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Erich Fromm's *The Art of Loving*: An Existential, Psychodynamic, and Theological Critique

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Abstract

This thesis responds to the account of the practice of love developed by Erich Fromm, arguing that Fromm's work can be critiqued by an approach to love which pays deeper attention to our concrete situation. Based on Fromm's own approach to our existential situation, I develop a critique consistently based on the psychodynamic processes of repression and transference, as well as the embodied, finite, intersubjective, and interpretative dimensions of life. This takes place through dialogue with aspects of Fromm's own work, as well as a variety of perspectives from psychotherapy, theology, and philosophy. Following an introduction explaining my method and sources, and also containing a brief account of Fromm's life and works, the first chapter frames Fromm's account of love by summarising the structure of his early texts. Focusing particularly on his theory of the recovery of our lost natural harmony through the full development of our potentialities, this chapter prepares the ground for an extended consideration of Fromm's *The Art of Loving*. In the second chapter, I discuss most of the main themes from *The Art of Loving*, focusing on love as a gift of self, an active power, an attitude towards the whole world, and as answer to the problem of human existence. The chapter also introduces the first of Fromm's elements of love, namely care and responsibility, before arguing that his account of repression, alienation, transference, and narcissism, are important for this focus on love as a gift of self. The second chapter also begins the discussion of embodiment, primarily drawing on the work of Alexander Lowen to argue for a somatic or organic critique of Fromm's theory. The third chapter focus on the other elements of love according to Fromm: the respect that enables pure sight, and the knowledge that penetrates to the core of the other. This chapter then responds to the work of Jean-Luc Marion, by arguing for a phenomenological reduction based on the potential for repression and transference to distort perception. This psychodynamic reduction is then situated in the context of the dynamic approach to psychology that permeates Fromm's work, arguing for transference to be construed as a process of discovery and transformation. The fourth chapter explores Fromm's account of the love of God, drawing on the work of Ana-Maria Rizzuto to argue that Fromm's approach should be revised to account both for the concrete development of concepts of God, and the importance of unconscious concepts. The chapter continues by discussing the ramifications of Fromm's view of an expanded or universal self (in other texts) for the theory of self in *The Art of Loving*, arguing that this latter self is alienated from its origin and source of activity, in dialogue with the tantric theology of Sally Kempton. Finally, the fifth chapter has an inverse emphasis, exploring how our repressive processes must be understood in the context of the presence and absence of

love, rather than how love is inhibited by repression. This primarily takes place through dialogue with the intersubjective psychoanalysis of Robert Stolorow and George Atwood, and critiques Fromm's work through the emphasis on the importance of relational context for our emotional and cognitive life. Fromm's work, however, is also shown to have a deep sensitivity to the intersubjective development of our powers, balancing a more emphatic and consistent stress on independence with a lesser but still clear attention to interdependence. Finally, in my conclusion I explore the ramifications of Fromm's seemingly contradictory claims that love is rooted both in the need of the giver and the need of the recipient, arguing for a phenomenological approach that accounts for the particularity and multiplicity of our experience of worlds. I ultimately insist that love is always conditional, although based on the limitations of our own finitude rather than any lack in others. Endorsing both the coherence and flexibility of Fromm's approach, I nonetheless maintain that the power to love is irreducibly contextual and particular, and that a genuinely existential interpretation of the practice of love will therefore be based on plurality, wisdom, and freedom.

Contents

Abstract 2

Acknowledgements 8

0.Introduction: Erich Fromm, Existence and *The Art of Loving* 9

0.1 Outline of the Aim of Thesis 9

0.2 Brief Biography and Summary of Fromm's Main Texts 12

0.2.1 Early Years and Encounters with the Irrational 12

0.2.2 Rabbinical Roots 13

0.2.3 Student in Heidelberg and Doctor of Sociology 14

0.2.4 Salman Rabinkow and Hasidism 15

0.2.5 Frieda Fromm-Reichmann and Psychoanalysis 17

0.2.6 Institute for Social Research, and Integration of Marx and Freud 19

0.2.7 Split with the Institute and Rejection of Drive Theory 21

0.2.8 Public Psychoanalyst and *The Fear of Freedom* 24

0.2.9 New York, and *Man for Himself* 27

0.2.10 Mexico City and *The Sane Society* 28

0.2.11 Annis Freeman and *The Art of Loving* 29

0.2.12 Peace Activism, *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism*, *Marx's Concept of Man* and *Beyond the Chains of Illusion*. 30

0.2.13 *The Heart of Man*, *You Shall Be as Gods*, *The Revolution of Hope*, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* 30

0.2.14 *To Have or To Be*, *Greatness and Limitations of Freud's Thought*, Illness and Death 31

0.3 Review of Secondary Literature on Fromm 32

0.4 Approaching the Theory of Love 43

0.5 Content and Method of the Thesis 44

Chapter One: The Existential Conditions of Love 48

1.1 The Original Harmony 48

1.2 Individuation 51

1.3 The Existential Situation 53

1.4 Existential Needs 56

1.4.1 Relatedness (Narcissism) 57

1.4.2 Transcendence (Creativeness/Destructiveness) 57

1.4.3 Rootedness (Brotherliness/Incest) 58

1.4.4 Identity (Individuality/Herd Conformity) 60

1.4.5 Frame of Orientation and Devotion (Reason/Irrationality) 61

1.5 Character 62

1.6 Regressive Solutions 66

1.7 Progressive/Productive Solutions 67

1.8 A New Harmony 71
1.9 Psychotherapy in Early Texts, and Primary/Secondary Potentialities 73
1.10 Conclusion: Harmony Reconsidered 75
Chapter Two: The Bio-energetic Conditions of Love 80
2.1 Love and the Total Personality 80
2.2 Love Stratified 81
2.3 Love: Inimical Attitudes 82
2.4 Love: The Answer to the Problem of Human Existence 83
2.5 Love: Activity Ordered towards Interpersonal Union 84
2.6 Love: A Basic Orientation Towards the World 87
2.7 Love: Giving of Self 89
2.8 Love: Care and Responsibility 90
2.9 Alienation, Repression, Narcissism, Transference. 92
2.10 Alienation 93
2.11 Repression 94
2.12 Narcissism 96
2.13 Transference 98
2.14 R.D. Laing: Divided Selves and Alienated Bodies 99
2.15 Alexander Lowen and Bioenergetics 103
2.15.1 Repression and Chronic Muscular Contractions 103
2.15.2 Character and Body 107
2.15.3 Spontaneity and Self-Expression 110
2.16 Conclusion: (Dis)Embodiment and *The Art of Loving* 111
Chapter Three: The Perceptual Conditions of Love 115
3.1 Introduction 115
3.2 The Art of Loving: Respect 115
3.3 Knowledge 117
3.3.1. Respect as non-conceptual knowledge 117
3.3.2 Knowledge: Our Ultimate Dynamism 119
3.3.3 Knowledge: Erotic and Brotherly Love 120
3.4. Transference in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* 125
3.5 W.R.D. Fairbairn: Repression and Inner Objects 127
3.6 Transference: A Mirror of the Inner World 130
3.6.1 Transference as a Mirror of the Inner World 131
3.6.2 Transference as Unconscious Organizing Template and Pattern of Behaviour 131
3.6.3 Transference as the Re-experience of Emotion 132
3.6.4 Transference as an Interpretative Interruption of Adult Relationships 133
3.6.5 Transference as the Past Alive in the Present 133

3.6.6 The Motive of Transference....134
3.7 Transference and Givenness in Jean-Luc Marion....137
3.7.1 Marion's Critique of Metaphysics....138
3.7.2 The Reduction to Givenness....139
3.7.3 The Erotic Reduction....139
3.7.4 The Intentionality of Love....141
3.7.5 Givenness and Interpretation....142
3.7.6 Givenness and the Hermeneutics of Transference....143
3.8 Conclusion: A Psychodynamic Reduction, and a Dialectic of Love and Transference....144
Chapter Four: The Theological Conditions of Love....148
4.1 God and the Existential Situation....148
4.1.1 Theology and Character....149
4.1.2 From Totemism to God the Father....149
4.1.3 Mature Theology: Negation and Symbolism....151
4.1.4 Negative Theology and Non-Theistic Negation: Transcendence and Humanism....153
4.1.5 Concepts of God and Human Empowerment....154
4.2 The Symbolic God and The Expanded Self....155
4.2.1 *Psychoanalysis and Religion*: Authoritarian and Humanistic Religion....156
4.2.2 *Psychoanalysis and Religion*: From Repression to Unity....156
4.2.3 *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism*: Repression and Relation....158
4.2.4 *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism*: Self and the Subject/Object Split....159
4.2.5 Reason in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* and *Man for Himself*....159
4.2.6 Self as Part of the Whole in *The Fear of Freedom* and *Psychoanalysis and Religion*....160
4.2.7 Harmony and Agency in *The Fear of Freedom* and *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* 161
4.3 The Concrete God-Concept....162
4.4 Psychoanalysis and the God-Representation: Ana-Maria Rizzuto....164
4.5 Idolatry in Erich Fromm and Jean-Luc Marion.....166
4.5.1 Idol and Icon in Marion....166
4.5.2 Idolatry in Fromm....167
4.5.3 Complementary Approaches to Idolatry in Fromm and Marion....168
4.6 Unconscious Gods, Negative Theology, and the Icon-Self....168
4.7 The Idolatrous Self in *The Art of Loving*....170
4.8 Fromm's Divine Feminine and the Ground of Potency....173
4.8.1 Towards a Revised Approach to Power, and Divine Power....173
4.8.2 Sally Kempton, *Awakening Shakti*, and Fromm's Divine Feminine....174
4.8.3 Shakti as Source of Power of Being and Acting....175
4.8.4 Shakti as Energetic Ground....175
4.8.5 Relating to the Ground of Love....176

4.9 Conclusion: Active Love, Individuation, and Universe. 177
Chapter Five: The Intersubjective Conditions of Love 181
5.1 Love: the Intersubjective Context of Repression and Expression 181
5.2 Intersubjective Psychoanalysis in Robert Stolorow and George Atwood 182
5.2.1. The Experiential World of the Subject 183
5.2.2. The Intersubjective Context of Development 186
5.2.3 Psychotherapy as Restorative: Being Therapeutic 193
5.3 Love and Interdependence in Fromm: The Formative Years 195
5.3.1 Primary Potentialities: Love and Destructiveness 195
5.3.2 Dynamic Adaptation, and Freedom from Primary Ties 197
5.3.3. Maternal Love and Faith 199
5.3.4. Personalism in Family and Society 203
5.3.5 Social Filters 205
5.3.6 Parental Love and Conscience 207
5.4 Love, the Intersubjective Context of Awareness and Expression 209
5.4.1. Psychotherapy and Self-development 209
5.4.2. The Qualities of the Therapist 210
5.4.3 Central Relatedness and the Therapeutic Way of Being 212
5.5 Self-Love, Self-Awareness, Self-Analysis: The Intrapersonal Context of Growth 215
5.6 Conclusion: Relational Drives and Fluid Worlds 217
6. Conclusion: Love, Existence, and Wisdom 221
6.1 Summary of Thesis 221
6.2 Simon May's Types of Love 222
6.3 Unconditional Love as Secularised Theology 222
6.4 *The Art of Loving* and May's First Five Types 223
6.5 *The Art of Loving* and Secularized Agape 224
6.6 Existential and Psychodynamic Conditions of the Power to Love 225
6.7 Love and Need 229
6.8 Need and Phenomenology 230
6.9 The Flexibility of *The Art of Loving* 232
6.10 The Coherence of *The Art of Loving* 233
6.11 Phenomenology and the Psychodynamics of Need 235
6.12 Love, Unity, and Practical Wisdom 236
6.13 Existence, Psychodynamics, and *The Art of Loving* 238
List of References 240

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0.Introduction: Erich Fromm, Existence and *The Art of Loving*

0.1 Outline of the Aim of Thesis

If, as Erich Fromm asserts, love is the most fitting response to the human existential situation, then our concept of love will be framed by our understanding of "the problem of human existence." ([1956] 1995, 6) In this thesis, I will argue that the theory of love found in Fromm's *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995) can be critiqued through an approach to existence which is more concrete than Fromm's, and one which considers a variety of ways in which our capacity to love can be limited. This project draws on Fromm's *The Revision of Psychoanalysis* (1992), where he argues that the psychoanalytic theory and practice of Sigmund Freud should be subject to a "dialectical revision" (20) of the philosophical foundation through Fromm's own humanistic philosophy.[1] The sense in which Fromm's thought is humanist will emerge throughout the text, but it is important to state from the outset that his humanism revolves around the development of the powers of intellect, will, emotion, and sense, and liberation from impediments to their use. In this context, Fromm's revised psychoanalysis focuses on how our powers or dynamisms tend towards relation with others and with nature, rather than towards the mere mechanical release and satisfaction of the sexual instinct. The importance of this claim for the present project lies simply in the possibility that Fromm's own approach to love can be subject to an existential critique that draws on Fromm's own work and on a variety of other sources, in order to see how the theory and practice of love is rooted in the concrete human situation. Such a project could, of course, proceed in any number of ways, relative to how we construe the central aspects of the human situation, and my own approach will focus on embodied finitude (encompassing spatiality, temporality, energy, contingency, and particularity), inter-subjectivity, and the interpretational world.[2]

[1] Fromm (1992, 20) states that this concerns Freud's theories of drives, the unconscious, society, sexuality, the body, and psychoanalytic therapy.

[2] A phenomenology of any of these areas could be developed in detail, but here I can merely elaborate some of the implications of each for Fromm's theory of love.

As well as these components of existence, my approach is also psychodynamic, as it is concerned with a variety of ways in which repression can inhibit the capacity to love.[3] In the context of this project, 'psychodynamic' refers to the claim that there are dynamisms or strivings that motivate our activity, and that some of these can be repressed or unconscious. Since Fromm depicts love as a way of relating to others and to the world, this psychodynamic critique is ultimately an exploration of the impact of repression upon relationship. As well as involving conversation with other sources to both critique and amplify Fromm's approach, this entails that *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995) be situated in the context of his own more detailed and developed subsequent works. Within the context of this thesis, Fromm's approach to love is primarily described, contextualised, and critiqued, rather than defended. However, in my conclusion I will refer to other approaches from the history of the theory of love to consider how Fromm's view either contrasts with or complements these. In developing and critiquing some of the claims in *The Art of Loving* with a more concrete view of human existence, my aim is to argue that love should be conceived as conditional, measured by our situation in all its finitude and particular limitations. As well as this focus on concrete conditions, the project is existential in terms of the selection of some of its sources. Being partly rooted in my own experience of repressing and relating, my method is largely informed by texts that I found to have had the most impact on my own capacities and understanding, primarily Fromm himself, R.D. Laing ([1960] 2010), Alexander Lowen ([1975] 1994), Ana-Maria Rizzuto (1979), and Robert Stolorow and George Atwood (2014).

That Fromm's own approach was dialectical suggests that his humanistic revision of psychoanalysis is both informed by and informs humanism. Whilst there is definite scope to argue this based on Fromm's whole body of work, it is not explicit in *The Revision of Psychoanalysis* (1992) itself. Moreover, my own aim is to use a variety of sources to simply critique and inform Fromm. Since dialectic would generally imply two poles that critique one another and were eventually blended, applying it to my own project would be both too rigid and too ambitious. Instead, I will apply a more conversational approach, simply proposing a number of other writers and concepts, and exploring how they might

[3] Although never stating this explicitly, Fromm himself seems to use dynamism, motivation, drive, need, and striving interchangeably, whereas I will generally prefer dynamism. Psychodynamic psychotherapy will often also pay sustained attention to the idea of stages in the development of the psyche, and particularly on how these can be arrested. For an account of psychodynamic psychotherapy in this developmental sense see Jacobs (1998), Leiper and Maltby (2004), or Bateman, Brown, and Pedder (2010).

make Fromm's theory more rooted in the conditions of life.[4] This will be primarily through sources from psychology, philosophy, and theology, but since the intention in each case is to illuminate how love is ineluctably rooted in somatic, relational, and interpretative context, it is an existential rather than a dialectical critique. Finally, the choice of sources for this simply arises from what I understand to be existential limitations to Fromm's approach, and the application of some perspectives that I have found to be illuminating ways of reframing his depiction of the power to love with more attention to the concrete.

Finally, having spoken above about the existential and psychodynamic content of the thesis, the question also arises as to how it is theological, philosophical, and psychological. Firstly, given the importance of the practice of love in theology and religion, I would argue that any approach which attempts to explore and re-imagine the foundation of our power to love has at least some implicit relevance. Secondly, Chapter Four will focus explicitly on the theological content of Fromm's work, arguing for the central importance of repression in the way we approach both God and cosmos. In the same chapter, I will also draw on the interpretation of the divine feminine in the work of Sally Kempton (2013) to critique Fromm's approach to human power. With regard to philosophy, in addition to the existential content of the thesis, it can be said to be philosophical in the same way that Fromm's work can, since it develops an understanding of human personhood and of our relations to others and to nature. This involves attention to themes like knowledge, power, and self, although the point of departure always remains with Fromm's own approach rather than through any other philosophical method or text. Concerning psychology, the thesis again draws on a number of perspectives from psychotherapeutic writings employed in critique of Fromm, rather than developing any method or theory of psychology as an empirical science or as psychotherapy or psychoanalysis as a practice (see Section 0.5).[5]

[4] This conversational approach also applies to my references to a variety of psychological or psychotherapeutic schools or approaches, since I will merely seek to explore how Fromm's work can be critiqued or contextualised through these rather than evaluate them in themselves.

[5] This invites the question as to whether this primarily involves psychology, psychoanalysis, psychotherapy, or psychodynamics. From now on I will primarily use 'psychotherapy' or 'psychodynamic' when referring to my critique, since my sources could all be referred to as psychotherapeutic and Fromm's own concern is with the dynamics of the psyche. This will avoid confusion with psychoanalysis as a specific approach to psychotherapy and with psychology as an empirical science, even if Fromm or my other sources refer to either of these from time to time. Sections considering Fromm's encounter with Freud will continue to refer to psychoanalysis.

0.2 Brief Biography and Summary of Fromm's Main Texts

0.2.1 Early Years and Encounters with the Irrational

Fromm's life has recently been described in great detail in both Rainer Funk's *Erich Fromm: His Life and Ideas* (2000), and Laurence Friedman's *Love's Prophet: The Lives of Erich Fromm* (2013).[6] Since it is the more recent and more critical text, I will primarily base this brief biography on Friedman, with additional recourse to a biographical chapter in Kieran Durkin's *The Radical Humanism of Erich Fromm* (2014) as well as a timeline in Lawrence Wilde's *Erich Fromm and the Quest for Solidarity* (2004).

Fromm was born in 1900, in the cultural and intellectual epicentre of Frankfurt-am-Main, into an orthodox Jewish family with prominent rabbinical heritage on the paternal side. Friedman situates Fromm's early years within the contrast between Jewish tradition and scholarship, on the one hand, and the developing capitalist economy, on the other, with Fromm feeling altogether at home in neither but preferring the atmosphere and possibilities of the former. Fromm was also often caught in the middle of his parents, the "neurotic unevenness" of his father, Naphtali Fromm, and "the smothering possessiveness" (Friedman 2013, 6) of his mother Rosa Krause. Friedman argues that they "had a strained relationship," to such an extent that Fromm "sometimes speculated that his presence may have held a bad marriage together." (5) Nonetheless, Fromm had a variety of family members who introduced him to cultural, religious, and intellectual interests that would remain with him throughout his life, and an eclectic education that helps account for the interdisciplinary range and synthetic aims of his own writing (4-8).

Devoted to his education, Fromm was intensely curious and highly capable. He particularly enjoyed law, ethics, and philosophy, and initially had such an interest in Jewish Scripture and law that he envisaged training as a Rabbi. Another important influence was Naphtali Fromm's co-worker, Oswald Sussman, who lived in the Fromm household for two years, and who took a "direct personal interest in [Fromm's] well-being." (Friedman 2013, 8) Sussman introduced the young Fromm to Karl Marx and to

[6] Funk is useful for providing more of Fromm's own personal perspective on his life, work, and influences, from written and oral sources.

other early works of socialism, thereby stoking his burgeoning interest in the political and social problems of his world and introducing him to the questions that would mark all of his life and works (8). As well as this theoretical interest, two events in Fromm's life made this focus on the world more urgent and excruciating, sowing the seeds of his enduring interest in the roots of dependency, death, and destructiveness.

First, he was deeply troubled and moved by a family friend who took her own life after the death of her father, leaving Fromm perplexed as to how a beautiful and talented young painter would consider life unliveable without her parent. Although he had not yet encountered Freudian psychoanalysis at that time, he would later find the account of the Oedipus complex a lens through which to view parental fixation, even if he eventually insisted upon a humanist revision. Secondly, Fromm recalls the outbreak of war in 1914, and his shock at the fanatical nationalism in his school. He was particularly struck at how both students and teachers lost any conviction regarding peace and human dignity, displaying a completely partisan view which absolved his own country of any blame. Finding only one sober and realistic teacher amid the jubilance, the sight of the relentless thirst for death shaped Fromm's lifelong exploration of how humans could be consumed by irrationality and destructiveness, as well as his enduring hunger for peace and international fraternity (Friedman 2013, 8-10).

0.2.2 Rabbinical Roots

Around this time, Fromm also encountered Rabbi Nehemiah Nobel, a decisive influence on his personal and intellectual development. Nobel introduced Fromm to the "universal code of ethics" found in the writings of Hermann Cohen, and Friedman maintains that this became the "bedrock of Fromm's thought." (Friedman 2013, 10)[7] Kieran Durkin argues for the centrality of Cohen in Fromm's development in a number of areas that would later be central to his thought: the importance of the prophetic tradition; the concept of history as a teleological process shaped by rational human activity; the importance of moral knowledge both in our knowledge of the essence of humanity and in religion; and the negative theology that would later ground Fromm's critique of traditional religion (2014,

[7] Cohen's thought is primarily expressed in his *Religion of Reason: Out of the Sources of Judaism* ([1919] 1995)

46-47). Durkin suggests that Fromm's own prophetic and utopian focus "in the first instance owes a debt to the thought of Hermann Cohen." (46) Although other writers have argued that Fromm's interest in historical dialectic primarily originates in the tradition of Hegel, Feuerbach, and Marx, Durkin speculates that it may also be rooted in Cohen's interpretation of creation as teleological. In addition, he suggests that Fromm's own account of human exile and return could be construed as a philosophical and dialectical rendering of his early study of Cohen (217n.4). Whilst this is impossible to verify, it is nonetheless important for my own approach, which focuses on how the dynamic approach to humanity that emerges out of this account of exile and return shapes Fromm's approach to love and can ultimately ground a critique of it.

In addition to introducing him to the rational religion and philosophy of history found in Cohen, Friedman argues that Nobel also helped Fromm to discover the Hasidic mystical tradition, both deepening his understanding of the prophets and shaping his understanding of the importance of the practice of love, justice, and humility. There was, however, an early struggle developing in Fromm between the Zionist ideals of Nobel and the universalism and humanism that Cohen argued were central to the teaching of the prophets and which precluded partisan nationalism. This was the first sign of the later contrast between humanistic and authoritarian religion which provides the framework for Fromm's *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (1950) and *You Shall Be as Gods* (1967). Around 1919, Fromm's relationship with Nobel also led to the formation of a "circle of young enthusiasts," (Friedman 2013, 11) involving Fromm and his friends Leo Löwenthal and Ernst Simon, as well as the young philosopher Franz Rosenzweig, and Gershom Scholem. This group was particularly important in Fromm's development, allowing him to participate in a creative environment and develop his passion for communication and study. In his 1922 obituary for Nobel, Fromm testified to the importance of Nobel's insistence on the bond of love and of his love for his students (see Friedman 2013, 10-12).

0.2.3 Student in Heidelberg and Doctor of Sociology

In 1918, Fromm began studying jurisprudence at Frankfurt University, but his desire to study the Talmud meant that he sought a move to Lithuania. With this being refused by his parents, Fromm instead moved to the University of Heidelberg in 1919. After an initial trial semester in jurisprudence he realised that his interests were broader, and took courses

in "medieval German history, the theory of Marxism, social movements, and the history of psychology." (Friedman 2013, 12)[8] Friedman states that Fromm also developed "a strong interest in Buddhist thought and began privately practicing Tai Chi and meditation," (12) all of which would be important throughout his life and feature in the posthumously published *The Art of Being* (Fromm [1993] 2007). This period was also important because Fromm ultimately transferred to the "department of national economy, with a specialty under Alfred Weber in sociology." (Friedman 2013, 12) This was pivotal for Fromm's view of life and his academic method, particularly in light of Weber's "commitment to universal humanism" (12) and his attention to the relationship between individual and society. Here Fromm's early interest in history and society, nurtured by the nature of his personal relationships, found fertile ground resulting a sustained period of productive study, during which he wrote a doctoral dissertation "on the function of Jewish law in maintaining social cohesion and continuity in three Diaspora communities." (13)[9]

0.2.4 Salman Rabinkow and Hasidism

Upon Fromm's defence of his dissertation and the subsequent award of the doctorate, Weber encouraged him to pursue an academic career, but Fromm felt that this would not suit his range of interests. Friedman attributes this in part to Fromm's relationship with the second major Rabbinical influence of his formative years, Rabbi Salman Baruch Rabinkow. As well as being another socialist presence, Rabinkow's primary importance for Fromm's intellectual development lies in the reading of the Talmud, and the "emphasis on the deeper psychological and spiritual truths inherent within its unifying themes." (Friedman, 2013, 15) This would remain important throughout Fromm's life, in particular in his interpretation of the exile from and return to the Garden of Eden as a humanist allegory depicting the emergence of human freedom and our quest for harmony with nature ([1941] 2001, 28). Friedman also comments that Rabinkow taught Fromm that Habad Hasidism "was a populist reaction against the legalism and rationalism of the rabbinic

[8] A more detailed account of Fromm's studies is given in Funk (2000, 50-58).

[9] Friedman also states that Weber insisted that Fromm master the works of Wilhelm Dilthey. The possibility, however, that Dilthey's interpretative approach to the human sciences might have been a significant influence on Fromm's later emphasis on empathy and of the important of a psychotherapist discovering within themselves the whole range of human experience seems to have escaped the attention of Fromm's commentators. I discuss the importance of empathy in Fromm's approach to therapy in Section 5.4, and the significance of Dilthey in psychotherapy appears in the intersubjective approach of Donna Orange (2009, 26, 47, 103f) as well as my own account of Robert Stolorow and George Atwood (2014) in Chapter Five.

orthodoxy," (Friedman 2013, 15) which points to Fromm's enduring interest in mysticism).[10] In his exploration of the roots of Fromm's "radical humanism," Durkin argues that, while Fromm wrote little about Hasidism, the many similarities between Hasidic thought and Fromm's own suggests a deep and pervasive connection (2014, 48).

The most salient of these connections is the idea that "Hasidism conceives the task of man as the direction of the whole inner purpose towards the restitution of the original harmony disturbed by the […] creation of the cosmos." (Durkin, 2014, 48) The emphasis on harmony will of central importance in this thesis, as will the stress on the place of the will in developing this harmony and the radical independence to which it is said to lead. Generally, Durkin argues that this period with Rabinkow was highly significant in the development of Fromm's interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures as revolutionary texts. This interpretation involves an understanding of humanity as open-ended and evolving, and of the texts as narratives which communicate the importance of human liberation from the bonds of idolatry. Fromm's understanding of idolatry was developing in a humanist direction, and ultimately centred around the process of surrendering our powers and avoiding, or fleeing from, freedom. Whilst this can also be found in Hegel and Marx, Durkin argues that having studied Hasidism and the Prophets with Rabinkow was the most significant factor in Fromm's understanding of idolatry, with his later encounters with German philosophy providing the conceptual ground for informing this understanding with humanistic and social analysis (2014, 48-52). Friedman also reports that Fromm himself wrote of Rabinkow as his most important and enduring influence, even given that Fromm would later transpose the Jewish content into a general humanist framework (2013, 18).

[10] The question of mysticism is a complex one, given Fromm's own use of the term and the variety of ways in which it has been used to refer to practices and experiences across a wide range of traditions. The main difficulty in Fromm is how the integrity of the individuated self endures throughout the experience of unity with the All, Universe, or One, contrasted with any view in which mystical love or union involves the annihilation of the ego or self. A full response to the problem would turn on how ego and self are distinguished in Fromm. Whilst there is no sustained discussion of how these terms relate, Fromm maintains that the powers of the self should be developed and preserved even in mysticism, but that egotistical traits must be eradicated (1950, 96ff). Whether the development of selfhood is consistent with mystical practice is clearly a question for a different thesis, and can be viewed from a wide range of perspectives. My own discussion of Fromm's use of mysticism is found in Sections 3.3.3, 4.1.3, 4.2, and 4.6. A brief account of the breadth of Fromm's study of mysticism and of the importance of the theme of unity is found in Funk (2000, 134f).

0.2.5 Frieda Fromm-Reichmann and Psychoanalysis

I have gone to some length to describe the period from 1918-1922 since we find here the majority of the most important themes in Fromm's work, from his interest in destructiveness, death, and irrationality; to the importance of history, society, and the rational and ethical power of humanity; as well as, finally, the "religio-philosophical humanism" (Durkin 2014, 2, 14) in which Fromm's thought is embedded. This latter aspect also illustrates how Fromm's work is grounded in the psychology of mysticism, primarily in the concept of an exiled humanity perpetually yearning for home and a return to a harmonious union with nature. This is important since it contests the widely held consensus that Fromm is primarily a psychoanalytic thinker. At the same time, as we shall see, it indicates certain areas in Fromm's work which may be vulnerable to criticism, given his insistence on need and harmony. This period, however, is prior to what would be Fromm's main profession and the aspect of his approach for which he is nonetheless best known: the psychoanalytic.

It was not until his relationship with, and subsequent marriage to, Frieda Reichman that Fromm would both undergo psychoanalysis and begin his own psychoanalytic training. Originally training in medicine and psychiatry, Reichman "had a training analysis with Hanns Sachs, a member of Freud's inner circle, in Berlin, and became a practicing psychoanalyst as well as a psychiatrist." (Friedman 2013, 19; see also Funk 2000, 61ff) Although Fromm had met Reichman in Frankfurt around 1917, it was not until he went to visit her during her training (1920-1923) at the Weisser Hirsch Sanatorium that their relationship became more significant. The extent of Fromm's engagement with Freud prior to his relationship with Reichman, and hence the degree to which the influence in psychoanalysis was reciprocal, is unclear. What is clear, by contrast, is that Reichmann was more experienced in both medicine and psychoanalysis, being the first to undergo training. Indeed, she was Fromm's first analyst, although the analysis stopped when their relationship became romantic (Friedman 2013, 18-20).

Even before Fromm's own psychoanalytic training, he and Reichman had opened a therapeutic facility for Jewish patients in Heidelberg. This was based on community and social justice, integrating Jewish ritual life with the provision of psychoanalysis based on ability to pay (Friedman 2013, 20; Funk 2000, 59ff). Although only Reichman was then a

psychoanalyst, Fromm had commenced his own training and was increasingly able to contribute as it progressed. An important factor at this point was the friendship of both with the philosopher Martin Buber, who was then developing his theory of human relations based on the "I-Thou" paradigm of relating to others as persons rather than as objects ([1937] 1923). This has profound parallels with Fromm's own views of love and psychotherapy, even if both Fromm's eclectic formation and the dialogical atmosphere of the psychoanalytic world at that period make it difficult to isolate Buber's influence.[11] As the community grew, Fromm and Reichmann (ten years his senior) married in 1926, with Fromm continuing his psychoanalytic training and studies in Munich, with Wilhelm Wittenberg and Emil Kraepelin.[12] After four years, however, the therapeutic community came to an end as Fromm and Fromm-Reichmann drifted away from their Jewish orthodoxy, culminating in their symbolic consumption of leavened bread on Passover and subsequent abandonment of Jewish dietary laws (Friedman 2013, 20-21).

Difficulties within the marriage, however, prompted the couple to visit maverick psychoanalyst Georg Groddeck for marital therapy. Friedman describes how Groddeck's view of the person preserved "the unity between psyche and soma" (2013, 23) and was heavily influenced by German romanticism. Most important for Fromm, however, was Groddeck's stress on the maternal kindness and concern of the analyst, which enabled understanding and healing through the "childlike trust and innocence" (23) of the patient. Friedman also speculates that it may have been the relationship with Groddeck that first gave Fromm the freedom to explore his burgeoning reservations about the analytic approach of Freud, and to develop his own appreciation of the warmer, more personal approach he found modelled in Groddeck's interpersonal approach. As Fromm's training continued in Berlin, he also benefitted from the social and cultural aspects of the psychoanalytic scene there. This was particularly through joining the seminar group organised by Otto Fenichel, where Fromm first began to encounter the possibility of integrating Marx and Freud. He also found this approach exemplified in the work of Wilhelm Reich, who was becoming well-known for his political and social emphases, and his work on the importance of character analysis and sexual liberation in psychoanalytic

[11] The popularity of Buber's writings could also have been an important element of Fromm's original exposure to Hasidic thought.

[12] Friedman also points out here that Kraepelin nurtured Fromm's interest in neuroscience, which was highly important in his approach to human existence (see Section 1.2).

practice.[13] This period was immensely important for Fromm's development, and his completion of psychoanalytic training in 1929 coincided with his first forays into developing the relationship between psychoanalysis and the sociology in which he was trained (Friedman 2013, 22-27).

0.2.6 Institute for Social Research, and Integration of Marx and Freud

A further significant period in Fromm's formation was his involvement in the foundation and development of the Southwestern German Psychoanalytic Study Group, which he and Fromm-Reichman had joined in 1927, and which changed into the Frankfurt Psychoanalytic Institute in 1929. This institute shared a building with "the Marxist-oriented Institute for Social Research," (Friedman 2013, 27) directed at that point by Max Horkheimer.[14] After his own analysis, Horkheimer began to focus on integrating psychoanalysis into the social theory of the Institute, and so Fromm became involved during the formative years of the Institute, initially on a part-time basis. This added another aspect to Fromm's professional life, meaning that he was able to combine his psychoanalytic practice with research focused on the relationship between psyche and society, which he was gradually coming to see as reciprocal. As well as giving Fromm an environment in and platform upon which a dialogue between Freud and Marx could flourish, his time at the Institute would also lead to his break with some of the central elements of Freud's approach and an acrimonious end of his association with Horkheimer and his colleagues.[15]

The first members of the Institute, under the direction Carl Grünberg, had accepted a mechanistic and putatively scientific interpretation of Marx that held that revolution would

[13] I will discuss the importance of Reich both for Fromm and my own method in Section 2.15.

[14] Many of the writers who would subsequently be associated with the Institute for Social Research would be seen as part of the Frankfurt School and of the movement known as Critical Theory, particularly Max Horkheimer, Theodore Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse. To avoid the questions around membership and orientation of this group I will remain with Fromm's formal association and eventual split and with the Institute for Social Research, hereafter merely 'the Institute'.

[15] It is important to note that Fromm continued to consider himself Freudian insofar as he maintained the centrality of the basic concepts of "the unconscious, its manifestation in neurosis, dreams, etc., resistance, and [the] dynamic concept of character," despite the fact that he "gave up the libido theory…[and]…the metapsychology." (See Jay 1973, 89-90)

inevitably follow from economic collapse. When this did not transpire, Horkheimer – who became Institute director in 1930 – and his colleagues began turning towards a humanistic interpretation of Marx which accounted for the importance of subjectivity in the development of history and the social environment. This meant that the possibility of an interdisciplinary approach to Marxism was central in the development of the Institute, a prospect that was greatly enhanced by the rediscovery of Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (Marx [1932] 1984) in the late 1920's. These manuscripts, which Fromm was later to present and explicate to an Anglophone audience through his *Marx's Concept of Man* ([1961) 2004), introduced a generation of writers and social critics to Marx's emphasis on the importance of human and social psychology. This inspired and grounded a new response to the communist insistence that contemporary social reality is the result of impersonal historical and economic forces (Friedman 2013, 29-31).

Fromm's introduction to Horkheimer and the Institute roughly coincided with the rediscovery of these aspects of Marx, meaning that his own emerging focus on the relationship between psyche and society factors was an important feature of the early years of Horkheimer's directorship of the Institute. Initially, this gave Fromm an ideal environment in which to form and communicate his approach, and he soon became the Institute's head of Psychoanalysis and Social Psychology. With the essay later published as part of the eponymous collection *The Dogma of Christ* ([1963] 1992), Fromm applied his approach to developments in the early understanding of Christology, specifically the putative transition from Christ considered as Son of God but nonetheless distinct from God (i.e. in Arianism) to the Nicene doctrine of Christ as God the Son consubstantial with God the Father. Here, Fromm argues that this shift in the understanding of Christ was rooted in the changing social situation of the early Christians. In this way, he developed the insight of Marx into how material factors condition intellectual, cultural, and spiritual developments (Friedman 2013, 32-33).

As Fromm sees it, the persecuted Christian underclass of the first few centuries, and their revolutionary God of apocalyptic judgement, gave way to the adherents of the powerful state religion of the fourth century, the reactionary creed of the ruling classes, and the consequent emphasis on salvation and eternal life rather than justice. Notwithstanding the gaps in Fromm's account of the history of doctrine and his neglect of other factors that

might have been involved in any transition, the text is an important early example of how Fromm envisaged the importance of economic and social conditions on the development of character and theology. Around this time, precipitated by the growing influence and threat of National Socialism, the Institute also commissioned a study into the attitudes of German workers. This was directed by Fromm (1984), applying his sociological methods to the question regarding the prevalence and development of character traits germane to the development of authoritarian socio-political structures (Friedman 2013, 39-45; Funk 2000, 89-91).

