



## 2. The character theory

### The dynamic concept of character

Fromm sees character as that constitutive part of the personality that is acquired and shaped and that is the opposite of the inherent, innate psychic qualities. „The difference between inherited and acquired qualities is on the whole synonymous with the difference between temperament, gifts and all constitutionally given psychic qualities on the one hand and character on the other.“<sup>1</sup> Here the concept „character“ is used exclusively to designate those psychic qualities that were acquired as reactions to experienced events. It thus differs from both everyday usage and the understanding of the term in other branches of science.<sup>2</sup>

An important distinction is the *difference between character and temperament*: „temperament refers to the mode of reaction and is constitutional and not changeable; character is essentially formed by a person’s experiences, especially those in early life, and changeable, to some extent, by insights and new kinds of experience.“<sup>3</sup> In contrast to temperament, which reveals whether a person will react cholericly or in a melancholy, phlegmatic, or sanguine manner, character and situation clarify what the reaction refers to.<sup>4</sup> Character, in other

words, gives information about the nature of the individual’s relatedness to the world, to others, and to himself, and, in turn, is formed by this relatedness. Fromm calls this kind of relatedness „orientation.“ When a choleric individual feels attracted by cruelty, for example, the fact that he reacts quickly and severely is to be ascribed to his temperament, {028} while the fact that he feels attracted to cruelty is to be attributed to his sadistic character orientation.

A further fundamental *difference* is that *between character and behavior*. From a behaviorist perspective, behavior is „the ultimately attainable and at the same time scientifically satisfactory datum in the study of man. From this standpoint, behavior traits and character traits are identical and from a positivistic standpoint, even the concept ‘character’ may not be legitimate in scientific parlance.“<sup>5</sup>

In opposition to this view of a „superficial“ equation of character trait and behavior, psychoanalysis has the merit of having recognized different-conscious, and especially unconscious-motivational nexuses. „The same behavior can spring from different motives, while of course the same motives can give rise to the most variegated behavior.“<sup>6</sup> It is in its criticism of every kind of behaviorism that the decisively different approach of psychoanalysis becomes apparent. Behaviorism does „not recognize that ‘behavior’ itself, separated from the behaving person, cannot be adequately

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<sup>1</sup> E. Fromm, *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 51-53; C. Thompson, *Die Psychoanalyse*, pp. 75f. See also E. Fromm, „Aggressivität wurzelt im Charakter.“ This article, which is based on a conversation between Erich Fromm and Adalbert Reif that was published as „Aggression and Charakter“ (1975b), can be viewed as a brief and easily understandable presentation of Fromm’s characterology. The first systematic presentation of the characterology is to be found in *Man for Himself* (1947a). It coincides with the comments in *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a), pp. 219-230, 251-254.

<sup>3</sup> E. Fromm, *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 52.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. P. Mullahy, *Oedipus Myth and Complex*, pp. 258-

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<sup>5</sup> Fromm and Maccoby, *Social Character in a Mexican Village* (1970b), p. 8. Cf. Fromm, *Man for Himself* (1947a), pp. 54f; *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a), pp. 43f.

<sup>6</sup> D. Riesman, „Psychological Types and National Character,“ p. 332.



described.”<sup>7</sup>

The difference between a form of conduct and a character trait is this: While there are forms of conduct that must be seen as essentially momentary or practiced adaptations to the demands of circumstance, there are typical, pervasive forms of behavior--and these are really what so-called behaviorism is concerned with--that can be properly understood and interpreted only when viewed as character traits that persist under changed circumstances, even when they disadvantageously affect the person who conducts himself typically in this fashion. For this reason, Fromm makes a strict terminological distinction between forms of behavior and character traits. The term „forms of behavior“ is reserved for „adaptive responses to a given social situation and [is] essentially a result of learning.“<sup>8</sup> „Character trait,“ in Fromm’s definition, is something that typically remains the same in the most widely differing social situations.<sup>9</sup> This „dynamic“ quality of the character trait suggests that the trait is only one part of an entire character syndrome and that it is charged with psychic energy--or, as Fromm usually puts it, it is part of a character system or structure.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> E. Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a), p. 43.

<sup>8</sup> Fromm and Maccoby, *Social Character in a Mexican Village* (1970b), p. 11.

<sup>9</sup> This insight into the difference between form of behavior and the character trait that determines this form of behavior has significant consequences for an ethical judgment: It is, then, not a matter of judging (and eventually condemning) someone on the basis of his overt behavior and of educating him to observe certain forms of behavior. What is decisive for ethical judgment is the diagnosis of the character trait in back of the form of behavior, and it is not the forms of behavior but these determining character traits that are the object of pedagogy.

<sup>10</sup> On the concepts „dynamic“ and „syndrome,“ cf. Fromm, *Escape from Freedom* (1941a), pp. 162f; *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 56; C. J. Sahlin, *An Analysis of the Writings of Erich Fromm and Their Implications for Adult Education*, pp. 122-125. On the concept „system,“ cf. Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a), p. 79.

Freud perceived the *dynamic quality of character* and recognized in the character structure of an individual the specific form {029} through which psychic energy is channeled in the development of life. He derived the psychic energy of individual character traits from the sexual drive, which is to say he combined his characterology and his libido theory and „interpreted the dynamic nature of character traits as the expression of their libidinous source.“<sup>11</sup> The tie-in with the libido theory meant that the individual character trait had to be understood as an element in the organization of the character as a whole.

In contrast to Freud, Fromm ascribes to man a primary relatedness to the world, to others, and to himself. It follows that the genesis of character must be understood through this antecedent relatedness. Accordingly, character traits are not the sublimations or reaction formations of various forms of the sexual drive but rather a syndrome „which results from a particular organization or ... orientation of character.“<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> E. Fromm, *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 57.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. On the historical development of this view of character that is an original contribution, see especially his essay „Selfishness and Self-Love“ (1939b), in which he makes use of the example of love and hate to develop the „principle“ that love and hate, e.g., „are actualizations of a constant readiness“ (p. 250). He postulates „that character is a structure of numerous readinensses ... which are constantly present and are actualized but not caused by an outside stimulus“ (p. 521). In contrast to Freud, Fromm already felt at that time that while some of these „readinesses“ are rooted in biological instinct, „many others have arisen as a reaction to individual and social experiences“ (p. 521). The distinction between character traits and the character orientations that determine them is not sufficiently evident when Fromm calls character traits „passions.“ That is the reason the use of the concepts „rational“ and „irrational passions“ for character traits that correspond to a productive and a nonproductive character orientation, respectively--a use that Fromm borrowed from Spinoza-is not adopted here. Cf. Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a), pp. 263-267. That talk about „passions“ may



In the process of assimilation and socialization, every human being must somehow „relate“ („orient“ himself). The specific form of relatedness is expressed in the individual's character and is at the same time an expression of that character.” These orientations, by which the individual relates himself to the world, constitute the core of his character“ so that „character can be defined as the (relatively permanent) form in which human energy is canalized in the process of assimilation and socialization.“<sup>13</sup>

Unlike forms of behavior, which are adaptive and learned responses to a given social situation, *character traits* are parts of a dynamic system, the character structure,<sup>14</sup> and change only as the character structure does. The character structure as a whole is formed by the entire social configuration—that is, „it is the result of a dynamic interrelation between system-man (with the needs, possibilities and limitations deriving from man's nature) and the system-society in which he lives.“

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cause a reader to forget the relation to characterology that is shown by Hans Peter Balmer's essay „Befreiung von Destruktivität? Erich Fromm in der Debatte um die menschliche Aggression.“ While this author does mention Fromm's characterology (see p. 494f), he does not appear to have understood its significance. For otherwise he could not have written: „At the center are questions that arise in connection with Fromm's doctrine of affects[!] Is it possible to sustain a division of passions into 'rational' and 'irrational' ones, using object relatedness[!] as a criterion?“ (p. 497). In view of such misunderstandings of the sociopsychological approach of Fromm's characterology, it is not surprising that Balmer does not hesitate to argue for a necrophilous view of human life and go along with George Bataille in making a case for a „need for destruction and loss“ (p. 500): „Bataille's dialectic sees in death the 'ultimate meaning of eroticism,' i.e. the anticipation of the ultimate border crossing... Passion, the 'exuberance of eroticism,' is never without violence...“ (p. 501).

<sup>13</sup> Fromm, *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 59; cf. also p. 18 and Chapter I, note 37.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Fromm and Maccoby, *Social Character in a Mexican Village* (1970b), p. 11.

What character means for man is properly understood only when *character is seen as a substitute for animal instinct* and its functions. Since character is the relatively permanent form in which human energy is channeled, this channeling has an extremely important biological function. For the character structure can then be viewed as the „human substitute for the instinctive apparatus of the animal.“<sup>15</sup> It is precisely the comparison with the animal kingdom that clarifies the distinctiveness of man. {030} Equipped with an innate instinctive apparatus, an animal either adapts autoplastically to changed conditions and is in harmony with nature, or it becomes extinct. Man, in contrast, came into existence at that very point in evolution when an enlarged brain mass made possible an alloplastic behavior vis-à-vis the environment. Human instinctual adaptation to the environment therefore decreased to a minimum and character took over the functions of instinct, thus becoming „man's second nature.“<sup>16</sup>

Though initially this thesis may appear vague and even insignificant, it is fraught with consequences. To begin with, it means a consistent rejection of the Freudian theory according to which man is shaped instinctually, by the development of the sexual drive. It also repudiates behaviorist thinking, which proposes to understand human behavior as conditioned reflex. And it is most opposed to the kind of research that takes its cue from the analysis of animal behavior to explain, for example, that aggressive behavior is inherent in man, a legacy of his animal ancestors, and the implication of this view for the image of man.<sup>17</sup>

When character is defined as a substitute for animal instinct, the function of human character is clarified.<sup>18</sup> For character is then seen as determining

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<sup>15</sup> E. Fromm, *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 59.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a), pp. 111, 227, e.g.

<sup>17</sup> See pp. 142-145.

<sup>18</sup> On what follows, cf. particularly *Man for Himself* (1947a), pp. 59-61; *Social Character in a Mexican Village* (1970b), p. 12f; *The Anatomy of Human Destruc-*



the decisions everyone makes constantly--and occasionally very suddenly--and this to such an extent that conscious acts of judgment are not required time and again. It stabilizes human reactions and ensures the internal consistency of human thinking, feeling, and acting (which is why we use such turns of speech as „having character,“ being „faithful“ to one’s character, and being „characterless“).

Character also has a selective function as regards an individual’s ideas and values. And finally, it is the basis for adaptation to society. It is shaped by the family as the „psychic agency of society.“ As „social character,“ it is functional for social processes and the survival of the individual in any given society.<sup>19</sup>

If character is defined as „relatively“ permanent form, there is a further sense in which it differs from instinct. For Fromm as well as for Freud, the first years of life are decisive for the shaping of the character structure.<sup>20</sup> But the importance of the early years does not preclude later changes in character structure and character traits. On the contrary, Fromm’s different understanding of the genesis of character and its independence from instinctive {031} behavior patterns leads him to say that character structure continues to be modifiable up to an advanced age.<sup>21</sup> A change in the conditions that shaped an individual’s character in a particular way and inhibited the rise of different character orientations can bring about a change in his character structure by allowing a hitherto latent orientation to become dominant.<sup>22</sup>

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tiveness (1973a), pp. 251-253.

<sup>19</sup> See pp. 18-22.

<sup>20</sup> Precisely because of this insight, it was plausible that Freud should define his character doctrine in terms of instinctual drives.

<sup>21</sup> On this, see especially Fromm, „The Psychological Problem of Aging“ (1966g).

<sup>22</sup> Cf. especially Fromm and Maccoby, *Social Character in a Mexican Village* (1970b), pp. 21-23. Every psychotherapeutic effort depends on this possibility for change. And every reform of the social structure would be ultimately meaningless if it could not have an impact on the character structure of the individuals

## Character orientations

The character traits of a person and a social group correspond to a specific orientation of the character structure. In what follows, various such character orientations will be set forth. The term „orientation“ reveals that the statement that some person or group has a certain character orientation, does not mean that this orientation is the sole determinant of their character. Rather, „the character of a given individual is usually a blend of all or some of these orientations in which one, however, is dominant.“<sup>23</sup> The dominant orientation must therefore be understood as an „ideal type“ in Max Weber’s sense of the word.

Because he is not simply describing the character of a given individual,<sup>24</sup> Fromm speaks not only of orientations of the character structure or of character orientations but also of character types.

In keeping with Fromm’s distinction between assimilation (as a relationship to things) and socialization (as an interpersonal relation), we will first consider orientations in the process of assimilation.

### *Orientations in the Process of Assimilation*<sup>25</sup>

In both the assimilation and socialization process,

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involved.

<sup>23</sup> *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 61; see p. 47f.

<sup>24</sup> While Fromm specifically notes in *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 61, that the orientations are to be understood as ideal types that are not descriptions of the character of any particular individual, „ideal types“ should not be understood here as utopian entities. Fromm’s ideal types resemble diagnostic findings in medicine in the sense that they occur in reality when an orientation acquires an unambiguous dominance.

<sup>25</sup> On this, cf. *Man for Himself* (1947a), pp. 62-82; *Dialogue with Erich Fromm* (1966o), pp. 2-12; *Social Character in a Mexican Village* (1970b), pp. 69-71; M. McGrath, *An Examination of Erich Fromm’s Ethics with Implications for the Philosophy of Adult Education*, pp. 21-32; C. J. Sahlin, *An Analysis of the Writings of Erich Fromm*, pp. 129-140.



Fromm differentiates between productive and non-productive orientations, and this distinction is fundamental to a clear definition of orientations. In actual individuals and societies, of course, we are always dealing with a mixture of these two forms of orientation, but since one or the other dominates, an ideal-typical classification is possible.

The following presentation follows Fromm in the sense that it is the negative aspects of these orientations that are first set forth.<sup>26</sup> {032}

### *The Nonproductive Orientations*

Fromm distinguishes five orientations in the process of assimilation that are characterized as nonproductive: the receptive, the exploitative, the hoarding, the marketing, and the necrophilic-destructive.

„In the *receptive orientation*, a person feels ‘the source of all good’ to be outside, and he believes that the only way to get what he needs--be it something material, be it affection, love, knowledge, pleasure--is to receive it from that outside source.”<sup>27</sup> In the religious sphere, such individuals expect everything from God; in the interpersonal sphere, they depend on what others give them so that, when on their own, they cannot live contentedly and find it difficult to make decisions. They are

loyal and affectionate, however. Eating and drinking are very important to them.

The receptive orientation plays a dominant role in twentieth-century civilization: it is the orientation of our present-day social character. „*Homo consumens*“<sup>28</sup> is the eternal suckling, and it is a matter of indifference to him whether the consumption goods are cigarettes, alcohol, and sex, or books, lectures, art galleries, and TV. He relates to all things receptively. „I expect others to feed me if I’m nice to them“<sup>29</sup> is his motto.

Like those dominated by the receptive orientation, those marked by the *exploitative orientation* expect everything good to come from outside. The difference is „that the exploitative type does not expect to receive things from others as gifts, but to take them away from others by force or cunning.“<sup>30</sup> Believers in the adage „stolen fruits are the sweetest,“ such individuals always try to appropriate something that isn’t theirs: they break up marriages, become kleptomaniacs, or when they work as scientists, tend to plagiarism. Mistrust, cynicism, envy, and jealousy are other characteristics of individuals with this orientation. Their entire lives are based on the conviction that they are incapable of producing anything whatever.

In primitive cultures, this orientation would be called cannibalism. In our century, the exploitative orientation is less often dominant than the receptive orientation, although the current capitalist system is essentially designed to be exploitative.

The *hoarding orientation* „makes people have little faith in {033} anything new they might get from the outside world; their security is based on hoarding and saving...”<sup>31</sup> These people view everything from the perspective of possessing and owning. To them, love equals taking possession of but never giving. Out of avarice and stubbornness, but also orderliness and punctuality, they reject and re-

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<sup>26</sup> How Fromm arrived at these orientations is not an easy question to answer. He simply deduced them from all the conceivable possibilities of a nonproductive relation to the world: „I can get things by receiving them passively; I can get things by taking them by force; I can get things by hoarding them; I can get things by marketing“ (*Dialogue with Erich Fromm* [1966f], p. 3). The first three orientations are clearly close to Freud’s pregenital character types: the receptive orientation corresponds to Freud’s oral-receptive character, the exploitative to his oral-sadistic, and the hoarding to his anal character. The marketing orientation has no equivalent in Freud’s characterology, while the destructive-necrophilous orientation resembles the anal character. On this, see Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a), pp. 348f.

<sup>27</sup> *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 62.

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<sup>28</sup> Fromm, „Die psychologischen and geistigen Probleme des Überflusses“ (1970j).

<sup>29</sup> *Dialogue with Erich Fromm* (19660, p. 4.

<sup>30</sup> *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 64.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.



sist all questioning by others. Order and punctuality are their highest values: „No experiments“ and „There is nothing new under the sun“ are their mottos.

As a social character, the hoarding orientation was probably most at home among the middle and upper classes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, that is, during the ear of private capitalism when lust for possessions and an eagerness to save were necessary to economic progress. Today these qualities tend to prevail only among the petite bourgeoisie.<sup>32</sup>

Although exchange is one of the oldest economic mechanisms, the *marketing orientation* that is shaped by exchange did not become a dominant influence in relations to the world until our own century. Today it is not characterized by use value but rather by the mechanism of supply and demand, and extends beyond the commodity market to the market for persons. The individual whose dominant orientation is marketing relates to the world by perpetually asking how he can best sell himself—that is, he needs constantly to determine whether and how he can best make himself acceptable to others, and he must do, think, and feel what the market prescribes. In contrast to the receptive hoarding orientations, which are intent on preserving, taking, and receiving, the marketing-oriented individual's process of assimilation is characterized by exchange.

The marketing orientation is the social character of present-day Western industrial civilization generally. It expresses itself in the person's increasing alienation from himself, his work, and his environment, and derives from the conviction that he is no longer his own master, or the master of his products and capacities. Instead, it is the products and capacities that, as objects of supply and demand, control man.<sup>33</sup> Modern man experiences himself

both as commodity and as the seller of that commodity.

Compared to the three nonproductive orientations just discussed, the distinctive feature of the marketing orientation is „that {034} no specific and permanent kind of relatedness is developed, but that the very changeability of attitudes is the only permanent quality of such orientation.“<sup>34</sup>

Only much later did Fromm elaborate an additional orientation. Because of its destructive character, he called it the necrophilous-destructive orientation, a term that does not refer to a sexual perversion, but to an attraction for everything dead and destructive.<sup>35</sup> In the assimilation process, the necrophilous and destructive individual is oriented toward the inorganic and object-like. „The person with the necrophilous orientation is one who is attracted to and fascinated by all that is not alive, all that is dead: corpses, decay, feces, dirt.“<sup>36</sup> He lives in the past, cultivates feelings he had yesterday, and is devoted to „law and order.“ Because he loves

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guments are in *The Revolution of Hope* (1968a).