0.2.7 Split with the Institute and Rejection of Drive Theory

Since a full account of Fromm's articles of this period would take us beyond the scope of this brief account of his life and work, I will merely point out the main aspects of his initial convergence with the interests of the Institute and the nature of their eventual parting. Fromm had split with Fromm-Reichmann in 1931 and began to develop a professional and eventually romantic relationship with the psychoanalyst Karen Horney, a pioneer in both cultural and feminist critiques of Freud (Friedman 2013, 78ff).[16] Fromm's focus on the reciprocal relationship between psyche and society had originally been forged in the context of the Freudian drive theory, but his relationship with Horney and her focus on the development of self arguably brought his own developing difficulties with Freud's approach to the fore. These differences are also rooted in Fromm's humanist viewpoint, since they involve the claim that our dynamisms and character structures are ordered to relationship with others and with the world. The psychoanalytic element of this was the development of Fromm's focus on social character, involving an analysis of the manner in which economic structures lead to ways of existing and relating that are typical in given social contexts. This was a major source of concern to his colleagues at the Institute, who by then were entrenched in their adherence to the biological determination of character that they saw in Freud (38-39).

[16] Horney's work centres around the idea that neurosis involves the development of false structures of self, which protect us from anxiety whilst also preventing the fulfilment of our tendency towards growth. In Section 2.14 I will draw on a different account of the false self, that of R.D. Laing, chosen because of the stress on embodiment found there ([1960] 2010). Horney's writings culminate in *Neurosis and Human Growth: The Struggle Towards Self-Realization* (1950).

There were, however, other factors, which perhaps both exacerbated and were exacerbated by the concern with Fromm's social approach. These included personal difficulties with Theodor Adorno, and disputes with Horkheimer over Fromm's salary and the possibility of financial assistance for Fromm's relatives to flee Germany in 1938. By then, the Institute had relocated to New York, and Fromm had become more involved in American culture and society than many other members. Adapting his vocabulary and sources towards a new, broader sphere, Fromm began to move away from the merely academic method and audience preferred by other members of the Institute. In addition, Fromm's openness to new horizons meant that he began to communicate with other psychoanalysts who were more inclined to the interpersonal approach, particularly Harry Stack Sullivan and Clara Thompson, as well as the Culture and Personality school of anthropologists, primarily Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead. All of these aspects of the development of Fromm's life and approach meant that his acceptance of the drive theory and psychology of Freud was becoming increasingly tenuous, coinciding with its increasing centrality in the overall work of the Institute (Friedman, 56-58; Funk, 2000, 102-115).

This split was clarified in a piece of Fromm's writing from 1937, in which he renounced Freud's drive theory (Fromm, 1937). In a letter to his friend Karl Wittfogel, Fromm described how his paper contrasted with Freud in the attempt "to show that drives which motivate social behaviour are not, as Freud assumes, sublimations of sexual instincts [but] the products of social processes." (quoted in Friedman 2013, 58) The paper was rejected by Horkheimer twice and, combined with the personal and financial aspects mentioned above, precipitated Fromm's eventual break from the Institute in 1939. In the context of the dialectical revision of Freud that Fromm was later to describe in his posthumously published *The Revision of Psychoanalysis* (1992), this renunciation of the merely biological origin of our dynamisms represents the basis of all of Fromm's theoretical differences from the Institute, as well as anticipating the relational approach which was to characterise his own work from that time onwards. The other differences which developed from this basic contrast are spread across a number of texts, periods, and debates, detailed discussion of which would entail a lengthy diversion. Since my argument is more concerned with the relational content of Fromm's work that developed from this point onwards, I will merely summarise the accounts of the theoretical aspects of the split as found in the literature on Fromm and the Institute (Durkin 2014, 26-8, 93-7; Friedman 2014, 30-46, 50-62; Held 1990, 112-115; Funk 2000, 92-101; Jay 1973, 98-105).

The central aspect of this difference concerns Fromm's insistence that the foundational human drives or dynamisms are neither merely sexual or libidinal in nature, nor biologically fixed. Instead, during his time with the Institute and following it, Fromm developed a dynamic social psychology in which our drives are shaped by the socio-economic environment in which we live. This entails our basic driving forces are both malleable and contextual nature, contrasted with a biological approach which sees people as basically driven by the need for libidinal release and satisfaction. From this distinction follows a different concept of human nature, which is now seen as ordered towards relation and harmony with the world, to the restoration of a putative original unity between humanity and nature which will be the focus of Chapter One. This possibility is contrasted with the approach typically taken by members of the Institute – at least at this period – in which civilisation was held to be a necessary restraint upon our libidinal needs, with humanity and society necessarily in conflict. This also points to the general suspicion around Fromm's social optimism, including his later insistence on the possibility of the reform of capitalist institutions rather than the revolutionary critique and withdrawal professed by the Institute. This distance between the Institute and Fromm was also echoed in his stress on the possibility of an integrated personality, which was becoming a central aspect of his thought around the time of his split from the Institute (Fromm [1941] 2001, 25, 101f, 222f).

A number of subsidiary matters also followed from Fromm's rejection of the biologism and drive theory, generally concerning his humanist revision of Freudian staples such as the Oedipus complex, the death instinct, and the idea of a pre-historical patricidal event which set the tone for the development of religion and guilt. In each of these Fromm argues that the relevance of Freud's theories pertains not merely to the sexual life, but to relation in general. This involves, for instance, the claim that Oedipus represents the rejection of authority generally, rather than the sexual jealousy of son towards father (Fromm 1950, 79), as well as his argument that any death drive or destructiveness should be construed as socially derived rather than a necessary biological urge towards disintegration. A further general point concerns Fromm's stress on current socio-economic factors and their impact on personality in the present, contrasted with the customary psychoanalytic stress on past psychosexual development and the series of phases from infancy to adolescence.

Finally, from his encounters with Groddeck and Horney onwards, Fromm had been developing a critique of the patriarchal aspects of Freud's thought, while growing in his conviction that the centrality of the Oedipus complex was a symptom of Freud's own bourgeois and patriarchal context.[17] In a matriarchal context, which Fromm argued was also historical, our relationships to our parents would be different, and so the Institute failed to recognise the inherent historicity in Freud and how this implied that our drives are in fact socially derived. As well as eliciting unease around its cultural and historical aspects, Fromm's embrace of matriarchal theory was also viewed as suspect relative to his psychoanalytic approach. Here it involved a shift in emphasis away from the traditional view of the authority of the interpretations of the analyst towards the empathic and interpersonal approach favoured by Groddeck and grounded in Fromm's humanism.

0.2.8 Public Psychoanalyst and *The Fear of Freedom*

This treatment of the split with the Institute brings us to the mid-point of Fromm's life in terms both of his lifespan and of a turning point in his writings and career. My own account of Fromm's life and work also shifts in emphasis somewhat, since it has been weighted towards his formative decades, in which the influences that would shape Fromm's subsequent writing are present at least in basic form. Until now, I have given more attention to Fromm's context as a ground for his ideas, particularly in his relationships with Nobel, Rabinkow, Fromm-Reichmann, Groddeck, and the Institute. This has enabled me to emphasise the development of Fromm's – primarily Jewish and Hasidic

[17] Fromm's main source for this seems to have been Johan Jakob Bachofen, who claimed to have discovered a matriarchal phase of human history. I will prescind from the question of the scientific value of Bachofen's claims, and focus on discussing how Fromm's attention to matriarchy and femininity develops in the context of his approach to psychoanalysis (Sections 0.2.7, 4.4.2), history (1.4.3), erotic love (3.3.3), theology (4.1.2), parental love (5.3.3), and the humanistic conscience (5.3.6). I have also critiqued his merely receptive view of the feminine in Sections 4.8.1 and 4.8.2, but still within the type of gender-binary paradigm that Fromm himself employs. My own response to Fromm is therefore based on a distinction between masculine and feminine that itself would be vulnerable to a post-structuralist or non-binary approach. Whilst Fromm was far more attentive to gender than many of his male contemporaries, he remained tied to a patriarchal model of the family (see Sections 2.13, 5.3.6). On the importance of Bachofen for Fromm see Burston (1991, 37-45), Friedman (2013, 47-50), and Jay (1973, 94-95). Jay (95-97) also points to the importance of Robert Briffault. Fromm's own writings on matriarchy are collected in his *Love, Sexuality, and Matriarchy: About Gender* (1997) but the most salient points are also sprinkled through his main works in passages that I have presented throughout each section. Fromm typically employs masculine pronouns throughout his work, which I have sought to balance with feminine or neutral pronouns in my own writing where possible.

- humanistic approach and its ideal of harmony; his appropriation of sociology and Marx; and his initial encounters with psychoanalysis in theory and practice. Given that his split with the Institute coincides with his emergence as a writer who was both critically acclaimed and had immense popularity, my focus from now will be on describing his texts from *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm, [1941] 2001) onwards, with relatively little attention to context and life events. This period also coincides with Fromm being granted citizenship in the United States, which will be a central arena of his life from now on, along with Mexico and Switzerland.

In her defence of Fromm as a public psychoanalyst, Ilene Philipson, states that

> Second only to Freud, Erich Fromm remains the most widely read psychoanalyst in history. Although many of the most popular psychoanalytic books of the 20th century sold thousands of copies, Fromm's sold millions. At the height of his career, not only was he a best-selling author, but he also appeared on national television; wrote for the *Saturday Review*, *McCall's*, and *Dissent* magazines; received 30 invitations a month to lecture at American universities; founded SANE, the first major peace organization in the United States; addressed [Nikita] Khrushchev at the World Congress for General Disarmament and Peace in 1962; testified in front of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee multiple times on topics having to do with allied access to Berlin and the intentions of the Soviet Union; and campaigned across the country for Senator Eugene McCarthy's presidential bid. On the occasion of his 75th birthday, *Contemporary Psychoanalysis* stated simply, "No psychoanalyst has been more outspoken and incisive than Fromm in working for a better society" ("Erich Fromm", 1975, p. 394).
>
> The extent of his popularity cannot be overstated. To briefly summarise: [h]is first book, *Escape from Freedom* (Fromm, 1941), has sold 5 million copies; *To Have or To Be* (Fromm, 1976) sold 10 million copies; both *The Sane Society* (Fromm, 1955) and *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (Fromm, 1973) sold 3 million each. Then there's *The Art of Loving* (Fromm, 1956), which has sold a staggering 25 million copies, and which, along with *Escape [f]rom Freedom* (Fromm, 1941),

> continues to outsell the work of any living psychoanalytic author today (according to Amazon statistics, March 6, 2016). (Philipson 2017, 2-3)[18]

It is important to recount these aspects of Fromm's range at this point, since his emergence as a public figure arguably begins with the publication of *The Fear of Freedom* ([1941] 2001), prior to which he had been well-known in his own circles but without impact on the public sphere. Indeed, in some ways it is for this text that he is primarily known today, particularly with its emphasis on the psychological factors of the mass acceptance of Nazism and fascism. Whilst I will cover the main narrative of the text in more depth in Chapter One, I will summarise it here before moving onto the other texts which are grounded in its basic outlook.

Fromm begins the foreword to *The Fear of Freedom* ([1941] 2001) by stating that it "is part of a broad study concerning the character structure of modern man and the problems of the interaction between psychological and social factors." (viii) Given the outbreak of war in Europe and the rise of Nazism and fascism, Fromm instead decided to "concentrate on one aspect of it", namely "the meaning of freedom for modern man." (viii) Fromm's approach to this question again revolves around his existential view of humanity, in which he sees humanity as alienated from nature by virtue of the development of reason and self-awareness, and hence striving to make the earth our own. This results in freedom being conceived in both a negative and positive light, first in terms of the extent to which it entails insecurity and fear, and second as the increased autonomy to develop our own powers. Fromm argues that our basic choice is either to embrace this freedom through the productive and spontaneous use of our powers, and thereby develop a new harmony based on freedom rather than instinct, or to reject it and seek shelter in authority. In the latter case we surrender our powers, either to authoritarian political, religious, or social structures, or to masochistic or sadistic forms of personal relationship. Fromm argues that the historical ground for fascism and Nazism has its roots in the emergence of humanity from medieval society into the possibilities for self-determination found in Protestantism and early capitalism, since many humans cannot bear the responsibility that these entail and hence seek refuge in political conformity. Demonstrating that the context of the book is American as well as European, Fromm also warns that this flight from freedom might also

[18] This last claim is a little contrived, given that Fromm's popularity is based on his appeal to a number of disciplines as well as popular culture, and should thus be distinguished from any merely psychoanalytic writer.

be manifest in conformity to patterns of consumption and democratic governance in putatively free societies, and that the grounds for totalitarianism can therefore also be found in the United States. The text, however, does end with the prospect of a democratic situation in which the development of the powers of reason and love are cultivated through public institutions that centralise the importance of human freedom.

0.2.9 New York, and *Man for Himself*

This period of Fromm's life also involves his association with the New School for Social Research in New York, as well as his split with Karen Horney in 1943 and his marriage to Henny Gurland in 1944.[19] In addition, Fromm became an important figure in the foundation and development of the William Alanson White Institute of Psychiatry, which was another forum for the development and communication of his interpersonal approach to psychotherapy. In 1947, Fromm published *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003), in which his basic binary between freedom and authoritarianism was applied to the ethical sphere. Here Fromm envisages the central question of ethics as the development of human independence and of the potentialities which follow from our evolution and existence. The theme of exile from nature again figures prominently, with the basic need for relatedness found in *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm, [1941] 2001) developed into a series of existential needs (which I will discuss in Section 1.4). *Man for Himself* is best known for its normative approach to ethics, since Fromm argues that whilst there is no a-historical human essence, there *is* a nature that can be found in the dichotomies that develop out of our evolutionary break with the natural world. Fromm argues that the goodness which has often been the subject matter of ethics should be equated with what enables the development of our powers, and that these powers are ordered towards the restoration of the harmonious relationship with nature that we have lost. Here Fromm also introduces the concepts of rational authority, humanistic conscience, and primary potentialities (see Sections 5.3.4, 5.3.6, 1.9, 5.3.1, respectively) as well as a humanistic reconfiguration of the concept of faith, now understood as faith in our powers (see Section 5.3.3). *Man for Himself* is also important for its account of character, which I will discuss in Section 1.5, and for Fromm's critique of the idea that self-love entails selfishness (see Section 5.5).[20]

[19] Biographical details on Gurland can be found in Funk (2000, 120ff).

[20] The section in *Man for Himself* was based on the earlier paper "Selfishness and Self-Love" (Fromm 1939).

Both *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm [1941] 2001) and *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003) utilise the same basic choice between freedom and authority, and the stress on the fundamental importance of independence and autonomy which constitute the guiding principle in all of Fromm's work. Turning from politics and ethics, Fromm then applied the same binary to religion, with the 1950 publication of a series of lectures at Yale University given in 1948 and 1949. *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (Fromm 1950) is based on the claim that the central questions of ethics had traditionally been considered as psychological, insofar as what is good depends upon the conception and development of the psyche (which Fromm now calls the soul). This leads Fromm to argue that the aspect which most characterises religion is not belief in a transcendent God, but whether it emphasizes and cultivates the development of our freedom and potentialities. The binary choice above is hence transposed into the sphere of religion, since a religion that is based on the authoritarian character emerges out of the surrender of our powers due to fear, whilst one that is humanistic is premised on embracing freedom. Fromm argues that this demonstrates the inherent connection between religion and character, since the type of religion we opt for will be determined by the response that we have to our basic existential situation. The text also develops Fromm's response to Freud, since he sees in the latter the basic constituents of a humanist religion, claiming that Freud is intent on truth and liberation from idols. This in fact grounds the basic claim of the text that we have an existential need for orientation and devotion, and that our response to this, be it authoritarian or humanist, constitutes our religion (see Section 1.4.5. and Chapter Four).

0.2.10 Mexico City and *The Sane Society*

Around this time Fromm relocated to Mexico City on account of Gurland's ill-health, and found there a fertile and largely undiscovered ground for his ideas. Fromm was highly influential in the development of psychotherapy in Mexico, and was involved in the landmark foundation of the Mexican Psychoanalytic Society in 1956. Whilst based in Mexico, Fromm continued to teach and research in the United States, making an annual three-month visit to New York to work at the New School for Social Research and the William Alanson White Foundation from 1953 onwards (Friedman 2013, xxviii, 160-69). This time also saw the publication of two of Fromm's most important and popular books, first the 350 pages of *The Sane Society* ([1955] 2002) in 1955, and the far shorter *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995) the following year. In *The Sane Society*, Fromm adds more detail to his theory of our evolutionary emergence and alienation and the existential needs which

follow from our situation. This is now placed in the context of the idea of the "pathology of normalcy," (Fromm [1955] 2002, 12) where the character structure that is adapted to material production and consumption under 20th century capitalism is defective and based on the need for security and conformity rather than freedom. This is followed by a long account of the history of capitalism from the 17th to the 20th centuries, and a variety of social patterns which masquerade as answers to our basic needs whilst in reality constraining us. The book concludes by arguing for the possibility of "a sane society which corresponds to the needs of man," (20) once more based on the premise of an observable ideal for human nature which focuses on the development of our powers and freedom.[21]

0.2.11 Annis Freeman and *The Art of Loving*

Following the death of Henny Gurland two years earlier, Fromm married Annis Freeman in 1954, with both Friedman and Funk arguing that this relationship was instrumental in the rationale for and content of *The Art of Loving* (Friedman 2013, xxvii; Funk 2000, 138; Fromm [1956] 1995). Since this text will be the focus of the whole thesis, I will merely outline its basic structure here, and highlight aspects that are not emphasised in the other chapters. The main argument is that love is an active power to respond to the needs of others by giving of self, and that it enables us to enter the interpersonal union that is the "answer to the problem of human existence." ([1956] 1995, 6) Fromm asserts that this entails a basic orientation to love all people, so that love should not be confused with a variety of pseudo-loves in which the intention is to surrender our autonomy. Stratifying love into four elements (care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge) and five objects (brotherly love, motherly love, erotic love, love of self, and love of God), Fromm again develops the focus on the socio-economic context of human activity and identity by recounting a number of ways in which capitalism distorts the nature of love by framing it as a commodity and as premised on a marketable personality. The text concludes with a practical element in which Fromm discusses some of the ways in which the power to love can be developed, namely discipline, concentration, patience, and commitment. Love is hence portrayed as an art which must be cultivated and learned, especially given that "[p]eople capable of love, under the present system, are necessarily the exceptions." (103)

[21] For more on the observable nature of this ideal see Section 1.7.

0.2.12 Peace Activism, *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism*, *Marx's Concept of Man* and *Beyond the Chains of Illusion*.

In 1957 Fromm was instrumental in founding the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, reflecting his growing horror at the proliferation of nuclear arms and the stand-off between the United States and the Soviet Union (Funk 2000,143ff). He also directed a six-year sociological study into the social character of workers in a Mexican village, again with the focus on the prevalence of authoritarian character traits (Fromm and Maccoby [1970] 1996; Funk 2000,140f). By then Fromm had been developing his interest in Zen Buddhism, primarily through his friendship with D.T. Suzuki, and, based on a conference in Mexico, he published his *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (1960). This text will be referred to throughout this thesis, and focused on arguing for some complementarity between Zen and Fromm's humanistic psychoanalysis.[22] In 1961, as mentioned above, Fromm published *Marx's Concept of Man* ([1961] 2004), comprising both the first English translation (by T.B. Bottomore) of Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, and Fromm's own explication of Marx's text. This publication was highly important in introducing a different side of Marx to the American audience, which was especially significant given a political climate in which communist activities had been outlawed. This focus on Marx was developed in Fromm's account of his own development and ideas, *Beyond the Chains of Illusion* ([1962] 2006), which is the most sustained treatment of his own attempts to integrate Marx and Freud.[23]

0.2.13 *The Heart of Man*, *You Shall Be as Gods*, *The Revolution of Hope*, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*

In 1964 Fromm developed the approach to love found in *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995) with the focus on love of life, or biophilia, elaborated in *The Heart of Man* ([1964] 1980), contrasting this love with the inclination to death and mechanism that Fromm called

[22] Funk states that this text is "without a doubt the best of Fromm's writings on the unconscious and psychoanalysis." (2000, 133)

[23] Anderson (2015) chronicles Fromm's reception of Marx and his relation to some other Marxist writers of his time.

necrophilous.[24] Extending Fromm's basic stress on activity that fosters human growth into the sphere of life in general, the text is also noteworthy for developing Fromm's critique of the instinctual approach to destructiveness that was a factor in his dispute with the Institute Here Fromm argued – as he had in *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003) – that destructiveness and hatred result from the frustration of our need for relation rather than any inherent biological instinct. Since Fromm's short account of biophilia merely extends his earlier work to frame the object of love as life in general, my references to *The Heart of Man* will be peripheral to my focus on love as specifically interpersonal. Continuing to reach a large audience, Fromm had the first of four heart attacks on a lecture tour of California in 1966, soon followed by the development of his approach to humanistic religion found in *You Shall Be As Gods* (1967). This text was founded on the claim that the concept of God emerges out of the concrete human situation, a point which is again developed in terms of humanism and authoritarianism, with specific focus on the putative presence of both elements in the texts of Judaism. In 1968 Fromm became involved in the McCarthy presidential campaign, publishing his *The Revolution of Hope* (1968) as a humanist manifesto for peace and socialist democracy. Despite beginning to spend summer in Switzerland to preserve his health, 1973 saw the publication of arguably Fromm's most ambitious book, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* ([1973] 1997). Here Fromm seeks an empirical ground in evolutionary biology, zoology, and neuroscience, for his thesis that hatred is reactive rather than innate.[25]

0.2.14 *To Have or To Be*, *Greatness and Limitations of Freud's Thought*, Illness and Death

Fromm subsequently retired to Switzerland, hoping to complete a systematic account of his therapeutic approach that in fact never appeared. Instead, he worked on *To Have or To Be* (Fromm [1976] 2009), as well a text originally intended as its practical complement but ultimately published separately and posthumously as *The Art of Being* (Fromm [1993] 2007). In both, the basic binary distinction between authoritarianism and humanism is transposed into a context that Fromm had first discovered in Hasidism and Marx, which

[24] This broader meaning of necrophilia again shows Fromm's tendency to give a more general interpretation to phenomena often considered in a specifically sexual context.

[25] Daniel Burston (1991, 75) argues that there is a thread in *The Heart of Man*, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, and *Greatness and Limitations of Freud's Thought* (Fromm 1980), in which necrophilia involves a more instinctive model of destructiveness rooted in Freud's theory of the development of the erogenous zones.

distinguishes a mode of existence focused on being from one based on having. Again critiquing a life based on consumption, greed, and selfishness, Fromm depicts the modality of being as focused on the growth of our powers, on enjoyment of life, in awareness, compassion, peace, and unity, supporting this with a variety of examples from mysticism, philosophy, and the writings of Marx (Funk 2000, 157ff).

However, it was with Freud that Fromm's writing career came to an end, as the last published work of his lifetime was *Greatness and Limitations of Freud's Thought* (1980). Here Fromm summarises his career-long engagement with Freud, elaborating his appropriation and revision of the unconscious, the Oedipus complex, transference, narcissism, character, childhood, dream theory, and the instincts. Following a series of heart attacks from 1977 onwards, Fromm died in Locarno, Switzerland, on the morning of March 18th, 1980. He was cremated in a small and intimate service led by Ivan Illich, who spoke of Fromm's humanism and its relation to the spiritual traditions that he had explored during his life. "Obituaries, memorial statements, and other notices of Fromm's death" (Friedman 2013, 336) quickly appeared in newspapers around the world, testifying to the wide range of causes that Fromm had supported and the qualities that he had manifested, as well as his commitment to a humane and loving society. His third wife, Annis Freeman, died only three years later, having developed colon cancer following Fromm's death. Fromm named Rainer Funk as the executor of his literary estate, and was followed by the posthumous publication of *The Art of Being* (Fromm [1993] 2007), a series of lectures on his understanding of psychoanalysis published as *The Art of Listening* (Fromm 1994), and *The Revision of Psychoanalysis* (Fromm 1992), the collection of writings in which Fromm develops his humanistic revision of Freud.[26]

0.3 Review of Secondary Literature on Fromm

As well as the *Revision of Psychoanalysis* (Fromm 1992), my work will take its orientation from a range of points raised in response to Fromm's work by writers in the various fields in which he was engaged. This task is made somewhat more complex simply by its interdisciplinary nature, as many texts approach Fromm from one particular perspective

[26] Funk (2015) gives his own account of his work as Fromm's editor and executor, including his involvement in the foundation of the International Erich Fromm Society.

(e.g. sociology, politics, economics, ethics, or psychoanalysis), and therefore attempt to situate his work relative to developments in that field. The tone for the secondary literature in recent decades has been set by the work of the sociologist Neil McLaughlin (1998, 1999), and his series of articles addressing the question of Fromm's relative neglect in academic circles in the late twentieth century. That Fromm was in many respects a "forgotten intellectual" (McLaughlin, 1998) is partly due to the debate carried out with Herbert Marcuse, by then a colleague of Horkheimer and Adorno at the Institute, in the pages of *Dissent* in the mid-1950s. Based on the issues that I have covered in Section 0.2.7., Marcuse continued to accuse Fromm of having abandoned the premises of orthodox Freudianism, assuming that these principles – in particular the liberation of libido from social constraints – were the only remedy to a repressive civilization (Friedman 2013, xxiii). Despite what were cogent and thorough responses from Fromm, he was widely perceived to have been disproved and discredited by Marcuse, a perception that was heightened by several subsequent accounts of the debate that were favourable to Marcuse (196). Although this did considerable harm to Fromm's reputation, recent decades have seen a renewed appreciation of his work in both academic and popular circles. Since Kieran Durkin's *The Radical Humanism of Erich Fromm* (2014) situates Fromm's absence and re-emergence in the context of subsequent trends in European academia, I will begin there.

Durkin argues that Fromm's work has been rejected largely on account of the "overt humanism" that it is grounded on, as well as its "psychoanalytic genealogy," (2014, 1) and the accessibility of his writing.[27] That Fromm's work was self-consciously humanistic meant that he was simply considered peculiar and obsolete by both analytic and continental philosophical traditions, either on the grounds that he was too vague and imprecise, or that he employed concepts of nature that were routinely rejected as normative. Durkin argues that this type of social thinking, premised on the idea of a discernible human nature, "still seems to be adversely affected by the anti-humanism and other excessively relativistic tropes of the linguistic turn and of structuralist and poststructuralist thought more generally." (1) This rejection of humanism involves "an overstated attack on the axiomatic precepts of humanism – namely, the idea of 'man' (or the human being), 'the subject', 'the self', and of history as the realm in which human perfectibility (or flourishing) can

[27] It is not clear whether Durkin conceives the difficulty with the genealogy on account of Fromm's rejection of drive theory, or simply that his work was psychoanalytic in general.

manifest itself." (2014, 1) In response to this, Durkin defends Fromm's work as a "qualified form of essentialism compatible with the central ideas of constructivist thought," (2) meaning that Fromm's work combines a notion of human essence or nature that is not considered as ahistorical but situated in (and partly constructed by) historical and social context. This is founded on "the idea of a basic psychological dynamism that underlies human experience," and which employs "a form of human universalism […involving…] ethical normativism, objective value statements, and…democratic socialism based on resolutely human criteria." (2) As we have seen above, and will continue to explore in the forthcoming chapters, this dynamism is the need for relationship with others and nature, manifest in either freedom and interpersonal love or in surrender to authority.

As well as demonstrating his normative intent, Durkin's work is important for its elaboration of the roots of Fromm's humanism. Durkin argues that this work is "*primarily* an expression of humanism," which – despite its psychoanalytic language and sociological context – is ultimately grounded in "his underlying religio-philosophical premise." (2014, 4) This mainly entails the perspectives that Fromm developed in his relationship with Nobel and Rabinkow, concerning the moral basis of religion and biblical interpretation based on the exile of humanity and our search for harmony. Whilst he attests to their complexity, much of Durkin's work is focused on chronicling these roots, as well as the young Fromm's engagement with Marx and Freud. Durkin argues that this culminates in a "radical humanism" – Fromm's own label (1967, 13-14) – simply because it is rooted in "a metaphysical realism/essentialism that recognises the existence of the human being as an entity possessed of certain properties […which constitute…] the ground upon which value for human beings exists and upon which the very idea of ethics makes sense." (Durkin 2014, 4)[28] This also refers to the normative elements of Fromm's work, in which "the very idea of ethics" (4) is grounded on the observance of the consequences of the fulfilment or frustration of our basic dynamism towards relatedness, in mental well-being or neurosis respectively. Consistent with this, Fromm's *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003) is an account of ethics based on the principle that the good is found in whatever enables the fulfilment of our powers and our consequent well-being (see Section 0.2.9). Finally, Durkin claims that this entails that radical humanism is "not merely a philosophical humanism, but one related

[28] *The Revision of Psychoanalysis* (Fromm 1992, 19) suggests an additional sense of radical, in the critical approach dehumanising social structures and the psychoanalytic exploration of the unconscious.

to the applied understanding of 'actually existing real men,'" (2014, 4) both in being relevant to the development of people today as well as being grounded in analysis of life.

The main concern of Durkin's account of Fromm is to defend radical humanism against a variety of theorists – including Horkheimer, Adorno, and Marcuse, but also Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault, and Claude Lévi-Strauss, among others – who have rejected the idea of a discernible human nature which endures throughout historical, social, and cultural change. This defence is based on an acceptance of Fromm's claim that we can simply observe the consequences of failing to relate in an interpersonal and independent way, even if this means that nature is reduced to the variety of dichotomies and needs that we have evolved distinct from other animals. This defence is primarily in the context of Fromm's relevance for social theory and for the idea of a renaissance of humanism in the development of a just world. Lawrence Wilde's *Erich Fromm and the Quest for Solidarity* (2004) also departs from the question of relevance, although this time in the context of political theory. Wilde's work is based on the idea of a series of stages in Fromm's thought, which although not chronologically defined, represent three distinct emphases of his approach: social psychology, ethical humanism, and politics (6-19). In each of these Wilde identifies a consistent concern for solidarity, even if he seems to neglect the possibility of a mystical or religious concern which permeates Fromm's work from his encounter with the prophetic writings until *The Art of Being* ([1993] 2007).

Like Durkin, Joan Braune's *Erich Fromm's Revolutionary Hope: Prophetic Messianism as Critical Theory of the Future* (2014) pays significant attention to Fromm's prophetic and Hasidic roots, as well as his context in the Institute and critical social theory. Focusing on the pervasive presence of hope both as an explicit concept and as an implicit tone, Braune argues that Fromm's work can be construed as a prophetic messianism which should be distinguished from the primarily apocalyptic or catastrophic messianism of his contemporaries. This means that Fromm's hope for a renewed society was not premised on the expectation of a catastrophic event that "creates a dramatic break from all preceding history" (Braune 2014, xiv) and that rescues humanity, but upon a trajectory that Fromm saw as originating in the Hebrew prophets. Rather than a cataclysm, prophetic messianism is hence based on the hope that human activity can build a world of justice, peace, and harmony, based on the prophetic presentation of the alternatives of peace or destruction through the lives of present-day leaders. Braune makes the important point that Fromm's

work, rather than being a naïve utopianism premised on the inevitability of historical processes, is alternativist, since it is clear that both a just and peaceful society and a despotic totalitarianism are possible outcomes of our response to the crises of history.

This prophetic aspect is echoed by Lawrence Friedman's, whose *Love's Prophet: The Lives of Erich Fromm* (2013), is primarily important for its biographical range and detail, and its comprehensive use of Fromm's published work and archives. The main premise of Friedman's biography is based on Fromm's own admission of four distinct elements to his life: the psychoanalyst/clinician, the political activist, the social critic, and the "writer committed to instructing society." (xix) Friedman argues that Fromm, for all his impact on both society and persons, often struggled to integrate these aspects, even if he saw them as connected "by his vision of himself as a prophet for the love of life." (xix)[29] Daniel Burston's *The Legacy of Erich Fromm* (1991) focuses on one of these elements, exploring Fromm's relevance in the history and practice of psychoanalysis, including how he has been received and the importance of his work for the subsequent relational turn.[30] Burston also pays significant attention to Fromm's development in the context of Judaism, Hasidism, Marxism, and psychoanalysis, but supplements this by also recounting the importance of German philosophy in his work. Ultimately, Burston upholds the claim that Fromm can be described as part of Freud's "loyal opposition," (4) faithful to some Freudian principles but revising others (mainly involving Fromm's grounding in the Hasidic world-view, his explorations in matriarchal theory, and the interpersonal method that he developed in dialogue with Fromm-Reichmann, Groddeck, and Buber). This is contrasted with outright "dissidents" like C.J. Jung or Alfred Adler, or "crypto-revisionists" such as Erik Eriksen, Melanie Klein, and Donald Winnicott, who made "major departures from [Freudian] orthodoxy appear as logical extensions or developments of the master's own thought." (Burston 1991, 3)

[29] Braune (2015) argues for more of a link between the prophetic and scientific.

[30] I would argue that Fromm's work can be construed as relational in two distinct ways, which echo the ambiguity of the term in its use in psychotherapy generally. First, his reaction to Freud was based on the claim that our dynamisms are relational, and so – like the Object Relations Theory that I discuss in Chapter Three – Fromm sees the human person as orientated towards relation. A second sense concerns the practice of psychotherapy itself, in which the relational turn is towards the importance of the way of relating practiced by the therapist and the subsequent connection that develops in the therapy. Johach (2015) argues that Fromm is an important peripheral figure in the development of humanistic psychology, even if he remained a psychoanalytic therapist.

As I have suggested above, each of these texts is defined by the question of relevance, albeit in distinct fields. John Schaar's *Escape from Authority* (1961), although published prior to some of Fromm's main texts, is important partly because it resists this question in order to focus on the philosophical ground of Fromm's work. Approaching Fromm, primarily *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003), from the perspective of moral and political philosophy, Schaar develops a number of criticisms which will be important as my own investigation proceeds, even if his work suffers from an misunderstanding of Fromm's purpose. Schaar argues that Fromm proposes that his own approach is objective, normative, and scientific, and proceeds to contest each of these, as well as Fromm's putative naturalism. Each of these concerns is based on the claim that the pervasive eclecticism in Fromm's work leads in places to "superficial scholarship and loose intellectual construction," which results from a hunger for materials and the willingness to violate "the boundaries which increasing specialization has built around the separate fields of learning." (Schaar 1961, 4) Because of this, Schaar suggests that Fromm's "system contains a large number of contradictory principles and concepts" (7) which are easily visible but to which Fromm himself is blind and yet consistently attempts to juggle. Schaar lists

> reason versus intuition; empiricism versus mysticism; scientific versus philosophic method; detachment versus involvement; man as part of nature versus man as freak of nature; essential human nature versus social determinism; equality versus liberty; democracy versus aristocracy; [and] communalism versus individualism.(7)

I would argue that Schaar's claim here has some weight, particularly with respect to the first three binaries. Each concerns knowledge, and it is often unclear how conscious Fromm is of the epistemological foundations of his thought, a point that will recur in this section in relation to the use of language. Concerning humanity and nature, nature and society, and community and individual, however, I would argue that Fromm is aware of the tension, and indeed bases his conception of human nature on the dichotomies inherent in them. With the remaining tensions, Schaar seems to simply accuse Fromm of failing to reconcile tensions which are arguably basic to the problems of political philosophy in general, concerning the relation between person and whole and the possibility of freedom. The fact, moreover, that Fromm's supposed aristocratic tendency relates to his use of authoritative masters in spirituality and philosophy means that Schaar's contrast with a democratic political philosophy collapses. Quite apart from whether the use of authorities

is justified, it is clear that the tension that Schaar proposes relates to two different fields and that his claim is thereby questionable.[31] Despite this, Schaar's critique remains important in the attempt to expose the hidden premises in Fromm's work, and it is with these that my account of the relevance of Schaar's work will proceed.

The first of these questions involves the question of naturalism in Fromm's writings, mainly concerning the origin and nature of evil and suffering. The central point is that Fromm's humans discover the good within themselves, in their basic nature and potentialities, rather than creating it through conquering the evil which is part of this nature. This relates to an idea that I will discuss in Sections 1.9 and 5.3.1, namely Fromm's assertion that our tendency towards goodness and flourishing is the primary inclination of our nature and that it will develop naturally given the proper environmental conditions. As a result of this, evil, hatred, and destructiveness, are socially derived rather than resulting from biological drives or a fall from grace. Schaar assumes that this means that Fromm naively asserts that our nature is good, oblivious to Fromm's own claim that our sociality and the existential dichotomies to which we can respond in two basic ways mean that we are neither good nor evil.[32] As well as this argument against Fromm's naturalism, which seems to be based on Schaar's assumption of inherent evil in humanity, Schaar argues that Fromm's claim assumes that he has full knowledge of our nature and needs, leading us to the second point about objectivity.

Schaar argues that ethics involves deriving practical norms from an understanding of human nature, and that Fromm's own ethic assumes that this human nature involves an inherent drive to live and actualise our potential. This putative objectivity of these norms is hence based on Fromm's claims around both the nature of life and what constitutes the good life, namely our flourishing and the fulfilment of our powers. Schaar rebuttal of this this on mainly based on the widespread occurrence of suicide, since he argues that this prevents us from ascribing an inherent drive to live to humanity. Whilst this is clearly an important, tragic, and perplexing issue, I would argue that Schaar either misrepresents or has misunderstood Fromm's argument, since Fromm is not claiming that the drive to live

[31] Schaar does not elaborate on what is meant by detachment and involvement, and it is hard to see how it relates to Fromm without further explanation.