<sup>34</sup> *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 77. In *The Lonely Crowd*, David Riesman rightly described man in contemporary Western industrial civilization as „other-directed.“

<sup>35</sup> Especially in *The Heart of Man* (1964a), pp. 37-61, 108-114; Fromm, „Creators and Destroyers“ (1964f), pp. 22-25; Fromm, „Prophets and Priests“ (1967b), esp. pp. 77f; *Dialogue with Erich Fromm* (1966f), pp. 11f; *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a), pp. 330-358. Most of Fromm's interpreters have overlooked the fact that this orientation, which he demonstrated in connection with a further systematization of the socialization process, is relevant also to the process of assimilation, even though it differs from the other nonproductive orientations. On the relation of this necrophilous-destructive orientation to Freud's anal character type (in its negative form) and to the theory of the death instinct, see *The Heart of Man* (1964a), pp. 39, 48-55; *Dialogue with Erich Fromm* (1966f), pp. 11f; C. J. Sahlin, *An Analysis of the Writings of Erich Fromm*, pp. 95-97.

<sup>36</sup> *The Heart of Man* (1964a), p. 39. Cf. the definition in *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a), p. 332.



what is dead, he loves violence, for violence aims at limiting and destroying life. „All living processes, feelings, and thoughts are transformed into things. Memory, rather than experience; having rather than being, is what counts.“<sup>37</sup> He enjoys talking about illnesses, difficulties, accidents, and deaths.

For Fromm, necrophilous destructiveness as a social character is especially apparent in the buildup of nuclear armaments. The sheer madness already apparent in calculating how many millions of deaths a nuclear war may cause is understandable only in a social character where „people are not afraid of total destruction because they do not love life.“<sup>38</sup> Aside from the question of the life and death of mankind, the individual in our bureaucratized, industrial culture<sup>39</sup> is a *homo mechanicus* who believes he can make his relations to the world purely mechanical and thus avoid all direct, spontaneous, and productive contact. He turns all relations into something mechanical in an attempt to control them and to suppress the spontaneous and creative elements of all relationships: „Necrophilia constitutes a fundamental orientation: it is the one answer to life which is in complete opposition to life.“<sup>40</sup>

### *The Productive Orientations*

From a formal point of view, Sigmund Freud's concept of the genital character parallels the productive orientation in Fromm's theory of character.<sup>41</sup> Fromm, however, attempts a very precise definition of productivity. In so doing, he not only fills a

gap in Freud's account of the „mature“ character but also establishes an {035} important link between psychoanalytic and sociopsychological insights on the one hand, and an anthropology on the other. For this reason, his *concept of productivity will be examined first.*<sup>42</sup>

The concepts „spontaneity“ and „spontaneous activity“ represent the first step in Fromm's attempt to define productivity. „Spontaneous activity is free activity of the self and implies, psychologically, what the Latin root of the word 'sponte' means literally: of one's free will.“<sup>43</sup> The historical and conceptual background of the phrase „spontaneous activity“ is somewhat different. For Hegel, man is only himself when „actively related to the world.“<sup>44</sup> Karl Marx, whose image of man is rooted in Hegel's thought and whose concept of „self-activity“ quite clearly lies behind Fromm's concept of productivity, sees man at home only when he relates actively to other human beings and to nature.<sup>45</sup>

In contrast to animals, which are completely at one with their activity, man „makes his activity itself the object of his willing and his consciousness. He has conscious life activity.“<sup>46</sup> And whenever this life-activity or self-activity is not directed toward making him productive, whenever man remains receptive or passive, he is alienated from himself,<sup>47</sup> at home with neither himself nor nature nor other people. „Auto-activity is, then, nothing less than

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<sup>37</sup> *The Heart of Man* (1964a), p. 41.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56; Cf. Fromm, „The Case for Unilateral Disarmament“ (1960c); Fromm and Maccoby, „A Debate on the Question of Civil Defense“ (1962b); *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a), pp. 345-348.

<sup>39</sup> *The Heart of Man* (1964a), pp. 57f.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>41</sup> On this, see Fromm, *Man for Himself* (1947a), pp. 82-84; Fromm and Evans, *Dialogue with Erich Fromm* (1966f), pp. 13f; J. H. Schaar, *Escape from Authority*, pp. 102-104.

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<sup>42</sup> On the following, see *Escape from Freedom* (1941a), pp. 256-263; *Man for Himself* (1947a), pp. 84-88; *Marx's Concept of Man* (1961b), pp. 26-30; *The Heart of Man* (1964a), pp. 30-32; „Marx's Contribution to the Knowledge of Man“ (1968h), esp. pp. 68-70; and *Dialogue with Erich Fromm* (1966f), pp. 24f; *Social Character in a Mexican Village* (1970b), pp. 71-73; M. McGrath, *An Examination of Erich Fromm's Ethics*, pp. 51-53; H. Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization*, pp. 236f.

<sup>43</sup> *Escape from Freedom* (1941a), p. 258.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man* (1961b), p. 29.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Fromm, „Marx's Contribution to the Knowledge of Man“ (1968h) in (1970a), p. 68.

<sup>46</sup> Marx, *MEGA I*, 3, 88.

<sup>47</sup> On the concept of „alienation,“ see pp. 72-82.



freedom, freedom in the sense of the voluntary and unconstrained activity, stimulated by one's own profound internal needs."<sup>48</sup>

Against the background of this understanding of activity, Fromm developed his concepts „spontaneity“ or „spontaneous activity,“<sup>49</sup> which he later expanded to mean „productivity“ and „productive orientation“ in *Man for Himself*. In this book, he first defines these concepts negatively.<sup>50</sup> Productivity is not the same as artistic creativity, since the latter presupposes a specific gift, while every individual who is not an intellectual or psychological cripple is capable of productivity.<sup>51</sup> More important, productivity does not mean activity in the modern sense of simply being active--a hypnotized person is „active“ though it is not he himself who acts but rather the hypnotist who acts through him. Similarly unproductive are activities that are reactions to fear, submission, dependence, or irrational passions such as avarice, masochism, envy, jealousy, and other forms of greed. In all these, man is active but he is not productive, for Fromm's concept of productivity is the opposite of what is commonly meant by that word. It is not an {036} activity that *necessarily* leads to practical results but an „attitude, a mode of reaction and orientation toward the world and oneself in the process of life.“<sup>52</sup> It is identical with biophilia.<sup>53</sup>

For this reason, productivity is the realization of man's own faculties, the use of his capacities and his power, though what is involved here is the very opposite of „power over.“ Rather, it is „power to“ (bring something about): „The ability of man to make productive use of his powers is his potency.“<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> M. Fritzhand, *Marx's Ideal of Man*, pp. 161f.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Fromm, *Escape from Freedom* (1941a), pp. 256-263.

<sup>50</sup> *Man for Himself* (1947a), pp. 85-90.

<sup>51</sup> On the question of creativity, cf. Fromm, „The Creative Attitude“ (1959c).

<sup>52</sup> *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 87.

<sup>53</sup> See p. 49f.

<sup>54</sup> *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 88; *The Heart of Man* (1964a), p. 31.

With this concept of productivity as a basis, *the productive orientation* in the process of assimilation can be defined. „The world outside oneself can be experienced in two ways: reproductively by perceiving actuality in the same fashion as a film makes a literal record of things photographed (although even mere reproductive perception requires the active participation of the mind); and generatively by conceiving it, by enlivening and re-creating this new material through the spontaneous activity of one's own mental and emotional powers.“<sup>55</sup> When the generative experience of the world is atrophied, the result is a relatedness to the world that is proudly called „realism,“ but that is actually nothing but a superficial kind of perception. The individual is then incapable of enlivening and newly creating the perception from the inside, with all the fibers of his capacity for experience. When reproductive perception is totally lacking, man has only his imagination. Such an individual is psychotic and cannot function in society.

In the productive orientation, the reproductive and the generative faculties represent two poles that in their interaction are the dynamic source of productivity.<sup>56</sup>

Compared with a „realistic“ orientation, the productive orientation is characterized by the fact that man „is capable of relating himself to the world simultaneously by perceiving it as it is and by conceiving it enlivened and enriched by his own

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<sup>55</sup> *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 88.