[32] See Fromm ([1947] 2003, 158-168). See also Fromm ([1955] 2002, 27), for the most explicit and concise statement of these two tendencies or possibilities, which permeate his work from beginning to end.

well will always prevail, but that it will be activated under the requisite environmental conditions. Of course, this is a questionable point in itself, but the mere fact that suicide exists does not entail the claim that Fromm's drive to live can be disproved by contradictory and derived drives. This relates again to Schaar's claim about naturalism, and the suggestion that Fromm assumes that nature is merely good. I have mentioned above how Joan Braune points out that Fromm's thought involves an alternativism that upholds the possibilities of both creation and destruction, life and death, freedom and authoritarianism, health and ill-health, good and evil. These two claims made by Schaar – around naturalism and objectivity – neglect Fromm's attention to these alternatives. This is even more significant given that the dual nature of our responses to the existential question pervades *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003), which is the text that Schaar's critique of Fromm focuses on.

Nonetheless, even if Schaar overlooks Fromm's appreciation of the ambiguity inherent in human life, his observation about the good life leads to a more powerful objection. This is the epistemological point that I have mentioned, concerning Schaar's objection to the alleged incoherence in Fromm's thought. The nucleus of the argument involves the imprecision and arguable confusion between ways of knowing that Fromm's existentialism is based on. Schaar again points to the need for ethical normativity to be grounded upon knowledge of human nature and our needs, arguing that our understanding of the good for humanity will depend on our apprehension of human nature itself. Given that our basic qualities and needs are hence prior to norms, Schaar questions how Fromm arrives at his knowledge of a universal humanity, as distinguished from humans in the particular circumstances in which they are encountered. This argument centres around Fromm's conception of a "science of man," (2015) and his insistence on the development of ethical norms based on the observation of the consequences of fulfilment or non-fulfilment of our needs.[33] If adverse reactions to the frustration of our needs and powers can always be observed, then Fromm argues that there is a ground for claiming that certain questions and needs are inherent to human nature, at least at the present stage of evolutionary history ([1947] 2003, 14-17). Moreover, in his *Beyond the Chains of Illusion*, Fromm claims that

[33] It is important to point out that there are two separate issues at hand here. The first concerns the question of whether Fromm assumes that knowledge of humanity is possible, whereas the second concerns whether he confuses separate methods of knowing. Durkin (2014) is dedicated to defending Fromm against the first question, so my own brief response focuses on the second.

this theory emerges out of his own clinical work and of his observations of human reactions to historical events ([1962] 2006, 10).[34]

Schaar's response to this is far more perceptive and important than his claim against naturalism, since he points out that Fromm's theory of existence is "a philosophic position rather than a scientific conclusion […meaning that…] the appeal to science merely clutters Fromm's case and confuses his arguments." (Schaar 1961, 35-36) He then points out that Fromm, in *The Sane Society* ([1955] 2002), claims that his position on mental health coincides with a consistent set of norms found in a variety of spiritual teachers, from Moses, Isaiah, and Jesus, to Buddha, Lao-tse, and Socrates, among others. Crucially, in the same citation, Fromm addresses the idea that this recourse to spiritual figures negates the scientific basis of his thought, with Fromm's refutation based on the claim that these teachers employed rational insight into human nature and development (36; see also 69). Schaar rightly points out that however this supposedly rational insight functioned, "they did not use the methods of empirical social science," and that this entails that Fromm maintains that "the findings of the great spiritual teachers are quite enough." (1961, 37)[35]

I would argue that Schaar's claim here is both important and limited. It is vulnerable since it seems to neglect Schaar's own admission that this recourse to historical figures *follows* Fromm's definition of mental health rather than grounding it, and that it this recourse is hence intended merely to support both the possibility of empirical observation of the optimal conditions of humanity and the actual empirical observation that precede it (Fromm [1955] 2002, 3-11). Nonetheless, Schaar's claim does remain important in the context of Fromm's work as a whole, since there is a question mark over the extent to which philosophy and spirituality do precede his sociological and psychoanalytic observations, and therefore the degree to which Fromm's work can be called empirical.[36] This is reflected in Durkin's claim Fromm's work is primarily rooted in his early

[34] Fromm ([1957] 2015) also states his own understanding of the function of science in his work in a short essay from 1957 reflecting on the possibility of an "Institute for the Science of Man," which the collection of essays edited by Funk and McLaughlin (2015) is a response to.

[35] This is echoed in Friedman's claim that Fromm's writings became increasingly self-referential as his fame grew, with Fromm perhaps now coming to rely on the supposed self-evidence of his own claims rather than those of his sources (Friedman 2013, xxxii).

[36] See Maccoby (2015) for an account of Fromm's work in social science.

appropriation of the prophets and Hasidism, since if this was indeed the remote root of Fromm's way of perceiving the world then it is fair to question whether empiricism is merely a proximate way of supporting the "religio-philosophical" ground of Fromm's humanism (Durkin 2014, 2, 14).[37] Schaar's argument, which seems to have escaped the attention of Fromm's commentators, is summarised in the claim that Fromm's "knowledge rests not upon an empirical study of human behaviour but on a philosophic analysis of [our] needs as they stem from the conditions of [our] existence." (1961, 42)[38]

I have devoted a substantial amount of this section to Schaar's critique because as well as identifying an omission in the subsequent reception of Fromm it also helps situate my own account of his work relative to that of others. Questioning the ground of Fromm's work is clearly important insofar as it might point to ambiguity in his approach, but – even if Schaar's account remains limited itself – it is also salient in leading to the question of whether the implications of the roots of Fromm's existentialism have ever been followed through. In other words, I will come to ask what is entailed for Fromm's theory of love by its roots in what seems to be an exilic existentialism focused on the need to return to unity. Arguably the secondary literature that I have surveyed until now merely exhibits Fromm's formative influences without thinking through their ramifications. An exception to this is Schaar's claim that Fromm simply cannot be a Freudian revisionist, because his conception of human nature and its relation to civilisation is profoundly opposed to Freud's, and also so fundamental to Fromm's thought (1961, 61). A second gap in the literature that exhibits Fromm's roots centres around whether the humanism that he employs results in voluntarism, an omission that I will begin to address in Chapter Two.

As well as contesting the assumptions at work in both Fromm and his commentators, Schaar's work is vulnerable to the way that subsequent scholarship, that of Friedman and Braune in particular, has focused on the prophetic Fromm. Schaar's critique also turns to focus on the logical foundations of Fromm's thought, accusing him of failing to respond to

[37] Schaar's second objection, however, simply does not hold, since his argument that Fromm's conception of knowledge as based in love and as transcending objective knowledge entails mysticism rather than science ignores the fact that Fromm states in the same text that objective knowledge is a prerequisite of loving knowledge (Fromm [1956] 1995, 25; see also Section 3.3.3).

[38] This is additionally premised on Schaar's own assumption that happiness and mental health are moral rather than empirical concepts, which seems to be based on the idea that each entails some notion of the good which cannot be derived from, say, biochemical observation (Schaar 1961,56).

the fact-value distinction around which moral philosophers have often argued that it is impossible to derive norms of conduct from the mere observation of phenomena. Schaar argues that Fromm's approach both to the ethical good and to the self simply fail to meet traditional criteria of logical rigour. Whilst this may be the case, the problem is that Schaar's argument simply assumes that it is necessary for Fromm to respond to the problems of Western epistemology using deductive logic. Whilst Western philosophy has indeed been dominated by the idea of logical rigour, arguably since Socrates, there are nonetheless other ways to imagine the use of language.[39] In this context, Schaar's claim that Fromm depends upon a supposed logical equation of living and living well (1961, 32) becomes vulnerable to a response based on the possibility that Fromm is simply not using the same logical paradigm as Schaar.

One example of another function of language is the prophetic voice, which would suggest that Fromm and some of his sources employ writing and speech not in the form of deduction but as a call to action and understanding. This could arguably be supplemented with a phenomenological approach to language such as found in Martin Heidegger, in which language unveils the truth of phenomena ([1927] 1962, 256-273).[40] Rather than dismissing Fromm's use of language as logically deficient, however much that might be the case, I would also argue for the possibility of conceiving his work as a prophetic declaration intended to reveal to each reader or hearer aspects of existence that have previously been concealed. This would render the matter of the ground a less important question, but admittedly would also lead to something of a sporadic or fragmentary approach concerning which aspects of Fromm's work made an impact on each reader. In fact, this possibility of fragmentation is connected to my own questioning of the grounding of love in exile, need, and unity, and the idea of an alternative conception of language is also helpful in my attempt to recover the relevance of Fromm's approach to love when this ground is rendered vulnerable (see Conclusion).

As well as these texts, there have, of course, been a number of articles in which Fromm's work has been presented. Again, most of these depart from the question of relevance

[39] Fromm himself claims that there is a paradoxical model of language and logic at work in several Eastern traditions (1960, 49ff).

[40] This point could also be amplified by referring to the concept of performative utterances found in Austin (1962), which involves the idea that language can be active as well as descriptive.

(Cortina 2017; Ortmeyer, Rasmussen and Salhani 2017), and the assertion that Fromm was once a "forgotten intellectual" expunged from accounts of the origin of the Institute (McLaughlin 1998a, 1998b). These have focused on Fromm's importance in psychoanalysis (Philipson 2017; Cortina 2015, 2017; Roland 2017; Silver 2017), as well as in social theory (Grillo 2018), politics (Wilde 2000), philosophy (Omelchenko 2015), and education (Fleming 2012; Bierhoff, 2015). In addition to the recovery of Fromm's relevance, there are important criticisms around the theory of instinct and autonomy (Cortina 2015, 406ff), of the limitations of the social stance in psychoanalysis and the neglect of the dyadic nature of development (Philipson 2017, 56-58, 63), and of the conception of the empathic experience of whatever is felt by a patient (Cortina 2017). In addition to these psychoanalytic and social criticisms, there are more specific or niche-based considerations of Fromm's approach to gender (Chancer 2017), sexuality (King 1992), and same sex-attraction (Bauer 2017), which testify to the range of contexts in which Fromm's work has been found relevant.

0.4 Approaching the Theory of Love

Given the vast amount written about the theory and practice of love throughout history, the intentions of any research or argumentation in this area must be precisely defined. This is even more important when we take into consideration the range of ways in which love has been conceived, the amount of equivocation between different uses of the term, the range of languages involved, and the way in which its uses have often been in contrast with one another. Fromm uses the term clearly, to mean an active power possessed by all humans which can either be fostered or frustrated by our environment; which involves a basic orientation or attitude towards all people; which is a gift of self for the growth and good of others; which develops union with others and with nature; and which is the answer to the need of the exiled human and the dichotomies of human existence. The brotherly love through which we should relate to all people is the ground of the specific loves focused on our children, partners, self, and God. Finally, love as Fromm conceives it has four elements, with care and responsibility in the sphere of activity, respect as a way of seeing clearly, and the unitive knowledge which I will describe as our ultimate dynamism. Since the thesis is weighted towards the work of Fromm and hence an exploration and critique of one particular approach to love, there is necessarily less emphasis on specific other texts. Nonetheless, in my conclusion I will apply some context, comparison, and contrast, to Fromm's work by drawing on the thematic and historical approach in Simon May's *Love:*

A History (2011), and *Love: A New Understanding of an Ancient Emotion* (2019). As will become clear in the conclusion, I have elected to draw on May's account because of its range and its clear distinction of six historical interpretations of love, since Fromm's approach can be illuminated through contrast or complementarity with each of them.

0.5 Content and Method of the Thesis

As outlined in Section 0.1, the aim of this thesis is to develop an existential revision of the theory of love found in the work of Erich Fromm, based on the claim that the power to love can be made more concrete through conversation with a variety of writers in the fields of psychotherapy, philosophy, and theology. Throughout this thesis I will therefore argue that any power of love that we possess is deeply conditioned by our situation and personal circumstances and limitations, specifically by embodied finitude (and the components of spatiality, temporality, energy, contingency, and particularity), inter-subjectivity, the interpretational world, and by the psychodynamics of repression and transference. The first chapter will primarily analyse the ground of love in Fromm's own writings, building on the account of the roots of his work in Durkin and others that I have discussed above. Focusing mainly on the works prior to *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995), I will describe how Fromm's work involves a narrative arc from our putative pre-human or pre-existential harmony with nature. Central to Fromm's work is the claim that our evolution renders this harmony sundered, as we emerge into the freedom that Fromm calls individuation, as well as the series of needs and dichotomies that this entails. I will then discuss how Fromm sees character as our habitual way of responding to this situation, with a broad distinction of productive/progressive and regressive ways of doing so. The productive/progressive way of relating will then be seen to culminate in spontaneity and love, leading to a new harmony with others and nature which is interpersonal whilst at the same time independent. Finally, I will question the place and legitimacy of harmony and our need for it in Fromm's work, bringing into view the question of its implications for love and for the validity of Fromm's approach.

This first chapter and its account of Fromm's conception of the context of love in alienation and existential dichotomy will prepare the ground for a sustained treatment of the themes and arguments found in *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995). In Chapter Two I will consider aspects of love which I have briefly introduced above, namely that love is the answer to the problem of our human existence; that it is an active power; that it entails the

gift of self; and that it necessitates a basic orientation or attitude to the world rather than merely towards particular persons. I will then begin my treatment of the elements of love, with this chapter discussing the components that primarily involve activity, namely care and responsibility. Subsequently, I will discuss a number of themes from Fromm's psychoanalytic work - repression, alienation, transference, and narcissism - arguing for the importance of repression for the other three, and questioning the coherence of Fromm's ostensibly unrelated claims that love originates in our own need and yet also tends towards the needs of others for their own sake. This will provide the ground to consider both alienation and repression as somatic phenomena, which I will I develop with attention to the work of R.D. Laing ([1960] 2010) and Alexander Lowen ([1975] 1994), and with a brief consideration of the implications of physiology and biochemistry for the activity of love. Throughout Chapter Two there will be consistent attention to Fromm's claim that genuine love must be perfect, contrasted with my own argument that theories of love should account for our limitations.

The third chapter will shift from the elements of love that are mainly concerned with activity to those that involve perception, namely Fromm's respect and knowledge. Following discussion of Fromm's treatment of these elements, I will question the relationship between two of his objects, brotherly and erotic love, as well as continuing my critique of love as a need of the person who loves. These sections will also involve the introduction of a consideration of Fromm's claim that love as knowledge transcends concepts, and that the unity of love is our ultimate dynamism. Building on the understanding of transference as a surrender of our responsibility (Chapter Two), this chapter will shift to a different understanding in which transference is seen in its distorting aspects, both in Fromm's work and in the history of psychotherapy. This will have additional recourse to the Object Relations Theory of W.R.D. Fairbairn (1952), which I will develop into an analysis of the importance of repressed images of parents and others for perception. Building on the similarities of Fromm's idea of love as involving genuine sight of others and Jean-Luc Marion's ([1982] 1991, [1986] 2002 [1997] 2002, [2003] 2007) connection between love and phenomenality, I will argue for the importance of these repressed others in any approach to love that involves visibility. The third chapter will conclude with a call for phenomenology to account for the importance of repression and transference through a psychodynamic reduction, as well as suggesting a way of

reciprocally situating transference – as conceived in this chapter – into a dynamic psychology of love and self-realization.[41]

This question of the inner world will lead into Chapter Four, where I will consider Fromm's account of how love of God relates to the psychological and historical emergence of God-concepts. Beginning with Fromm's claims around how theology is rooted in character structure and in our response to the problem and dichotomies of existence, I will then consider his account of the emergence of the concept of God in history. This involves totemism, matriarchy, patriarchy, negation, and culminates in a symbolic approach that depicts theological concepts as projections of human powers that we have fled from. Fromm's account of theology therefore culminates with an affirmation of the possibility of the full development of the individuated self and liberation from limiting conditions. I will then discuss a more expansive concept of self in Fromm's *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (1950) and *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (1960), suggesting that these are inconsistent with the self depicted in *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995). I will subsequently turn Fromm's idea of the concrete God-concept back on his own approach, employing the work of Ana-Maria Rizzuto (1979) to argue both for a more contextual and particular understanding of the emergence of our God-concepts and for the possibility that these can be repressed. The importance of this claim will then be discussed in the context of the distinct but complementary accounts of idolatry found in Fromm and Marion, and the argument that Fromm's work implies that the full emergence of self also involves attention to our unconscious theological representations. Finally, I will draw upon the tantric theory of Sally Kempton (2013) to propose a revision of Fromm's concepts of power and divinity based on the idea of a feminine energetic ground of the Cosmos, ultimately suggesting that Fromm's concept of self shelters a subtle alienation in terms of agency.

Following on from the focus on how repression inhibits love and on how our dynamisms are ordered towards relation, Chapter Five will then shift to how love and relationship condition repression and our dynamisms. I will compare Fromm's work with the intersubjective approach found in Robert Stolorow and George Atwood's *Structures of*

[41] As per footnote 3 (Section 0.1), psychodynamic in this sense refers to the idea of repressed dynamisms and the importance of uncovering them.

Subjectivity (2014) arguing that Fromm both anticipates and is vulnerable to some of the perspectives developed in the latter text. Stolorow and Atwood depict human life as profoundly contextual, arguing that our conceptions of self, other, and world are always emerging in our relationships, along with our capacity to experience emotion and to love. I will argue from several less emphatic threads in Fromm's work that he is deeply sensitive to this intersubjective context of self, love, and repression, in both his theory of existence and his approach to psychotherapy. I will then build on Fromm's approach to explore the idea that love is a way of being that is itself therapeutic, stressing the importance of Fromm's emphasis on self-love and *intra-subjective* context. The focus on the experiential worlds and their fluidity will also be an important avenue of my critique of Fromm, since his approach is less attentive to experience than one which is both intersubjective and phenomenological. Finally, in my conclusion this focus on first-person experience will be employed to explore the implications of grounding love in need, and to reconsider the coherence and importance of *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995), again focusing on the concrete conditions that I explore throughout the thesis.

Chapter One: The Existential Conditions of Love

1.1 The Original Harmony

My account of the work of Erich Fromm prior to the publication of *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995) begins with the concept of harmony. Harmony is the state that human self-awareness disrupts, both in terms of the evolution of the species and the development of the individual. Furthermore, it is also the state that we seek, although in a new form that reflects our developed capacities. I will begin with Fromm's account of this harmony – also referred to as primary ties – in *The Fear of Freedom* ([1941] 2001), before comparing it with a slightly different account in *The Sane Society* ([1955] 2002). Having justified the importance of an analysis of the relationship between human freedom and social processes ([1955] 2002, viii), Fromm prefaces his consideration of individuation (see Section 1.2) with the harmonious state from which it develops. This state has two analogous aspects, with the first – phylogenetic - concerning the evolution of the human species from our genetic ancestors. The second is ontogenetic, which involves the physiological and psychological development of persons from infancy to adulthood. Both are significant for Fromm's understanding of our predicament and of love, and each will be explored in turn here.

Fromm first states that human "social history" begins with our emergence "from a state of oneness with the natural world" ([1955] 2002, 19) into an awareness of our separation. This takes place by a gradual process of leaving the state of union rather than a sudden one. Whilst this might primarily be understood in terms of the development of our species, Fromm begins by discussing it as an ontogenetic and individual process, again a phased one. The birth of a child means both biological separation from a mother and "the beginning of individual human existence." (20) Despite how abrupt this is on one level it also involves a period – comparatively long relative to other species – of functional unity. The child is still bound by what Fromm calls "primary ties" (21) with its mother, an organic and normal phase of our development. Despite the appearance of physical separation, in "a functional sense, the infant remains part of the mother," (21) existing in a state of complete dependency for its vital needs. Despite limiting the child's freedom, these ties are nonetheless the source of its security and orientation (20), and a "basic unity with the world outside." (24) The child is an "integral part" (24) of this world, and hence the

world is not a source of fear. We shall see how this "original identity with others" (24) is ruptured, having first considered its phylogenetic analogate.

Fromm contrasts the evolutionary emergence of human existence and freedom with the harmony of animal, instinct, and nature ([1955] 2002, 26). The most concise account of pre-human animal life is given in *The Sane Society* (Fromm [1955] 2002), which contains some development from the discussion in *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm [1941] 2001) . Fromm sees humans as having gradually evolved from a state that was governed by instinct, or "specific action patterns which are […] determined by inherited neurological structures." ([1955] 2002, 22) Allowing for some gradation in the flexibility of these patterns amongst separate animal species and intelligence "in the higher primates, " non-human animals are nonetheless seen as merely passive adherents to the "biological laws of nature." (22)[42] Moreover, they are considered bereft of moral conscience, awareness of self, and reason. All of this is central in Fromm's picture of the harmony between animal and nature, since the animal is "equipped by nature to cope with the very conditions it is to meet." (23) Whilst he is clear that he is not portraying a world without threat and struggle for existence, animals are in harmony with nature because they are possessed of all the biological and instinctual equipment required for the satisfaction of their needs.[43] Hence there is a clear and determined chain between the stimuli of need, and reaction. These two aspects – equipment for satisfaction of needs and determined response to stimuli – form the basis of Fromm's original unity. They also function as the points of contrast for Fromm's discussion of the evolutionary path taken by human life.

Before seeing this contrast, it is important to first note how the transition between human and pre-human is a gradual one, reflecting a period in human development where some semblance of harmonious ties was still experienced. It is important to point out, firstly, that Fromm's use of phylogenetic involves the development of culture, as well as mere biology.

[42] From now on, 'animal' will refer only to non-human animals.

[43] The idea that harmony means the instinctual fulfilment of needs is a fairly idiosyncratic interpretation, given the connotations that harmony has of agreement, unity, or cooperation. This demonstrates the extent to which Fromm's work is utterly grounded in need, as I will return to repeatedly. An alternative to harmony might be found in resonance, as recently developed in the work of Hartmut Rosa ([2016] 2019, 164-74). Rosa uses the metaphor of the tuning fork to depict the way in which we can respond to one another and the world, becoming in sync and mutually affecting and affected. Rosa's use of vibration would perhaps also shed more light on the energetic aspects of Fromm's approach (see Sections 1.5 and 2.16).

Here also the distinction between phylogenetic and ontogenetic loosens. This is because these liminal areas between harmony and independence include connections between child and mother, "member of primitive community [and] clan and nature," or "medieval man" (Fromm [1941] 2001, 20) and Church or social group. Again, these are sources of security, orientation, belonging, unity, and meaning (20-37, 69, 221), by which the early humans remained "tied to the world from which [they] emerged." (28) This connection, with "the soil he lives on, the sun and moon and stars, the trees and flowers, the animals, and the group of people with whom he is connected by the ties of blood" is expressed by "primitive religion" as a "oneness with nature," ([1941] 2001, 28-9) and with one another (19).[44]

As well as being his point of departure, this interpretation of harmony and our ties also points to the psychodynamic nature of his later work, both in psychotherapy and psychology.[45] This will be discussed in more depth throughout this chapter and the next, the salient point for now being that Fromm envisages a harmonious and unitive environment as one in which our needs are met. This satisfaction originally takes place either through maternal care or instinctual equipment, or – to a lesser degree – earth, community, church, or family. These needs will later be extended to encompass strivings and motivations of a psychological and existential nature, dynamisms which will distinguish Fromm's individuated human. Another point to note is that it is rather vague as to what extent these needs would have governed the activity of the medieval human, or indeed whether medieval society, for instance, is merely envisaged as the communal locale for the fulfilment of our basic animal strivings. A more detailed consideration of these needs - and others - necessitates moving to our second theme, individuation.

[44] Fromm always refers to humanity with the masculine singular pronoun. I will retain direct quotes as they appear unless agreement with my own preceding text enables a change, and vary my own use between neutral, feminine, and masculine.

[45] Fromm's work is psychological insofar as it assumes that human life can be depicted as a "dynamic psychology", ([1941] 2001) in which the most important factor is our existential and biological needs.

1.2 Individuation

Each of our four preliminary works revolves around the notion of individuation. Fromm does tend to emphasise a different aspect in each text, however, and the language of individuation does not pervade the later texts as much as *The Fear of Freedom* ([1941] 2001).[46] Since the vocabulary of individuation and its content and historical context are dominant in *The Fear of Freedom*, it is there that I will begin. In fact, individuation assumes such centrality there that Fromm states that "[t]he history of mankind is the history of growing individuation." (26) This is a gradual phylogenetic and ontogenetic evolutionary process peaking "in modern history in the centuries between the Reformation and the present." (26) The citation continues by attesting that history is a "history of growing freedom," (26) hinting at the connection between individuation and freedom that will become clear as this chapter develops (20ff). This section will focus first on how the historical process is portrayed.

Individuation is seen both in Fromm's account of the development of the individual person and of the human species, in each case concerning the emergence from the harmonious primary ties discussed in Section 1.1. In phylogenetic terms, humanity gradually emerges from natural unity into "an awareness of [itself] as an entity separate from surrounding nature and man." (Fromm [1941] 2001, 19) In other words, individuation is the "growing process of the emergence of the individual from his original ties." (20) It is crucial to emerge from these ties since they "stand in the way of the development of his reason and his critical capacities…his development as a free, self-determining, productive individual." (29) Given that these ties gave humanity security and orientation, individuation presents both individual and species with a task. This is to become re-orientated to the experience of a post-harmonious world and find security in a way which reflects the developing awareness of separation and the emergence of new human powers. This awareness is depicted slightly differently in person and in species. Relative to the individual, it involves the development of the nervous system and body in general, specifically involving the physical and mental capacity to grasp objects, the experience of "a world outside oneself," (21) and the general growth of activity and intensity in the physical, emotional, and mental

[46] This point might merit more exploration in a project with a different emphasis, but at present I can simply offer the example that the predominance of individuation here largely gives way to that of the birth of the self in *Man of Himself* (Fromm [1947] 2003) and later texts.

spheres (23). The natural tendency of this moves towards integration of these spheres/powers.[47] Fromm summarises this and his theory of personal individuation as "the growth of self-strength." (23)

In our phylogenetic development, the emphasis is placed upon freedom from coercion by instinct, understood as inherited neurological patterns of action ([1941] 2001, 26). This freedom involves adaptation to our environment based on learning and thought rather than mere mechanical reflex. Fromm does recognise that other animal species display learning and thought, but argues that this reaches a decisive point in humans. Hence, it is the comparative absence of instinctual coercion in humans that characterises our freedom and lack of fixed actions. Relative to our basic physiological needs we remain fixed in the requirement to strive for satisfaction, but Fromm distinguishes between this imperative and the multiplicity of possible modes of responding to it. It is in this diversity of open and deliberative possibilities for our response to stimuli and need that Fromm locates human freedom: "freedom from instinctual determination of his actions." (26) In the context of love, each of these is important since the ontogenetic development of the body and the integration of our powers is a prerequisite of loving activity, along with freedom from the exterior conditioning of our actions.

The beginning of the last citation – 'freedom from' – and its distinction from 'freedom to' indicates the ambiguity or dialectical character of Fromm's understanding of individuation and freedom. This involves the division of freedom into two pairs. Although rather vaguely distinguished in places, Fromm names the first binary 'freedom from/freedom to', and a second 'negative freedom/positive freedom'. This is rendered confusing by Fromm's tendency to equate positive freedom with freedom to ([1941] 2001) 28), but to not do so with freedom from and negative freedom. Freedom from is simply the process by which humanity grows out of its phylogenetic and ontogenetic primary ties. This process is necessary but not sufficient for freedom to, which means "to develop and express his own individual self unhampered by these ties." (25) The process of emerging from the ties is thus merely seen as the foundation upon which freedom to can be developed. So, the first of our binaries distinguishes between liberation from limiting conditions and the

[47] This is precisely the sort of integration that was part of the theoretical basis of Fromm's split with the Institute, which I have referred to in Section 0.2.7.

development of our capacities that this merely facilitates. The second pair, on the other hand, whilst also culminating in the positive use of our powers, contrasts this with another aspect of freedom. Negative freedom describes the implications of this liberation for our psychological state, and involves a variety of disorientating and difficult experiences, and a new awareness of vulnerability.

Rather than signifying the negation of primary ties, the negative aspect of freedom therefore refers to the undesirable consequences of the absence of natural harmony. Since these ties offered security, belonging, identity, orientation, and meaning, breaking free from them – individuation – implies their absence or loss. Of all the aspects of individuation, the abyss left by the absence of our primary ties is perhaps the most pervasive in Fromm's early work, particularly in *The Fear of Freedom* ([1941] 2001). The historical and personal development of individuation – the strength of self – is hindered most gravely by the fear of isolation ([1941] 2001, 17, 181, 221); doubt about our identity (67, 134, 226); feelings of powerlessness (76); inner compulsions (80); slavish obedience to authority (122); oppressive social conditions (26); and automatic conformity to cultural patterns (158-77). Due to these negative corollaries, the process of individuation results in what Fromm calls a dialectic of freedom. Here the development of positive freedom is measured by the extent to which we succumb to escapism and abdication of self when faced with these negative elements. This means that 'freedom to' and 'freedom from' are in continuous tension, because of how the negative aspects of freedom lead to a tendency to interrupt the process of emerging out of our ties and into 'freedom to'. This will be treated in more depth in Section 1.6, but at present I will turn to Fromm's account of how the experience of negative freedom elicits a search for union, or a quest for an answer, by producing a series of existential needs and strivings.

1.3 The Existential Situation

As we have seen, the process of individuation and self-awareness entails the emergence of two contrary aspects of freedom: increasing isolation, and the capacity to exercise our powers. In *The Fear of Freedom* ([1941] 2001), Fromm's terminology is primarily confined to dialectical freedom. By *Man For Himself* ([1947] 2003) he is referring increasingly to our existential situation, primarily in terms of the needs and dichotomies associated with human self-awareness. There are sparing references to this in *The Fear of Freedom*, mainly around our need for a remedy for aloneness (Fromm [1941] 2001, 16);

for relation (15); for union (25); and for new ties (130); ultimately culminating in the fulfilment of all of these in a new harmony with the world (see Section 1.8). Since, however, the immediate post-individuation situation begins to emerge in *Man for Himself*, before being systematically elaborated in *The Sane Society* (Fromm [1955] 2002), this section will focus on these later texts. This is particularly significant for the entire present project, since Fromm's psychology is a psychodynamic one in which the needs and strivings of the psyche are central to our activity. Having considered instinct from the animal perspective, we will see now how Fromm distinguishes human/existential needs from those which are shared with other animals.

In *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003), Fromm refers to the human situation, which – as a fundamental and universal dimension of human nature – must be treated prior to the particularities of human character (see Section 1.5). As we have seen in Section 1.1, the first aspect of this is freedom from instinct, as one aspect of our phylogenetic primary ties. Due to their fixed instinctual equipment, animals can either adapt to their environment in a way that ensures fulfilment of their biological needs, or perish. Change takes place merely in the animal – it is autoplastic – rather than being exercised by animal on environment (alloplastic).[48] Fromm's early work turns on the claim that this static nature of instinct involves a basic level of neurological development compared to that of humans, and that this comparison is decisive in the distinction between humans and other species. Viewed from the opposite perspective, the increasing capacity of consciousness to interrogate and explore the world entails the inadequacy of what relatively little instinctual equipment we possess. In sum, the "emergence of man can be defined as occurring at the point in the process of evolution where instinctive adaptation has reached its minimum." (Fromm [1947], 2003) 28) In place of instinct we have new strengths, qualities, and potentialities. These are principally awareness of self as a separate entity; the ability to remember the past and visualise the future; increasing symbolic power; rational conception and understanding of the world; and the imaginative capacity to transcend sense data (28). Lack of instinctual determination is thus coupled with the new potentialities that distinguish our human species from everything that we have evolved from.

[48] Fromm does not dwell on this point, but I would argue that he means that other animals do not mould the world to fit their own needs as humans do.

However, given that these powers also involve the disruption of the primal harmony, they give rise to a series of existential dichotomies. These are insoluble contradictions rooted in the fact that humans are part of nature yet also have capacities and awareness which entail transcending it. Whilst the natural world is our only dwelling, our inability to understand our origins or purpose renders us homeless and inescapably aware of our limitations (Fromm [1947], 2003) 29). The main factor in this situation is reason, by which we are impelled to seek an ever-elusive answer. Because of this quest we exist "in a state of constant and unavoidable disequilibrium." (29) Given our lack of instinctual determination we cannot function in a merely patterned way but must live personally. We are thus the sole animal to whom existence is posed as an inescapable problem, one of finding a meaning to our existence and a new home, a world of our own in which we are no longer separate from nature, from self, and from one another. It is this problem of existential exile that characterises, grounds, and unites the whole of Fromm's work, including *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995) and his conception of psychotherapy.

This existential situation results in the series of dichotomies depicted in *Man for Himself* (Fromm [1947] 2003), and the needs found in *The Sane Society* (Fromm [1955] 2002). These are referred to as existential because they are rooted in the necessary conditions of our existence, and in this are opposed to dichotomies merely rooted in historical or economic conditions. Foundational to all of these is the tension between life and death, by which our desire to live is ultimately contrasted with our mortality. Fromm's attention to this is limited to a mere paragraph in which the fact of death is seen as ineluctably tragic and in need of ideological or theological negation.[49] This fundamental limitation and impermanence leads to a second dichotomy, in which our potential to express and realise our human capacities is mitigated by our finite lifespan. The historical development of the human species will always dwarf the potential of any one person, and our individual consciousness will always be at least dimly aware of this supposed deficiency. The dichotomy which is of most concern to the present project is the third, which involves being simultaneously alone and related ([1947], 2003) 30-36).

[49] This is perhaps in tension with his later interest in mysticism and Buddhism, in which the impermanence of life need not be a dichotomy but perhaps a liberation or transformation.

Fromm's attention to this third dichotomy is rather sparing at this point, restricted to observing that: (i) we are alone in being unique and aware of ourselves as separate, and (ii) we are alone when confronted with a rational judgement or decision. The dichotomised aspect of this emerges in the contrast with our deep need for relation and solidarity. As we shall see in Section 1.6, it is this fear of being isolated that is central in the development of our regressive solutions to the problem of individuation. These three dichotomies – life/death; power/limitation; and solitude/relation – present us with an intractable imperative, which we can respond to either with acceptance or by evasion and the pretence that our avoidance is rational. These two options correspond to either embracing our existential situation or evading it. The latter option – avoidance and rationalization – may well entail conscious respite from the dichotomies of existence, but their absence is merely superficial. Evasion, that is, would still leave us beset by the restlessness, dissatisfaction, and anxiety that are the symptoms of our deeper sense of our dichotomies and the needs which they entail.

It might be argued that Fromm's whole work revolves around these needs, including *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995), and his approach to repression (as I will show). These are so important to Fromm that he states that the "most striking feature in human behaviour is the tremendous intensity of [our] passions and strivings." ([1947] 2003, 33) Fromm rejects any reduction of these needs to mere instinctual or biological urges, since even given satiation in hunger, thirst, and sex, our uniquely human strivings remain. These needs are generated not merely by the origin we share with the animal kingdom, but by the disharmony resulting from our development of self-consciousness, reason, imagination, individuality, etc. Evolution of humanity thus entails an "imperative drive to restore a unity and equilibrium between [ourselves] and the rest of nature." (33) Fromm's exposition of the content of these needs in *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003) is restricted to one – the frame of orientation and devotion – which is more developed in *The Sane Society* (Fromm [1955] 2002, 26-64). Given this, it is to the latter text that I will now turn my attention.

1.4 Existential Needs

Following another account of our emergence from pre-human harmony, Fromm states that our "most intensive passions and needs are not those rooted in [the] body, but those rooted in the very particularity of [our] existence." ([1955] 2002, 28) Our existential situation

impels us to search for "equilibrium […] a new harmony […] an answer to our existence," (27-8) and entails the development of a series of needs which reflect this. I shall now describe these needs, beginning with relatedness, and moving onto transcendence, rootedness, identity, and orientation/devotion. Fromm contrasts relatedness with its opposite (narcissism), whilst splitting the others into a progressive/regressive pole which will be named in brackets. These regressive poles will only be mentioned briefly, since I will have a separate section dealing with them in the context of the general tendency towards regress (Section 1.6).

1.4.1 Relatedness (Narcissism)

Due to the negative aspects of freedom, existence is an experience of a prison from which we can only escape through the development of relation. Fromm argues that our sanity depends on finding relation, and that the need to be sane underlies all our attempts to relate.[50] Since the genuine fulfilment of our relational need is found in love, it will be developed in subsequent chapters, but it should be mentioned now that it is contrasted with both submission/symbiosis, and narcissism.[51] In the former, two individuals are merged with one another, albeit with contrary roles (see Sections 1.6, 2.4, and 2.12). This enables the evasion of responsibility for each person, and avoidance of the need to choose how to exercise their faculties. In the second, the awareness of the narcissist is restricted to "his own thought processes, feelings, and needs," (Fromm [1955] 2002, 34) and both relation and the perception of reality is limited. Fromm later argues that this is "the opposite pole of love," (1980, 7) which also indicates the significant connection between love and relatedness, given that narcissism opposes them both.

1.4.2 Transcendence (Creativeness/Destructiveness)

A second existential need is for transcendence, with progressive and regressive poles of creativeness and destructiveness respectively. The imperative here is to transcend "the role

[50] That this relation involves the full development of selfhood leads to a distinct contrast between Fromm's approach and any view that sees our liberation as involving the evisceration of self (see footnote 10 in Section 0.2.4, and footnote 151 in Section 4.1.4).

[51] I will consider narcissism in more depth in Section 2.12.

of the creature," (Fromm [1955] 2002, 35) by having a creative impact on the world. This creativity, be it in parenthood, agriculture, work, art, ideas, or loving relations, enables us to emerge from mere passivity and enter "the realm of purposefulness and freedom." (37) This creative power is opposed by the possibility of transcending our environment through destruction. Destructiveness is a derived or secondary potentiality by which we are elevated above other persons or entities by wielding dominion and control over them, culminating in the decisive act of total destruction. Destructiveness as a secondary potential will recur throughout the work, particularly in Sections 1.9 and 5.2.1, where it will be directly contrasted with the primary potential of love.[52] For now, the important part is that Fromm's humans have an inescapable – for all that we might attempt to evade it – need to transcend inertia and passivity by using our powers for creation and impact upon nature.

1.4.3 Rootedness (Brotherliness/Incest)

Rootedness, the third existential need in *The Sane Society* (Fromm [1955] 2002), is by far the most developed of the five, and involves progressive/regressive aspects of brotherliness and incest. Much of this section (Fromm [1955] 2002, 38-60) is concerned with the natural roots/ties discussed in Section 1.1, though now through the medium of Fromm's appropriation of the work of Bachofen (see Section 0.2.7). Fromm argues that Bachofen has identified a matriarchal phase of human development, which was at once social, psychological, and religious. Fromm uses this to revise Freud's merely "negative, pathogenic" interpretation of maternal attachment, arguing also for a "positive aspect…of affirmation of life, freedom, and equality [pervading] the matriarchal structure." (45)[53] Consistent with Section 1.1, however, this matriarchal rootedness and dependence can also impede the emergence of reason and individuality, and so is merely a stage of human development. A subsequent phase is thus necessary, involving a shift from matriarchy to patriarchy. Fromm claims that the maternal connection with children during pregnancy and infancy renders men further from nature than women and hence involves the development of different characteristics and expectations. The emergence of the paternal relationship is

[52] Fromm often also refers to 'irrational passions' such as greed, destructiveness, hate, revenge, or envy, and states that the loving and productive person must conquer these (see [1947] 2003, 63-64; [1964] 1980, 24-36).

[53] The matriarchal-patriarchal arc will recur in Section 4.1.2 in a theological context, where I will subject it to more scrutiny.

seen as largely legalistic, based on power, "abstraction, conscience, duty, law, and hierarchy." (46)[54] Again, there are both positive and negative dimensions to "the patriarchal complex: reason, discipline, conscience, and individuation" in the first place; and "hierarchy, oppression, inequality, submission," in the latter (47).

The rationale behind discussing these at this stage is that they form two aspects – either complementary or contradictory depending on their respective weight – of Fromm's account of rootedness. Following a breathless tour of the history of the theology of God – through animism and Mother-Goddesses to legalism and Father-Gods – Fromm finally begins to elaborate on the relevance of this account for rootedness, brotherliness, and incest. Each fixation has positive and negative aspects that must be balanced, viewed here through their relation to the social sphere. Patriarchy manifests negatively "in a new submission to the state and temporal power, to the ever-increasing importance of man-made laws and secular hierarchies." (Fromm [1955] 2002, 55) Positively, it is found in "the increasing spirit of rationality and objectivity and in the growth of individual and social consciences." (56) The development of the scientific method is viewed as the main flourishing of this mentality in our time. Matriarchy also has benefits, based on its mentality of unconditional love and affirmation of life. These are "human equality…the sacredness of life…all men's right to share in the fruits of nature [expressed] in the ideas of natural law, humanism, enlightenment philosophy and the objectives of democratic socialism." (57) The basic feature of this is that all are "children of Mother Earth," (57) with the right to maternal nourishment and happiness regardless of achievement or status. Relative to the original need for rootedness, this is Fromm's understanding of brotherliness, in which all people are envisaged as equal and worthy of a home on the earth.[55]

The negative aspect of our matriarchal tendency remains persistent to the present day and involves regression to fixation upon blood and soil. Without the security of the primary

[54] I will discuss the ramifications for this transition in Sections 5.3.3 and 5.3.6, with the basic point being that maternal love is unconditional and based on nature, whilst paternal love is conditional and earned by achievement and capability.

[55] It might be a valid question to ask whether Fromm's notion of brotherliness is anthropocentric or speciesist, although is true that in later texts he begins to develop an ecological sensitivity (see [1993] 2007).

ties, some humans have taken refuge in state- or clan-based systems of nationalism and racism, and the worship of political systems and demagogues. This – and its milder form of mere national belonging – leads to the fear and judgement of difference. In sum, any putative love of nation, race, or clan that is not at once universal is incest rather than genuine love. Incest is a significant concept for Fromm, and should be seen in light of his humanist revision and extension of the basic Freudian concepts (see Section 0.2.7). Rather than being understood in a merely sexual sense, Fromm uses the term in a wider sense to refer to the idolatrous fixation and submission to an exclusive cultural or geographical group or symbol. This is inimical to genuine love and rootedness because it limits the extent to which we can relate to those outside of our sphere (Fromm [1955] 2002, 38-44).

I have followed Fromm's exposition of this aspect of our existential situation and needs because it is the clearest account of the progressive and regressive dialectic at work in them all, and in Fromm's work as a whole. Our need to re-establish roots upon the earth leads either to the development of genuine fraternal connection and life in accordance with the dignity of all, or to the idolatrous absorption in a national, racial, or cultural absolute which abhors outsiders. This dichotomy can be viewed at another level of abstraction, which helps show the importance of the progress/regress division as it recurs in Fromm's work. Viewed progressively, the existential need is fulfilled through a solution that makes full use of our powers. With regress, the need is evaded in a submissive and alienating way of relating that is dependent on an authoritarian power structure. The important point to note is that this has deep implications for our subsequent account of the relationship between love and repression, since repression will also be seen to result in the type of regressive solution discussed here (see Section 1.6). It will also resound throughout my discussion of Fromm's early approach to psychoanalysis (Section 1.9), which is essentially one of response to our needs and whether these are empowering or disempowering, autonomous or heteronomous.

1.4.4 Identity (Individuality/Herd Conformity)

The fourth existential need is for the development of a sense of identity and of being a subject of activity, which is emerges as an answer to the question posed by the development of self-awareness. This follows on from the previous need, since only in emerging from a sense of identity mediated through social structure (family, clan, tribe, or

nation) can we learn how to identify as individuals. Freed from the structures of authoritarianism, we ideally learn to experience ourselves as the centre of our own powers and "acquire an individual sense of identity." (Fromm [1955] 2002, 62) Fromm claims that the fulfilment of this need is rarer than advocates of the freedoms of Western culture would have us believe, and perhaps the whole of the early body of his work is an attempt to demonstrate this.[56] The alternative to this individual identity is regression to a modern version of clan conformity, now primarily mediated through "[n]ation, religion, class, and occupation." (62) This might involve cultures still operating with the vestiges of a class system, or others in which the economic market typically provides a material culture in which we can find security through conformity (158-177). With herd conformity, identity is not the outcome of personal activity but of the drive to escape the question posed by self-awareness. Hence, this intense need – rooted in the dichotomies and conditions of existence – produces strivings which can result either in the development of a genuine identity or "a new herd identity" based on "the sense of an unquestionable belonging to the crowd." (62)

1.4.5 Frame of Orientation and Devotion (Reason/Irrationality)

Finally, Fromm arrives at a fifth need, concerned now not with a sense of self, but rather with a point of direction in the world: "the need for a frame of orientation and devotion." (Fromm [1955] 2002, 64)[57] The evolution of the faculty of reason has given us an existential need for an objective and undistorted picture of "the world, nature, and other persons." (64)[58] Reason has given us both the capacity and the imperative to orient ourselves in our environment, a need which may result in various contradictory outcomes. Prior to and contrasted with the need for a rational picture of the world is simply the need for a framework which is subjectively satisfactory, whether rational or not. Here we encounter Fromm's characteristic critique of rationalization, in which the need to perceive

[56] In a 1971 letter to Martin Jay (see Jay 1973, 100), Fromm re-iterates this, saying "I have always upheld the same point that man's capacity for freedom, for love, etc. depends almost entirely on the given socio-economic conditions, and that only exceptionally can one find, as I pointed out in *The Art of Loving*, that there is love in a society whose principle is the very opposite."

[57] This is also the focus of the whole of *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (Fromm 1950).

[58] I discuss a variety of aspects of Fromm's complex use of reason in in Section 2.1 (the analogy of reason and love), 4.2.5 (the transcendence of the subject-object distinction), and 5.3.6 (the supposedly masculine nature of reason).

an action or belief as being motivated by reason is more important than its truthfulness. We can be satisfied to act irrationally, but the realization that our behaviour is not supported by reason is too discomforting to refrain from giving the action "the appearance of reasonable motivation." (65) Finally, this is not merely cognitive or volitional but also affective, since we must react through "the total process of living." (65) Thus, orientation also includes devotion, or feeling and sensing as well as conceptualizing and willing.

1.5 Character

A comprehensive understanding of Fromm's view of human life will not stop at his account of our existential needs, since it is our way of responding to them that is paramount. This leads to the study of character, or characterology. Character is so central for Fromm that he prefaces *The Fear of Freedom* by framing it as merely a part of a "broader study on the character structure of modern man," ([1941] 2001, iix) an imagined larger work particularly concerned with the relationship between psyche and society. The completion of *The Fear of Freedom* was accelerated by Fromm's horror at the rise of Nazism and Fascism, and so the more comprehensive work was postponed in order to focus on the more pressing question of the meaning of freedom. I will take up the question of positive freedom in Section 1.7, remaining now with character. To do this we must turn to *Man for Himself*, in which Fromm considers "the problem of ethics, of norms and values leading to the realization of man's self and of his potentialities." ([1947] 2003, xiii)[59] This grounding of ethics in self-realization and the realizing of human potentialities is later developed to include character as "the subject matter of ethics," (23) and "the object of man's ethical development." (39) The reason for this focus – which might be argued to under-emphasise the importance of specific acts – is primarily psychoanalytic and concerned with the repudiation of behaviourism. To attempt to establish this refutation, Fromm makes the point that whilst behaviour merely observes the observation and stimulation of externals, the psychoanalytic study of character differentiates between the inner and the outer.[60]

[59] This citation again indicates the depth of the connection in Fromm's thought between normative ethics and the development of selfhood, this time focusing on how ethics is central to the development of selfhood rather than merely following from our nature (see Section 0.2.9).

[60] The behaviourist school of psychology is based on the claim that a rigorous and scientific psychology must limit itself to the measurement and stimulation or modification of observable behaviour, rather than

Contrasted with mere behaviour, the study of character is concerned with the motivation behind activity, which may be so veiled as to elude the awareness of both agent and observer. In other words, incorporation of the psychoanalytic exploration of character structure enables ethics to account for unconscious motivation, and for any disparity between the professed and the actual intention of an act. To demonstrate this, Fromm considers how the traditional study of virtue and vice may remain blind to ambiguity, since the same action (for instance an action which appears humble, or one which appears arrogant) may be rooted in different motives (i.e. humility in either fear or arrogance, or arrogance as an expression of either insecurity or self-deprecation). Hence a virtue or vice may be "viewed in a different light if understood in the context of the whole character." (Fromm [1947] 2003, 23)[61]

The principle ramification of this is that to merely deal with an isolated act is ethically inadequate, since acts must be placed in the context of the habitual ways of acting that we refer to as character types. Given that this is rather abstract, some more detail as to the formal content of character shall help clarify its relevance for my own project, relative to love, repression, and energy. Character is but one aspect of personality, to which it contributes along with our human nature (i.e. existential situation), and our constitution or temperament. It is not necessary to dwell on this combination, since I will remain on the general level of character rather than in dealing with specific individual personalities. Personalities are seen as unique and infinitely diverse blends of character types with one temperament, with temperament being understood as the manner in which one acts.[62] Temperament is fixed and constitutional, relating to how we operate, whereas character develops through activity and concerns content or object. Fromm bases his treatment of this on that of Hippocrates, distinguishing between choleric, sanguine, melancholic, and phlegmatic temperaments. The distinction between personality and temperament can be summarised with the example that one might have a "quick and strong" temperament

making claims about motivation or unconscious processes (see Greenwood 2008, 422-450; Hergenhahn 2008, 384-422).

[61] This could perhaps also ground an incisive critique of virtue ethics.

[62] This can be contrasted with the phenomenological approach to character that I will discuss in Chapter Five, beside which Fromm's perspective appears as theory-laden and abstract, despite its historical content.

(Fromm [1947] 2003, 37), but only the character would determine what the quick and strong reactions pertain to.

It is vital to point out what is in my view a largely unrecognised fulcrum of Fromm's psychology and which will be part of the focus of my existential revision of his work: energy. Responding to the concept of cultural relativism, Fromm describes how he sees the human being not as a *tabula rasa* on which culture merely paints its picture, but as "an entity charged with energy and structured in specific ways, which…reacts in specific and ascertainable ways to external conditions." ([1947] 2003, 16) The central point here lies in Fromm's conception of human nature. As we have seen, neurological evolution has given us the power and imperative to question and conceptualise our place in the universe and to live in a way which cultivates relation. Rather than any definition based on genus and species, Fromm sees human nature as comprising this predicament as well as the needs and strivings that it generates, and our attempts at a solution to this determine the direction in which our energy is charged. The vital point with respect to a relativist anthropology is that if the external conditions are an impediment to fulfilment of these needs, then we will react adversely.[63] Hence the constituents of our nature can be ascertained by observing the conditions that enable our natural energy to flow in a manner which is conducive to well-being. In other words, if we had no nature and were merely a receptacle of culture, we would not experience psychological reactions to oppressive conditions which do in fact elicit distress or other symptoms. This is of major importance in Fromm's defence of love as a natural state, but on the characterological level the point to note is that character is principally a way of channelling energy towards fulfilment of – or indeed escape from – our relational needs.[64]

Indeed, Fromm draws on what he clearly sees as path-finding work by Freud to stress that character is not about behavioural observation but about the dynamic aspect of activity, or what motivates our acts at the most basic level. For one observable behaviour there can be a variety of dynamisms, strivings, or attempts to achieve a range of goals. In the case of behaviour labelled as parsimony, for instance, Fromm's point is that ethical analysis would

[63] See my comments on Fromm's empiricism in Sections 0.3 and 1.7.

[64] Fromm states elsewhere that energy is visible only by its manifestations, and that it "binds, unifies, and holds together the individual within himself as well as the individual in his relationship to the world outside." ([1964] 1980, 64)

be deeply influenced by what drove the activity. He argues that it is crucial to the evaluation of a parsimonious act to determine whether it is motivated by the status associated with the accumulation of wealth, or in a striving to provide for the needs of one's family. The channelling of energy in each case would have a different end, and hence a different dynamism by which it was impelled. As I have mentioned in Section 0.2.7, Freud based his character-analysis on his own libido theory, but Fromm adopts a subsequent interpersonal critique of this. In his dialectical revision of Freud, energy dynamics are governed by our characteristic mode of relatedness to self, others, and nature. In other words, rather than being merely based on the satisfaction of sexual instinct, energy is driven by our need to rediscover our unity with the world.[65] Again, it should be stressed that this is normally a matter of the organization of a variety of character traits which may well be unconscious, but in the end: we "must be related in some fashion, and the particular form of relatedness is expressive of […] character." (Fromm [1947] 2003, 42)

Character is defined as the "relatively permanent form of canalization of energy in assimilation [of goods] and socialization [with people]." (Fromm [1947] 2003, 42) Fromm states that character has a biological function, arising in response to our relative lack of instinctual equipment. Without character each decision would entail a process of rational deliberation that would be both inefficient with respect to time and energy, and dangerous given our need to avert threats. As well as relief from the constant need to deliberate, character has a social function and origin. Here the family unit is seen as the first social agent, and the medium by which adaptation to customary ways of thinking, feeling, and acting takes place. Fromm calls this the social character, and it was seen as a major original contribution of his work, defining his stress on how social structures are instrumental in shaping the character types particular to a given society ([1947] 2003, 45-78; Durkin 2014, 108-123).[66] This familial-social adjustment process is combined with

[65] Fromm also states that energy is driven by the need to survive, but this is consistent with the stress on energy as relational, given that Fromm sees our survival needs as relational as well as biological (1992, 8, 16). Energy will recur throughout this thesis in Section 2.11 in the context of the repression of emotional and biochemical energy, and Section 4.8.4 in my discussion of the possibility of an alternative to Fromm's conception of God and feminine power. For an account of Freud's use of energy see Hall ([1954] 1999, 36-53), whilst Fromm discusses his use of the term relative to that of Freud and Jung in *The Revision of Psychoanalysis* (1992, 16). Like Jung, Fromm rejects any approach that confines energy to mere libido ([1964] 1980, 64).

[66] Fromm's most developed stratification of this distinguishes between receptive, exploitative, hoarding, marketing, and productive orientations, and is found in *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003, 45-78). For commentary on these types and social character in general see Durkin (2014, 83-92, 108-123).

temperament and the unique aspects of a person's environment, to form the blend of ways in which relational energy is ordered towards the world (in a largely stable fashion). The possibility – or threat – that the social origin of our way of relating might lead to heteronomy is the central topic in Fromm's critical work. With the transition from harmony to character in mind, I now turn to the variety of ways in which our solution to the problem of individuation and our existential needs can be regressive rather than progressive.

1.6 Regressive Solutions

We have already seen how Fromm's approach to human freedom involves two binary distinctions, namely negative freedom/positive freedom and freedom from/freedom to. These subsequently lead to another pair which is the central dichotomy in the whole of Fromm's work, although subsequently receding in prominence as he develops the humanism/authoritarianism, biophilia/necrophilia, and being/having distinctions of later texts. At this early stage it is framed as a choice between regressive and productive (or, less frequently, progressive) solutions to the problem of individuation - *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm [1941] 2001) – or as the choice between authoritarianism and humanism depicted in *Man for Himself* (Fromm [1947] 2003). In fact, one might suggest that the former text could also be known as 'The Dynamics of Surrender', since it focuses its first 220 pages on the psychological concomitants of liberation from our primary ties (i.e. how negative freedom follows freedom from). This account centres around the fear of isolation, powerlessness, insecurity, and doubt, and how these can cause us to seek patterns of escape and surrender. In other words, our existential situation can easily lead us to seek a regressive solution.

In *The Sane Society* ([1955] 2002, 27), Fromm presents this as one half of an "intense struggle" between two tendencies. First is the tendency to "to emerge from the womb, from the animal form of existence into a more human existence, from bondage to freedom." (27) This tendency continually meets the temptation "to return to the womb, to nature, to certainty and security." (27) In more detail elsewhere, he describes the latter option as "to fall back, to give up his freedom, and to try and overcome his aloneness by eliminating the gap that has arisen between his individual self and the world." (Fromm [1941] 2001, 121) This process will never recover the original state of phylogenetic or

ontogenetic harmony, since the individuation process is linear and irrevocable. Once we are aware of our potentialities, therefore, we can never completely escape from them, regardless of how deeply we may be embedded in structures of surrender. Any such effort is essentially an attempt to assuage the anxiety of isolation and powerlessness, and its relative or ostensible success entails compulsive and automatic activity. This type of activity means the abrogation of our individuality and independence. Regress is thereby an attempt to return to a pre-responsible state, which is an impossibility no matter the extent to which we might cease to be aware of our powers.

Fromm's theory of regression develops from our emergence from primary ties, into isolation, powerlessness, doubt, insecurity, and entailing escape, compulsion, alienation from self and loss of integrity. There are a variety of ways in which this escape can be carried out, with *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm [1941] 2001) primarily concerned with totalitarian political systems. Fromm argues that the emergence of Protestant individualism and a capitalist economy prepared the psychological ground for the surrender of integrity upon which such political systems and allegiances are built. *Man for Himself* (Fromm [1941] 2003) discusses mostly authoritarianism in ethics, whilst *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (1950) develops Fromm's account of authoritarianism in terms of religious systems. As well as these, there are both interpersonal and intrapersonal dynamics of escape: sadism, masochism, internalized authority figures, conformity to mass culture, the adaptation to social roles, and several pseudo-loves (or forms of co-dependency masquerading as genuine love). The common logic of these is the submissive effacement of self (Fromm [1941] 2001, 70), and hence the alienation from our own powers. In each case there is the construction of a pseudo-self (160, 172, 227), and "the incorporation of extraneous patterns of thinking and feeling." (227)[67]

1.7 Progressive/Productive Solutions

Elsewhere in *The Fear of Freedom*, Fromm represents the basic dichotomy as being between submission to exterior/interior others and spontaneity ([1941] 2001, 151). Spontaneity is merely one of the ways in which Fromm depicts our solution to the

[67] Regression also leads us to the importance of repression, since it is the difficulty of bearing the burden of freedom and isolation that elicits from us the impulse to avoid facing our situation, to cast it from consciousness through repression. I will discuss Fromm's understanding of repression in Section 2.11.

problems that we have been discussing in this chapter: the progressive or productive solution.[68] Spontaneity culminates in love, and so enables us to look deeper into aspects of love which remain underdeveloped or absent in *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995). Before focusing on how spontaneity facilitates this I will discuss the general aspects of the productive/progressive solution, and the several modes in which Fromm conceives it, including positive freedom. The clearest definition of any of these refers to the latter, in the second part of a citation that I have begun to quote in Section 1.6. In discussing the fork in our path, Fromm states

> by one course he can progress to 'positive freedom'; he can relate himself spontaneously to the world in love and work; in the genuine expression of his emotional, sensuous, and intellectual capacities; he can thus become one again with man, nature, and himself, without giving up the independence and integrity of his individual self. (Fromm [1941] 2001, 121)

In this dense passage are found all the constructive aspects of Fromm's early work: progress, spontaneity, relatedness, love, work, potentialities, unity, integration, and individuality. Later in the same text, Fromm will encapsulate all of these through the motif of the realization of our self ([1941] 2001, ix, 23, 61), or total personality (222), and elsewhere the birth of self ([1947] 2003, 69, 177). Each of these concerns the full utilization or expression of our powers or potentialities, and each is contrasted with the regressive pseudo-solutions outlined above, since regress involves the surrender of these potentialities to an external will. The alternative to regress is hence progression from primary ties to the productive use of one's capacities, and their integration in a total personality ([1941] 2001, 213, 222).

Before considering the most detailed descriptions of the nature and implications of spontaneity for love, I would also like to focus on one of its richest and most significant aspects. Fromm is passionately committed to the claim that productivity, progress, spontaneity, and love are our natural state, and the fulfilment of our inherent tendency to grow, flourish, and relate. What is most significant about Fromm maintaining this is his claim for an empirical ground. Again, it is founded on the observation of our adverse

[68] Fromm refers to the productive orientation far more than to the progressive, but I will refer to both here since the latter illustrates the contrast with regress in a way that the former does not.

emotional and physical reactions to conditions which thwart our growth (see Section 0.2.9) and our capacity to relate in a manner which maintains our integrity. Any chronic avoidance of these implications will result in illness and neurosis, and therefore Fromm states that nervous disorder is always a result of the way in which our relational needs are answered ([1947] 2003, 165). As we have seen, Fromm concludes from this that a nature can be observed in us, one that impels us towards the full development of our capacity to relate to the world. Regardless of the many mysteries in which all life and human life are shrouded, we are relational, productive beings, tending towards activity and the free use of our capacities. The importance of this is simply that love hence appears as our natural response to the conditions of existence, as well as being the most effective way of responding to these.

In *The Fear of Freedom*, the appearance of love comes by way of Fromm's use of spontaneity, and the text culminates in the second section of the seventh chapter, entitled "Freedom and Spontaneity" ([1941] 2001, 221-237). In this section Fromm ends his focus on the "powerlessness and insecurity of the isolated individual in modern society," on the vacuum of meaning, and on the resultant sacrifice of "the integrity of [the] individual self." (221) These are merely antecedents to the shift to the ideal, the "state of positive freedom in which the individual exists as an independent self and yet is not isolated but united with the world, with other men, with nature." (222) Contrasting his own solution with the idealism or rationalism which proposes pure or mere thought, Fromm invokes the "realization of man's total personality, by the active expression of his emotional and intellectual potentialities." (222) The culmination of all that we have discussed until now is contained here: "*positive freedom consists in the spontaneous activity of the total, integrated personality*." (222)

Of course, this conclusion merely shifts the interrogative focus onto spontaneity, which Fromm immediately acknowledges as "one of the most difficult problems of psychology." ([1941] 2001, 222) He concedes that his approach is a mere delineation of the essential aspects, merely intended to describe the ideal state in the context of the problem of authoritarianism. This means that he places spontaneity in contrast with compulsion, automatism, and heteronomy, all of which, again, are driven by the need to escape isolation. Spontaneity is "free activity of the self […] of one's own free will." (223) There is a suggestion of circularity here, in which freedom is seen to culminate in spontaneity

and yet spontaneity is defined in the context of free activity. Nonetheless, it seems clear enough that Fromm understands spontaneity as activity that originates with self, and which allows for the expression of the various powers of the self, comprising the sensual, emotional, volitional, and intellectual. Spontaneity is activity in which we are the agent, and which involves the integration of the otherwise disparate faculties of the self.

We might legitimately question the relationship between spontaneity and the habitual and non-deliberative activity of character traits, but nonetheless I would argue that Fromm has highlighted an important point. This relates to what might be considered a popular perception of spontaneity. In common use, spontaneity is frequently taken to mean action that has no premeditated element, and as a matter of simply doing what one wishes to do at a given moment. This sense is consistent with Fromm's in the sense that spontaneity precludes the influence of exterior authorities, but Fromm's use is far more robust given that he stresses repeatedly that spontaneous activity is also integrative activity. This circumvents the possibility that spontaneity might be narrowly understood to comprise simply activity in accord with one's momentary feeling or impulse. According to Fromm's use spontaneity need not be unplanned, since it might well be part of its integrative nature that the act has undergone a period of rumination and emotional testing before being carried out.

Having seen what spontaneity involves it is natural to question why Fromm sees it as the solution to the problem of individuation and our existential dichotomies and needs, or why it is "the one way in which man can overcome the terror of aloneness." ([1941] 2001, 224) The answer is quite simple, although perhaps not as simple as Fromm presents it: spontaneous activity re-unites us with the world from which we were separated through individuation.[69] What distinguishes this new unity from the original harmony is that it is premised on the exercise of the powers that make us individuals, and hence it does not come at the cost of self-possession. The crucial and unitive aspect of spontaneity is that its "foremost component" is love: "love as spontaneous affirmation of others, as the union of the individual with others on the basis of the preservation of the individual self." (225) Love is one pole of spontaneity, with work as the second, and these are distinguished in

[69] To my knowledge, Fromm never addresses the question of why the free exercise of our powers entails unity or harmony with the world, but seems to simply assume that it does.

that love entails unity between persons, whereas work merely facilitates becoming "one with nature in the act of creation." (225) Through spontaneity we have a new harmony, which is the natural tendency of every human organism given the presence of conditions conducive to its growth (see Sections 1.9 and 5.21).[70]

Before considering this new harmony in more detail, one final point will illuminate the importance of Fromm's treatment of spontaneity for the relationship between love and repression. Fromm states that spontaneity is premised on the "acceptance of the total personality and the elimination of the split between 'reason' and 'nature.'" (Fromm [1941] 2001, 223) Based on this, he concludes that "only the person who does not repress essential parts of himself," who becomes "transparent" (223) to self and achieves integration, will ever be spontaneous. Given that this statement immediately follows the necessity of integrating our emotional, intellectual, and sensuous experiences, this passage is arguably a legitimate foundation upon which to build an exploration of the coherence of and possibilities of developing these two themes – repression and spontaneous love – in Fromm's work. The various ways of doing so will be the focus of each subsequent chapter, but for now we arrive at the culmination of Fromm's arc of harmonies.

1.8 A New Harmony

The union established by the productive use of our potentialities represents the completion of what can be read as a process of emergence and return, with the final pole of this process involving the development of a renewed harmony with the natural world.[71] Contrary to the original harmony, here we maintain our individuality, providing we have avoided the snare of escaping from freedom by regressing to earlier developmental stages.

[70] Fromm's stress on the unitive power of love resembles the position of the philosopher and theologian Paul Tillich, who was a Professor of Theology in Frankfurt from 1929 to 1933, before, like Fromm, emigrating to the United States. Although Tillich frames love in the context of faith and in the power of God, his interpretation is analogous to Fromm insofar as love is a volitional and emotional drive towards re-union and the overcoming of separation, and involves the whole person. Like Fromm, as I shall explore in my conclusion, Tillich grounds the analogous relationship of different types of love in this drive towards unity (1964, 142-147). Tillich also states elsewhere that the love of God is "the law of our own being," (1956, 29) and that through our love we dwell in the love of God, which are arguable theological analogates to Fromm's love being the fulfilment of our own natural life and the way in which we find a home in the universe. An account of the relationship between Fromm and Tillich can be found in Hammond (1965).

[71] This is perhaps analogous to the traditional neo-platonic or theological structure of *exitus-reditus*, although here it is shorn of its transcendent origin and destination.

As I shall explore in a subsequent section on self-love (5.5), this new unity encompasses not only other humans and nature, but self (Fromm [1941] 2001, 224). Through spontaneous activity of work and love, the harmonious individual becomes related anew to the world, and "ceases to be an isolated atom […but becomes…] part of one structuralized whole." (226) In my view what is most striking and fertile about the remainder of this passage is that our previous "doubt concerning [ourselves] and the meaning of life disappears." (226) From the previous section on the meaning of the pre-human harmony we might extrapolate from this that the new world of our own making is one in which our existential needs are met. Given, moreover, the centrality of doubt in Fromm's picture of negative freedom, it seems to me that what is being subtly proposed here is a basic framework for an epistemology of love, the grounding of knowledge about self and universe in the practice of love (see Section 3.3.2). Earlier, Fromm had argued that unless we overcome isolation, the best that can be hoped for is to "eliminate the awareness of doubt," (68) or its repression rather than cessation. Now Fromm equates the liberation from doubt with ending our separateness through spontaneous activity, an activity which is subsequently grasped as the meaning of life.

Rather than this new harmony being merely about the vanquishing of doubt, Fromm goes on to say that it is the origin of a new strength and security based on an interpersonal relation to the world rather than absorption and abdication ([1941] 2001, 226). Moreover, Fromm hints elsewhere that our union with nature may well be the root of conscience ([1947] 2003, 107), as well as the source of our happiness (167). Once again it is important to stress that this state of spontaneity is seen as our natural state, and the fulfilment of our inherent tendency to grow ([1941] 2001, 231). The most salient aspect of this account of our relatedness to nature is that harmony enhances our powers, strength, security, and conscience, rather than divesting us of them. This is a crucial point, given Fromm's consistent resistance to regress, heteronomy, and authoritarianism.[72] I will question the concept of harmony in the conclusion to this chapter, having first discussed the matter of our primary potentialities, and how these frame Fromm's early understanding of psychotherapy.

[72] This will also be important in my account of the relationship between the universe and human agency in Sections 4.2, 4.8, and 4.9, where it will function as a point of contrast with the absence of any ramifications for human agency in the conception of union found in other texts.

1.9 Psychotherapy in Early Texts, and Primary/Secondary Potentialities

Whilst exploring the relationship between love and repression in subsequent chapters I will have repeated recourse to Fromm's understanding of psychotherapy. To ground this discussion, I shall now present the salient points of his approach to this in the works prior to *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995). The bulk of this is expressed in *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm [1941] 2001) and *Man for Himself* (Fromm [1947] 2003), with the latter significantly expanding upon the ethical and psychological claims of the former. My focus will therefore be on *Man for Himself*, with reference to other early texts where appropriate.[73] As we have already glimpsed, Fromm's psychology is a dynamic one, meaning that he sees the psyche as the seat of a series of forces, strivings, motivations, or dynamisms. Fromm never discusses what often seems like an equivalence between these terms, but it is clear that they have their goal in the happiness and full development that he maintains is the natural tendency of human existence. Given that historical and sociological evidence often contests the assertion that we tend towards happiness, it is appropriate at this point to introduce what is perhaps the most important concept in *Man for Himself*. This is the concept of primary and secondary potentialities, and will also be crucial in my concluding chapter, where it will shed deeper light on the contextual and reciprocal aspects of Fromm's theory of love.

Fromm accounts for the disparity between our present condition and the ideal of inherent love with recourse to this concept of primary potentialities, and their derivative secondary potentialities. Love is seen as a primary potentiality, meaning that it will develop naturally given the presence of enabling conditions in the early environment. These ideal conditions are simply those which are focused on developing the growth and autonomy of the child (Fromm [1947) 2003, 162-169). In a unique passage in *The Fear of Freedom*, Fromm shows how important an environment conducive to growth is in his early work: if "every step in the direction of separation and individuation were matched by the corresponding growth of self, the development of the child would be harmonious." ([1941] 2001, 25) Because this growth "is hampered for a number of individual and social reasons" we develop the "unbearable feeling of isolation and powerlessness." (25) These feelings are shadows cast by negative freedom, and it is important to note here that they occur only

[73] The elements of psychotherapy discussed in this section are expanded in later texts such as *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism*, in which the focus is more upon the idea of making the unconscious conscious (Fromm 1960, 42ff).

when growth is hampered. These passages indicate that the problems with which *The Fear of Freedom* is concerned, whilst appearing evolutionary and natural, are actually the result of an inadequate environment. This is underemphasized in *The Fear of Freedom* itself, which portrays negative freedom as a ontogenetic and phylogenetic inevitability, but this can be explained by pointing out that the type of relationship that does not hamper growth is merely an ideal. Love, returning to *Man for Himself* (Fromm [1947] 2003), is the primary potentiality of the human person. Its opposites – escapism, destructiveness, conformity, idolatry, authoritarianism, neurosis - are secondary and derived potentialities (162). These emerge from the absence of nourishing conditions, and from conditions which are inimical to growth, and lead to a process that Fromm often describes as the thwarting of our powers ([1941] 2001, 21, 137; [1947) 2003, 162).

I have briefly introduced the potentialities at this point in order to prepare for the discussion of Fromm's early approach to psychotherapy. Our primary potentialities are crucial to his understanding of psychotherapy, which is concerned with facilitating the full emergence of this natural loving self. Fromm sees the importance of the psychotherapeutic relationship primarily in its potential to enable the conditions for the full range of our potentialities to flourish ([1947) 2003, 167, 172). Initially it "consists in gaining greater insight into the dissociated parts of a person's feeling and ideas," but this intellectual insight merely "clears the way for those forces in him which strive for psychic health and happiness to operate and become effective." (167) Here we have the kernel of Fromm's approach, in which the connection between psychotherapy and human development is clearly stated.

In addition to the passages above concerning spontaneity and repression, this connection between psychotherapy and our potentialities is also the basis of my own development and existential revision of his approach to love. This is because it elicits the question of the concrete content of the psychotherapeutic contribution to the emergence of our powers, and the extent to which Fromm's initial understanding can be supplemented or revised by other approaches. Before we can activate our natural tendency to love, and fulfil our existential needs, we must be liberated from what Fromm calls "internal impediments" to freedom. ([1941] 2001, 90) The method of *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm [1941] 2001) in fact focuses on this, specifically on how freedom from external impediments will not result in full freedom without liberation from inner restraints. Although *The Fear of Freedom*

conceives these internal restrictions principally as the experiences of negative freedom, the subsequent trajectory of Fromm's work continually adds to their content and importance. Assuming also the presence of the proper social conditions, liberation from these impediments is thus placed at the centre of the works which are the foundation of *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995). It is not until Fromm's later work on psychotherapy that the importance of our inner impediments can be fully appreciated, but these early texts lay the existential groundwork for future developments.[74] Even though Fromm will continue to develop his approach to it, psychotherapy is conceived from the outset as being concerned with the development of the total personality, the birth of self, and the liberation of our innate tendency towards growth. Each of these is culminates in love, and the development of our harmonious relationship with the universe and with self and others. It is in this context that psychotherapy must therefore be held.

1.10 Conclusion: Harmony Reconsidered

This opening chapter has considered the human journey from original harmony to existential harmony, as conceived in Fromm's early work. This is a process of individuation, or taking possession of the human powers that arise from the evolution of self-awareness and reason. These give rise to our existential situation, our isolation and disequilibrium, and a series of dichotomies to which we feel compelled to find a resolution. Our response to these needs (for relatedness, transcendence, rootedness, identity, and orientation) shapes our characteristic way of relating, comprised of a personal blend of regressive and progressive/productive solutions. In the former, we surrender our freedom to external powers out of fear, whilst in the latter we take possession of them and use them to unite ourselves with the world. The unity that comes from using our powers is contrasted with our original pre-human harmony, since in the latter state we possess our integrity rather than being dependent on nature, tribe, or mother for our needs. I will conclude this chapter by considering the importance of harmony for Fromm's work, and the place of this first chapter in the thesis.

Given its place at both the beginning and the end of Fromm's account of existence, harmony is clearly the foundation upon which it stands. Two questions therefore arise,

[74] See especially Sections 2.9-2.13 and 3.4.

concerning the justification and function of harmony. As I have discussed in the introduction, Kieran Durkin (2014, 2, 14) argues that Fromm's work has a "religio-philosophical" foundation, which reflects his original formation in humanism and Hasidism.[75] Fromm himself, however, claims that his account of harmony draws on three separate fields, namely animal biology, anthropology, and the psychoanalysis which he has elsewhere portrayed as the sole ground of all his theory ([1962] 2006, 10). The first enables him to suppose that, prior to the evolution of the human brain, each animal had an adequate level of instinctual determination for its needs to be met by nature. The prevalence of instinct wanes as more complex and adaptable animals evolve, but it is not until the emergence of the present human brain that our level of instinctual determination is no longer enough to maintain our needs. This enhanced level of awareness brings with it our existential needs, needs which Fromm claims are uniquely human and which cannot be answered by instinct alone, since they require a personal solution. In terms of anthropology, Fromm argues that this has not always been the case, since in a prior state of human evolution there was harmony between human and tribe. Finally, Fromm draws on psychoanalysis to suggest that there is an original harmony between infant and mother, a blissful period in which all the needs of the young human are met by unconditional maternal love.