<sup>56</sup> This differentiation between reproducing and generative capacities results in an important differentiation between „intelligence“ and „reason“ in Fromm's work. Intelligence „is taking things for granted as they are, making combinations which have the purpose of facilitating their manipulation. ... Reason, on the other hand, aims at understanding; it tries to find out what is behind the surface, to recognize the kernel, the essence of the reality which surrounds us. ... Reason requires relatedness and a sense of self“ (*The Sane Society* [1955a], p. 170). Cf. *Man for Himself* (1947a), pp. 102f; „Values, Psychology, and Human Existence“ (1959b), esp. pp. 159-161; P. A. Bertocci and R. M. Millard, *Personality and the Good*, pp. 84-86.





powers.<sup>57</sup> What the productive orientation produces are not primarily material things, works of art, or systems of thought. „By far the most important object of productiveness is man himself,<sup>58</sup> for everything that takes place between the conception and the death of an individual is a process of birth of that individual's possibilities and capacities. In contrast to the process of physical maturation, which occurs spontaneously when conditions are favorable, the development of the individual's psychic and intellectual capacities {037} requires productive activity. Therefore it is only through the productive orientation in the process of assimilation and socialization that an individual can realize the possibilities and capacities that lie dormant within. Productive relatedness to the world (as activity) simultaneously implies and evokes the individual's relatedness to himself and to others and is an essential factor in the process of individuation.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 90. Here Fromm sees himself as within the tradition of German Idealism, of Karl Marx, and of Zen Buddhism, all of which attempt to overcome the subject-object split. „The object is an object, yet it ceases to be an object, and in this new approach, man becomes one with the object, although he and it remain two“ (Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man* [1961b], p. 33, n. 22). „The eye has become a human eye, just as its object has become a social, human object, made by man for man. The senses have therefore become theoreticians in their immediate praxis. They relate to the thing for its own sake, but the thing itself is an objective human relation to itself and to man, and vice-versa“ (Karl Marx, *Early Writings*, p. 352). In Zen Buddhism, as in Western mysticism, the same thing is expressed by the concept „experience“: „I see the world as it is and experience it as my world, the world created and transformed by my creative grasp of it, so that the world ceases to be a strange world 'over there' and becomes my world“ (Fromm, *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* [1960a], p. 91). See also G. B. Hammond, *Man in Estrangement*, pp. 69-71.

<sup>58</sup> *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 91.

<sup>59</sup> The concept of „individuation“ as a positive self-realization, as coined by Jung, is not used by Fromm in that sense. While he does speak of „self-realization“

### *The Orientations in the Process of Socialization*

A person's character structure is molded not only by the process of assimilation but also by that of socialization. As in the case of the assimilation process, in the following discussion of the possible forms of interpersonal relatedness we will first distinguish between nonproductive and productive orientations.

### *The Nonproductive Orientations*

Describing the orientations in the process of socialization is made more difficult by the fact that after his book *Escape from Freedom* was published in 1941, Fromm repeatedly defined the various orientations more precisely and also elaborated them.<sup>60</sup> But one fundamental differentiation persists throughout his work: nonproductive interpersonal relatedness can be either symbiotic and unfree--be it masochistically or sadistically--or fail to develop at all because the individual lives indifferently-conformistically, destructively or narcissistically. The first type is characterized by symbiosis and includes masochism and sadism in authoritarian relations of dependency. The orientations characterized by distance include indifference, necrophilic destructiveness, and narcissism.

When Fromm uses the term *symbiotic related-*

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in *Escape from Freedom* (1941a), p. 257, the development of the idea of a syndrome of growth and a syndrome of decay (*The Heart of Man* [1964a]) makes clear that individuation can also be negative. Cf. Fromm and Evans, *Dialogue with Erich Fromm* (1966f), pp. 24f.

<sup>60</sup> The most important sources for more precise statements and elaborations of the substance of this matter are „Sozialpsychologischer Teil“ (1936a), esp. pp. 110-128; *Escape from Freedom* (1941a), pp. 136-206; *Man for Himself* (1947a), pp. 107-112; *The Heart of Man* (1964a), pp. 37-94; *Dialogue with Erich Fromm* (1966f), pp. 16-24; *Social Character in a Mexican Village* (1970b), pp. 73-76; *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a), esp. pp. 268-299, 330-368.



ness, he means by symbiosis „the union of one individual self with another self (or any other power outside of the own self) in such a way as to make each lose the integrity of its own self and to make them completely dependent on each other.“<sup>61</sup> This kind of nonproductive orientation is embodied in two apparently diametrically opposed forms of relatedness: masochistic and sadistic interpersonal relatedness.<sup>62</sup>

Masochism is the passive form of symbiotic relatedness. In it, the individual makes himself part of another person who guides, directs, and protects him and without whom he can no longer live. {038} „The power of the one to whom one submits is inflated, may he be a person or a god; he is everything, I am nothing, except inasmuch as I am part of him. As a part, I am part of greatness, of power, of certainty.“<sup>63</sup>

Submissiveness expresses itself in a variety of forms. Most frequently it manifests itself in feelings of inferiority, impotence, and personal insignificance. What is special here is that people with this orientation are unconsciously driven to make themselves small and weak. Sometimes this inclination expresses itself in persistent avowals of weakness and of the difficulty of life. Usually the tendency of the weak to submit to a strong individual is rationalized „as love or loyalty, inferiority feelings [are rationalized] as an adequate expression of actual shortcomings, and one’s suffering as being entirely due to unchangeable circumstances.“<sup>64</sup> In extreme cases, the tendency to submit to external forces like

a small child becomes a crazed desire to hurt oneself and to make oneself suffer so as to guarantee the protection and care of a powerful being. Such submission may no longer be conscious. The forms of masochistic self-inflicted harm extend from self-accusations and the tendency to become psychically ill, to the creation of accidents and being blocked during examinations, and even to provocative criminal acts and various addictions that could be called suicide by installments.<sup>65</sup>

The common denominator of all forms of masochism is the incapacity to be one’s own person, to stand on one’s own feet, to use „freedom to.“<sup>66</sup> Instead, the masochistic individual attaches himself to an authority in order to make his personal self disappear to the point where he no longer feels in conflict between his desire for independence and his sense of insignificance. He can then surrender his self and be „overwhelmed by pain and agony.“ The person with a masochistic orientation deals with the fear of being alone that is involved in „freedom from“ by humiliating himself, by suffering and hiding.<sup>67</sup> „But pain and suffering are not what he wants; pain and suffering are the price he pays for an aim which he compulsively tries to attain.“<sup>68</sup>

From the perspective of the person who seeks a symbiotic tie, submission to an authority means becoming a part of a larger, more powerful whole

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<sup>61</sup> *Escape from Freedom* (1941a), p. 158.

<sup>62</sup> In line with Fromm’s approach of taking man’s relatedness to the world, to others, and to himself as his point of departure, masochism and sadism are not understood exclusively as sexual perversions. The opposite is true: sexual masochism and sadism may be the expressions of masochistic and sadistic relatedness. Fromm therefore also speaks of „moral masochism,“ e.g., or of the „masochistic character“ (*Escape from Freedom* [1941a], p. 148).

<sup>63</sup> Fromm, *The Art of Loving* (1956a), p. 16.

<sup>64</sup> *Escape from Freedom* (1941a), p. 143. Cf. on what follows, *Escape*, pp. 142ff.

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<sup>65</sup> It is precisely these self-destructive forms of the masochistic orientation that show the common root and the closeness of masochism and sadism. This closeness consists in the ambivalence of every type of symbiotic relatedness. The hostility that is found in both masochism and sadism is more conscious in the latter and is put into practice directly, while hostility in masochism is usually unconscious and expresses itself only indirectly. Cf. *Escape from Freedom* (1941a), p. 159.

<sup>66</sup> In *Escape from Freedom* (1941a), the nonproductive orientations are therefore understood as escape mechanisms that become activated when human beings are incapable of realizing their „freedom from“ as a „freedom to.“ The escape mechanism of symbiotic relatedness is called „authoritarianism“ in that work.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. *Escape from Freedom* (1941a), pp. 152f.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 154f.



(another individual, an institution, god, the {039} people, or, in internalized form, his own conscience or obsession), to share in its power and superiority, and thus to become equally powerful and superior, even though all this may be unconscious.<sup>69</sup> As social character, masochism (as well as sadism) is the ideal precondition for fascist and totalitarian systems<sup>70</sup> because this orientation toward authority satisfies „both the need for a lessening of anxiety and that for greatness and power.“<sup>71</sup>

Sadism is the active form of symbiotic relatedness. It differs from the masochistic orientation in that „the sadistic person commands, exploits, hurts, humiliates, [while] the masochistic person is commanded, exploited, hurt, humiliated.“<sup>72</sup> Both forms have in common the desire for a union without independence and integrity, the sadist being as dependent on the masochist as the masochist is on him. Indeed, every sadist is also a masochist, and vice versa, albeit in different respects.<sup>73</sup>

The inner affinity between sadism and masochism does not mean that their manifestations are similar. In fact, it is precisely by its destructive and other damaging tendencies that the sadistic orientation differs significantly from the masochistic one.

Fromm distinguishes three forms of sadistic

orientation. The first is „to make others dependent on oneself and to have absolute and unrestricted power over them so as to make of them nothing but instruments, ‘clay in the potter’s hand.’ Another consists of the impulse not only to rule over others in this absolute fashion, but to exploit them, to use them, to steal from them, to disembowel them and, so to speak, to incorporate anything eatable in them. ... The third kind of sadistic tendency is the wish to make others suffer or to see them suffer. This suffering can be physical but more often it is mental suffering. Its aim is to hurt actively, to humiliate, embarrass others, or to see them in embarrassing and humiliating situations.“<sup>74</sup>

Because such sadistic tendencies are not nearly so socially innocuous as the corresponding masochistic ones, they are usually more conscious and frequently veiled by a misleading justification. Examples of such rationalizations are: „I rule over you because I know what is best for you“ (a pedagogic maxim parents may use toward their teenagers in order to prolong their symbiotic fixation on their children); „I have done so much for you, and now I am {040} entitled to take from you what I want“ (to validate exploitative claims on inferiors in the world of work); „I have been hurt by others and my wish to hurt them is nothing but retaliation.“<sup>75</sup>

All forms of sadistic orientation have in common the passion „to have absolute and unrestricted control over a living being, whether an animal, a child, a man, or a woman.“<sup>76</sup> Humiliation and enslavement are often means to that end, though the goal of ruling over others is best attained when suffering is inflicted on the other, „since there is no greater power over another person than that of inflicting pain on him to force him to undergo suffering without his being able to defend himself.“<sup>77</sup> The

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., pp. 155f.

<sup>70</sup> See also Fromm’s studies at the Institute for Social Research: „Sozialpsychologischer Teil“ (1936a); „Geschichte und Methoden der Erhebungen“ (1936b); *Arbeiter and Angestellte am Vorabend des Dritten Reiches. Eine sozialpsychologische Untersuchung* (1980a). A detailed „psychology of Nazism“ is also part of *Escape from Freedom* (1941a), pp. 207-239, for which Fromm uses *Arbeiter and Angestellte* as source material. See also Fromm’s comment in *Escape from Freedom*, p. 212. n. 3.

<sup>71</sup> „Sozialpsychologischer Teil,“ (1936a), p. 123.

<sup>72</sup> *The Art of Loving* (1956a), p. 17.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 16f; *Escape from Freedom* (1941a), pp. 158f. Thus Hitler’s reaction to human beings was primarily sadistic, whereas his reaction to his fate, to history, and the „higher powers“ of nature was masochistic. Cf. Fromm, *The Art of Loving* (1956a), p. 17; and his analysis of Hitler’s character in *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a), pp. 369-433.

<sup>74</sup> *Escape from Freedom* (1941a), p. 144. Cf. the less systematic presentation in *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a), pp. 288-292.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. *Escape from Freedom* (1941a), pp. 144f.

<sup>76</sup> *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a), pp. 288f.

<sup>77</sup> *Escape from Freedom* (1941a), p. 157.



need of the sadistically oriented individual to rule over others has its deepest root in an incapacity to live his freedom (the same is true of the masochist). Instead he attaches himself to others and can survive only if he can exercise power over them. The nonproductive element of both the sadistic and the masochistic orientation lies in the symbiotic relatedness of these individuals to each other where the one lives, and is dependent on, the other.

An examination of the relations between the orientations in the processes of assimilation and socialization yields the following conclusion: The receptive orientation in the process of assimilation corresponds to the masochistic one in the process of socialization; the exploitative orientation corresponds to the oral-sadistic; while the hoarding orientation parallels the anal-sadistic orientation.<sup>78</sup>

If the characteristic of symbiotic relatedness is a close dependence of one person on another, the following nonproductive orientations in the process of socialization are characterized by *withdrawal*—that is, a relatedness that is *marked by a distance* whenever the other is experienced as a threat.<sup>79</sup> We are dealing here with the indifferent, the necrophilous-destructive, and the narcissist orientations.

In the indifferent orientation, modern society has produced a new type of interpersonal relatedness that is of considerable importance because it is widespread, yet it has hardly been recognized for what it is because it is veiled by illusions. As in all nonproductive orientations, the individual self stops being itself. Instead the individual „adopts entirely the kind of personality offered to him by cultural patterns, and he therefore becomes {041} exactly as all others are and as they expect him to be.“<sup>80</sup> The individual self withdraws by conforming with others, becomes an automaton, and gives up the

„freedom to,“ a freedom that is experienced as loneliness and isolation. He withdraws into an indifference that is „often accompanied by a compensatory feeling of self-inflation.“<sup>81</sup>

The levels at which the indifferent orientation becomes manifest are as numerous as the individual points of contact with society and its culture; they extend from the latest fashion to theories about equality as uniformity in the women’s movement.<sup>82</sup> The compulsive quality of the anonymous „one“ of this orientation points up another aspect of conformist relatedness. While in earlier times adaptation to visible authorities such as state, church, parents, school, and moral codes demanded an equally visible conformism, authority in the middle of the twentieth century has become anonymous and invisible and all the more compelling because its invisibility renders it invulnerable. The only authority is the „one,“ and that may be „profit, economic necessity, the market, common sense, public opinion, what ‘one’ does, thinks, feels.“<sup>83</sup>

The submission to *anonymous* authorities that indifference implies explains why this orientation, although a submission and surrender of the individual self, has the power to give people security and even an inflated sense of what they are. As in the masochistic orientation, the individual who conformistically submits to the dictates of anonymous authorities participates in the power of these authorities, a power that increases precisely because it is anonymous. In a manner of speaking, he himself is the power of the anonymous „one.“<sup>84</sup> The anonymity of the authorities that enforce conformism also explains why the majority of people in our so-

<sup>78</sup> Cf. *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 111. In a conversation, Fromm proposed this distinction between the oral- and anal-sadistic orientation.

<sup>79</sup> The general term „withdrawal“ is used by Fromm for this group of nonproductive orientations (*Man for Himself* [1947a], p. 111).

<sup>80</sup> *Escape from Freedom* (1947a), pp. 185-186.

<sup>81</sup> *Social Character in a Mexican Village* (1970b), p. 74.

<sup>82</sup> See esp. *The Art of Loving* (1956a), pp. 14f, where conformist tendencies of earlier periods are also described (pp. 8-10).

<sup>83</sup> *The Sane Society* (1955a), pp. 152f.; cf. *Dialogue with Erich Fromm* (1966f), pp. 21f.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Fromm, „Values, Psychology, and Human Existence“ (1959b), p. 159: „instead of the pre-individualistic clan identity, a new herd identity develops in which the sense of identity rests on the sense of an unquestionable belonging to the crowd.“



ciety have this orientation, yet firmly believe that they are individualists who think, act, and feel freely. First, „one“ surrenders to the illusion that it is the (relative) freedom from external authorities that made individuality and responsibility possible to begin with, and the reason is that external authorities can no longer enforce conformism. Second, being determined by anonymous authorities is rationalized as interest, social attitudes, „having both feet on the ground,“ individuality, „leading a productive life,“ and the like (such rationalizations are suggested by the {042} anonymous authorities themselves). In reality, of course, these rationalizations only disguise the loss of individual self and veil the conformist orientation that, like its counterpart in the process of assimilation, the marketing orientation, is nonproductive because on a deeper emotional level it means detachment from others.<sup>85</sup>

If indifference is the passive form of the relatedness characterized by distance, *the necrophilous-destructive* orientation is its active form. But before we discuss this active form we must explain what Fromm means by destructiveness.<sup>86</sup>

We must distinguish between three different forms of destructiveness, each differently motivated: there is reactive or defensive aggression, sadistic-cruel destructiveness, and necrophilous destructiveness.<sup>87</sup> Reactive or defensive aggression stands in the service of life and appears when an individual's vital interests are being threatened.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Cf. *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 112.

<sup>86</sup> On what follows, cf. especially *Escape from Freedom* (1947a), pp. 159, 179f.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Fromm, „Zur Theorie and Strategie des Friedens“ (1970h). *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a) presents all three forms of destructive behavior at some length. Fromm distinguishes between two malignant forms of destructive behavior: the destructiveness that is marked by cruelty; and necrophilia, which is another kind of destructiveness. In the interest of greater clarity, the terms „Necrophilous destructiveness“ and „Necrophilous-destructive orientation“ were used in the text.

<sup>88</sup> On the dispute with Konrad Lorenz and other ethologists regarding an aggressive drive or aggressive be-

Sadistic-cruel destructiveness, which is unique to man, is something altogether different. It uses violence to control and incorporate others. In this process, the object of the destructive act must not perish because it is needed for symbiosis. Sadistic-cruel destructiveness is thus merely a means to an end. Necrophilous destructiveness is also unique to man. The person who acts necrophilously aims to destroy the object because he is attracted by everything that is dead: by decay, illness, nonlife, and nongrowth. This is the kind of destructiveness that is meant when the necrophilous-destructive orientation in the process of socialization is mentioned. In contrast to reactive aggression, it is profoundly irrational—that is, if no objects for its passion to destroy can be found, it turns upon itself so that serious illnesses or even suicide may result.

Of all the orientations, the necrophilous-destructive is the most damaging both socially and individually. It is hardly conscious and usually recognizable only by its rationalizations. Sacrificial love, strict fulfillment of duty, the call of conscience, patriotism, personal honor, racial consciousness, and the desire to defend and protect are some of the rationalizations used to hide a necrophilous-destructive orientation from oneself and others. The purpose of such rationalizations is always the same: it is to disguise the destructive impulse as reactive aggression, as effort with a high moral purpose.<sup>89</sup>

Though negative and totally nonproductive, the {043} necrophilous-destructive orientation is an attempt to relate to oneself and to others. The need to relate derives from man's loneliness and the powerlessness it entails. The individual with a necrophilous-destructive orientation believes he can escape from this situation by seeking to destroy

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havior, see pp. 142-145.

<sup>89</sup> On this, compare, e.g., the heated controversy regarding reform of the abortion law that sometimes tells us something about the destructive character structure of the fighters for a „right to life“ or a „right to one's own belly,“ and which can hardly be called rational argumentation.



possible objects of relatedness. His attempted „solution“ is determined in part by two factors that also have their roots in man’s isolation and powerlessness, and these are the fear and the thwarting of life.<sup>90</sup>

All isolation is experienced as a threat to vital interests and produces anxiety. Resistance to such anxiety normally provokes an aggressive attitude toward the threatening objects, and if this attitude is not overcome (as, for example, when such objects turn toward the individual with love), the individual develops an inclination toward destructiveness that becomes constant and governs all his relations to life. The thwarting of life results from an inner blocking: sensual, emotional, and intellectual capacities go unrealized, and this is intensified by cultural, religious, and moral taboos on enjoyment and pleasure. The result is an interpersonal orientation that is necrophilous and destructive because it could not and cannot develop love for life. „Destructiveness is the outcome of un-lived life.“<sup>91</sup> The necrophilous-destructive orientation in the process of socialization has its parallel in the process of assimilation.