Fromm's method is at least putatively scientific, but given the period of time that has elapsed since *The Fear of Freedom* ([1941] 2001) it is necessary to point out that each of these concepts of harmony is vulnerable to scrutiny. First, the idea that animals exist in some natural state in which their needs are met by nature ignores not only the competition inherent in the struggle to adapt and evolve, and the obvious fact of predation amongst species, but also the number of extinct animal species. Each of these points contests the idea that there is an automatic and instinctual fulfilment of the need of animals, or in other words harmony between animals and nature. This also relates to the first species of humans, most of whom are remembered merely in fossils, and all of whom would have faced the same struggles to adapt and have their needs met. Moreover, the notion of a so-called primitive harmony between human and tribe in pre-historic culture has been challenged by anthropologists, particularly in the work of Adam Kuper (2005). Finally, the

[75] In his account of Fromm's existentialist approach, Burston points out that Fromm also has roots in the German tradition of interpreting life as an exile from unity or nature, a scheme found more often in writers associated with romanticism and idealism than with existentialism (1991, 94-95). Fromm himself points out the romantic roots of psychoanalysis, in the quest to understand the "dark forces," and sees it as a synthesis of rationalism and romanticism (1960, 13).

history of psychotherapy and developmental psychology is so replete with evidence for how tenuous and erratic the bond between parent and infant can be that it seems odd for Fromm to suppose that we *necessarily* lament some lost maternal harmony.[76]

To recognise the difficulties inherent in any of the harmonies which Fromm asserts leads to the second question, which concerns what function harmony fulfils in his account of love. As well as appearing to ground his work in biology, anthropology, and psychoanalysis, the arc of harmonies enables Fromm to situate love within the Hegelian and Marxist concept of dialectic. Here contradictory elements are revised through a synthesis, in this case the contrast of freedom from/freedom to, and generally between human and nature, being answered by love. This enables Fromm to argue that love is the answer to a problem, that it is the only answer to our quest for the unity that we have lost, the unity for which we yearn and without which we experience doubt, terror, and isolation (in other words, negative freedom). It also involves the claim our activity of love is rooted in our own need, which suggests a problem which will recur throughout each of the following chapters. Similar to the dialectical trajectories towards synthesis found in Hegel and Marx, love is the natural fulfilment of human life and evolution, the culmination of human history, even if for Fromm the possibilities of regress and ultimate totalitarianism are real.

The problem is that the experience of freedom need not depend on exile from harmony, and that if the idea of original harmony is questioned then the way that Fromm sees love also begins to appear suspect. Our evolution may well have been preceded by ties that were not harmonious, either ontogenetically or phylogenetically, and so there may be no original state to which we yearn to return. In this case love would no longer be placed within a dialectical framework of emergence and return, and so neither resolve the problem of freedom nor respond to a need. The same is true of our existence generally, since when that is shorn of the concept of an original harmonious state and the unrelenting desire for a return, the negative aspects of freedom might be better understood in terms of

[76] One example of this is the attachment theory of John Bowlby ([1988] 2005), who observed the impact of several parenting styles on the manner in which people were capable of healthy relationships in later life. The work of R.D. Laing (1971) on the ramifications of disordered patterns of communication in families also illustrates the point, as do more recent studies in emotional environment and biochemistry (see Lewis, Amini, and Lannon 2001; Gerhardt 2014; Szalavitz and Perry 2010).

bewilderment, angst, or something similar.[77] Here, rather than being able to grasp our situation through a developing dialectic process, we would simply be cast into the doubt, terror, and isolation that many experience, and be haunted by a mythical symbol of a home that might not exist, and may have never existed. Either of these claims – dialectic or mere phenomenon - may be more accurate, as might many others either like them or different. In other words, Fromm's dialectic imposes a theoretical structure on an existence that can be experienced in a multitude of ways other than the pain of exile and the hunger for return, in different people and even in the same person at different times. The main point I wish to raise now is that the journey from harmony to harmony plays a foundational role in Fromm's approach to love, love as a need, an answer, a quest, our home-coming. Most importantly, it places love in the context of union, unity lost, and unity sought. With the original harmony in question, all of this becomes vulnerable.

In general, this chapter has provided a rationale from Fromm's texts for my own project, first in the assertion that spontaneity involves the integration of self, and in the importance of psychotherapy in liberating our powers. Relative to repression, the significance of this is that full integration also involves our emotional power, and hence the power of spontaneous love involves freedom to feel. In the next three chapters, I will discuss a variety of the components of love from *The Art of Loving* (Fromm ([1956] 1995) relative to this general theme of repression, as well as the existential elements I have outlined in Section 0.1. Hence, this first chapter has lain the groundwork for the second by introducing the problem of existence to which love responds, as well as the ideas of character and energy; regress and narcissism; and temperament and body. It has also shown the importance of selfhood in Fromm, preparing for the idea that love is a gift of self and an active power. The question of character will recur in the concept of a basic attitude to the world, comprising our habitual loving way of relating. Concerning the third chapter, knowledge will arise as our ultimate dynamism, as I will draw on the idea of harmony to depict love as a fusion in which our integrity is maintained. The theme of dynamism and power will also recur there in the account of the relationship between transference and dynamic psychology. Chapter Four continues to build on this first chapter through the application of the ideas of individuation and the regressive self to theology, and the matriarchal and patriarchal trajectory of Fromm's work, as well as grounding the concept

[77] I am grateful to George Pattison for pointing out that the symbol of a lost unity may well fulfil some function even if it does not have a historical correlate. Nonetheless, my point is that Fromm's love necessarily depends on the historicity of a lost harmony.

of idolatry that results from his emphasis on regression. Again, the theme of harmony will re-appear in the idea of the All, or One, which will also be shown to be vulnerable given how Fromm claims that we draw strength from our harmony with nature.

Despite the different emphases in these chapters, each builds on the theme of individuation. Love appears in each of them through a different aspect, but each involves the emergence of an independent self. The first chapter relates to the fifth chapter in a different fashion, by providing a point of contrast, albeit one which is more of emphasis than opposition. Having explored the development of independence, which often involves the negation of repressive others (both internal and external), Chapter Five turns to interdependence. This involves an inversion: shifting the focus from how repression impacts on relationship to consider how relationship is the context of repression (and expression). This is also a shift from activity to passivity, and from individuation to socialization, since Chapter One situates *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995) within Fromm's emphasis on the active pole, individuation and independence. In Chapter Five this will be contrasted, or supplemented, with a less emphatic thread in Fromm's own work, love as receiving as well as giving. In addition, the existential dichotomies depicted in this chapter will be distinguished from the phenomenological and hermeneutic approach to existence which also emerges in Chapter Five. Finally, the concept and problematizing of harmony recounted here will lead to a conclusion which questions love and its rationale through the introduction of this phenomenological and interpretative approach, and which has been touched upon here through the possibility of bewilderment as an alternative to exile and need. To begin developing the themes discussed in this chapter, Chapter Two begins with an account of love and the total personality.

Chapter Two: The Bio-energetic Conditions of Love

2.1 Love and the Total Personality

In my first chapter, I emphasised how Fromm's work moves from the original and pre-existential harmony with nature to the new harmony which we must fashion through the full use of our powers. Central to this new unity is that it involves the development of our individuality and independence developed through taking possession of these powers. This was contrasted with the symbiotic abdication of self that is characteristic of surrender. In *The Fear of Freedom*, Fromm's refers to the full use of our powers as spontaneity, since it involves activity which originates in ourselves. The "foremost component" of spontaneity is love (Fromm [1941] 2001, 224). Before beginning my account of *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995), I will supplement my first chapter by discussing several additional points from Fromm's discussion of love from earlier texts. This will illustrate again how love must be understood as part of his whole theory of human personality and development. This also complements my account of the claim that love is a primary potentiality, activated given the right environmental conditions (see Sections 1.9 and 5.3.1).

The most important point Fromm makes about love prior to *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995) is that it is an inherent power, with its expression being the natural tendency of the human person/organism ([1947] 2003, 9,100). Rather than being principally elicited by someone external, love is an inner striving and an emotional faculty equivalent to reason in the intellectual sphere (72, 97).[78] It is a power of uniting because it breaks down the wall that separates us from others, and also a power which affirms and nurtures the potentialities possessed by self and others (Fromm [1941] 2001, 224; [1947] 2003, 119). It is premised on the preservation of self and individuality since it emerges as a solution to the series of existential dilemmas that follow from our first experience of self-awareness and reason. These call for the spontaneous activity which both maintains the uniqueness and individuality of the self and simultaneously creates new harmony with others. It is important to note this again here, since one aspect of Fromm's account of spontaneity in *The Fear of Freedom* is ultimately central to the rationale for this project: both love and spontaneity are only possible given the integration, transparency, and strength of "the total

[78] This raises the question of whether love is emotional or volitional, and how these two relate, but there is little ground in Fromm upon which to build a comprehensive answer.

personality." ([1941] 2001, 25) It is fundamental to the present chapter that this includes the "emotional, intellectual, sensuous" and volitional aspects of self (223).

This stress on integration provides the basis for my own existential critique of Fromm's work, since it enables me to question the extent to which the unconscious and somatic dimensions of persons (including those discussed in Fromm's later work) need further consideration. As well as integration in the personality, I will argue that integration of the various aspects of Fromm's work enables the theory of love to be placed more firmly in our existential and concrete context. This recourse to personality as a ground of critique is vindicated in Fromm's own preface to *The Art of Loving*, in which Fromm suggests that our attempts to love are doomed to failure without the development of the "total personality." ([1956] 1995, vii) I will begin the process of looking at what is merely implicit in this assertion in the latter parts of this chapter, having first considered the divisions employed in his treatment of love.

2.2 Love Stratified

Amongst a variety of distinct aspects of love, Fromm also makes two separate stratifications which are each central in his treatment, first elaborating the elements of love, and then following this with its objects. The four elements are care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge, whilst the five objects are brotherly love, maternal love, erotic love, self-love, and love of God. The elements are aspects of all objects of love, and brotherly love is said to be the foundation of the other objects. Given this, the presence of these elements and objects in my own work will be fluid. In this chapter I will focus on how Fromm presents love as the answer to the problem of human existence (Section 2.4), as activity ordered towards interpersonal union (2.5), as gift of self (2.7), and as a basic attitude towards the world (2.6). I will subsequently consider how these relate to four psychodynamic features of Fromm's later work, namely alienation, repression, narcissism, and transference. This will primarily enable me to introduce the possibility of a somatic or bio-energetic critique of Fromm's account of love by considering the work of Alexander Lowen. I will also begin a more detailed investigation of brotherly love through these elements of care and responsibility.

2.3 Love: Inimical Attitudes

Fromm's immediate concern at the outset of *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995) is to establish and emphasise that love is an art, rather than a mere sensation. Like any art, love necessitates "knowledge and effort." (1) Fromm observes that whilst other arts are normally assumed to require a degree of specialisation and training, "hardly anyone thinks that there is anything that needs to be learned about love." (1)[79] The point echoes the importance of paying attention to the idiom of love, since whilst we might often hear the phrase 'I love you', it is rarely accompanied by the capacity to elucidate the basis and content of that love. Perhaps more important is the question of whether the mere words are normally accompanied by the type of self-giving activity that Fromm will argue comprises love. Another significant point is that this art is said to be the most important thing in our life, which again might provide some barometer for testing claims of love against activity and attention. More so, the idea that love is an art is important for my own project, to which it lends additional justification. Despite love being a natural and primary potency, if it entails effort then paying attention to the dynamics which begin to take root in the psyche in our earliest years is a prerequisite for understanding and eliminating the impediments to its development. Here we can recall the discussion in Section 1.9 around the relationship between psychotherapy and the activation of our primary potentialities (Fromm [1947] 2003, 163ff).

Fromm outlines three attitudes which epitomise the misunderstandings around love, the first two being particularly important for this chapter. First, he observes that most interpret love as a problem of "*being* loved, rather than that of *loving*, of one's capacity to love." ([1956] 1995, 1)[80] This quest to be loveable generates a variety of strategies to make ourselves attractive, such as being pleasant, interesting, or helpful; pursuing success; cultivation of appearance; etc. The second attitude is less obvious, and perhaps more significant: "the assumption that the problem of love is the problem of an *object*, not the problem of a faculty." (2, 36) In other words, there is a commonplace and mistaken assumption that our love can and should be enabled by the encounter with a specific other, for instance a spouse, friend, child, someone popular, or someone who does not try us.

[79] Simon May points out that Friedrich Nietzsche attested to this same necessity (May 2011, 196).

[80] In contrast, John Armstrong argues that the desire to be recognised, understood, and loved, are central aspects of human existence, although he is using love in a primarily affective sense rather than Fromm's loving activity (2003, 49-54).

This point is related to Fromm's discussion of love as a basic attitude towards the world, which I will discuss and critique in Section 2.6. The third attitude which Fromm points to is that of infatuation masquerading as love.[81] Since this project is not principally concerned with romantic love I will merely mention this here, and proceed to Fromm's account of what love is.

2.4 Love: The Answer to the Problem of Human Existence

As we have seen in Chapter One, Fromm's account of humanity is based on his observation of an evolutionary and existential problematic that simultaneously haunts us and enables us to be free. This is the transcendence of mere instinctual apparatus and responses, and the consequent rational and imaginative self-awareness that enables us to make some sense of our existence. In my first chapter, the discussion of the productive and spontaneous solution to our existential needs – relatedness, transcendence (creativity), rootedness, identity, orientation and devotion – led us to love: "spontaneous affirmation of others […and…] the union of the individual with others on the basis of the preservation of the individual self." (Fromm [1941] 2001, 25) The second section of *The Art of Loving* follows from the elaboration of this problematic in previous works, at once re-iterating several aspects and introducing new ones (Fromm [1956] 1995, vii, 6-30). It is worth quoting Fromm's restatement of this problematic in full, before isolating what he sees to be the definitive aspect relative to love:

> Man is gifted with reason; he is *life being aware of itself*; he has awareness of himself, of his fellow men, of his past, and of the possibilities of the future. The awareness of himself as a separate entity, the awareness of his own short life span, of the fact that without his will he is born and against his will he dies, that he will die before those whom he loves, or they before him, the awareness of his aloneness and separateness, of his helplessness before the forces of nature and society, all this makes his separate, disunited existence an unbearable prison. He would become insane if he could not liberate himself from this prison and reach out, unite himself in some form or other with men, with 'the world outside.' (7)

Rather than survival, pleasure, power, salvation, or success, human fulfilment is found in unity with the world. Arguably the most significant aspect of this is that our separateness is

[81] Infatuation could also be understood in the context of the discussion of idolatry in Section 1.6.

"the source of all anxiety." (7) This is particularly important to my own project since I will ultimately ask whether Fromm's emphasis on love as a remedy to this separateness and anxiety raises the question of whether the practice of love is rooted in our need to escape isolation, or rooted in the needs of others for the sake of those others.

Fromm states that humanity is always confronted with the same question, which is the fundamental problem of human history: "how to overcome separateness, how to achieve union, how to transcend one's individual life and find at-onement." ([1956] 1995, 8) He lists a number of different partial solutions (with their respective limitations in parenthesis): Orgiastic fusion (merely transitory); productive work (not interpersonal); and conformity (mere pseudo-unity built on the evisceration of individuality). Given Fromm's focus on the necessity of the full development of personality and individuality, the only adequate unity then emerges: "[t]he full answer lies in the achievement of interpersonal union, of fusion with another person, in *love*." (14) In accordance with his dynamic approach to the human person, Fromm sees the desire for this fusion as "the most powerful striving in man […] the most fundamental passion." (14) Contrasted with this, Fromm turns first to "those immature kinds of love which may be called *symbiotic union.*" (15) As with the regressive solutions in Section 1.6, these pseudo-unions are premised on the submission of surrender of self to another, or dominion over another. Through this both the sadist and the masochist evade the question of freedom and the awareness of need for mature unity. It is important to note that sadism and masochism should be understood much like incest in Section 1.4.3, since rather than being just sexual phenomena, Fromm broadens the concepts to mean ways of relating in which one self surrenders to another. This brief tour of the regressive alternatives to love clears the path for the genuine, mature, interpersonal activity to emerge.

2.5 Love: Activity Ordered towards Interpersonal Union

"In contrast to symbiotic union, mature *love* is *union under the condition of preserving one's integrity*, one's individuality." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 16) Here we have the kernel of Fromm's understanding of love, and a clear statement of its two poles of unity and distinction. Love is the antidote to our isolation precisely because it is the "*active power* […] which breaks through the walls which separate man from his fellow man." (16) It is important to note that this is merely an affirmation, and that Fromm is not concerned with

the cosmological or metaphysical conditions that make this possible. It therefore seems somewhat question-begging, presuming that union is achievable rather than exploring how. On a phenomenological level it is important to highlight elements of this approach which contrast with other ways in which love may be conceived. Firstly, love is not a phenomenon which merely arises in or modifies a subject, for instance an accident in the sense of scholastic philosophy, or a mere biochemical reaction. Rather, it is implicit in Fromm's claim that love entails a bond *between* two subjects. Secondly, love involves the whole person and the preservation of integrity, rather than the absorption of self in the presence of another. For Fromm, the emphasis is principally on how this love is therefore the opposite of surrendering our powers to an external authority, and I will argue that a concrete account of love must also attend to the environmental and developmental conditions in which integrity can be *established* (Chapter Five). A third point is that love involves activity, and Fromm's approach is therefore also distinguished from love seen as a mere feeling.

Elaborating on his initial question, Fromm continues: "[l]ove is an active power in man." ([1956] 1995, 16) Activity is immediately contrasted with passivity, as well as with being affected.[82] To understand Fromm's approach to this distinction more clearly, it will be helpful to refer to *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (Fromm 1950). Here, Fromm argues that the principle contribution of psychoanalysis to the study of truth lies in the emphasis on rationalization, the process of assuming or professing conscious reasons for behaviours which mask motivations beyond the range of awareness (1950, 60). This surface-level focus points to a flaw in one modern usage of activity, by which "is usually meant an action which brings about a change in an existing situation by means of an expenditure of energy." ([1956] 1995, 17) This understanding focuses on behaviour and its impact on our environment, and like the rationalising explanation of a behaviour the emphasis is on what can be observed externally. Fromm's psychodynamic approach, on the other hand, argues that a merely external observation fails to account for the possibility that behaviour can be passive, driven by external impulses, such as when "the person is the slave of a passion,"

[82] In Chapter Five I will argue that the emphasis on activity and independence in Fromm's approach can be balanced with attention to less pronounced threads that show how he was aware of the importance of passivity and interdependence. This is not the case in the sections in which Fromm discusses activity, which are dominated by the rational and voluntary response to affectivity ([1947] 2003, 62-64, 67-71, 78-79).

(17) for money or power, for instance.[83] Hence, considering the example of a person who was teaching someone how to perform a task, Fromm's point is that this can only be considered activity if it originates in the free exercise of the powers of the teacher, rather than in some unconscious need to be admired, for instance, or in some external compulsion or duty, or for that matter in a merely mechanical view of human behaviour.

This point can be summarised in Fromm's distinction between patient and agent, which involves the autonomy-heteronomy binary governing Fromm's work, as well as the separation of faculty and object in his theory of love. Reading between the lines, it seems that Fromm understands passion to be a driving force with an exterior – yet perhaps internalized – origin, something that we undergo rather than bring forth ourselves. Activity, on the contrary, "refers to the use of man's inherent powers, regardless of whether any external change is brought about." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 17) Referring to Spinoza, Fromm adds a second distinction, splitting affect into activity and passivity (or action and passion). With the former, rather than being passively moved, "man is free, he is the master of his affect." (17) Rather than being "the object of motivations of which he himself is not aware," (17) the implication is that we can respond to or transform a stimulus of which we are conscious. It might be objected that the identification of awareness and freedom to respond is simplistic, and that Fromm's use of affect is in need of more clarity.[84] Nonetheless, the point regarding activity is clear: we are agents only when we retain our power to respond to stimuli and our own affective states by choice. It is important to note that the distinction between active and passive affects allows Fromm to maintain the place of stimuli in our activity, which constitutes one example of how

[83] It is noteworthy that Fromm lists insecurity and loneliness as passions by which we might be driven, seemingly oblivious to how his own understanding of love is motivated by precisely these experiences. This point will be explored in Section 2.12, as well as recurring in the critique of the relationship between love and need in my conclusion (6.7-6.8).

[84] This picture is complicated by a section entitled "Productive Love and Thinking" in *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003, 71-78), in which Fromm discusses the relationship between love and reason. Although both are powers which relate to the world, reason does so through thought whilst love does so through emotion. This is in contrast with the approach in *The Art of Loving (*Fromm [1956] 1995), which sees love as a power of activity and as voluntary. Unfortunately it is neither echoed nor elaborated upon elsewhere, nor is there an account of emotion that would enable us to understand the relationship between emotion and will. Fromm also refers to love as an emotion in *The Art of Loving*, but again there is no elaboration of this and Fromm goes on to say that love is an act of choice rather than a mere feeling ([1956] 1995, 43-44). Fromm repeatedly refers to the intellectual, emotional, and sensual, human powers, so it is possible that volition could be an element of emotion, but any discussion of this is hindered by the absence of sufficient ground in Fromm's work to establish his own view.

concrete human love will always be situational. Love must hence be understood as a power which chooses how to respond to stimuli (in this case another person), contrasted with an affect that compels us to act, or that depends on others before it can be experienced.

2.6 Love: A Basic Orientation Towards the World

Recalling my introduction of Fromm's observation that love is a faculty that does not wait for an object (Section 2.2), we can now consider this point in more depth. Drawing also on his previous work on character (see Section 1.5) as a habitual way of channelling energy towards relationship, Fromm also claims that love is a basic attitude or orientation. This should be distinguished from love that is merely sporadic or focused only on one person, since it "determines the relatedness of a person to the world as a whole." ([1956] 1995, 36) This universal, indiscriminate relatedness is contrasted with an attitude that is indifferent except in relation to specific people. The basis of this claim is that love is a power or faculty which is abiding rather than fleeting or occasional, and which informs the way that we relate to everyone. The gravity of this somewhat abstract and technical way of posing the problem becomes clearer when Fromm states in more concrete language: "If I truly love one person, I love all persons, I love the world, I love life." (36) This means that the assertion of love for one person also contains a declaration of universal love.

This valuable point also raises a major issue with respect to the psychodynamic and existential foundations of Fromm's theory of the practice of love. This revolves around a prospective false dichotomy based in Fromm's abstraction of love from its situational context, which ignores the significance of experience and development in our capacity to relate. Fromm poses a strict binary in which the universal, character-based love that he espouses is absolutized and idealized so emphatically that anything less than perfect and universal love is mere pseudo-love. The idea that love is a basic, habitual way of relating is an invaluable antidote to the claim that we can love merely specific persons of our choosing whilst remaining indifferent to others. Despite this, Fromm has stressed universality at too great a cost, since his theory confronts us with the extremes of the perfection of love and its complete absence. This leaves little place for a love in development, the ongoing struggle to grow in loving habitually and indiscriminately. Because of this, Fromm fails to account for human finitude, how we each develop in particular ways, and so how our power to love is contingent on our history to some extent.

The error here is rooted in departing from a negation, namely the idea that the complete absence of love is a theoretical possibility. In light of his own assertion that the power of love will be activated given the right environmental conditions, we are expected to suppose that there could be persons who only practice pseudo-love, in whom genuine love is completely absent, in whom the power to love is utterly atrophied. Whilst this may be a possibility in extreme cases of total isolation from any sort of nurture whatsoever, the problem is that Fromm's account poses it as the state of all those who do not practice universal, indiscriminate, unconditional love, love for all.

Rather than beginning from its complete absence, an alternative view might proceed by suggesting that every person must struggle to learn how to love. It is perfectly feasible that we might be able to love in certain circumstances whilst remaining unable to do so in others, perhaps even in most others. Rather than a zero-sum situation, this would frame love as a continuum, and an unending one given the demands of Fromm's universal ideal. This would allow us to maintain another possibility: that there might be genuine love in some circumstances, but that in others we simply don't have the energy, experience, wisdom, openness, or time to love. This would also be more consistent with Fromm's own stress on internal impediments, and on psychotherapy being a process in which we learn to love. If this is the case, then there simply must be some process at work in our becoming free of the impediments to love, contrasted with Fromm's claim that there is no genuine love until there is perfect love.

I can summarise this subtle point by saying that we can begin to develop the ability to love by learning to relate to some others, whilst also remaining inhibited in relating to those we have not yet learned to love. Anything else renders love an abstract phantom, practiced only by those without impediments. In addition to the sheer finitude of human life, this also points to the intersubjective approach that I will develop in Chapter Five, where I will discuss how our power to love can fluctuate depending on relational context. Concrete loving activity does not emerge fully born out of the womb of its own absence, but grows from situational origins, person by person, dismantling one impediment at a time, on a never-ending path to universality.[85] Fromm therefore isolates love from its context, and

[85] The force of what I am arguing here might be mitigated by Fromm's stress on love as an attitude. I would argue that it retains its relevance even here, given that our attitude can never be immune to the

fails to recognise the nuances in the capacities of persons. This is an example of the basic abstract binaries which might be said to both structure his works and restrict them. From here on, I will primarily be exploring other ways of paying greater attention to our situations so as to account for the shades and phases on the continuum of genuine love. Before shifting the emphasis of this thesis in that direction, the final aspect of love I will discuss in this chapter is the giving of self, which is the practical basis of all the others.

2.7 Love: Giving of Self

Having considered love as an activity and as orientation to the world, we now arrive at Fromm's claim that love is based on the gift of self. This emphasis on giving is distinguished from any approach which sees love as primarily about receiving, and is roughly analogous to the distinction between loving and being loved that we encountered earlier (Section 2.1). It also develops Fromm's account of the activity which responds to affect in a way that upholds our freedom (Section 2.5). Fromm introduces giving of self through the distinction between "standing in" love, and "falling in love," ([1956] 1995, 18) seeing the latter as connoting helplessness and contrasting it with the control implied in the former. He continues by adding that "love is primarily *giving*, not receiving." (18) Fromm is careful to avoid the reduction of giving to sacrificing, since this might imply that giving is an "an impoverishment." (18) Properly understood, giving is "the highest expression of potency," "strength," "wealth" and "power." (18) From the vitality felt in giving follows an experience of self as "overflowing, spending, alive, hence as joyous." (18)

Fromm does not elaborate on why giving expresses vitality, which might easily be argued to be optimally experienced in aesthetic, sporting, or contemplative experiences not primarily based on giving to others. His answer can be extrapolated from the next point, addressing the question of what precisely is given in the act: the "most important sphere of giving" (Fromm [1956] 1995, 19) is when we give ourselves, our own life. It is worth quoting Fromm's explanation of this in full: "he gives from that which is alive in him, he gives of his joy, of his interest, of his understanding, of his knowledge, of his humour, of his sadness – of all expressions and manifestations of that which is alive in him." (19) In

impediments by which are constricted. Fromm himself also states that love must be learned ([1956] 1995, 1), but doesn't seem to see any conflict with the dichotomy discussed here.

doing so, the giver "enriches the other person […] enhances the other's sense of aliveness […] bringing something to life in the other." (19f)[86] We can see from this why the concept of individuation (Section 1.2) is of such central importance to Fromm. Love is epitomized in giving of self, the self which we only possess through completion of the process of individuation. A second connection with Fromm's earlier work is found in the connection between our ability to love "as an act of giving" and "the character development of the person [and] attainment of a predominantly productive orientation." (20) Without overcoming "dependency, narcissistic omnipotence, the will to exploit others, or to hoard" – some of the hallmarks of regressive character types - we will be afraid of the self-giving involved in love (20).

2.8 Love: Care and Responsibility

As introduced in Section 2.2, Fromm claims that there are four elements of love. Care and responsibility will be explained and contextualised in this chapter, whilst respect and knowledge will be considered in Chapter Three. Care and responsibility are significant for their central role in Fromm's theory as are they common to all forms of love, even if this is not reflected in the length of time that he spends on them. Since my critique of these elements will unfold throughout the chapter, I will merely introduce them briefly at this point. It is also important to note that they are clearly similar in content, entailing a degree of repetition that Fromm does not seem to be aware of. Care has its paradigm "in a mother's love for her child," (Fromm [1956] 1995, 22) which would be considered absent were it not for the element of caring for the basic needs of nutrition, hygiene, and comfort. Similarly, a professed love for plants or animals would appear hollow if the person neglected to provide them with food and water. Hence, as care, "[l]ove is the active concern for the life and growth of that which we love. Where the active concern is lacking, there is no love." (22) Responsibility is to be "able and ready" to respond to "the needs, expressed or unexpressed, of another human being." (21) Unlike the maternal emphasis on physical needs, responsibility among adults "refers mainly to the psychic needs of the other person." (22)[87] Fromm is keen to make clear the distinction between heteronomy and

[86] This is another hint of my theme in Chapter Five, concerning the reciprocal and intersubjective nature of love.

[87] Clearly there are adults for whom the principal need for love is not in their psychic needs, such as adults who are impaired physically or cognitively. Fromm shows no sign of accounting for this, mostly concerning himself with generalities rather than specific exceptions to his theory.

autonomy, pointing out that responsibility does not "denote duty, something imposed on one from the outside." (22) Instead, it is "an entirely voluntary act." (22)

The first of the elements of love thus relate to our ability to act, in the first case for the growth and life of the other person, and in the second to respond to their needs. Given what we have seen about the innate tendency or striving of every organism to grow. it is hard to see why these need to be distinguished. Care for growth and life would arguably be absorbed by responding to need, but perhaps the point would not have been clear unless Fromm's readers were familiar with his previous work. In any case it is a minor point relative to the significance of two others. First, Fromm's statement that responsibility is entirely voluntary seems to be a further instance of his abstraction of love from its physiological and psychodynamic foundations. As will become clearer throughout the chapter, this is because our ability to will is connected to a range of physiological, bio-chemical, energetic, and emotional factors. The power to will can therefore be interrupted by any number of these factors. Whilst it is perhaps mitigated by later emphases in his work, Fromm's love here has an air of voluntarism, where the will is sovereign all other processes, which both medicine and the experience of people afflicted by depressive or physical conditions might contest. Despite later references to body (see Section 2.16) and emphases elsewhere on emotion and affect, Fromm's assertion here invites the suspicion of dissociation or disembodiment. This lack of attention to the concrete experience of embodiment, finitude, and energy introduces the need for a somatic re-contextualization of love.

Secondly, I would argue that the claim around responding to the expressed or unexpressed needs of other persons raises the question of a further limitation in Fromm's theory. This has already been hinted at in Section 2.6, and concerns the need for our basic orientation to be made more concrete. The issue here concerns both how we are to know what needs of which persons to respond to, given the deluge of unfulfilled and unexpressed needs in our world. In my view this highlights the need for the practice and theory of love to be informed by some discriminative faculty or virtue, such as practical wisdom, *phronesis*, prudence, discernment, etc. Since the basic attitude of love is continually faced with concrete situations involving the decision between x or y, here or there, now or then, it is

not enough to merely to be orientated towards the world lovingly[88]. At the very least, the assertion seems empty without some awareness of the existential and practical components of responding. In concrete, finite, embodied, historical human life, we always love in specific situations, and are therefore simultaneously unable to love in the multitude of situations which might otherwise have elicited a response.

This failure to account for embodied finitude echoes the charge that Fromm's approach needs contextualisation, and to be nuanced to account for the practicalities of deliberation and discernment around action, the idea that love must be supplemented with a wise estimation of our own limitations and possibilities. Whilst any theory of love will always remain to some extent an abstraction, it can continually be made more concrete by incorporating an increasing number of the dimensions of embodied action. In other words, human and embodied love must also be a wise love, operating in realistic ways, such that a concrete love will accept the limitation of its own potency. In light of this, I will now introduce my discussion of several psychodynamic aspects of Fromm's work, in order to explore how they relate to care, responsibility, and embodied giving of self.

2.9 Alienation, Repression, Narcissism, Transference.

I will now begin to isolate and consider four aspects from the subsequent work of Erich Fromm that contribute to critical and existential revision of those dimensions of love that we have encountered in this chapter. The choice of these aspects – alienation, repression, narcissism, and transference – will be justified in order to explain why they are especially important counterparts for the theory of love. All four are processes of the psyche that interrupt the relationship to self and to others, and hence can prove impediments to genuine loving relation. This chapter is thus organised around the claim that love as activity, giving of self, basic orientation of character, and care and responsibility, is particularly ripe for dialogue with alienation, repression, narcissism, and transference, with additional focus on the somatic and emotional aspects of alienation and repression.

[88] This is reflected in Aristotelian ethics, in which practical wisdom, or *phronesis*, is central to moral activity (Aristotle 2009, 112-117).

2.10 Alienation

Alienation occupies an important place in all of Fromm's work, even if not always explicitly referred to.[89] I have elected to explore this first because I see it as especially relevant to the emphasis in *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995) on giving of self, and to a lesser extent love as an activity. To demonstrate this, we can first turn to Fromm's most precise definition of alienation, from *The Sane Society*:

> [b]y alienation is meant a mode of experience in which the person experiences himself as an alien. He has become, one might say, estranged from himself. He does not experience himself as the centre of his world, as the creator of his own acts […] [t]he alienated person is out of touch with himself as he is out of touch with any other person. ([1955] 2002, 120)

Proceeding to list several ways in which it can develop – primarily religious, political, industrial, and interpersonal – Fromm develops his theory of alienation, now focusing on its idolatrous aspects. This consists in our fear of assuming the control and use of our own powers, and in projecting them outwards and locating them in some external ideal. In doing so, the alienated person does not experience "himself as the active bearer of his own powers and richness, but as an impoverished 'thing' dependent on powers outside of himself, into whom he has projected his living substance." (124)

In these citations, we begin to encounter three themes which are of huge significance for relating love to other aspects of Fromm's thought. First, alienation entails being separated from our own self and centre. Second, it implies a rupture in our relationships with others. Third, it involves both the sundering of our powers and the heteronomy which follows from surrendering them to an alternate power. Given the focus on love as responding and relating to the needs of others and as an active power, each of these relates directly to love.

[89] Of the accounts of alienation in the secondary literature, that of John Schaar is the most critical (1961, 159-235). Schaar argues that Fromm fails to see the positive possibilities of alienation from others, since alienation from others is a condition of development of self. In my view this rests on Schaar's own failure to acknowledge that Fromm sees alienation as primarily separation from our own powers, and that the type of positive possibilities that Schaar speaks of are also present in Fromm's process of individuation as expounded in *The Fear of Freedom* ([1941] 2001). Schaar's second point is that Fromm's view of alienation is sociological and economic, which Schaar contrasts with the existential and theological views that see alienation as a condition of existence in general. Again this is based in Schaar's failure to look at analogous concepts in writings other than *The Sane Society* (Fromm [1955] 2002), which would provide clear evidence that alienation is a condition of our evolution and exile. Expositions of Fromm's view of alienation can be found in Miyamoto (1987), Pangilinan (2010), Durkin (2014, 178-80), and Friedman (2013, 188-90).

Elsewhere, Fromm's focus is on alienation as economic, political, interpersonal, and religious, and in many of the texts in which these are discussed there are also sections on love as the culmination of our powers ([1941] 2001, 224f; [1955] 2002, 31-34, 197-200; [1947] 2003, 71-5). Rather than simply focusing on these, however, I would like to broaden the horizon by introducing another aspect of alienation, which Fromm begins to exhibit in later texts, that of the psychodynamic dimension.

This psychodynamic dimension can be illustrated with reference to Fromm's treatment of the connection between unconsciousness and alienation in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (1960). Rejecting Freud's notion of *the* unconscious as a location in the psyche - the topographical approach - Fromm elects to draw the line between consciousness and its antithesis in terms of states of awareness (42-45).[90] Rather than referring to some locale or receptacle of unconscious elements, the emphasis here is on the *process* of inhibiting awareness of affects and experiences. This means that we should speak not of *the* unconscious but of *being* unconscious, unaware of some (non)phenomenon. The importance of this for the present task is simply that Fromm's understanding of the emergence from being unconscious involves that of overcoming alienation, since it also involves being unaware of aspects of ourselves. To be fully conscious means emerging from alienation from self, others, and reality. To understand this more comprehensively, we can now progress to a discussion of repression in Fromm's later work.

2.11 Repression

In the same text, Fromm makes two claims that are important in connecting these two sections of my argument. He first equates unconsciousness with repression, before stressing that the alienated person is precisely the person who is repressed (Fromm 1960, 42, 90).[91] Unconsciousness "refers to a state of mind in which the person is not aware of

[90] Fromm himself does refer to the unconscious from time to time, for instance in *The Revision of Psychoanalysis* (1992, 19).

[91] This equation of unconsciousness and repression is one example of a tendency to make ungrounded assumptions, since there are other ways in which the relationship between them can be framed. Freud, for instance, stresses that as well as consciousness and the repressed unconscious, there is also the preconscious. This comprises mental contents which are not at the forefront of awareness at a given time but which can easily be recalled, and hence are contrasted with contents which have been actively repressed (see Freud [1933] 1973, 89). It is especially curious that Fromm himself, in a 1980 interview cited

his inner experiences," primarily "affect[s], impulse[s], feeling[s], desire[s], fear[s], etc." (43)[92] In addition, repression

> results in the fact that I, the accidental, social person, am separated from the whole human person. I am a stranger to myself, and to the same degree everyone else is a stranger to me. I am cut off from the vast area of experience which is human, and remain a fragment of a man, a cripple who experiences only a small part of what is real in him and what is real in others. (61)

In other texts of his later period, Fromm expands on the ramifications of repression, although normally in a sporadic fashion. In *The Revision of Psychoanalysis* unconsciousness is seen to have other areas (here in the context of Freud's focus on the repression of libido): "I, the person, am greedy, frightened, narcissistic, sadistic, masochistic, destructive, dishonest […] but my awareness of all these qualities is repressed." (Fromm 1992, 33) Secondly, in *Greatness and Limitations of Freud's Thought*, his final text before his death in 1980, Fromm elaborates a number of conflicts between repressed strivings and conscious ones: unfreedom/freedom; guilt/good/conscience; depression/happiness; fraudulence/honesty; suggestibility/individualism; powerlessness/power; cynicism and lack of faith/faith; indifference or hate/love; passivity and laziness/being active; lack of realism/realism (1980, 26). The crucial point here, returning to *The Revision of Psychoanalysis*, is "my own unconscious and its incompatibility with my conscious image of myself," which means that repression is an impediment to "self-discovery and […] sincerity." (Fromm 1992, 34)

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by Funk, clearly attests to the distinction between unconscious and preconscious (Funk, 2000, 66). In addition to the Freudian preconscious, the Gestalt school of psychology generally holds that the structure of perception involves the organization of conscious experience through wholes or structures which are neither fully conscious nor repressed (Greenwood 2008 326-336; Hergenhahn 2008, 456-485). Finally there is a plethora of work in recent neuroscience attesting to the hypothesis that our brains act as filters which screen out the vast majority of stimuli that we receive and which render conscious merely that which is most relevant and/or familiar to us (Eagleman 2016, 37-75). Burston raises this point relative to cognitive psychology, in which our selectivity with respect to our conscious experience is rooted in normal mental development rather than avoidance, arguing that these processes account for "perhaps most" of the contents of our unconscious mind (1991, 149).

[92] Fromm also sees unconsciousness as having a social dimension, in which there are experiences, ways of thinking, character traits, emotions, etc., that are typically repressed by the members of a given society ([1962] 2006, 84-126). This also involves social filters, in which the language, logic, and concepts of the society mandates the forms of awareness that are tolerated (Fromm 1960, 47-58; see Section 5.3.5).

These last citations show how Fromm emphasises the importance of becoming aware of our unconscious motivations, strivings, or dynamisms. This is a cornerstone of his method from *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm [1941] 2001) onwards, since it is our fear of isolation that prevents us from recognising our freedom and impels us to seek authoritarian refuges entailing the alienation of our powers. Repression is therefore of central importance in all Fromm's work, as well as one foundation of alienation. My own line of interrogation concerns whether the importance of repression is made explicit enough in *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995), and if not how to begin to revise the theory in response to this. Kieran Durkin suggests that the psychoanalytic emphasis on repression was held to represent a "new basis for critical thought." (2014, 64) Granting this, it must also be applied to Fromm's own approach to love, which is the culmination of his account of humanity. I will also develop this by exploring again the question of how repression impacts embodied finitude (Sections 2.14-15), and perception or interpretation (Chapter 3). The focus in this section has been on how repression inhibits the power of self by constricting our consciousness of our feelings, desires, thoughts, self-images, etc. That repression also concerns our capacity to know and to respond to our own needs signals a shift to the third and fourth of my points of contact with psychodynamics, namely narcissism and transference.

2.12 Narcissism

In an essay entitled "Specific Methods to Cure Modern Character Neuroses," Fromm (1994, 163-191) writes that "for the understanding of ourselves, the understanding of narcissism is one of the most important things." (181) Narcissism entails "a person for whom reality is only that which goes on subjectively [and whose] own thoughts […] feelings, and so on […] are real." (181) [93] This is the "the narcissistic mood" in which "my thoughts, my feelings, my body, my interests" are real, whilst "the rest of the world" is unreal and barely felt (181).[94] A person in such a state "lives on the feeding of his narcissism," (182) implying the constant quest for ways to satisfy those needs. It is here

[93] Fromm gives a longer account of the variety of ways of living that can follow from the narcissistic condition, but each of them are simply variations on the same basic state ([1964] 1980, 62-76).

[94] Elsewhere, Fromm distinguishes between "benign narcissism" – the fixation upon our work or achievements – and "malignant narcissism." ([1964] 1980, 77) In the latter the object of our attention is something that we have or are, rather than something that we make, and so it lacks "the corrective element" (77) of seeing our efforts reflected externally.

that the connection with love lies, a connection which Fromm himself is keen to stress both in *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995) and in other texts. First, the excessive concern with our own needs involves a narcissistic distortion of the other person, and their "reality as it exists regardless of my interests, needs, and fears." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 94) Narcissism is conceived as "the opposite pole of love," (Fromm 1980, 45) especially since love is seen as the forgetting of self and "caring for others more than for oneself." (7, 49) It is clear that this formulation is in tension with the rest of Fromm's work on self-love, where the emphasis is on the need to love self and others with the same love (see Section 5.4). The point about narcissism nevertheless remains: to live in a state of being exclusively concerned with one's own needs is antithetical to being able to respond to the needs of others. Hence, "the main condition for the achievement of love is the *overcoming* of one's *narcissism*." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 92)[95]

Fromm distinguishes between the putative developmental narcissistic phase of infant life and the narcissism that is a regressive trait in adults ([1956] 1995, 30, 93).[96] In this latter case, narcissism results in "the distortions which are commonplace in interpersonal relations." (93) Leaving aside for the moment the question of perception, my point here concerns the giving of self and the capacity to care for and respond to the needs of others. As Fromm points out, narcissism entails being so absorbed in our own needs that the needs of others are either distorted or not experienced as real. What Fromm does not make clear – or at least leaves implicit and in need of making clear – is the connection between narcissism and repression. He does point out that narcissism can *be repressed* (Fromm 1992, 33), but is silent – at least in his works on love – as to how repression can be an *origin* of narcissism. In fact, his statement that love enables us to "leave the prison of aloneness and isolation which was constituted by the state of narcissism and self-centredness" (Fromm [1956] 1995, 32) arguably implies the opposite: that narcissism is the origin of isolation and hence the repression and escapism that follow from it. It would thus be more consistent with Fromm's work in general to suppose that narcissism is a putative

[95] In Fromm's theory, self-love can be distinguished from narcissism by being concerned with the healthy development of our powers, and ultimately being the foundation of love for others (see Section 5.5).

[96] The state of infant narcissism is when the child is "not yet aware of itself, or of a world outside of itself." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 30) The issue of narcissism in the history of psychoanalysis is complex, and so I will leave aside the question of whether Fromm is justified in seeing narcissism as a normal developmental phase. In any case, Fromm's focus is always on the impact of narcissism on adult relatedness. See Bacciagaluppi (1993) for an account of narcissism in Fromm's work.

refuge *from* isolation, from the need to avoid the experience of negative freedom. On this view negative freedom and the experience of isolation would be prior to narcissism.

If narcissism can follow from isolation, then a further dimension of the relationship between repression and love appears to us. We have seen already how the refusal to face the problem of freedom results in alienating strategies of avoidance such as masochism. Another of these strategies is repression, the constriction of awareness from threatening circumstances or intolerable experiences. Given this, it is arguably justified to suppose that the process of avoiding our own needs through repression would prevent us from seeing the extent to which our behaviour was driven by them. In other words, repression of our needs would not only make us narcissistic, but also limit the degree to which we were aware of this. In fact, Fromm himself hints at this in *Greatness and Limitations of Freud's Thought*, claiming that of "all character orientations narcissism is by far the most difficult to recognise in oneself." (1980, 45) This is not only because of our conviction of our own greatness and importance, but also because narcissism "wears many masks: saintliness, obedience to duty, kindness and love, humility, pride," with "many tricks to disguise [itself]." (51) Hence, the narcissist veils narcissism with behaviours "characterised by concern and help for others." (51) Fromm adds that the habit of basing one's life around helping others can be driven by the "usually unconscious" (51) aim of denying the narcissism. Even so it remains the case that Fromm seems to suggest that it is narcissism that renders us blind, rather than repression. Again, I would argue that this is inconsistent with Fromm's earlier work, in which fear and repression precede the *content* of the various avoidant character types.[97] The impact of this point is to restate the importance of repression for the practice of love: if narcissism as the antithesis of love has its remotest origins in isolation and repression, then the range of ways in which repression is an impediment to love becomes broader. A further aspect of this will now emerge in my discussion of one sense of transference.

2.13 Transference

The main analysis of transference in this work will take place in the third chapter, where its distorting consequences will be explored. The present section will focus on the principle

[97] Fromm's use of narcissism is specific to his own perspective, and my point here relates only to his view rather than narcissism in general.

way in which transference is employed by Fromm, and only insofar as it is related to the themes explored so far. Fromm states that transference is "among the most powerful emotional forces which exist," (1994, 115) and "the most significant problem in human life." (118) Given the different usages in Chapters Two and Three, it is important to be precise concerning the phenomenon that he is referring to here. Fromm praises Freud for his discovery of transference (1980, 38f), whilst also arguing that Freud's understanding is restricted to the clinical environment and therefore too narrow. In this original, attenuated sense it concerns merely the relationship between the analyst and patient. Typically, the latter develops a strong emotional attachment towards the former, who becomes the object of repressed childhood feelings and experiences (3; 1994, 118).

Whilst not contesting this, Fromm depicts a broader phenomenon, expressing "a need of a person to have somebody who takes over responsibility, who is a mother, who gives unconditional love, who is a father who promises and punishes, and admonishes and teaches." (1994, 119) The basic point here concerns the impulse to avoid responsibility, to have our helplessness and vulnerability assuaged. Consistent with Fromm's work elsewhere, the emphasis is on how transference is another abdication of our independence and powers, and a "failure in […] freedom." (119) Elsewhere Fromm makes a point which helps frame my own argument: first, transference is overcome by our awareness "of reality and of [our] own forces." (1980, 43) This is deeply significant, because it implies that transference - "about the most significant problem in human life" (Fromm 194, 118) - is rooted in our most fundamental danger, that of failing to embrace our freedom. It is perhaps one of the central points of Fromm's early work that this transference inhibits our ability to love, to use our powers to respond to the needs of others. Moreover it is clear from the context of *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm [1941] 2001) that this generally results from the repression of the experience of negative freedom. This augments my own argument that aspects of Fromm's work imply that our inability to respond to others is rooted in repression of our own needs. To continue to explore the implications of repression I will turn to the account of disembodiment and participation in R.D. Laing.

2.14 R.D. Laing: Divided Selves and Alienated Bodies

R.D. Laing's *The Divided Self* ([1960] 2010) is an attempt to break with the psychiatric convention of his time and argue that there can be comprehensibility in the voices of those labelled 'mad'. Laing draws on texts from existentialism and phenomenology to argue that

there are patterns that can be encountered in ways of being and communicating which are typically labelled incoherent. This means that the therapist must attempt to enter the world of the other in order to decipher the meaning of these patterns. This is existential primarily because of the notion that language communicates a person's way of being in and experiencing a world of meaning. Another sense of existential also applies, insofar as the analyst uses her empathic quality to enter this world of meaning. It is phenomenological since it departs from the primacy of the conscious experience of the person, rather than diagnostic criteria or clinical or experimental analysis of personality type or brain chemistry, etc.[98]

The focus of Laing's attempt to understand the world of his patients leads him into an observation which is the core of the work. He notes the way in which "ontological insecurity" – primarily in early life and shaped by disordered patterns of communication in families – produces the need for self-preservation (Laing [1960] 2010, 39, 42). This need in turn generates the strategy of retreating into isolation in order to preserve identity (76, 83). Since complete physical isolation is rarely viable, it is accomplished through a process of splitting into splintered selves (17, 73). Laing depicts this split as between the self which the person takes to be the genuine one, and the body which becomes heteronomous and complicit to the will of others (17, 96-98). Here the body is a false self, since it is controlled by the demands of others, and presents to them only what is acceptable. It is important to note that despite the label 'true self' neither of these selves are grounded in reality. The so-called true self remains "transcendent" (90) and concealed by being veiled by the false self, or possibly a system of false selves (94-105). This means that interaction with the world takes place entirely through these facades (90), and that the false self is the mediator between person and world.

The most important aspects of this concern the trajectory from alienation/dissociation to disembodiment, and to the absence of participation and spontaneity.[99] In *The Divided Self*,

[98] This focus on first-person experience anticipates my discussion of the work of Robert Stolorow and George Atwood in Chapter Five. It is noteworthy that in his focus on embodiment, interpretation, and worldhood, here – as well as his consistent focus on inter-subjectivity elsewhere - Laing exhibits a number of the themes which I am applying to the work of Fromm. See particularly *Interpersonal Perception* (1966), *Self and Others* (1969), and *The Politics of the Family* (1971), for the stress on inter-subjectivity.

[99] Laing is writing during a period of philosophy in which bodies were returning to – or perhaps assuming for the first time – a central position. The work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, building on a less focused range of

Laing uses 'dissociation' to refer to the process of being separated from our self, our body, or our experience, but within a decade his focus will have largely shifted to alienation. Whilst unwilling to equate these terms or either of them with Fromm's usage, I would argue that there is sufficient common ground between Fromm's alienation and Laing's dissociation to make some comparative analysis of the process involved. The crucial factor here is that both writers invoke the case of being estranged from self through dynamics of complicity to external authorities, and see the need to do so as rooted in insecurity and fear. For Fromm these authorities are largely persons or structures, and remain for the most part externalized. Laing's dissociation, as well as being clearly interpersonal, is primarily intra-psychic, since its focus is on splits *within* the psyche, between several facets of it.[100] Laing is much more concerned with how external relationships influence internal processes, relative to Fromm's customary focus on the impact of social structures on the way that we relate to the world. This distinction must not be overstated, however, being one of emphasis rather than exclusion. Demonstrating this, Laing draws a clear progression from developmental environments and internal dissociative processes to estrangement from reality and society, as we shall now see.

Laing's text opens by explaining that the "term schizoid refers to an individual the totality of whose experience is split in two main ways." (Laing [1960] 2010, 17) This is firstly, "a rent in his relationship with the world," and secondly "a disruption of his relation with himself." (17) The first division follows from the second: given the experience of insecurity and the need for preservation, the false self serves as a mediator between the world and the putative true self. This maintains the isolation of the latter and minimises the danger of destruction. The false self thus becomes the barrier to genuine participation in the world, (90) and the world is then experienced cloaked in a sense of unreality, futility, and deadness (75, 80). One crucial aspect of this is that the person relates to the body as to the false self, seeing both as unreal and as tools by which to keep the disembodied and estranged self safe from the world. Disembodiment is thus a crucial component of the splitting process, with the body completely implicated in the heteronomy which keeps self

reflections in Gabriel Marcel, was central in this recovery, focusing on the importance of embodiment for agency and perception (Merleau-Ponty, [1945] 2013, 67-205; Marcel, 1950, 92ff). Although never discussing his work, Laing refers to Merleau-Ponty from time to time, and was clearly at least familiar with his main texts (Laing [1960] 2010, 31; Mullan 1995, 110, 160, 292, 307).

[100] The closest that Laing comes to a unifying ground for these aspects is his use of being (2010, 20ff).

and environment separate from one another (66-68). It is here that the importance for my study of love begins to emerge, since this involves a distinct way of relating.

This disembodiment again concerns the point of departure for Laing's study: ontological insecurity. The person who experiences ontological security

> may experience his own being as real, alive, whole; as differentiated from the rest of the world in ordinary circumstances so clearly that his identity and autonomy are never in question as a continuum in time; as having an inner consistency, substantiality, genuineness, and worth; as spatially co-existent with the body, and usually as having begun in or around birth and liable to extinction with death. (Laing [1960] 2010, 41f)

The split person experiences all of this in a contrary manner, with each of these aspects vulnerable, and "his self…partially divided from his body." (42) The point to which I now wish to draw attention concerns the impact of this split condition for the purpose of relationship.

With ontological insecurity and disembodiment, "[r]elatedness to other persons will be seen to have a radically different significance and function," (Laing [1960] 2010, 42) as it will be primarily aimed at preservation. Laing also describes this as a matter of dynamisms, since as the "overall deadness" of the split person follows from the "basic dynamic structure of the individual's being." (96) In the present context, this suggests that the body of the split person becomes a central element in a way of relating premised on the need for preservation. This is necessary to maintain the identity and isolation of the supposedly genuine self. Disembodiment is therefore a primary component of the failure to participate, to enter a spontaneous and mutually enriching relationship (82). Without properly inhabiting the body there is no genuine relationship between persons, and hence no love. In the conclusion to this chapter I will discuss the importance of this for my own project and for the work of Fromm, having first added more depth to my account of disembodiment through an exploration of Alexander Lowen's *Bioenergetics*.

2.15 Alexander Lowen and Bioenergetics

Lowen is a particularly apt avenue of dialogue with Fromm for several reasons, both in terms of the roots of his work and its content. Concerning the roots, Lowen was a student of Fromm's contemporary, Wilhelm Reich, who was an early student of Freud and seen as a pioneer for his work relating both character to body and the healthy functioning of the body to the free expression of sexual energy. This is significant given the early overlap between the work of Reich and the burgeoning interests of the young Fromm, particularly around the psychology of authoritarianism. Reich's *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* ([1933] 1980) had a profound influence on Fromm's interests and indeed on his foundational text *The Fear of Freedom* ([1941] 2001). Reich would later be shunned, largely for his subsequent work in attempting to treat cancer with what he called orgone energy. Jailed for disobeying government sanctions concerning movement of his orgone generators, Reich died imprisoned in 1957. Having studied and received somatic therapy from Reich, Lowen's commitment in his work and writing during the remaining 60 years of his life was to expanding Reich's original insights into body, character, and energy. From Lowen's *Bioenergetics* I will emphasise the importance of the connections he establishes between painful experience, repression, chronic muscular contractions, character structure, energy, and spontaneity. Throughout this section I will also refer to several other psychotherapeutic and scientific sources, in order to develop the importance of bodies for the theory and practice of love.

2.15.1 Repression and Chronic Muscular Contractions

Lowen describes how his original interest in Reich came after attending Reich's 1940 lectures at the New School for Social Research, in New York, where Fromm would teach from 1941. Lowen was captivated by the observation of "the functional identity of a person's character with his bodily attitude or muscular armouring […] the total pattern of chronic muscular tensions in the body [which] protect an individual against painful and threatening emotional experiences." ([1975] 1994, 13) These muscular tensions are contractions which inhibit the flow of energy - including emotional energy - in order to protect the person against the unpleasant feelings and physical threats to existence. This is also rooted in Reich's scientific experiments, and his observation that single-celled organisms would contract when exposed to toxins. The pattern of expansion and contraction is of fundamental importance for Lowen, particularly in his claim that our

bodies open towards experiences of pleasure and contract in order to avoid pain (see Section 2.14.3).

Whilst contraction also serves the immediate purpose of enabling the movement of the body, the crucial distinction is made between temporary contraction for movement and the chronic contraction which results in limitation of the flow of energy around the body. This type of prolonged contraction is the result of the repression of emotion, when we are "afraid to perceive or sense [our] feelings." (Lowe [1975] 1994, 65)[101] Lowen adds that when

> feelings have a threatening quality, they are generally suppressed [through] chronic muscular tensions that do not allow any flow of excitation or spontaneous movement to develop in the relevant areas. People often suppress their fear because it has a paralyzing effect, their rage because it is too dangerous, and their despair because it is too discouraging. They will also suppress their awareness of pain, such as the pain of an unfulfilled longing, because they cannot support that pain. (65)

On the physiological level, this results mainly in the reduction of respiration throughout the body (87, 144), reduction of motility (35), and generally blocking the flows of energy (15, 19), and of "impulse and feeling," (150), all of which allow the body to function naturally. Although Lowen's work is not based on experimental observation, the biochemical work of Candace Pert buttress this observation. Pert, at one point the most cited scientist at the American National Institute of Mental Health (1998, 120), found acclaim for her work in the area of peptides, which provides important context for my argument in this chapter.

Pert's *Molecules of Emotion* (1998) describes how she and a succession of collaborators made a series of breakthroughs in discovering how the range of biochemicals known as peptides are produced not only in the brain – as had previously been held – but throughout the body. In addition to this, Pert discovered the mechanism by which peptides influence cell function in a vast range of ways across the whole spectrum of somatic processes. This

[101] Thomas Hanna (2004, 37-92) argues that prolonged adoption of the same posture, in work or simply in our gait, can result in sensorimotor amnesia. Here the neural network simply becomes wired to the same posture, and no longer carries out the autonomic function of relaxation after stress. Given that Lowen is speaking of habitual postural defences, this would add some neurological basis to his claim, although the emotional-energetic focus is absent in Hanna.

takes place through chemical and vibrational signatures which each match only to one type of cell receptor (26-31). The salient point here is that there is a network of glands and cells throughout the body, with peptides the medium by which information relating to changes in cell function passes through the blood-stream.[102] Pert describes these as "the basic units of a language used by cells throughout the organism to communicate across systems such as the endocrine, neurological, gastrointestinal, and even the immune system." (33)

Crucially, Pert was among the first to hypothesise and then observe that some of these peptides are the biochemical correlates of emotional states. This meant that a phenomenon which had previously been considered as merely subjective might now be studied objectively, using radiography to correlate emotional states with chemical components (Pert 1998 229ff).[103] In the intervening years, a wide range of biochemicals have been observed in emotional states and reactions, the most salient of them being dopamine, serotonin, oxytocin, vasopressin, and adrenaline. Of particular importance is the idea that dopamine production – by being associated with reward – influences agency, whilst oxytocin and vasopressin concern the ability to make social bonds (including, but not limited to, the bond between mother and child facilitated by oxytocin).[104] In addition, the role that adrenaline and noradrenaline play in the physiology of fear and anger has been well known in psychology and physiology since the elaboration of the fight-flight response by Walter Cannon (1915, 1963) in 1915.[105]

The most important aspect of this for my critique of Fromm is that Pert also observes the impact that repression can have on the free flow of these biochemical correlates of emotion

[102] This function is also carried out other hormones, steroids, and neurotransmitters. The matter of stratifying these biochemicals is one of great complexity and Pert prefers the simple genus "information substances." (Pert, 89)

[103] Pert's work was later to be considered controversial in mainstream scientific circles because it was seen to be a representative of the mind-body paradigm, whereby the cultivation mental states is said to influence physical health.

[104] See Ross and Young (2009), Hurlemann *et al* (2010), Feldman (2012), Donaldson and Young (2008), on biochemistry and sociality. See Render and Jansen (2019), Friston *et al* (2014), and Salamon and Correa (2012) on agency.

[105] For a more recent and developed account see Sapolsky (1994).

between origin and destination.[106] This also involves the destructive effect that their impediment can have on physiological function. Pert argues that the repression of emotion leads to the inhibition of the movement of peptides, which leads to "blockages and insufficient flow of peptide signals to maintain function at the cellular level." (Pert, 1998, 248) Consequently, repression can weaken the body and cause a lack of integrity between the parts. Pert adds that

> if our emotions are blocked due to denial, repression, or trauma, then blood flow can become chronically constricted, depriving the frontal cortex, as well as other organs, of vital nourishment. This can leave you foggy and less alert, limited in your awareness and thus your ability to intervene into the conversation of your bodymind, to make decisions that change physiology or behavior. As a result, you may become stuck — unable to respond freshly to the world around you. (372)

To sum up the biochemical aspect of the contrast between emotional expression and repression, she states that her

> research has shown me that when emotions are expressed — which is to say that the biochemicals that are the substrate of emotion are flowing freely—all systems are united and made whole. When emotions are repressed, denied, not allowed to be whatever they may be, our network pathways get blocked, stopping the flow of the vital feel-good, unifying chemicals that run both our biology and our behavior. (352)

I will develop the importance of this for Fromm's work in the conclusion of this section, but it is also important to consider a second aspect of Pert's work. This is the impact of the repression of the biochemicals of emotion on the immune system, and the threat of disease.

Pert argues that given sufficient time and degree of repression, the inhibited flow of biochemicals can eventually become toxic and leave the body in danger of disease or breakdown (Pert 1998, 226ff).[107] Although Pert was a pioneer in this field, there have been

[106] This observation is clearly in a different sphere to that of the radiographic method used to establish the existence of the peptides, and so Pert's claims about repression are far less rigorous than the main findings of her work.

[107] The notion of flow also evokes the primary claim of traditional Chinese Medicine, that the health of the body and mind depends on the unimpeded flow of *chi* through the pathways of the body. As well as being

a significant number of more recent claims around the specific ways that excessive levels of biochemicals in the body can lead to a wide range of health conditions. This can happen either simply through excessive quantities of the chemicals, or by the chemicals beginning to attack the cells which coordinate immune responses. In addition to this is the field of psychosomatics, which has long held that so-called mental phenomena can have a significant effect on our bodies. In his medical practice and writing, John Sarno (1991) develops the link between muscular tension in the back and repressed emotion, particularly rage. Sarno argues that there are several conditions which traditional medicine has been unable to establish a cause for, and that these are legitimate terrains of study for psychosomatic medicine. Based on his observation that emotional expression can in many cases provide complete relief of chronic spinal conditions, Sarno argues that the original cause was indeed repression.[108] This supports the general claim of this chapter around the importance of repression in the optimal function of the body and of the importance of the body in the capacity to love. In order to discuss how this relates to the work of Fromm, I will now turn to the matter of character in his own work and in Lowen.

2.15.2 Character and Body

In his *Wilhelm Reich: The Evolution of His Work* (1974), David Boadella argues that Reich was initially renowned for his focus on shifting psychoanalysis away from the mere relationship between symptom and repressed libido, and in the direction of character analysis. Reich's practice was based on the observation that any significant therapeutic breakthroughs must be preceded by a breakdown of the character defences which impede not only the relationship with reality but also the possibility of genuine candour with the analyst (Boadella 1974, 38-47). Boadella argues that as well as the stress on authoritarianism and fascism, Fromm's early interest in character is in part attributed to the

traditionally attested to in Chinese culture – with an arguable analogue in the *prana* of India – Western science and medicine is now beginning to study this in a more rigorous experimental setting (although with resistant from established paradigms in each discipline). See Oschman, (2015), Holman (2017) and Keown (2014).

[108] Sarno (1991) argues that the physical symptom represents an attempt of the psyche to divert attention from the emotion. An alternative, more prevalent in the first period of psychosomatic research, is that the symptom is a way of expressing the need to attend to the emotional distress. For an account of the development of this latter view, see Harrington (2008, 67-102).

influence of Reich, marginally his elder (92).[109] Fromm's sees character primarily as a habitual way of channelling energy towards relationship and harmony with the world, structuring his characterology around ways in which modern political and economic structures influence our habits of relating (see Section 1.5). As well as this influence of Reich, the most important point of contact and convergence between Fromm and Lowen is the respective notions of spontaneity, as I will discuss in Section 2.15.3. Given the trajectory of my argument in this chapter, the most significant divergence is found in Lowen's development of Reich's emphasis on the connection between body and character.

Lowen argues that his bioenergetic method "differs from similar explorations into the nature of the self by attempting to understand the human personality in terms of the human body" ([1975] 1994, 44). In practice this entails the convergence of character and posture, which has the effect of structuring the musculature in a way that both symbolically illustrates and practically facilitates the type of character it is rooted in.[110] Examples of this are found in Lowen's characterology, which separates the abstract types into schizoid, oral, psychopathic, masochistic, and rigid. Each of these have a range of energetic, physical, psychological, and etiological contents (151-169). This

> functional identity of psychic character and body structure or muscular attitude is the key to understanding personality, for it enables us to read the character from the body and to explain a body attitude by its psychic representations and vice versa. (137)

This is particularly important in that what is often communicated is the specific way in which a person avoids pain, supplementing Laing's claim about how bodies are implicated in protection. The patterns of contraction thus give an indication of the emotions and experiences which the person finds most intolerable (128), including anxiety that past threats will be reprised (123). The specific ways in which a person represses past emotion

[109] Boadella (1974, 92) argues that Fromm "presents a diluted, socially acceptable version of many of the decisive points that had first been made by Reich," but he ignores the extent to which Fromm's own revision of sexuality, character, and drive in Freud could in fact implicitly cover his reception of Reich. Fromm himself mentions Reich and "the liberation of the body" in *The Art of Being* ([1993] 2007, 14), but since this is in a section entitled "Great Shams," it is hard to isolate any explicit evaluation of Reich's approach.

[110] Like Fromm, Lowen stresses that the individual person is not seen in abstract terms, since the reflective understanding of typical character traits is merely used to illuminate any number of combinations in one person (Lowen [1975] 1994, 151).

and protects against present-day pain are thus argued to be visible in “the language of the body [or] nonverbal communication.” (99)

We can begin to see other aspects of the direct connection between repression, embodiment, and relationship that first began to emerge in my account of *The Divided Self* . Lowen generally defines character as a “fixed pattern of behavior, the typical way an individual handles his striving for pleasure.” (Lowen [1975] 1994, 137, *sic*) As well as this physiological aspect, it is “also a psychic attitude which is buttressed by a system of denials, rationalizations and projections and geared to an ego ideal that affirms its value.” (137) This system will involve some mixture of the abstract character types that I have listed above. Lowen therefore argues that our relationships to the world and to the pleasures and pains that we strive for are mediated by ways of behaving which are reflected by and mirrored between both body and psyche. As well as this emphasis on posture and physiology, the key difference between Fromm and Lowen here is that Fromm depicts us as striving for interpersonal relation whilst Lowen’s focus is on pleasure.

Describing this as a biological orientation which “promotes the life and well-being of the organism,” (Lowen [1975] 1994, 135) Lowen describes our “primary orientation of life [as] towards pleasure and away from pain.” (135) It is the prospect of pleasure to which we “open up and reach out spontaneously,” and that of pain from which we “contract and withdraw.” (135) Either in the threats of present-day life or in the shape of threatening emotions of the past lurking in the body, the avoidance of pain therefore motivates our muscular and energetic contractions. As well as the somatic effects, this prospect entails a blend of “ego defences,” such as repression, rationalization, “denial, projection, provoking,” and “blame casting.” (145) These psychic and physical defences mitigate the extent to which the person is engaged with the world, relative to the degree that such engagement threatens elicitation of the repressed feelings. This is where the most significant convergence with Fromm is found, since it concerns an analogous approach to Fromm’s key themes of relatedness and spontaneity. At the same time, it illustrates the need for a somatic dimension to be applied to both.

2.15.3 Spontaneity and Self-Expression

Lowen contrasts spontaneity with the "unconscious restrictions of movement and expression [that] limit a person's ability to reach out to the world for the satisfaction of his needs." ([1975] 1994, 263) Spontaneity is "a function of the body's motility," and so "directly related to its energy level." (265) He depicts the ideal trajectory of activity as energy, motility, feeling, spontaneity, and finally self-expression. As the goal of therapy, self-expression "describes the free, natural, and spontaneous activity of the body and is, like self-preservation, an inherent quality of all living organisms." (261) Therapy "should be designed to remove the barriers or blocks to self-expression," (262) and so the connection between repression, body, character, energy, and relation can be seen clearly here. Spontaneous and self-expressive reaching out to the world is either inhibited or facilitated by the body and character structure, depending on how these have developed to respond to emotion and protect against danger. This expansiveness and relatedness of persons is consequently inseparable from the natural functioning of our bodies, and the "flow of feeling and energy to the periphery of the organism and the world." (138) This is augmented by the work of Pert and subsequent scientists around how biochemicals relate both to existential matters (such as agency, bonding, and fear), and to the immensely complex autonomic physiological network by which we function.

This is not merely on the level of muscular contraction, character, and energy, since Lowen also touches on the extent to which awareness of the body can impact on its functioning. Arguing that alienation is not merely from nature and from others, he states that its "base is the estrangement of the person from his body," since it is through our bodies that we "experience…life and…being in the world." (Lowen [1975] 1994, 107) To the extent that we avoid painful feelings we also avoid awareness of the body, and vice versa. Lowen therefore stresses that successful therapy must focus both on ego defences and upon returning awareness, breath, and movement to the areas of the body which have been chronically contracted (117-22). In doing so, the painful and threatening emotions that have been repressed can find expression, and so "make available the energy necessary for change" and growth (121). This also reduces involuntary contraction in the muscles and allows improved physiological functioning. Lowen's account of spontaneity and relatedness to the world thus involves the return of awareness to the body, and direct work with the habitual contractions of the body. Rather than merely dismantling defensive character structures and liberating energy, opening up to the world involves an ongoing

process of re-embodiment and the recovery of the motility of the body and its healthy functioning. I will now conclude this chapter by reflecting on the implications of embodiment for *The Art of Loving*.

2.16 Conclusion: (Dis)Embodiment and *The Art of Loving*

Before discussing how the previous two sections impact on my critique of Fromm, it is important to present some passages in his work which show that he did have some concern for both energy and embodiment. In probing the internal consistency of Fromm's work and the interpenetration of its elements, energy is especially important given its place in Fromm's characterology. Character, is both "the specific kinds of a person's relatedness to the world" and "the (relatively permanent) form in which human energy is canalized." (Fromm [1947] 2003, 42) Given that character also culminates in love, we can easily see the relationship between energy and love. In considering the connection between repression and love I must therefore also focus to some extent on the fleeting references to energy in the rest of Fromm's work. The most illuminating of them are found in *The Art of Listening*, where Fromm states that "every repression requires energy to keep the repression alive." (1994, 93) If we become aware of whatever has been kept from consciousness, "this energy becomes available…and that means an increase in freedom." (93) A second consequence is that this allows our "innate strivings for health [to] begin to work […] the tendency for well-being, for cooperation, growth." (93) By contrast, repression entails both the wasting of energy and the inhibiting of the relational energies that tend towards well-being. Elsewhere, psychoanalysis aims at "liberation of energy," (Fromm 1960, 82) precisely through the lifting of repression (42). Supplementing his focus on repression and integration, Fromm is clearly aware of the impact of repression upon energy, and of energy upon activity, but this is not the case with the relationship between repression, energy, activity, and embodiment.

Fromm does mention bodies in the later texts that I have discussed from time to time in this chapter, although always sporadically. Still, there is little evidence that he is sufficiently attentive to the somatic nature of loving or the impact which alienation and repression have on embodiment and hence on love. To the extent that he does discuss bodies, he generally does so in the context of awareness, relaxation, and posture, rather

than the necessity to relate through the body (Fromm 1994, 115).[111] One very notable exception to this is in *The Sane Society*. In a chapter entitled "Roads to Sanity," Fromm states that

> [m]an, in order to feel at home in the world, must grasp it not only with his heart, but with all his senses, his eyes, his ears, with all his body. He must act out with his body what he thinks out with his brain. Body and mind cannot be separated, in this, or in any other aspect. ([1955] 2002, 338f)

Elsewhere in the same text, Fromm identifies a nineteenth century taboo on thought and feeling, which involves "the repression of sex and all that was natural in the body." (97) This text – published one year prior to *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995) – therefore clearly acknowledges the need of relating through the body and its natural processes, at least vaguely. In addition, Fromm discusses at more length the importance of being aware of and loosening our bodies in overcoming repression, in a chapter entitled "Functions and Methods of the Psychoanalytic Process" in *The Art of Listening* (1994, 115). Finally, there is also a passing mention of awareness of the body in *The Art of Loving*, in the context of the importance of concentration (Fromm [1956] 1995, 88n2). Whilst all of these passages are important, there nevertheless remains a need to relate them to Fromm's theory of love, since there is no attention in *The Art of Loving* to how embodiment relates to the active and responsive power and basic orientation to give self.[112] All of these, I will now suggest, are tied to the awareness and health of our bodies.

This emphasis on embodiment, firstly, is particularly important given Fromm's focus on the will, since he states that love should be "entirely voluntary." ([1956] 1995, 22) Lowen's approach is arguably excessive in a converse manner, given his focus on freeing the body *for* involuntary expressions. Nonetheless I would argue that some middle ground is necessary in order to take into account the complexity of the connection between freedom and our biochemistry.[113] My argument is that in suggesting that love is merely a

[111] Funk notes that Fromm took daily instruction in bodily awareness for a short period in 1942, being visited each morning by Charlotte Selver, "the grand dame of the then fashionable Sensory Awareness movement." (Funk, 2000, 122f)

[112] One possible addition would be the importance of temperament and constitution in the conception of character in *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003, 37), although that is at best an implicit connection and also a fairly fleeting point.

[113] It is possible that the account of the relationship between emotional and volition in the work of psychoanalysts Conraad Baars and Anna Terruwe may provide some ground for a synthesis, but the

voluntary choice, Fromm becomes vulnerable to a critique based on his own work. Given that character is essentially the channelling of energy towards the world, I would argue that Fromm's own understanding of the person and of love calls for a somatic, organic, or bio-energetic critique.[114] This is particularly apt given his stress on love as responsibility, since the capacity to respond is clearly measured by the freedom of the body to move and to feel, as well as by the efficiency of the biological processes which are central to our functioning.

Fromm's approach, on the contrary, is so centred on willing as to shelter within it a subtle alienation from the processes and energies of the body that make activity possible. This leads to the suspicion that this voluntarism of love is *premised* on disembodiment. In other words, Fromm's stress on willing seems to imply that the ability to act regardless of the limitations of bodies is a fundamental component of love.[115] As well as what I have discussed above, there are a multitude of psychological conditions which can have a debilitating and interruptive impact on bodies, (e.g. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Depression, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Seasonal Affective Disorder, etc.). To suggest to anyone suffering from such conditions that love is "entirely voluntary" (Fromm [1956] 1995, 22) seems naïve at best, and implies a failure to empathically and lovingly enter the world of the other. The body in these and other conditions is simply subject to a variety of crippling symptoms beyond the control of volition, and hence there is another abstraction in Fromm's view of love. Added to my emphasis on finitude, temporal and spatial limitations, and particularity, *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995) thus invites an existential revision based on the concrete experience of embodiment, and biochemical and emotional energetic processes.

Given his focus on love as an active power, a gift of self, and as responsive, my existential critique of Fromm's work thus calls for attention to a major flaw in his account. The main

problem of physiology and biochemistry would remain. See Baars (2003), and Baars and Terruwe (2016), where emotion is said to be a motive force giving impetus to the will to pursue an object which the intellect has judged truthful and good.

[114] In fact, Fromm himself seems to allude to the importance of an organic approach in referring to the "self-actualizing tendencies of the organism," (1994, 93) but this is not integrated into his account of love.