The final nonproductive orientation in the process of socialization is the narcissistic orientation.<sup>92</sup> It is characterized by a greater degree of withdrawal than the nonsymbiotic orientations. In contrast to the indifferent and the necrophilous-destructive, the individual with a narcissistic orientation acknowledges only his own inner world as real and is incapable of seeing and experiencing the world and others „objectively,“ as they are.

It was only at a relatively late date in his career, and then as a result of his reinterpretation of Freud’s view of narcissism, that Fromm recognized

the fundamental importance of this orientation.<sup>93</sup> Freud distinguishes between „primary“ and „secondary narcissism.“<sup>94</sup> By „primary narcissism,“ he means the phenomenon whereby the libido of the small child is wholly self-directed and does not yet extend to objects in the outside world. Freud believed that during the maturation process the libido turns outward, but that in pathological conditions it detaches itself from {044} objects and is reflected back on one’s own person („secondary narcissism“).<sup>95</sup> Because of its connection with Freud’s libido theory, secondary narcissism was seen as limited to pathological, usually psychotic, manifestations, but Fromm recognized that it was, in fact, typical of many „normal“ individuals in their interpersonal relatedness.

„Narcissism can ... be described as a state of experience in which only the person himself, his body, his needs, his feelings, his thoughts, his property, everything and everybody pertaining to him are experienced as fully real, while everybody and everything that does not form part of the person or is not an object of his needs is not interesting, is not fully real, is perceived only by intellectual recognition, while *affectively* without weight and color.“<sup>96</sup> Such individuals only truly know a single reality, that of their own thoughts, feelings, needs. „The world outside is not experienced and perceived objectively, i.e. as existing in its own terms, conditions

<sup>90</sup> On this, cf. *Escape from Freedom* (1947a), pp. 181f.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 184.

<sup>92</sup> On what follows, cf. *The Sane Society* (1955a), pp. 34-36; *The Heart of Man* (1964a); pp. 62-94; *Dialogue with Erich Fromm* (1966f), pp. 68-70; *Social Character in a Mexican Village* (1970b), pp. 74-76; Fromm, „Einige post-marxsche and postfreudsche Gedanken über Religion and Religiosität“ (1972b), p. 475; *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a), p. 200-205.

<sup>93</sup> In *Escape from Freedom* (1941a), there is a brief reference to the possibility of a narcissistic orientation (p. 185), but in that passage, narcissism is dismissed as an escape mechanism from freedom which is of interest only to individual psychology. The first reflections on narcissism occur in *The Sane Society* (1955a), pp. 34-36; they are explicated subsequently in *The Heart of Man* (1964a).

<sup>94</sup> Cf. Freud, *On Narcissism: An Introduction*, Vol. XIV; *Totem and Taboo*, Vol. XIII, in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works* (1961).

<sup>95</sup> Fromm, „Einige post-marxsche and post-freudsche Gedanken über Religion and Religiosität“ (1972b), p. 475.

<sup>96</sup> *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a), p. 201.



and needs.<sup>97</sup> For that reason, the narcissistically oriented individual can never make a value judgment that truly measures what is to be evaluated, for example, because he knows only himself, what he thinks and feels. For the same reason, he is hypersensitive to any criticism of his person, however fair it may be.<sup>98</sup> He compensates for his nonrelatedness to the world outside him by excessive estimate of his own worth, and this compensation makes it possible for him to live only for himself, his body, his possessions, his illnesses, his guilt, his beauty, his virtues, and so on. „If I am ‘great’ because of some quality I *have*, and not because of something I *achieve*, I do not need to be related to anybody or anything.“<sup>99</sup> The only thing such a person represents is an inflated ego that can only cultivate itself.<sup>100</sup>

The narcissistic orientation is found not only in individuals but, as „social narcissism,“ in groups, classes, races, and nations. In conjunction with destructive tendencies, it constitutes a source of violence, genocide, and war.<sup>101</sup> The analysis of group narcissism yields results that are quite similar to those found in the analysis of individual cases. What is common is primarily the incapacity to see reality objectively. There is also the unflagging concern to underline the superiority of one’s group, race, or religion by recourse to all manner of ideologies.<sup>102</sup> The narcissistic orientation is probably the most

pronounced nonproductive orientation in the {045} socialization process because it supplants relatedness to others with a pure self-relatedness, and therefore totally misses man’s task, which is to relate to others and the world.

### *The Productive Orientations*<sup>103</sup>

The nonproductive orientations mentioned so far have illuminated the paradox of human existence: „that man must simultaneously seek for closeness and independence; for oneness with others and at the same time for the preservation of his uniqueness and particularity.“<sup>104</sup> Only a productive orientation to the world (i.e., to nature, to others, and to oneself) can ensure such a twofold effort. Productivity here means that man realizes his capacities for active and creative relatedness.<sup>105</sup> „In the realm of thought, this productive orientation is expressed in the proper grasp of the world by reason. In the realm of action, the productive orientation is expressed in productive work. ... In the realm of feeling, the productive orientation is expressed in love which is the experience of union with another person, with all men, and with nature, under the condition of retaining one’s sense of integrity and independence.“<sup>106</sup>

We have already discussed productive orientation in the realm of action.<sup>107</sup> Now we will deal with the productive orientation of love and reason, which are but two different forms of the same productive relatedness, though they must be treated as the expression of two different powers in man: feeling and thinking.

Today the word „love“ is illegitimately used

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<sup>97</sup> *The Sane Society* (1955a), p. 36.

<sup>98</sup> On this, and on the consequences of criticizing a narcissistically oriented individual, see *The Heart of Man* (1964a), pp. 74-77.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>100</sup> While this narcissism is solipsistic and xenophobic, it need not be identical with what is customarily called „egoism,“ for in contrast to narcissism, egoism is not normally blind to objective reality. Quite the contrary, it seeks its advantage by a correct assessment of the claims of others. Cf. *The Heart of Man* (1964a), p. 70, n.9. Similar considerations apply when narcissism is rationalized as a biological function of self-preservation. Cf. *The Heart of Man*, pp. 72f.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. the historical survey in *ibid.*, pp. 78-85.

<sup>102</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 85-87.

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<sup>103</sup> On what follows, cf. especially *Man for Himself* (1947a), pp. 96-107; *The Sane Society* (1955a), pp. 31-34; *The Art of Loving* (1956a).

<sup>104</sup> *Man for Himself* (1947a), pp. 96f.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. what was said above on the concept „productivity,“ p. 34f.

<sup>106</sup> *The Sane Society* (1955a), p. 32.

<sup>107</sup> See p. 36f.



for all manner of inclinations, sympathies, dependencies and obsessions. Yet such misuse should not be taken to mean that every human being does not have the fundamental capacity for productive love, even though „its realization ... is one of the most difficult achievements.“<sup>108</sup> The mere attempt to list the characteristics of such love is beset by difficulties. The essential criteria for productive love are neither its object nor its intensity and quality. Rather, the fundamental elements that are typical of every form of productive love are care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge. They define productive love whether it be the mother's love for her child, the love for humanity, the erotic love between two individuals, the love of one's neighbor or of oneself.<sup>109</sup> „Care and responsibility denote that love is an activity (in the sense of „productive activity“) and {046} not a passion by which one is overcome, nor an 'affect' which one is affected by.“<sup>110</sup> It is the criterion of „responsibility“ that makes it clear that love cannot refer to a duty imposed from without but is rather a response to the expressed and implicit needs of another person, and that it comes from inside.<sup>111</sup>

Care and responsibility then, are indispensable elements of productive love. But love can degenerate into the desire to dominate and the greed to possess unless respect and knowledge of the other

person are also present. Respect is possible only when the loving person is free to see the other as he is in his individuality and uniqueness and neither uses nor exploits him. Respect thus presupposes knowledge of the other. „Knowledge“ here means putting oneself into another's place in order to understand his needs, fears, limits, and capacities.<sup>112</sup>

All four characteristics of productive love are interdependent and determine one another. „They are a syndrome of attitudes which are to be found in the mature person.“<sup>113</sup>

*The capacity for productive thought* that is called reason „enables man to penetrate through the surface and to grasp the essence of his object by getting into active relation with it.“<sup>114</sup> This definition is based on the distinction between reason and intelligence.<sup>115</sup> Whereas intelligence sees things merely as appearance and in terms of their use value, „reason involves a third dimension, that of depth, which reaches to the essence of things and processes.“<sup>116</sup> Penetration of the object means two things: From the point of view of the cognizing subject, it means an interest (in the etymological sense), an existential engagement, and a relating of oneself. It also means, however, that one allows oneself to be determined by the object and its nature so that one may understand its essence, its hidden ramifications, and its deeper meaning. The object is thus not „experienced as something dead and divorced from oneself and one's life... . On the contrary, the subject is intensely interested in his object and the more intimate this relation is, the more fruitful is his thinking.“<sup>117</sup>

Productive thinking (reason) makes objectivity

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<sup>108</sup> *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 98.