[115] I would argue that this is also present in Marion's claim that the voice transcends the limitations of the finitude of the flesh, as if love can speak through the voice regardless of the mouth and the whole body ([2003] 2007, 213).

line of argument in this chapter has been around how repression, as a species of alienation, has a variety of consequences that impact on responsibility, including narcissism and transference. In these last two sections, I have argued for a revision of Fromm's account based on the work of Laing, Lowen, and Pert. Contrasted with the power that Fromm centralises, bodies can become disempowering, restricted and impoverished in the freedom to give and act. This means that the capacity to respond can be hindered by the concrete and physical nature of human existence, by (dis)embodiment and its discontents.[116] Again, this is particularly the case given Fromm's stress on the importance of repression, an organic process which inhibits biochemistry, movement, energy, and openness to relation. As well as its impact on character, repression also has a significant impact on physiology. Any treatment of loving which aspires to be concrete and human must therefore attend to the bio-energetic conditions of love. In doing so it would be an account of an *organic love*, guided by practical wisdom, in which the embodied nature of human existence is fully appreciated in both in its sorrows and joys, its contractions and expansions, its limitations and freedoms. To explore further ways in which psychodynamics condition these freedoms, my third chapter turns to the impact of another sense of transference upon respect and knowledge.

[116] It would also be important to consider the extent to which repression of emotions such as anger and fear might entail the atrophy of the power to feel in general, and how this might impact on the capacity to sense the needs of others. The work of Gabriel Marcel (1950, 103-124) on the centrality of feeling in participation would be a significant point of contact here, perhaps in dialogue with the work on the atrophy of the emotional power in Baars and Terruwe (2016, 68, 96f, 116). John Armstrong (2003, 110) also considers how responsive love might entail some disagreement over how to determine someone's genuine needs.

Chapter Three: The Perceptual Conditions of Love

3.1 Introduction

Having examined the implications of repression and transference for care and responsibility, the present chapter will do so for respect and knowledge. Since respect and knowledge are primarily concerned with our perception of others, this also involves a shift to a different view of transference. Drawing on Jan Grant and Jim Crawley's *Transference and Projection: Mirrors to the Self* (2002), I will explore how transference is also understood as a process by which past experiences are imposed upon the present, leading to the distortion of perception. This is clearly at odds with transference in the fashion in which it is most often understood by Fromm, who primarily sees it as a transfer of our volitional and intellectual powers and independence. It is nonetheless consistent with his approach in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (Fromm 1960), as we shall see. Whilst Chapter Two focused on alienation from oneself, this chapter will explore how the repression of our inner representations of significant others entails alienation from those we encounter in daily life. Concerning love, I will consider how this relates to both Fromm's respect and knowledge, and Jean-Luc Marion's *The Erotic Phenomenon* ([2003] 2007).

3.2 The Art of Loving: Respect

Fromm draws on the Latin origins of respect to emphasise its connotations of looking at and seeing.[117] The first characteristic of respect is the "ability to see a person as he is; to be aware of his unique individuality." ([1956] 1995, 22) The most significant aspect of this is the assertion that love sees someone *as they are.* As we shall see with Marion, this involves the capacity to allow phenomena to appear from themselves, or on their own terms. This is contrasted with a mode of seeing which constitutes or distorts according to conditions present in the consciousness or senses of the seer. Fromm himself states that genuine respect presupposes the objective knowledge which has "overcome the illusions, the irrationally distorted picture" (25) of someone, and my main line of inquiry in this chapter will ask whether this admission merits a deeper and broader consideration of the

[117] From the combination of *specere* (to look), and the prefix *re-* (again).

place of repression and transference in love than we see in *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995).

Respect does not concern merely seeing, since a central point of contrast with the place of erotic love in phenomenality for Marion is found in Fromm's claim that respect also involves "the concern that the other person should grow and unfold as he is." ([1956] 1995, 22) Rather than merely enabling sight, love involves a decisive change in the person who becomes visible. Instead of simply being an enhanced capacity to see, love is portrayed as a force which affects the development of what is seen. To attempt to make this distinction clearer we can consider the person who sees as X, and the person seen as Y. If love is conceived simply as a way of seeing, then love enables X to see Y in state Y1. However, given that love is something that affects the growth of what is seen, there is a further phase involved. As well as enabling X to see Y, respect facilitates the development of Y. X therefore sees Y in an enhanced state, Y2. Love now no longer seems like a mere optic device, but also a power that affects the other. This means that that the love of the parent, for instance, facilitates the growth of the child and the emergence into new states, contrasted with merely seeing the child in an original and static state.

Arguably this raises questions for the first aspect of Fromm's understanding of respect, insofar as it involves seeing someone as they are. From a broader perspective which incorporates the second aspect (Y as Y2), it might well be more accurate to say that love also involves seeing someone *as we facilitate them becoming.* This is also a highly significant point relative to Chapter Five, which will explore environmental factors in the development of love and its impediments. It is perhaps a minor point given that Fromm himself accounts for both aspects, but it does appear that there is a tension between merely seeing in state Y1, and enabling the emergence and sight of Y2. Given the second, love seems to entail change as well as visibility. This seems more of a lacuna in Marion, since Fromm – at least implicitly – understands respect as a dynamic process which sees Y1 initially and then enables the emergence of Y2, and so on. In this sense we might also point to the elements of care and responsibility, in their striving for the needs and growth of others. This can enhance our understanding of how Fromm's elements of love are connected, since respect involves the same growth as care and responsibility do. We will now see what Fromm understands as the goal of love: knowledge.

3.3 Knowledge

At first, it seems difficult to distinguish knowledge from respect in Fromm's account. He initially describes knowledge as "an aspect of love which does not stay at the periphery, but penetrates to the core." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 23) Furthermore, knowledge is able "to see the other person in his own terms." (23) It could appear as if this penetration is simply the same act of seeing as respect, and so we might wonder why these two are distinct. Fromm does expand on what it means to be seen on one's own terms, namely being able to peer through our initial perceptions of an emotional state such as anger and recognise in it a "manifestation of something deeper," (25) anxiety or embarrassment for instance. Here we recognise a person as suffering rather than simply angry. This helps us to see what is meant by penetrating to the core: to look through a phenomenon into its roots (or at least its proximate roots).

Nonetheless, this clarification merely deepens our grasp of seeing as Fromm conceives it, and to understand the distinction between respect and knowledge completely we must continue in the text. The crucial point of difference lies in the claim that knowledge also involves the "active penetration of the other person, in which my desire to know is filled by union." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 24) In this "act of fusion I know you, I know myself, I know everybody – and I know 'nothing'." (24) Furthermore, in loving knowledge "the act of union answers my quest," (24) meaning that in the gift of self that knowledge entails we know not only other but self. Love is hence a type of knowledge – premised on the giving of self as described in Chapter Two – that involves more than mere sight. Fromm's assertion of ultimately knowing nothing is an important one, since it hints at a problem which leads to three other questions which seem central to a deeper analysis of Fromm's body of work and approach to love. First, we can question the type of knowledge that is meant; second, the type of self; and third, the relationship between brotherly love, erotic love, and mystical love. This final question takes us into the heart both of Fromm's account of love and what I envisage as the most incisive manner of critiquing it. This concerns the all or nothing approach discussed in Section 2.6.

3.3.1. Respect as non-conceptual knowledge

The question of knowledge of another person is necessarily opaque, but nevertheless Fromm's statements on it are relatively clear. In both *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995) and

Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism (1960), Fromm uses a distinction which has been made in a variety of forms in the 20th century. This contrasts objective, conceptual, psychological knowledge with the deeper knowledge of love (Fromm [1956] 1995, 25) or intuition (Fromm 1960, 97). As we have seen, Fromm simultaneously endorses love as a type of knowledge – "you […] myself […] everybody" ([1956] 1995, 24) - and immediately denies that anything is known, emphasising the ambivalent meaning of knowledge. When it comes to "knowledge of that which is alive," what is required is the "experience of union" rather than "any knowledge our thought can give." (24) This transcendence of thought and word in loving union is said to be the "only way of knowledge." (24) Here what is known is not attribute, accident, measurement, or any sort of data or peripheral aspect, but "the core," (37) the depth of our being or someone else's being.[118] Ultimately, this sort of experience and fusion stills the desire for knowledge, and answers our quest to know "the secret of man," (25) an age-old desire "to know all of man." (24) Later in the same text Fromm calls this "relatedness from centre to centre […] central relatedness." (37) Here, "two persons communicate with each other from the centre of their existence." (80; see Section 5.4.3) Along with the knowledge of our own centre which is the prerequisite of knowledge of another, this depth of communication is the only basis for love.

Nonetheless, it is important to stress that Fromm does not emphasise this experience of union exclusively. He also asserts that "ordinary" or "psychological" knowledge, or "knowledge in thought," is a "necessary condition for full knowledge in the act of love," (Fromm [1956] 1995, 25) This type of knowledge is on a continuum with loving knowledge, and is necessary if we are to "overcome the illusions, the irrationally distorted picture" (25) that we can have of others. Fromm does not make the point here, but this is an example of the synthesis between reason and love in his work, and on a more fundamental level the integration of our powers. Secondly, even loving knowledge can never exhaust the core or essence of persons. No matter how far we "reach into the depth of our being" (23) the goal of complete knowledge will remain elusive. Love both transcends conceptual knowledge and involves continual discovery and deepening of knowledge, a journey into an increasingly unfathomable reality.

[118] Fromm seems to see soul, nucleus ([1956] 1995, 23), and essence (25) as cognate here.

A final point concerning knowledge and love is Fromm's analogy between love of other persons and the mystical knowledge of God.[119] Here the analogy turns on the limitations of rational knowledge, a fundamental characteristic of our ways of (not) knowing. Another way of framing the difference emerges, this time distinguishing the idea of *grasping* the other (or God), on the one hand, from knowing in love, on the other. The limitations of the conceptual study of psychology and theology are said to lead to love and mysticism respectively, deeper ways of knowing humans or God. In both there is neither the possibility nor the need for thoughts or statements *about* persons or God, but only the "experience of union," (Fromm [1956] 1995, 25) meaning knowledge *of* others or God. This series of assertions regarding a different, deeper sort of knowledge leads us to a matter introduced in Chapter One, namely Fromm's emphasis on our dynamic self.

3.3.2 Knowledge: Our Ultimate Dynamism

In Sections 1.5 and 1.9 I explained how Fromm's approach to human existence focuses on the dynamisms that arise out of the dichotomies of our situation. Fromm responds to merely biological and sexual interpretations of human motivation in which the primary drive is for the release of libidinal tension, and depicts our dynamisms as relational. Knowledge is of major importance to this aspect of Fromm's work, since his thought-transcending way of unitive knowledge is viewed as the end of all our strivings. This type of experience is also the goal portrayed in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism*, where it is framed as an intuitive knowledge that Fromm finds central to the writings of Spinoza, Fichte, and Bergson, as well as the Zen Buddhism of D.T. Suzuki (1960, 97).[120] In fact, in the work of Suzuki, the practice of meditative knowledge culminates in the transcendence of the distinction between subject and object (74). Whilst maintaining his characteristic emphasis on personal integrity within union, Fromm endorses this as the "experience of oneness with all that exists," (36) in which "knower and known become one." (76)

[119] We shall see in Chapter Four that when Fromm refers to God he does so in a symbolic way. Fromm's view of the type of mystical knowledge referred to in this section is also discussed in more depth in Section 4.2.

[120] This dialogue with Suzuki is also troublesome for Fromm's work given how Fromm himself states that Suzuki holds that empathy and enlightenment are incompatible, as empathy is said to imply dualism (Fromm 1960, 78).

Fromm therefore sees our dynamisms as not simply ordered towards fulfilment in relation, but in a type of relationship that is beyond concepts, words, and objective knowledge. Whilst this is by no means a unique or original claim it seems important to emphasise here, since the earlier texts in which Fromm first elaborates his theory of dynamic psychology do not go as far as to make this – this non-conceptual aspect of the love they *do* culminate in – explicit. This enables us to both re-read Fromm's earlier work through his later developments, and to show how the earlier themes – dynamism, for instance – remain relevant for our understanding of his subsequent perspectives. The question of whether this entails contrast or complementarity will be left for future research, since it would have to culminate in an analysis of Fromm's final works on the theme of being. Here, the question ultimately leads us to accentuate the implications of Fromm's take on love for our whole personality. According to his claims, and rooted in his early interest in mysticism, each of us is ordered towards an experiential and unitive knowledge which transcends what we can understand by thought. This leads us to the question of the meaning of union or fusion in Fromm's work, and to the relationship between brotherly love, erotic love, and mysticism.

3.3.3 Knowledge: Erotic and Brotherly Love

In following the content of *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995), the question of knowledge leads us to Fromm's account of erotic love, since both revolve around the concept of fusion. Love of another person is a type of fusion that satiates the desire to know, and in which all is known (Fromm [1956] 1995, 24). In Fromm's view, erotic love is a species of this fusion characterised by its exclusive intensity and commitment, driven by a craving to be completely fused with one other, to love from essence to essence. In this fusion each experiences self and other from and in the centre of their being (43-44), becoming "one with each other by being one with themselves." (80) Given Fromm's assertion that mature love "*is union under the condition of preserving one's integrity*, one's individuality," (16) this fusion is central to his understanding of love. In distinguishing mature love from "a number of forms of pseudo-love," (65) Fromm states that "the desire for interpersonal fusion is the most powerful striving in man," (16) and that this is the only path to true (non-conceptual) knowledge. In contrast to relation based on dominion or identity, genuine fusion is between persons who maintain their own integrity and possession of their own powers. This fusion is mainly described in a negative fashion: it enables us to "overcome the sense of isolation and separateness" (16) that is central to Fromm's account of human existence. Finally, this erotic love is never merely a feeling,

since feeling without will, decision, judgement, or promise will not be enough for the full and exclusive commitment entailed by erotic love (43).

It is this final point which most clearly connects erotic love to Fromm's understanding of brotherly love, since it recalls the voluntary aspects of care and concern. Brotherly love is the foundation of all other types of love, and in being "love for all human beings…is characterised by its lack of exclusiveness." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 37) It is also related to the element of knowledge, since it both experiences and "is based on the experience that we are all one." (37) This means that brotherly love also progresses from the "periphery to the core" and perceives "our identity, the fact of our brotherhood." (37) Here we run into the question of whether erotic love appears to be an inferior species of brotherly love by virtue of its exclusivity and, consequently, its reduced range or impact (even if it is a love distinguished by commitment and intensity). Elsewhere, Fromm bases this exclusivity on the differences between persons. In contrast to the brotherly love in which "we can love everybody in the same way," (44) erotic love has "certain specific highly individual elements which exist between some people but not between all." (44) Part of this involves sexual difference, which Fromm claims is rooted in a masculine-feminine polarity in nature. He bases this on the distinction between penetrating and receiving, and suggests that the desire to be re-united with our lost and complementary pole is the basis of *eros* (12, 26-27).[121]

Nevertheless, it remains the case that erotic love is simply one "manifestation of the need for love and union," (Fromm [1956] 1995, 26) and perhaps the question of any apparent superiority of brotherly love over erotic love turns on the meaning of exclusivity. At first sight, it may be that our reading of the concept of exclusivity is coloured by the development in recent decades of a healthy appreciation of inclusivity, particularly around issues of interreligious dialogue, gender, race, sexuality, society, human rights, etc. Notwithstanding the merits of inclusivity thus understood, Fromm has something different in mind when citing exclusivity as the kernel of erotic love. This is apparent in his

[121] Fromm also says that the masculine involves "penetration, guiding, activity, discipline and adventurousness," ([1956] 1995, 29) whilst the feminine has qualities of "productive receptiveness, protection, realism, endurance, motherliness." (29) As well as being a vulnerable claim in general it is also in tension with the claim that each of us possess both of these poles, since it remains to be seen why we would need to seek the other pole if we already had both. I will return to this theme in Section 4.8, by considering an alternative approach to the feminine pole.

assertion that erotic fusion possesses an "exclusiveness which is lacking in brotherly love and motherly love." (43) This is characterised by "full commitment in all aspects of life," (43) a fusion which Fromm argues is only possible with one person given its intensity and completeness. It does not, however, exclude others when it comes to brotherly love, since "it loves in the other person all of mankind, all that is alive." (43)

I would argue that we encounter here a problem analogous to the main line of critique in Chapter Two, that of the basic abstracting tendency in Fromm's argument. Here, "love should be essentially an act of will, of decision to commit my life to that of one other person." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 44) Fromm argues that this is equivalent to loving all of humanity since "[i]n essence, all human beings are identical. We are all part of One, we are One." (44) Given this unity, "it should not make any difference whom we love." (44) Elsewhere, however, Fromm develops his account of brotherly love to include "the love for those who do not serve a purpose […] the poor, the stranger, the widow, and the orphan […] the natural enemy." (38) The most significant aspect of this is that we begin to develop brotherly love through loving such "helpless ones." (38) What is the possibility of loving these others - with whom "love begins to unfold" (38) - in the context of full and intense commitment to one other person ?[122] I am not suggesting that *some* aspect of both is impossible, but merely that there is a fundamental tension. This is in terms of space, time, energy, and particularity, each of which we experience as finite and embodied, and each of which will condition our capacity to be fully committed here and now and to particular persons. Of course, Fromm will be aware that our concrete commitment is particular, but he seems to account for this with the recurring claim that in loving one person we love the world, we enter into fusion with all, with the "One" that we all are (44).[123]

A more significant difficulty arises at this point, concerning the relationship between love and need, since Fromm bases the universal need for love upon our existential isolation and

[122] The idea that we begin to love through such encounters is also in tension with Fromm's claim that our love must be universal before it can be genuine, a claim I have critiqued in Section 2.6.

[123] Perhaps this difficulty is rooted in the slippage in Fromm's work between love as an act and as an experience. Although this is clearly a problem for the history and theory of love generally, I would still argue that any coherent theory must be conscious of the ramifications of confusion between different senses, and that Fromm does not see the problem that this poses for his own work.

the need to avoid its terrors. Given that care and responsibility for the needs of others are two of the elements of Fromm's love, we are left with the question as to whose need it is that love primarily aims at resolving. This problem arises at this point simply because it is made most explicit in the account of erotic love, a striving for fusion based on the need to "overcome the sense of isolation and separateness." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 16) Erotic love is therefore clearly rooted in need, and again can be contrasted with the brotherly love for the helpless portrayed above, which is "love of those who do not serve a purpose." (38) Admittedly, brotherly love is also entailed in genuine erotic love, through which we love both partner and world. Despite this, the question again revolves around that of need: do we love because of our need for union, or out of the compassion for those who are helpless and without purpose, on the basis of brotherly love?[124] Even given that our love *responds* to the needs of the other it seems nonetheless inescapable that we still do so for the fulfilment of our own needs, and so love as a need for union seems to subtly entail seeing others as useful. This is not a moral point in the sense that the needs of others should overcome our own needs, but merely an observation of the possibility of tension.

Whilst the tension is primarily rooted in the contrast between the erotic love which is posed as an answer to my need for union and the brotherly love which is for the needs of the other, it is important to point out that it is present in all love, including brotherly. As I have mentioned above, Fromm states in successive sentences that in "brotherly love there is the experience of union with all men, of human solidarity, of human at-onement," and "[b]rotherly love is based on the experience that we all are one." ([1956] 1995, 37) The distinction is subtle but significant, and leads to the question of whether brotherly love seeks the experience of union or arises from it. Arguably only one can be fundamental, since if we already perceive union prior to loving then it makes little sense to say that our activity is driven by a need for it. Hence, Fromm seems to pose love both an act which needs and tends towards union and as one which perceives the union of humanity and then responds to need. Analogous to the argument above concerning the lack of concreteness in Fromm's basic orientation to the world, the difficulty arises most clearly when my own need for the experience of unity clashes with the need for me to act in response to the needs of others. If, for instance, I am faced with a choice between relating to someone who is willing to enter into some sort of union with me, and responding to someone who merely

[124] Fromm himself states that in love "the other person is not any more primarily a means to the satisfaction of his own needs," ([1956] 1995, 32) but the implications of this are never made explicit even though it anticipates the tension that I am suggesting.

needs food or shelter but is not open to further relation. In other words, whether I love on the basis of my need for knowledge or the need of the other for care could be decisive in determining who I respond to.[125]

I am not attempting to argue for the superiority of brotherly love over erotic love, since it is important to acknowledge that the increased intimacy of exclusive love between persons can be a powerful catalyst for growth in loving and in the freedom which Fromm emphasises (see Section 5.4.3). Nonetheless, Fromm's approach has implications that he does not seem to be aware of, once again arising from the idea of a basic readiness to love all. To commit my life in one direction need not render me without direction and commitment towards others. Nonetheless, the simple spatio-temporal nature of human activity and finitude inevitably means that I can make only one commitment at one place and in one time. The commitment that I give priority to will thereby potentially prevent me from prioritising others, at least some of the time. Fromm's claim that in fully loving one we love all is in part an attempt to subvert this problem, and whilst on some mystical or transcendental level it may well be true, on the level of our basic experience and resources it is not. Moreover, even if it might be true on some invisible level that an exclusive love might somehow unite us with 'the One,' such a point seems irrelevant for the hungry, helpless, or wounded. Arguably our commitment to those in need could be undermined – at least in principle – through Fromm's erotic commitment, as well as simply through our commitment to this hunger rather than that wound.[126]

Ultimately, this merely makes the question of need and love more pertinent. If love is based on my own need to escape the experience of separation, any means of doing this and still maintaining mutual integrity will be equivalent. If, however, love is genuinely based on care and concern for the needs of others, then the problem of which sort of commitment these needs call for will continually arise. The questions of an exclusive commitment is

[125] It is possible that Fromm assumes that this union could be possible merely in the intention of the (brotherly) lover towards the other, without any need for reciprocal openness. This, however, would raise the question of just how "the act of penetrating the other person" (Fromm [1956] 1995, 24) in order to discover them is possible without the other person being willing to be known. Whilst Fromm's erotic fusion implies reciprocity, the love for the helpless does not, and in the absence of any account of gradation in the types of unity implied we are left to question just how unity is intended in the latter. I will return to this problem in my conclusion.

[126] Again, this suggests the need for love to be shaped by practical wisdom, as I have suggested in Section 2.8.

thus placed in even sharper relief. At any moment I might encounter another person with needs of greater urgency than the needs of my partner - or indeed friend in love conceived as intense friendship - or my need to assuage the wound of separation. Fromm's "full commitment in all aspects of life" ([1956] 1995, 43) therefore begins to seem like it might intrude on the basic readiness to love all. Perhaps the exception would be an erotic relationship in which both partners readily saw their own needs as subordinate to a greater need in some or certain situations and so live in a fashion which qualifies full commitment by the possibility of a more urgent demand. Otherwise erotic commitment and love without purpose entail conflict, at least as they are portrayed by Fromm, and hence my existential critique of love again stresses the limitations implicit in our particularity in space and time. From these conditions latent in Fromm's account of respect and knowledge, I will now shift to the nature and implications of transference.

3.4. Transference in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism*

In Chapter Two, I considered an initial and more prevalent usage of transference in Fromm's work, in which the capacity to take possession of self is impeded by transferring our powers and independence to an external authority. In psychotherapeutic usage both prior to and since Fromm, transference has normally signified the transfer of states and experiences from our past to present relationships and perceptions. This sense is also present to a lesser degree in Fromm, since *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (1960) depicts transference as a process of projection, distortion, regression, and construction. Fromm begins by recalling how Freud had also observed how his patients had experienced him as a figure from their own childhood. As with the type of transference that is a surrender of powers in Section 2.13, he then asserts that this distorting process has far more range than the mere analytic relationship. Rooted in the repression of early experience, transference is also a general process which interferes with reality, since it involves our repressed strivings – mostly relative to people from our past - surfacing in present relationships and distorting what we experience (58-60). Fromm sees "the average person […as…] constantly enmeshed in a world of phantasies [which clothe] the world in qualities […] which are not there." (75) This is so prevalent that "most of what the person is conscious of is a fiction." (60) It might be helpful here to recall the root of fiction, in the Latin *facere*, and its basic meaning of making or doing. This can help us recognise that what Fromm means is that the reality of one under the power of transference is self-made

(albeit in an unconscious way).[127] Specifically, "I experience the world not with my total self, but with my split, childish self, and thus another person is experienced as a significant person of one's childhood, and not as the person he really is." (89)

Ultimately this entails us having a false consciousness, since in this projected mode of perception the person does not "see what exists, but puts his thought image into things, and sees them in the light of his thought images and fantasies rather than in their reality." (Fromm 1960, 89) The antidote to this is the expansion of consciousness, so as to re-integrate of the repressed experiences (85) and "lift the veil […] leave the cave […] bring light into darkness." (62) At this point we encounter an idea which is central to Fromm's account of the relationship between psychoanalysis and human existence, and crucial for the present project. If we are able to enter into communication with ourselves, we will also be more able to communicate with others: "if all repressedness has been lifted, there is no more unconscious as against conscious; there is direct, immediate experience; inasmuch as I am not a stranger to myself, no one and nothing is a stranger to me." (89) This means that we would finally be able to see others "in their reality," (89) and have an "immediate" (99) and "total grasp of the world." (90) As I have discussed in Chapter One, this grasp of the world is often depicted as harmony, and is Fromm's solution to our existential problem. He subsequently rephrases this even more clearly, explaining that "because [someone] has opened up communication with the universe within himself, [they have also] opened up communication with the world outside." (107)

This type of transference is a process of repression, projection, distortion, and alienation from the reality of others, and has clear implications for both respect and knowledge. First, respect concerns the process of seeing clearly, rather than in the distorted way entailed by repression and transference. Second, knowledge involves our ability to enter union or fusion with another, rather than have the relationship mediated by our own unconscious constructs. Part of Fromm's emphasis in love concerns relating from and with our centre rather than periphery, and perhaps we can envisage our relationship through our mental

[127] This equation of transference with the construction of reality is problematic given the prevalence in neuroscience towards a model of the brain in which the majority of light, say, is filtered out prior to conversion of the remainder into conscious experience. This would imply that all experience is in some degree self-made, as I have touched upon in the context of repression in footnote 91 (Section 2.11; see Eagleman 2016, 37-75).

constructs as relating to our own periphera, aspects of ourselves that are alienated from what Fromm calls our core, nucleus, heart, or essence ([1956] 1995, 23-25). To incorporate another perspective on how this might function, I will give an account of some aspects of the work of W.R.D. Fairbairn, one of the first generation of psychoanalysts of the Object Relations Theory perspective.

3.5 W.R.D. Fairbairn: Repression and Inner Objects

Lavinia Gomez states that the work of Ronald Fairbairn departs from his conviction "that the scientific foundations on which Freud's work rested were out of date," (Gomez 1997, 58) based on Fairbairn's philosophical training and his reading of Freud's original German texts. Much like Fromm in his *The Revision of Psychoanalysis* (1992) and other texts, Fairbairn's main concern is with a critique of Freud's claim that libido is ordered merely towards the release of biochemical tension. Whereas Fromm depicts our energy as ordered towards solving the problem of existence through harmonious and spontaneous relatedness, Fairbairn argues in a roughly analogous way that libido is primarily object-seeking (1952, 31). Fairbairn's focus was mainly on the objects of infanthood, principally our parents and other significant persons of our early life, and so the first meaning of object relations is simply that we are energetically driven not merely to the release of tension but to relationships with persons. Objects in this respect are real others, and our drives are towards being related to them.

Building on this account of our drives, Fairbairn is also – and most importantly for my own argument - concerned with the way in which our formational experiences with significant others shape the subsequent relationship between inner and outer in our lives. This takes place particularly through repression, "'the foundation-stone upon which the whole structure of psychoanalysis rests.'" (Fairbairn 1952, 60) This quote is originally from Freud (1914, 16) and endorsed by Fairbairn, but it is preceded in Fairbairn's work by what distinguishes his own objective. Fairbairn aims to consider "the implications of the view that libido is potentially oriented towards objects for the classic theory of repression." (1952, 60) This can be clarified by saying that Fairbairn is revising the theory of repression by placing it in the context of a theory of energy which seeks relation rather than mere relief. For my own purposes, the most important of these implications are mainly around three points: (i) that we can repress object representations, or internalized images of others; (ii) these inner representations can result in energy being channelled towards them, rather

than to the world around us; (iii) this results in splitting or division, both in the person, and between the person and reality.[128]

Concerning the first point, Fairbairn's claims that "*what are primarily repressed are neither intolerably guilty impulses not intolerably unpleasant memories but intolerably bad internalized objects*." (1952, 62) Moreover, the range of what he calls "the Schizoid character" (4) is so wide that "internalized bad objects are present in the minds of all of us at the deeper levels." (64) In his intellectual biography of Fairbairn, John D. Sutherland writes that this internalization involves the idea of "the inner worlds of children being populated with highly emotional figures." (1989, 37) The cornerstone of Fairbairn's work thus sees "repression originating from the interpersonal conflicts of infancy and childhood," conflicts which are "aroused by parental attitudes." (23) Furthermore, repression results in a "strikingly dramatized set of figures in the inner world," (25) which remain lurking in the adult.

Sutherland adds that these internal objects embody "the intense quality of the primitive affects" (Sutherland 1989, 37) of their original experiences. Fairbairn refers to this process as cathexis, in which libidinal energy seeks and "is captivated by the repressed object." (Sutherland 1989, 37)[129] Not only is libido thereby ordered to the inner world, but "the object-relationship determines the original libidinal attitude." (34) My interpretation of this technical formulation is that as well as functioning as an end to which energy is channelled, these objects can elicit the energy which is ordered towards them. This is highly significant when placed in relation to emotions such as anger, hatred, shame, or anxiety, which now appear as, at least partly, stimulated by repressed inner objects.[130]

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[128] Concerning the third point I am more concerned with how repression entails splitting between person and world, although we have already encountered both points in Laing (Section 2.14).

[129] In his *Freud: A Life for Our Time*, Peter Gay comments on how the anglophone reception of Freud was informed by the initial use of the Latin *cathexis*, translating the German *Besetzung*. Gay objects to this translation, arguing that the latter is far more common in general speech than the former would imply, and has connotations related to military occupation and to the channeling of energy (1988, 465n). In any case Fairbairn's use of cathexis is cognate with channelling, signifying the process of investing energy in or transferring it to an object, particularly an internal one. For an account of the complexities of translation see Hoffer (2005). McIntosh (1993) argues that Freud's concept of *Besetzung* was also related to intrapersonal objects, at least after 1915.

[130] In my view this has an analogate in the tradition of cognitive therapy, in which emotion is often seen as elicited by thought.

Given that we have seen how Fromm sees harmony as involving the channelling of energy towards interpersonal relations, this is deeply important for our understanding and practice of love. The repression of our inner objects involves the continuous production of energy that might be inimical to loving relationship, perhaps involving behaviour patterns designed to avoid or displace anger, fear, or shame. Repressing the internal object can thereby potentially co-opt and channel our vital energy away from harmonious relation and towards the relief of repressed need.

Fairbairn summarises his view of cathexis by explaining the disjunction between his own view and his understanding of Freud: in the latter, libido simply seeks relief or pleasure seeking, and so is unrelated to internal structure, and hence "directionless." (Fairbairn 1952, 149) In contrast, Fairbairn adheres to the "principle of dynamic structure." (149) Here the structures of the psyche – and change in them – are inseparable from the stimulation and direction of libidinal energy. This is so emphatically true for Fairbairn that "it is only when the internalized bad objects are released from the unconscious that there is any hope of their cathexis being dissolved." (69) In other words, only when the inner objects are no longer repressed will energy cease being channelled towards them and hence towards the inner world. This has profound consequences for the relationship between the inner and outer realms, meaning that we will now turn to the third point, concerning splits within persons, and between persons and world.

Fairbairn returns repeatedly to the issue of how repression of inner objects can entail "preoccupation with inner reality." (1952, 7) This means that the person will "tend to identify themselves very strongly with their internal objects," (18) imposing relationships with inner developmental objects upon our perception of the world. For people split in this manner "there is a great tendency for the outer world to derive its meaning too exclusively from the inner world." (18) This "general over-valuation of the internal" (23) implies an excessive emphasis on thought processes, difficulty in emotional expression, and difficulty in being natural and spontaneous in relationships (6). The implications of this are of major importance for the possibility of seeing clearly and entering union with others, given that the process involves a tendency to ascribe meaning to events based on inner processes and

repressed representations of others.[131] As with Fromm, our inner world can significantly distort the extent to which we allow others to appear clearly to us, to see and know them. Fairbairn therefore both expands upon and clarifies the short sections of *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (Fromm 1960) that refer to these repressed inner objects, and their implications for both energy and perception. Given the decades that have elapsed since both Fairbairn and *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism,* I will now turn to a more recent account of transference. This will both support the themes in this chapter and raise questions as to the dynamic at work in the process of transference.

3.6 Transference: A Mirror of the Inner World

In their *Transference and Projection* (2002)*,* Jan Grant and Jim Crawley consider transference from a clinical perspective, and in terms of the development of its use in the history of psychotherapy.[132] In this section I will summarise their approach thematically, identifying ideas and claims which re-occur throughout the various perspectives considered. We will see a significant degree of convergence with Fromm and Fairbairn, as well as the emergence of a question around the rationale of the dynamic at work in transference. This question emerges from the fact that Grant and Crawley are writing from the cognitivist tradition, in which the main concern is to elucidate the ways in which our minds process and organise information as it is received from our environment. In terms of therapy, this often translates into the aim of developing healthier ways of organizing information. This means that Grant and Crawley have a greater focus on how transference develops as our way of synthesising past and present, rather than having its roots in repression or other unconscious processes.[133] The areas I will explore concern transference as a mirror of our inner worlds (Section 3.6.1); as an unconscious organizing template and pattern of behaviour (3.6.2); as the re-experience of emotion (3.6.3); as an interpretative interruption of adult relationships (3.6.4); and ultimately as the past alive in the present

[131] Fairbairn labels this excess of thought "intellectualization," (1952, 20) which is significant for Fromm's account of knowledge given the importance of passing beyond concepts. We will also see something similar in Marion's account of phenomenality in Section 3.7. Fromm also warns about the persistence of intellectualization, which he also names cerebration (1960, 61ff).

[132] It should be stated that they often refer to theories which they consider to be analogous to transference, but which are named differently.

[133] For an account of the development of cognitivism in psychology see (Greenwood 2008, 523-564; Hergenhahn 2008, 623-642).

(3.6.5). The most controversial and abiding significance for the work of Fromm will be the question of motive (Section 3.6.6).

3.6.1 Transference as a Mirror of the Inner World

Grant and Crawley are working within an overall paradigm which sees transference as a window into a person's inner world, which reveals the "the structure of the self." (2002, xv) On this model, the way in which someone experiences others can be used as a lens through which internal experience can be viewed, or brought to the surface if repressed. Whilst they are careful to point out that this "is more akin to a hall of mirrors" (xv) rather than a simple reflection, transference is nonetheless a profound indication of the internal dynamics of the person. Due to the intended audience of the text, this is primarily understood in a clinical context, but they are also consistently clear that they see transference as a ubiquitous phenomenon, occurring in human relationships generally (3, 6, 12, 113, 130).[134] Because of our habitual need to understand the present through the past, transference is said to be an ever-present feature in our lives and relationships. This would clearly have significant implications for the prospect of allowing people to appear on their own terms, or to be united with them without conceptual distortion.

3.6.2 Transference as Unconscious Organizing Template and Pattern of Behaviour

The next part re-enforces the significance of transference, considering how it involves templates of experience built on previous relationships. These are "organized, internalized schemas that operate at an unconscious level," (Grant and Crawley 2002, 2) through which we anticipate or assume ways in which present relationships or events will develop. As well as expectation of how others will act, this can also lead "to the tendency to structure re-enactments of early disturbing relationships," (2) in other words to bring about situations in present life that repeat past experiences. Grant and Crawley argue that this begins with Freud seeing transference as a "core relationship pattern that provided a proto-type or schema for interaction in subsequent relationships." (5) Citing a number of subsequent perspectives, they then describe how previous events that have become embedded in the memory serve as proto-types or patterns of expectation as to how others

[134] Whilst they are not explicit about the degrees of this, it is nonetheless clear that progress in therapy will also entail progress in the extent to which transference dominates present relationships. How this relates to the ubiquity of transference is unclear.

will appear or act (5), and which coalesce into an "inner 'representational world.'" (47) This means that present "experience is read through the lens of the existing internal dramas rather than experienced fully in its current form." (47) In cognitive approaches to psychotherapy these can be referred to as "tacit," "core" or "irrational beliefs," and as "maladaptive schemas," which might include assumptions of "abandonment, unloveability, dependence, lack of individuality, mistrust, guilt and a fear of losing emotional control." (65)

3.6.3 Transference as the Re-experience of Emotion

Through a process also known as displacement or projection, the tendency to frame expectations of current events using schemas of past experiences also involves an emotional component. This involves emotion which really relates to people and experiences from our past being directed towards present persons. For instance, we might feel mistrustful or guilty in situations that do not merit it, perhaps due to some childhood experience of betrayal or blame (Grant and Crawley 2002, 65). As well as potentially impacting upon our openness to participate with others, this now has the added aspect of how these repressed feelings can distort perception. This could involve displaced blame or repressed hatred being projected onto another person or group of people. Clearly part of this issue is the capacity to see clearly, although there is by no means a consensus as to how or why displacement happens. Neither is there agreement surrounding whether Fairbairn is correct in seeing the inner object as stimulating the re-experience of emotion (structure and energy), or whether the emotional energy simply inclines continually towards being experienced. Fromm himself is silent on the dynamics of this, simply taking it for granted that we experience the present with split or childhood selves, and that this process involves among other things the projection of anxieties and strivings onto others (1960, 58ff).