<sup>109</sup> Cf. See *ibid.*, p. 98. On the various objects of productive love, cf. Fromm, *The Art of Loving* (1956a): love between parents and child, pp. 32-38; between brothers, pp. 39-41; mother love, pp. 41-44; erotic love, pp. 44-48; love of self, pp. 48-53; love of God, pp. 53-69. These criteria for productive love reveal a fundamental difference from Freud's understanding of love. The libido theory postulates a fixed quantity of energy that can only be used alternatively: „Accordingly, the alternative for a person is to love others and not to love himself, or to love himself and so be selfish and incapable of loving others“ (De la Fuente-Muniz, *Fromm's Approach to the Study of Personality*, p. 11).

<sup>110</sup> *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 98.

<sup>111</sup> Cf. *The Art of Loving* (1956a), pp. 27-28.

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<sup>112</sup> Cf. *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 101; *The Art of Loving* (1956a), pp. 23-27.

<sup>113</sup> *The Art of Loving* (1956a), p. 27. On the distinction between childish and mature love and the development of the capacity for love, cf. *Art of Loving* pp. 32-34.

<sup>114</sup> *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 97. On what follows, *ibid.*, pp. 102-107, and the works listed in note 56.

<sup>115</sup> Cf. note 56.

<sup>116</sup> *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 102.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103.





possible because it combines both the subject's interest in the object and the respect of the thinker for his object. Respect for the object as it is implies that the observer always takes seriously the object in the totality of its appearances and does not isolate individual aspects without {047} seeing the whole (which is what intelligence does). Finally, objectivity, as respect for the object as it is, also means that the cognizing subject becomes aware of the special constellations within which it is interested in the object.<sup>118</sup> „Objectivity does not mean detachment, it means respect.“<sup>119</sup>

It is only under these conditions that productive thinking--reason--can occur. In its specific quality, it corresponds to productive love and productive action. Productive reason and love as expressions and characteristics of productive activity are central concepts in Fromm's characterology, anthropology, religion, and ethics.

### The Affinity and the Blends of the Various Orientations<sup>120</sup>

Our discussion of the various possibilities of orientation in the processes of assimilation and socialization has repeatedly brought out *the affinity of the orientations*. In what follows, these affinities will be set forth schematically.

Figure 1 is based on the preceding explanations and differs in some points from Fromm's in *Man for Himself*.<sup>121</sup> To view the various orientations merely as the dimensions of a person's character

would be to misunderstand Fromm's characterology. The various orientations are the ultimate fundamental tendencies of {048} human relatedness in the sense that an individual's character traits and forms of conduct are largely determined by his underlying orientation. The various orientations are of significance primarily in the investigation of the social character and the factors that determine it.

The listed orientations are to be understood as ideal types in Max Weber's sense. No single orientation ever determines what a person is; in every individual we find a blend of all orientations. The important thing is the relative strength of these orientations and their dominance in an individual or a social group.

We must begin by making a distinction between combinations of nonproductive orientations and those of nonproductive and productive orientations.<sup>122</sup> The former are almost always blends of receptive and exploitative orientations. The conformist (as the passive element) and the necrophilous-destructive orientation (as the active element) also tend to combine. Finally, there is a relatively frequent mixture of hoarding and necrophilous, or narcissistic and necrophilous-destructive, orientations.

Before we explore the combination of nonproductive and productive orientations, we should note that „there is no person whose orientation is entirely productive, and no one who is completely lacking in productiveness.“<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Here Fromm turns against both a subjectivity in which thinking is not controlled by the object, and an objectivity that proposes to exclude all engaged or committed interest. Cf. *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 105.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> On what follows, cf. especially *Man for Himself* (1947a), pp. 78-82, 112-117; and *Social Character in a Mexican Village* (1970b), pp. 77-80.

<sup>121</sup> The modifications of *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 111, are based on conversations with Fromm and are legitimated, in part, by his reflections in *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a), pp. 348f, 462f.

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<sup>122</sup> The affinity of orientations in the processes of assimilation and socialization is not to be understood here as a blend but as the obvious precondition for blends or mixtures, corresponding to the two different possibilities of relatedness to the world.

<sup>123</sup> *Man for Himself* (1947a), p. 113.



FIG. 1  
 Relationship of the Orientations in the Process of Assimilation and Socialization

Orientations	In Assimilation Process	In Socialization Process
nonproductive	receptive -----	masochism
	exploitative -----	oral-sadism
	hoarding -----	anal-sadism
	marketing -----	indifference
	necrophilic-destructive ----	necrophilic-destructiveness (narcissism)
productive	working -----	loving, reasoning

*symbiosis (authoritarian)* (connected to masochism, oral-sadism, anal-sadism)

*withdrawal* (connected to indifference, necrophilic-destructiveness (narcissism))

What is decisive in a given individual is the relative weight of the productive and the nonproductive orientations in his character structure. The weight of the former determines the quality of the latter. In someone who has so little productiveness that his nonproductive orientation predominates, the single most salient nonproductive orientation, with its negative aspects, will become dominant. For example, a person will then think, feel, and act predominantly necrophilously and destructively. But the greater the „weight“ of the productive orientation, the less negative will be the role played by the nonproductive orientation, for every nonproductive orientation has not only the negative aspects we have described but also positive ones that emerge when the productive orientation is dominant. The aggressive component in the exploitative and sadistic orientation, for example,<sup>124</sup> emerges as the positive capacity to seize the initiative. Similarly, the arrogant individual becomes self-confident, the indifferent tolerant, the one-sided intellectual intelligent. Thus are the character traits of an individual determined by the degree of {049} his productive orientation. In addition, a given orienta-

<sup>124</sup> Cf. the extensive tables in *ibid.*, pp. 115f.

tion can be of varying strength, depending on whether one considers the realms of action, feeling, or thinking. „If we add to the picture of personality the different temperaments and gifts, we can easily recognize that the configuration of these basic elements makes for an endless number of variations in personality.“<sup>125</sup>

### The Syndrome of Growth and the Syndrome of Decay<sup>126</sup>

The description of the various character orientations and their affinities and mixtures has demonstrated that though the number of combinatory possibilities is considerable, there are two fundamental tendencies of character orientation: one is directed toward the greatest possible realization of love for life, the other aims at inhibiting life and is destructive in nature. This observation caused Fromm to investigate more closely the presuppositions and conditions for the development of these opposing tendencies, to elucidate the factors that

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. especially *The Heart of Man* (1964a), p. 37-114.



determined their intensity, and to set forth more precisely how these tendencies were correlated. The result of his investigations was the discovery of a syndrome of growth and a syndrome of decay. The latter develops only as a consequence of the failure of the former, which means that the syndrome of growth is prior. Viewed formally, these investigations involve a more precise account of the orientations in the process of socialization and their systematization in two fundamental orientations, the syndrome of growth and the syndrome of decay.

### *Biophilia and Necrophilia and Their Relation to Freud's Eros and Thanatos*

Starting from the observation that everything that lives is governed by the biological principle of growth, Fromm agrees with „the assumption made by many biologists and philosophers that it is an inherent quality of all living substance to live, to preserve its existence,“<sup>127</sup> that is, to fight death. This struggle for existence brings with it reactive aggression when a living being must defend itself in order to survive. But the preservation of existence also means that all living substance has the tendency to integrate and {050} unite. „The cycle of life is that of union, birth, and growth.“<sup>128</sup> Fromm calls this tendency, which also holds for man, biophilia, love for life and the living. „The full unfolding of biophilia is to be found in the productive orientation.“<sup>129</sup> This love for life opposes necrophilia, whose nature and manifestations we have already discussed,<sup>130</sup> and whose essence is the love for everything that is dead and does not grow, everything inorganic, thinglike, mechanical.<sup>131</sup>

Though Fromm's biophilia and necrophilia resemble Freud's Eros and Thanatos, the two theories

differ fundamentally.<sup>132</sup> While agreeing with Freud that the affinity for what is alive and the affinity for what is dead constitute a basic contradiction in man, Fromm does not see this duality as the expression of two equally basic, biologically anchored drives that are relatively constant and fight each other until Thanatos overwhelms Eros. Rather, he posits a duality „between the primary and most fundamental tendency of life--to persevere in life--and its contradiction, which comes into being when man fails in this goal. In this view, the „death instinct“ is a *malignant* phenomenon that grows and takes over to the extent to which Eros does not unfold.“<sup>133</sup> The phenomena that Freud ascribes to the death instinct are thus not part of a primary biological given to which everyone necessarily succumbs but a secondary possibility of psychopathological development that either does not set in at all or never becomes a competing entity if the primary possibility of a love for life develops under the appropriate circumstances.

The essential difference between Freud's and Fromm's understanding is this: In Freud's theory, the strength of Thanatos is constant, and environmental influences can do nothing but direct the death instinct more toward one's own person or toward others. According to Fromm, however, both the development of necrophilia and its intensity depend on nonbiological factors. „The most important condition for the development of the love for life in the child is for him to be with people who love life.“<sup>134</sup> The shaping influence such people have on the child does not so much depend on their express affirmations of a love for life as on their nonverbal and unreflected forms of communication such as gestures and intonation. In other words, they must themselves be biophilous in their character structure if they are to influence the child

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., pp. 46f.

<sup>130</sup> See pp. 33f and 41-43.

<sup>131</sup> Cf. *The Heart of Man* (1964a), pp. 37-45.

<sup>132</sup> On what follows, cf. *ibid.*, pp. 48-55, and *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973a), pp. 439-478, and pp. 23-26 of this text.

<sup>133</sup> *The Heart of Man* (1964a), p. 50.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51. Cf. B. Landis, „Fromm's Theory of Biophilia-Necrophilia.“



in this {051} direction. This fundamental condition implies specific pedagogic postulates such as warmth, heartfelt contact, freedom, protection from threats, and a stimulating life style.<sup>135</sup>

Social conditions also play a decisive role in the growth of biophilia. „Love for life will develop most in a society where there *is*: *security* in the sense that the basic material conditions for a dignified life are not threatened; *justice* in the sense that nobody can be an end for the purposes of another; and *freedom* in the sense that each man has the possibility to be an active and responsible member of society.“<sup>136</sup>

It is these individual and social conditions and not two biological drives inherent in man's nature and strictly determining his development, as Freud thought, that decide whether a person is biophilously or necrophilously oriented.<sup>137</sup>

#### *Narcissism and Incestuous Symbiosis*

We have already discussed narcissism and incestuous symbiosis as orientations in the process of socialization, the latter under the concept of symbiotic relatedness, as masochistic and sadistic orientation.<sup>138</sup> They are decisively important for the progressive or regressive development of the life of an individual or of groups, and for this reason, Fromm made them components of the decay syndrome.

<sup>135</sup> Cf. *The Heart of Man* (1964a), p. 51; *Foreword* (1960e); *Essay* (1970i).

<sup>136</sup> *The Heart of Man* (1964a), pp. 52f. On the relation of the necrophilous and biophilous orientation to Freud's anal and genital character, see *ibid.*, pp. 53-55. Concerning the social conditions for a necrophilous character development in our present industrial society, see *ibid.*, pp. 55-61.

<sup>137</sup> *The Heart of Man* (1964a), pp. 52f. On the relation of the necrophilous and biophilous orientation to Freud's anal and genital character, see *ibid.*, pp. 53-55. Concerning the social conditions for a necrophilous character development in our present industrial society, see *ibid.*, pp. 55-61. See p. 26.

<sup>138</sup> See pp. 37-45.

An adult is narcissistic because his development from the so-called primary narcissism of the small child to that object relatedness that first makes possible man's productive relatedness to nature, others, and himself did not proceed as it should have.<sup>139</sup> The extreme forms of narcissism are rare. Instead, it appears in many shadings, from markedly malignant, solipsistic forms to less malignant ones in which it is coupled with productive activity, even including the capacity for love of one's neighbor, of strangers, or of humanity in general.<sup>140</sup> Ontogenetically and phylogenetically, the intensity of individual or social narcissism is the measure of regression to earlier developmental levels. Love of one's neighbor or of humanity, on the other hand, is the expression of progression and of the overcoming of individual and social narcissism. In its malignant forms, narcissism thus works against life and growth and for destruction and death, and is therefore an essential component of the syndrome of decay. {052}

Similar considerations apply to the final orientation, incestuous symbiosis,<sup>141</sup> which derives from an incestuous fixation. But Fromm's interpretation goes beyond the one Freud advanced in connection with the Oedipus complex. While every child experiences incestuous wishes, they are not primarily the result of sexual desires nor are they tied to a specific--the oedipal--phase of libido development; instead, they „constitute one of the most fundamental tendencies in man: the wish to remain tied to an all-protective figure, the fear of being free, and the fear of being destroyed by mother, the very figure with whom he has made himself helpless.“<sup>142</sup> „Mother“ here must be understood literally, for genetically, the mother is the first personification of the power that protects and guarantees safety. In the course of psychic development, „mother“ is supplemented and supplanted by motherly elements such as family, clan, blood, na-

<sup>139</sup> Cf. pp. 43-45.

<sup>140</sup> Cf. *The Heart of Man* (1964a), p. 77.

<sup>141</sup> On the following, cf. *ibid.*, pp. 95-108.

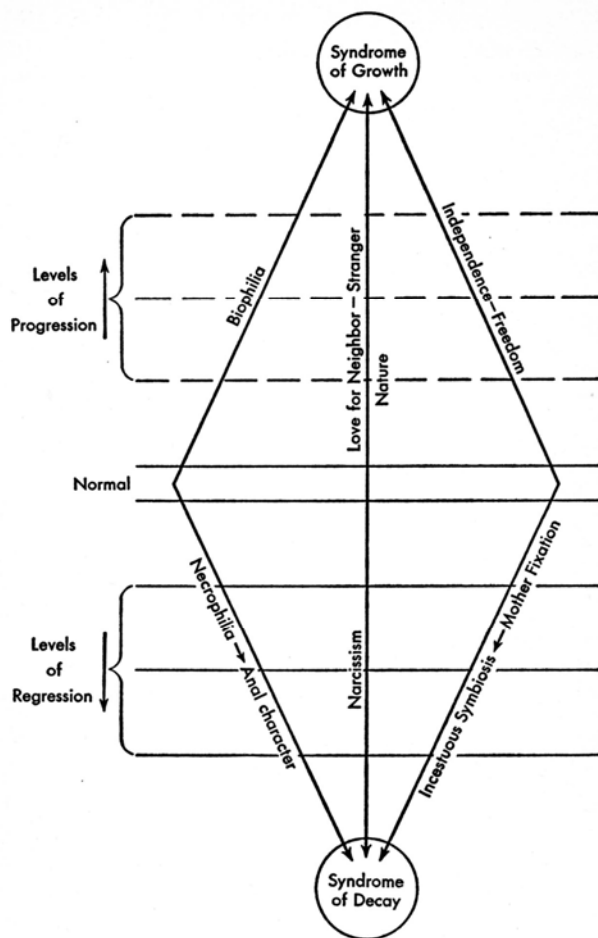
<sup>142</sup> *Social Character in a Mexican Village* (1970b), p. 77.



tion, church, political party, or--archaically--nature, earth, the sea. Every individual has the tendency to remain tied to a motherlike person or an equivalent, and this tendency conflicts with his more fundamental tendency to be born, to develop, to grow. If this tendency to develop fails, the regres-

incestuous tie to the mother implies not only love and security but usually also anxiety, which results from dependence and lack of freedom, especially when the „mother“ herself is necrophilously oriented.

To what extent ties to the mother are benign or malignant depends on the degree of regression. Malignant ties that prevent the individual from fulfilling his task of becoming independent are called incestuous symbiosis by Fromm.<sup>144</sup> In the most extreme regressive form, the unconscious longs for a return to the womb in order to recover total harmony with nature, even though this means the surrender of individuality and the desire to live.



*The Convergence Within the Syndromes of Growth and Decay and the Correlation of the Syndromes*<sup>145</sup>

The more malignant the components of the syndrome of decay--necrophilia, narcissism, and incestuous symbiosis--the more readily they merge, while in less malignant forms they can be distinguished from one another, and, in fact, often occur in isolation in a given individual. Still, the more archaic the form of any one such orientation in the syndrome of decay, and the greater the regression, the more all three orientations will fuse in a syndrome of decay that will determine the individual so completely as to shape his entire personality.<sup>146</sup>

sive tendency of symbiotic relatedness will prevail and become the source of hatred, destructiveness, and irrationality, as well as the basis for both the sadistic and the masochistic orientations.<sup>143</sup> For the

racter in a Mexican Village (19706), Fromm writes: „The patriarchal equivalent of fixation to mother, the obedient submission to father, has similar effects, although it seems that the depth and intensity of the fixation to or fear of the mother is greater. In fact, there are many clinical reasons for the assumption that submission to father is an attempt to escape the incestuous regression.“ Cf. *The Heart of Man* (1964a), p. 103.

<sup>144</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 100-102.

<sup>145</sup> On what follows, cf. *ibid.*, pp. 108-114.

<sup>146</sup> In contrast to Freud's view that the most abnormal orientation exists where the individual regresses to the earliest phase of libidinal development, Fromm's clinical observations led him to believe that the degree

<sup>143</sup> Cf. *The Heart of Man* (1964a), pp. 107f. In *Social Cha-*



Conversely, if an individual advances to biophilia, to love of neighbor and stranger, these orientations converge in a syndrome of growth that represents the greatest plenitude and productivity of human life.

The more markedly the orientations converge in a syndrome, the more they exclude one another. An individual with a growth syndrome will therefore be incapable of relating necrophilously, narcissistically, or symbiotically to others. The person with a decay syndrome will be incapable of exhibiting aspects of the growth syndrome in his relationships. But although one syndrome excludes the

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of pathology does not depend on the evolutionary phase of libido development. Human beings can regress to the pathological on *every level* of development; the degree of pathology depends only on the degree of regression within a given orientation. On this, cf. *ibid.*, pp. 111-113.

other, it is nonetheless true that the decay syndrome is the result of a growth syndrome that primordially characterizes man but failed to develop. As early as 1941, Fromm recognized {054} that „the amount of destructiveness to be found in individuals is proportionate to the amount to which expansiveness of life is curtailed“ and that destructiveness is „the outcome of unlived life.“<sup>147</sup> The thesis regarding the correlation of destructiveness and the unfolding of life he put forward at that time also applies to the other orientations and to the growth and decay syndromes themselves. Fromm’s summary of his thesis is shown in schematic form in figure 2.<sup>148</sup> {055}

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<sup>147</sup> *Escape from Freedom* (1941a), pp. 183f.

<sup>148</sup> *The Heart of Man* (1964a), p. 114. See the last part of this study for an elaboration of the biophilia-necrophilia alternative and of the growth and decay syndromes in the having and being modes.

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