3.6.4 Transference as an Interpretative Interruption of Adult Relationships

These schemas also have a hermeneutic component, insofar as they entail events and experiences being interpreted through the patterns of organization that we have developed, involving the projection of meaning onto present events. Here when we might assume a motivation or significance to the behaviour of a friend based on the experience of abandonment, rejection, or betrayal in childhood (Grant and Crawley 2002, 65f).[135] Grant and Crawley cite theory which refers to this as "interpersonal expectancies," (66) which shape our anticipation of how others will respond to us, and generally how we see others. They also point to Rollo May (1990, 55), and his claim that transference should primarily be seen in terms of how it can distort encounters that should ideally be transparent (78). Finally, they refer to Stolorow, Brandchaft, and Atwood, (1987, 37) who understand transference as an "expression of the universal psychological striving to organize experience, and construct meanings." (115) It is this aspect of construction that arguable poses the biggest issue for love, and particularly the elements of respect and knowledge. This is because it implies that rather than us being able to open up to and witness the manifestation of another person on her own terms, transference imposes interpretations and experiences upon them. This habit consequently distorts our views of others and interrupts our capacity to see them.

3.6.5 Transference as the Past Alive in the Present

In psychodynamic theory, Michael Jacobs (1998) has referred to "the presenting past." This is reminiscent of the way in which Gabriel Marcel recounts his experience of "a real struggle for existence" between "the small boy," "the man I was yesterday," and "the man I have a tendency to be, a yearning to be today." (1950, 184-5) Marcel echoes the way in which the past can distort present experience in his exploration of someone who re-experiences being the "small boy of eight who is in a state of deadly anxiety because his mother is so late in coming home," asking whether in some way he has "never really ceased to be that small boy?" (184) Although showing no signs of having been influenced by psychoanalytic theory at the point of these or subsequent writings, Marcel refers several

[135] This concerns projection and experience of our own feelings onto present situations, and should be distinguished from the type of projection that experiences these feelings in others, for instance when we might perceive anger in someone else as a result of denying our own anger. This is obviously also of great importance for phenomenality.

times to the possibility of a mental "simulacrum." (53) [136] This "obstructs or dims the fundamentally far more concrete idea we have formed of this person," imposing on our capacity to "be illuminated, or rather to have a sudden access to some reality's revelation of itself to us." (53) Finally, reinforcing the point I have been making around inner objects and (mis)interpretation of events, "it is quite possible for the simulacrum we have formed of our friend to change our attitude to him, and even our behaviour towards him, for the worse." (54). Marcel's simulacrum therefore reflects the general approach to mental objects and experience that has been developed throughout these last sections. My main question concerns the motive or rationale behind the process.

3.6.6 The Motive of Transference

Transference as presented in the preceding sections ultimately leads to the question of dynamisms, of the forces and goals which motivate behaviour in general. Any understanding of transference must be situated within an understanding of human behaviour and existence, however this might be, and my intention here is to ask whether Fromm does this, and what such an approach might look like otherwise. First, Grant and Crawley present a variety of perspectives on why transference might occur, both from their own position and from that of the approaches they discuss. Grant and Crawley themselves are largely writing from a cognitive perspective, in which the process of the past emerging in present experience is a necessary activity of our brains, putatively maintaining a sense of continuity and predictability, and facilitating sense-making and understanding. They are also clear that this activity is not pathological, but is simply a necessary part of being human, especially of being a young human.

In support of this view of transference they refer to the work of Stolorow, Atwood and Brandchaft (1994), summarising that "as children we must find a way of organizing the multitude of experiences we have with others", and so "form unconscious principles to organize all the stimuli." (Grant and Crawley 2002, 6) Stolorow – as part of a different group of writers – states elsewhere that transference expresses a "universal psychological striving to organize experience and construct meaning." (Stolorow, Brandchaft and

[136] Marcel would surely have been aware of the existence of psychoanalysis, but would perhaps have been dissuaded from deep engagement by the stance of the Catholic Church at that time, following his conversion to Catholicism in 1929.

Atwood 1987, 37; cited in Grant and Crawley 2002, 115) According to this perspective, transference is simply a natural process that we employ in order to manage the otherwise baffling range of phenomena that we encounter each moment. There is an arguable consensus among neuro-scientists around the hypothesis that our brains use established neural pathways to filter experience (e.g. Eagleman 2016, 37-75; O'Shea 2005, 64-83), but there are nonetheless problems with the proposal that activity which *distorts* perception or displaces emotion is somehow natural and necessary. Transference can involve the unconscious misinterpretation of someone's appearance, or a mental image from the past eliciting in us an unwarranted fear in a safe situation, and hence something less like mere continuity or understanding of experience and more like falsehood or self-deception.

Indeed, Grant and Crawley also seem to suggest that transference is neither as natural nor as ubiquitous as the citations above claim, since therapy is said to help bring us to awareness of unconscious organizing principles and enable more choice in our responses to situations. In contrast, the responses driven by transference are unconscious, automatic, and, therefore, not deliberate or free. So rather than simply being a natural way for us to organize experience, transference also entails a lack of freedom (Grant and Crawley 2002, 5). A second issue arises in the claim that transference is ubiquitous (3, 6, 12, 113). Whilst this may be the case in one sense, a distinction must be made between two different understandings of transference: (i) the schematizing and organizing activity of brains, and (ii) the activity of projecting or displacing experience, expectation, or emotion, onto situations that do not merit it. The first need not entail the latter, and so there is a false equivalence in the way the transference is employed in *Transference and Projection*. Again, the first understanding could be a legitimate and normal part of human functioning, but still leave the second aspect as something to be mitigated. Furthermore, the cognitivist claim employed here fails to recognise that transference as a distortion of perception can become entrenched, rather than simply malleable through a shift in organization of thought processes, and that it can be guarded by a variety of defence mechanisms or organizations erected to avoid some unpleasant or threatening experience.

Some recent research in the field of cognitive psychology appears to confirm that transference in this second sense is not ubiquitous. In their "Transference and the Relational Self," Serena Chen and her colleagues (2013) propose that transference is part of the process of having multiple ways of interacting with the world (which they call

relational selves). Whilst I need not engage with the claim on selfhood, the method used is nonetheless helpful in providing an empirical ground for demonstrating the conditions of transference. By gathering information about significant others in the lives of participants, their experimental method asked whether being reminded of these others would trigger patterns of interpretation in a new encounter. Crucially, the impact on interpretation was only found to occur given the prior presence of a trigger (Chen *et al.* 2013). Whilst this does not discount the possibility that some aspect of transference is ubiquitous, it seriously undermines the claim that we *automatically* interpret the activity of others through habitual patterns of organization and displacement. Bearing in mind again the distinction between activity that merely organizes and that which displaces or projects, we must consider a further motivation or rationale for the distorting dimension of transference.

In the multitude of approaches covered by Grant and Crawley there are several claims that concur with the possibility of another understanding. I will use these as the foundation of an alternative approach compatible with the work of Fromm, who is silent on the question of the motivation for the second type of transference. Grant and Crawley state that the emergence of new theories in psychoanalysis also saw the development of a "focus on different aspects of human motivation, which led to very different ways of interpreting the transference." (2002, 46) This is significant because the way that we see the activity of transference must be coherent with any more general theory of human motivation that we subscribe to, for instance that of Fromm. Grant and Crawley do not specify a dynamic psychology underpinning the theory they discuss, either in their own view or in that of their sources, but we do see the emergence of a fertile theme: transference as a microcosm of the total psyche, "around which the patterns dominating [our] existence as a whole can be clarified, understood, and thereby transformed." (55) Using this paradigm, transference could also be interpreted as a way by which we express our world, and, crucially, as being motivated by the tendency towards transformation (55). The distinction here is a subtle one, but I would argue that expression is more consistent with the idea of a teleological dynamism than the more neutral concept of mirroring, and that transformation suggests that there is some purpose beyond mere organization of experience.

The claim that transference is expressive corresponds to the approach of psychodrama, in which groups of participants and one therapist assume roles in a person's early experiences and portray them dramatically. Grant and Crawley argue that awareness of how

transference can function in these situations enables the therapist "to be aware of repressed object relationships that need to be explored on the external psychodramatic stage." (2002, 86) They also suggest that therapy "is a relationship characterised by […] self-disclosure," (119) again pointing to the possibility that transference can be as much about expressing as organizing. The overall purpose could therefore be depicted as being aware of, accepting, and transforming our repressed longings and experiences. This would place transference within the context of a psychology in which the development of self is our natural tendency, such as Fromm's. Grant and Crawley argue that through the emergence of the past in psychodrama participants can "re-create their inner world and experiences from their perspective, and then to observe them, understand them, and choose new ways of being when the old feelings are re-activated." (88) This is because the method "lends itself to exploration of internal object relations" (88). Like Grant and Crawley's point above about awareness of transference leading to "more choices," (6) this also points to transference as a process that can be explored in order to enable the emergence of freedom, and often freedom from transference itself. This allows us to make a profound connection with Fromm, and place transference within his dialectic between regressive and progressive ways of existing, having first considered the relevance of transference for the phenomenology of Jean-Luc Marion.

3.7 Transference and Givenness in Jean-Luc Marion

The discussion of the content of transference leads to a consideration of its relevance to love, and to my argument that transference must be considered as a potential interruption to the quest for phenomenality which drives the work of Jean-Luc Marion. According to Marion, the return to a phenomenology based on givenness is the only way to adequately stress the central role played by phenomena in experience, particularly in emphasising how phenomena give themselves from themselves. There are clear parallels here with Fromm's respect, in which others are seen on their own terms. Since Marion sees erotic love as the ultimate type of givenness we will also see the connection with Fromm's conceptions of knowledge and fusion.

Marion's account of love and givenness is rooted in a concern with critiquing metaphysics that can be traced to his early work, and for an understanding of this I will rely on Christina Gschwandtner's *Reading Jean-Luc Marion: Exceeding Metaphysics* (2008).

Building on a thematic account based on Marion's own work and Gschwandtner's explanation, I will propose transference as a kind of subjective and unconscious conditioning of others that escapes Marion's critique of the constituting presumptions of metaphysics. The section begins by outlining Marion's project of overcoming metaphysics, focusing on what he means by metaphysical (Section 3.7.1). I will then continue by considering the reduction to givenness (Section 3.7.2); the erotic reduction (3.7.3); love as an intentionality or way of seeing (3.7.4); and finally Shane Mackinlay's hermeneutic critique of Marion's saturated phenomena (3.7.5). This ultimately prepares the ground for a critique of Marion's work based on the distorting impact of transference (Section 3.7.6).

3.7.1 Marion's Critique of Metaphysics

One of Gschwandtner's main concern is to show how Marion's continual attempt to overcome the metaphysical prejudices of continental philosophy is rooted in his early reading of René Descartes. She also proposes that the themes of Marion's later development are present in these earlier Cartesian critiques. The most salient aspect of this concerns how Marion finds a different approach to selfhood and others in the concept of charity developed by Blaise Pascal, and a way of speaking of God that subverts theological paradigms based on being (Gschwandtner 2008, xv). These themes can be summarised through the concern that underpins them: transcending the limitations that a metaphysical manner of seeing and speaking has imposed upon our reception of phenomena, and allowing them to become visible from themselves. It is important to note here that when referring to metaphysics or being in this section, I will retain the usage of Marion himself, since the way he uses the terms refers to a distinct period in the history of philosophy. Each term refers to a philosophical approach that proposes a supreme being - namely God or a transcendent self – and which functions as the ground of certainty, presence, and meaning. Marion argues that in the projects of Descartes and Husserl, the transcendental self becomes the ground of phenomena by constituting them as objects. This means that the self imposes its own categories and ways of knowing upon what it encounters, such that 'being' involves the constitution of an object by a subject. In Marion's view it is this assumption of a subject or self as a ground of presence or meaning that prevents us from seeing phenomena as they are.

3.7.2 The Reduction to Givenness

Marion's solution is "the reduction to givenness…the act of reconditioning the ego to the given as given." ([1997] 2002, 27)[137] This is a process of leading consciousness back to a state in which we allow phenomena to emerge before us, as they are, and from themselves.[138] The importance of this phenomenological approach is that it enables "what shows itself to be seen without imposing any kinds of limitation upon the self-showing of the given." (Gschwandtner 2008, 67)[139] One of Gschwandtner's main contributions to our understanding of Marion is in illuminating the extent to which his work involves "the reconsideration and displacement of the Cartesian subject." (28) This means that any model of a subject that constitutes and controls phenomena needs to be revised (205). In place of the subject, genuine phenomenology and the reduction to givenness "must allow for the manifestation of the thing without manipulation of the viewer." (68; see also Marion [1997] 2002, 9) This is said to make way for a phenomenon that "arises from its own ground." (Gschwandtner 2008, 70) In Marion's view, givenness is such a comprehensive manner of reconsidering phenomenality that it "has finished radically – in my eyes, for the first time – with the 'subject' and all its recent avatars." ([1997] 2002, 322) That this constituting subject has been one of the consistent concerns of European philosophy in the modern period show the gravity of Marion's claim to have abolished it.

3.7.3 The Erotic Reduction

In the preface to the 2012 printing of the English edition of *Being Given*, Marion addresses the question of whether his subsequent focus on love entails a further reduction (i.e. a fourth, the third being the reduction to givenness). He answers that this is not the case,

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[137] I am grateful to George Pattison for pointing out to me that insofar as givenness translates Marion's *donation*, it might be better rendered as giving. This would point to a dynamic process occurring in the present, whereas givenness may imply a static and completed deposit. To avoid confusion between quotations and my own text, I will remain with the translation proposed by Gschwandtner and Marion's translators.

[138] The Latin '*ducere'* means to lead, and the prefix '*re'*- connotes repetition. Reduction as employed in English renderings of phenomenological texts means to lead back, rather than to reduce in the customary sense of reduction in quantity.

[139] It is unclear how this idea of a merely self-shown phenomenon would respond to the claim that our minds and/or brains are naturally constructing and selecting which aspects of the range of stimuli which we encounter become conscious (see footnote 91 in Sections 2.11 and footnote 127 in Section 3.4).

since love – "the erotic reduction" – "comes from the reduction to the given because it specifies a particular figure of it." (Marion [1997] 2002, x) What is specific about the erotic phenomenon is that rather than involving one person to whom a (non-personal) phenomenon appears, love encompasses two persons who appear to one another (xi). Marion calls this the "utmost possibility" (xi) of the reduction to givenness, rather than merely one figure of it or a subsequent reduction. Marion's treatment of love is primarily found in *The Erotic Phenomenon*, which begins with the claim that "[p]hilosophy today no longer says anything about love, or at best says very little." ([2003] 2007, 1) This is because any conception of philosophy based on the Cartesian ego and "the ordering and the meaning of objects" inevitably results in the "repression" (6) of love. Descartes' method of hyperbolic doubt was intended to respond to the scepticism of his time through a putative proof of his own being, based on the clear and distinct idea that the act of doubting itself entailed his existence. Marion sees this method as inadequate because mere certainty that 'I am' does nothing to excise the ghost of vanity, the experience of meaninglessness, and hence he asserts that we need assurance of meaning, and that this need endures even in certainty of existence (66).

Marion's first two proposed formulations of the attempts to lead philosophy back to love both end in deliberate failure. The first, "does anyone out there love me?", is bound to end frustrated by the ultimate finitude and fragility of human others ([2003] 2007, 67), and so Marion moves to the second: "can I love first?" (71) This involves the question of whether we can answer our need for assurance by being a lover, rather than primarily a beloved. Whilst this is seen as an improvement upon the first, it is said to be limited because of the temporary nature of our oaths of love and of our mortality. In Marion's view this opens the path to the eternal other and hence the final figure of the erotic reduction: "you have loved me first." (214) This is not the place for a sustained theological critique of Marion, but I would point out that he seems to have subtly introduced a transcendental method for arriving at the existence of God. This means that the entrance of God in the text ultimately rests on some human need for assurance and on the question of being loved. Moreover, it assumes that only an assurance of infinite and eternal love can quench the thirst for meaning. I would argue that this is particularly vulnerable to a psychodynamic critique, insofar as psychodynamic theory places the origin and veracity of our needs in question. This questioning subsequently renders any theology based on need as itself demanding a more sustained defence of these needs than Marion attempts. It is not with the third figure that the concern of the chapter lies, however, but with the second, "Can I love first?"

3.7.4 The Intentionality of Love

Marion's second figure explores the claim that the need for assurance can be fulfilled by loving others. We remain with this second figure because he understands erotic love not merely in terms of exclusive love between sexual partners, but as any relationship in which there is the desire for the emergence of the other (Marion [2003] 2007, 219). Marion sees love as a gaze that "discovers a phenomenon that is seen insofar as it is loved (and as much as it is loved)." (81)[140] It also means that the

> lover alone sees something else […] precisely no longer a thing, but, for the first time, just such an other, unique, individuated […] detached from objectness, unveiled by the initiative of loving, arisen like a phenomenon to that point unseen.(80)

Based on this, love alone sees others as unique others rather than objects constituted by a subject. Gschwandtner again turns to Marion's earlier works for the origin of this claim, locating it in Pascal's claim that charity is the antidote to Cartesian rationality.[141] According to Marion, charity "opens a distinct world by opening other eyes in man." (Marion [1986] 1999, 313) Gschwandtner adds to this that charity "is a different way of seeing the world that has its own rationality. Love opens our eyes to seeing anew, to observing and thinking differently." (2008, 226)

Elsewhere Marion names this optical power of love as the "intentionality of love," ([1986] 2002, 71-101) referring to the phenomenological theory of Franz Brentano and Edmund Husserl. Phenomenology sees consciousness as always intentional, tending towards something beyond itself. It should be borne in mind, however, that Marion distinguishes between the mere intentionality that looks in a linear fashion upon phenomena, and the love in which the gaze is reciprocal ([1997] 2002, x). This mutual intentionality, "the

[140] In *The Divided Self*, Laing develops an analogous point relating to psychiatry, in this case contrasting the type of intentionality which imposes categories on patients to a loving intention that enters the world of the other person (Laing 2010, 17-26).

[141] It would be a valid question to ask how Marion was influenced in this claim by the European philosophy of the early 20th century, such as Marcel or Buber. In *The Erotic Phenomenon*, however Marion's meditative approach means that he chooses not to engage in explicit dialogue with other philosophers, preferring an anonymous dialogue with imagined others.

crossing of gazes," involves "two currents of consciousness mutually expressing and pressing upon each other," and – like Fromm – "complete self-giving to the other." (Gschwandtner 2008, 232)[142] Gschwandtner also points to this as a sort of loss or destruction of consciousness, insofar as consciousness is the constituter of objects (232-233). This allows us to move to our final theme in Marion's work, concerning the hermeneutic space in which pure givenness unfolds.

3.7.5 Givenness and Interpretation

Shane Mackinlay's *Interpreting Excess: Jean-Luc Marion, Saturated Phenomena, and Hermeneutics* (2010) is largely a critique of Marion's concept of saturated phenomena. Marion develops this idea in his later works to refer to phenomena that are excessive, and that saturate our intentional consciousness with intuition and presence. Whether historical events, works of art, the flesh, the human face, and God, saturated phenomena dazzle the gaze and overwhelm or suspend its normal delimiting and controlling function. Although Marion's initial explorations of these phenomena did not focus on love, *The Erotic Phenomenon* does make the connection. His saturated phenomenon of 'the face' is the focus of the seventh chapter of Mackinlay's critique. Here Mackinlay points to Marion's idea of "the infinite hermeneutic," (Marion [2003] 2007, 210) which means that the sight of the face of a lover could never be exhausted or exhaustive. Mackinlay (2010) argues that this infinite range of ways of seeing calls for a radical critique of the possibility of givenness ever being pure, undiluted by constitution. Gschwandtner points to the assumption of a pure phenomenon in Marion's disavowal of the concept of horizon, which always "limits the self-givenness of the phenomenon in that it appears to me within the parameters I set for it in my act of constitution." (Gschwandtner 2008, 68) On this basis, Marion insists upon the need for the appearance of phenomena to be "absolutely unconditioned." ([1997] 2002, 189) Given the importance of a priori conditions in Kant and subsequent historical, linguistic, and sociological, re-framings of the way in which we understand phenomenon through inherited structures, the claim is clearly a significant one.

[142] At this point I can refer to Section 3.2, where I discuss Fromm's claim that love allows the beloved to unfold. Marion seems to neglect this transformative aspect of seeing, unless it is implicit in the notion of reciprocal reception of self.

Mackinlay bases his argument on the proposal that Marion "undermines the claims that he [himself] makes" (Mackinlay 2010, 160) relative to saturated phenomena. Given what Marion refers to as conditions in the recipient, the appearance of phenomena "is more complex than a simple self-manifestation." (160) In Mackinlay's view this involves "a prior hermeneutic space that makes their appearing possible and contains it." (160) Mackinlay thus argues that Marion presupposes interpretative openness and receptivity in the one who sees the given. I would argue that this is justified by recourse to *Being Given*, (Marion [1997] 2002) which repeatedly refers to openness as a condition of givenness, so much that the reduction could be said to be to openness rather than mere givenness. Marion seems to have in mind openness as a "pure screen," (175) in contrast with the tradition in phenomenology that sees human life as ineluctably interpretative. This is rooted in his conviction that the interpretative and constituting imperative can be simply overwhelmed by the power of the pure or saturated phenomenon. This is precisely the kernel of Mackinlay's critique, which argues that openness is a space which makes possible the limitless variety of interpretations with which saturated phenomena can be received.[143] Whether this is the case or not, I will focus on how both Marion and Mackinlay focus on the question of whether *consciousness* must be interpretative or constitutive, and thereby completely overlook the question of *unconscious* constitution or interpretation.

3.7.6 Givenness and the Hermeneutics of Transference

Mackinlay's method is to question the idea of undiluted givenness through the necessity of the interpretative dimension of existence. I would argue that what we have explored in this chapter with respect to the projective and distorting aspect of transference can also serve as a powerful restraint to the idea of pure phenomena. This is especially true given Fairbairn's idea of repressed inner objects, insofar as Marion asserts that love entails seeing the face of the beloved in a new way, divested of any a priori. Granted, transference may not be an a priori structure in the traditional sense of a condition that can be deduced logically. Nonetheless, in imposing developmental expectation and emotion upon present experience it is fundamental component of perception in many cases, rooted in experiences perhaps

[143] The question of the necessity of the hermeneutical structure of reception is perhaps more important – or easier to prove as essential - when it comes to depicting or communicating the experience of saturated phenomena rather than the mere experience itself.

prior to the development of self-awareness. Marion's critique of the constitutive consciousness of the metaphysical self fails to recognise that consciousness need not be the sole – or even main – origin of constitution and interpretation. Hence metaphysics is not the only tendency to be overcome before phenomena can be given as they are, since a more concrete and protracted task is the overcoming of transference and the repression in which it can originate. Unlike Marcel, Marion neglects temporality at least in this respect, since his notion of constitution ignores the influence of the past in the ways in which we see. In fact, we might argue that Marion's critique of metaphysics is itself metaphysical, culminating in the claim that phenomenology must merely transcend the metaphysical self. This ignores how transference can impose on others in ways that are just as distorting as the notions of essence, cause, category, quantity, etc., employed in traditional metaphysics.

The distorting impulses of transference therefore radically undermine Marion's reduction to givenness. This is especially the case with the erotic fulfilment of givenness, since transference primarily involves the misrepresentation of persons. This poses a major challenge to any phenomenological methods of intentionality that focus purely on consciousness and ignore the significance of unconscious processes. On this reading, transference can interrupt intentionality, phenomena, interpretation, and world – many of the normal concerns of phenomenology and existentialism – by subtly shaping, distorting, and imposing meaning upon what we encounter. Again this points to the need for an existential critique of any mode of love which involves seeing, this time paying closer attention to both the interpretative and psychodynamic conditions of concrete life. Moreover, this process itself happens in ways that elude awareness, increasing the urgency of reflection upon the possibility that it is taking place. Repression and transference thus lead to a further reduction, which responds to the possibility of the manifestation of phenomena being conditioned by those aspects of ourselves that remain beyond our awareness and are rooted in past experience. In other words, repression and transference entail a psychodynamic reduction.

3.8 Conclusion: A Psychodynamic Reduction, and a Dialectic of Love and Transference

With a psychodynamic reduction, the possibility of the emergence of phenomena into genuine visibility on their own terms is measured by the extent to which repression and

transference can distort them. We can refer to this as a reduction in the sense normally employed by phenomenology, where the appearance of phenomena is led back to evermore fundamental conditions of visibility. For Husserl this involves the "return to the things themselves" (phenomenological reduction) ([1900/1901] 2001, 168); the intuition of *eidos* or essence (eidetic reduction) ([1913] 1983); and ultimately the return to the constituting self (transcendental reduction) ([1913] 1983). Heidegger's ([1927] 1962) development of Husserl places the unveiling of phenomena in the context of *Dasein*, and our always being-there in a world of meaning, history, and language. Marion subsequently presses for a further reduction, which he argues is present but underemphasised in both Husserl and Heidegger. This involves returning to the capacity of phenomena to give from themselves, rather than in any conditions in the self, essence, *Dasein*, or world. This is said to render the givenness of phenomena as the most fundamental aspect of consciousness. Finally, Mackinlay argues that Marion's own work implies that the place of the human gaze in phenomenality entails that his reduction is in fact hermeneutic, and so concerned with receptivity and interpretation as well as givenness.

A psychodynamic reduction would build on all of these by arguing that this capacity for receptivity is mediated not merely by conscious intention, but by our unconscious world. This world can involve inner objects, repressed emotions, unconscious conflicts, configurations of self, and all the characteristics of transference discussed in Sections 3.4-3.6. The phenomenological method of transcending prior assumptions and returning to phenomena would thereby be developed by a notion of self that accounts for what eludes awareness. This implies a psychodynamic phenomenology that unfolds the way that phenomena can be distorted by our repressed dynamisms and the inner developmental objects to which they might relate. I have begun to establish how a psychodynamic critique of phenomenality might function through my reading of the work of Marion, but Marion's understanding of love as an intentional gaze also enables me to point to an analogous revision of Fromm's account of respect and knowledge. In each of these, love involves the capacity to see other persons as they are, shorn of distorting phantoms, and so the impact of transference – including Fromm's own account of it - upon sight also applies to Fromm's theory of love. Again, Fromm himself hints at this in his point about objective or psychological knowledge being a prerequisite for respect, but this calls for a more explicit account of how respect can be impeded.

As well as the psychodynamic reduction being relevant to Fromm, the relationship between transference and love may be reciprocal, involving a dialectic process in which our understanding of each is revised and enhanced through the other. Fromm's work is based around the claim that our lives are motivated by the need to be re-united with the world from which the evolution of self-awareness has estranged us. If our way of relating is regressive, we will surrender our freedom to external authorities, whilst if it is progressive/productive, we will develop spontaneous and free ways of uniting ourselves with others and with nature. Fromm's human should be understood in the context of the dynamism towards self-realization, freedom, and ultimately loving relation, our "primary potentiality." ([1947] 2003, 163; see Sections 1.9, 5.3.1) There is no direct reference in Fromm to how the process of transference might relate to this dynamic, but perhaps his work can provide ground to integrate them and to view transference in the context of the choice between freedom and surrender. From *The Fear of Freedom* onwards, Fromm's work revolves around the claim that this is the ever-present choice which confronts humanity, either to embrace freedom or take ostensible refuge from fear in disordered relationship ([1941] 2001, 121; see also [1955] 2002, 27). Even given its unconscious operation, transference must therefore be seen within this framework if it is to have a coherent place in Fromm's interpretation of life.

Whilst we should remain open to new ways of understanding transference through regression it is the progressive pole that is central to Fromm's depiction of human life.[144] A full understanding of transference from this perspective will therefore begin and end with the dynamism towards the development of our potentialities. This possibility departs from the claim in Sections 2.11, 2.15, and 3.5, that repression involves intolerable emotional energies and inner objects becoming trapped in our bodies and psyches. Given what we have seen in Section 3.6.6 about self-expression and transformation in psychotherapy, transference can then be framed as a dynamic attempt to express what has lain dormant and stagnant in us. In the context of the tendency towards freedom, this would be in the hope that we might encounter others who can help us increase our awareness and tolerance of them and diminish the extent to which they inhibit us. On this reading, our habit of transference tends towards liberation, facilitates self-transformation, and ultimately enables the realization of our potentialities. Of course, this depends on how our enactments of

[144] Ways of interpreting transference through the regressive pole include the need for protection, the masochistic tendency, or the mentality of blame.

previous situations are received by those who witness them, which will be the focus of Chapter Five. For now, my argument is simply that transference, projection, and displacement can be integrated into to Fromm's account of existence in the context of the dynamic human who strives for growth and the awakening of her potentialities.

Fromm himself alludes to how our relationships with the world in general can and should be seen in this way. In a highly illuminating and important passage from his humanist critique of authoritarian Judaism, *You Shall Be as Gods,* Fromm describes how in:

> art or science, joy or sorrow, work or play, whatever happens is a stimulus to his becoming stronger, and more sensitive. This process of constant inner transformation and of becoming part of the world in the act of living is the aim toward which all other aims are subordinated. Man is not a subject opposing the world in order to transform it; he is in the world making his being in the world the occasion for constant self-transformation. Hence the world (humanity and nature) is not an object standing opposite to us, but the medium in which he discovers his own reality and that of the world ever more deeply. (1967, 59)

The world and our activity within it appear here as the womb of self, the arena of our self-realization, and ultimately the birthplace of love and the union that love seeks. Incorporated into this view, transference is not merely a means of organising but also a cry to be able to express what was originally prohibited or intolerable, and a dynamic of transformation. Nor does it simply remain a passive or unconscious process of distortion, but a signal of what needs to be attended to for us to flourish and realise our potentialities. In my fourth chapter, I turn to consider how repressed theological images are involved in this dynamic.

Chapter Four: The Theological Conditions of Love

4.1 God and the Existential Situation

My analysis of Erich Fromm's *The Art of Loving* continues in this fourth chapter by focusing on his account of love of God ([1956] 1995, 49-64).[145] I will begin by briefly introducing the main themes of Fromm's exposition, before continuing the exploration of how a deeper understanding of the dynamisms of psyches can shed light on love. Chapter II.3.e in *The Art of Loving* attempts to develop Fromm's existential and psychoanalytic approach to love by situating love of God in the human predicament that I have discussed in Chapter One. Consistent with his interpretation of love as the answer to his portrayal of the problem of human existence, Fromm frames love of God in the context of the need to find a solution to the experience of isolation. This chapter will emphasise how Fromm's approach to God must thereby be seen through the lends of the distinction between progressive and regressive responses to existence. I will then discuss Fromm's account of the God-concept in terms of the phylogenetic schema discussed in Chapter One, culminating in the claim that the logic of monotheism leads to the negation of theology and the realisation of the powers of the human self. I will then introduce other approaches to self from Fromm's work with a view to considering whether the concept of self that theology culminates in is concrete enough.

As well as this discussion on selfhood, I will approach Fromm's theology from the perspective of the work of Ana-Maria Rizzuto (1979) on the development of God-concepts. This focuses on two questions: (i) whether Fromm's theogeny adequately considers the complexity of family and social dynamics, and (ii) whether Fromm accounts for the importance of de-repression in theology and in development of selfhood. At this point I will reintroduce the work of Jean-Luc Marion, comparing the notions of idolatry found in his work and in Fromm's. Finally, I will return to supplement my consideration of the approach to selfhood with the account of divine power found in the tantric tradition portrayed by Sally Kempton. This will ultimately ask whether Fromm's treatment of the

[145] There is a possible ambiguity in the use of the phrase 'love of God', which could be construed either as the love of God for humanity or the love with which humanity loves God. In Fromm's case it is always the latter.

individuated self pays enough attention to the relationship between love as an active power and our interdependence with the universe.

4.1.1 Theology and Character

Having re-iterated his claim that we have a need for love in order to solve the problem of human existence, Fromm then states that this applies to love of God as well as love of persons. As in interpersonal union, the quest for God is a remedy for the experience of isolation and the resultant anxiety. Continuing to root theology in his own psychodynamic and existential approach, the next step is to turn to the relationship between theology and characterology. Since Fromm has a dichotomised understanding of our solutions to the need to relate, he also proposes that a pair of theological concepts emerge as possible answers. The basis of the theological scheme that Fromm develops is thus founded on the claim that the meaning of concepts of God depend on their origin in the existential situation of those who hold them, and in their characteristic way of relating. Theology – at least insofar as it is concerned with psychological concepts of God – is therefore founded on character, or the way in which we channel energy in order to seek a solution to the problem of human existence. Love of God is understood through the lens of both love and pseudo-love being habitual ways of answering the human predicament (Fromm, [1956] 1995, 50ff).

4.1.2 From Totemism to God the Father

Following this statement of method, Fromm turns to his view of history. We have touched on the preliminary stages of this in the first chapter and its details are rather peripheral to the concepts Fromm uses to elaborate his own view of the love of God, so my treatment of it will be brief. Again, it is focused on a phylogenetic narrative of "the emergence of man from nature, from mother, from the bonds of blood and soil." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 50) Although the primary ties have been broken, our vulnerability entails the need for security, and identification with nature. Theologically, this results in totemism, in which the need for unity manifests in the worship of animals, whilst subsequent human technical developments facilitate the worship of artefacts. Both stages involve the alienation which is central to Fromm's work, the projection of "powers and skills" (50) into external

objects, wherein the overwhelming experience of freedom and responsibility is evaded by creating a god to whom our powers can be divested.

Consistent with his theory of the concurrent evolution of human awareness and individuation, Fromm identifies a subsequent stage in the history of idolatry: gods in human form. His developmental account flows here into two streams, one based on gender and another on human maturity. However, these can be more appropriately seen as successive bends in the same stream, since he also frames the transition from matriarchal to patriarchal gods as a preliminary to the emergence of the mature concept of God he has been preparing to argue for. In any case, the first of these streams flows from "mother-centred to father-centred religion." ([1956] 1995, 51) Based on his appropriation of Bachofen, Fromm posits a matriarchal stage in which the essence is "unconditional […] all-protective, all-enveloping" love (51).[146] The main ramifications of this are the knowledge of being loved by virtue of being rather than doing, and the equality among humans that follows. This putative matriarchy is merely a passing phase, succeeded by the reign of the father-gods and the social patriarchs. The main shift here is towards the development of conditional love, dependent on obedience to laws and demands. This produces in the adherents the need to obey in order to be loved (or, on a social level, to inherit property). This is seen as the origin of competition and hierarchy amongst what were once equal siblings (51-2).

The point of this comparison between unconditional and conditional love is to emphasise the transition from worship based on surrender and helplessness to worship in which humans begin to appropriate more of their own powers. Whilst not endorsing the theology of patriarchy, law, and obedience, Fromm seems to see the transition as relative progress, and as a step on the way to his mature God-concept. Fromm points to the biblical transition from "a despotic, jealous God […] entitled to do with man whatever he pleases" to the loving father of the covenant, "bound by the principles which he has postulated." ([1956] 1995, 53f) He argues that this depicts two preliminary phases on the journey away from anthropomorphism and towards symbolism. In the final stage "God ceases to be a person, a man, a father," and "becomes the symbol of the principle of unity behind the manifoldness of phenomena, of the vision of the flower which will grow from the spiritual seed within

[146] On Bachofen and Morgan and the question of scientific validity, see Section 1.4.3.

man." (54) It is important to note at this point that Fromm is elaborating what he sees as a trajectory in the Hebrew Scriptures that culminates in the nameless God revealed to Moses in the Burning Bush, rather than setting out his own position.[147] Nonetheless the ultimate outcome both of this and of Fromm's own account of theological maturity is the negation of concepts and activity, as we shall now see.

4.1.3 Mature Theology: Negation and Symbolism

Fromm argues that the prohibition against making images of or speaking the name of God has the rationale of liberating us "from the idea that God is a father…a person." (54) Fromm clearly sees this as the culmination of the Jewish thought in which he was schooled, but also as the starting point for later theological development and for his own method. This is the way of negation, in which "the more I know what God is *not*, the more knowledge I have of God." (55) Hence, monotheism results in the denial of any positive speech about God, which "can lead us to only one conclusion: not to mention God's name at all, not to speak about God. Fromm finally argues that the logic latent in monotheism thus leads to "the nameless One, an inexpressible stammer, referring to the unity underlying the phenomenal universe, the ground of all existence." (55) The main consequence of all of this relates to how these concepts of God impact on love and empowerment. A God invested with human attributes such as parenthood will be viewed through these attributes, particularly periodic forgiveness and anger. Based on this, humans are rendered mere children (55).

This account of theological development is significant for Fromm because of themes we have encountered in Chapter One, revolving around his understanding of maturity. To be mature is to step forth from dependency on nature, clan, or parents, and to fully develop our own powers. In contrast to this, a child depends on constant aid from parents, which should be merely an ontogenetic phase. At first glance it might seem that the important theological point here concerns how our self-concept is measured by our concepts of the dominant others in our lives, in this case the theological other. Fromm, however, primarily imagines the relationship in the opposite way: it is the failure to step out of dependence

[147] Fromm ([1956] 1995, 54) suggests that the most adequate translation of YHWH is "my name is nameless," but this is arguably tenuous.

and freedom that generates the anthropomorphic God-concept. Fromm is clear that to remain in the infantile, dependent frame of mind is to stay mired in the illusion of a helping father. Thus, the evolution of the masculine God-concept is merely one stage in the emergence from phylogenetic infancy, a mere phase in the development of human self-awareness. Fromm, in fact, sees this "[q]uite obviously" as the state of the majority, the dominant form of religion ([1956] 1995, 55).[148]

In the evolution of both species and individual, the historical and the personal, the negation of theological concepts leads to the emergence of the symbolic view of God. The anthropomorphic God is interpreted as an anachronistic symbol which humans once used to "express the totality of that which man is striving for, the realm of the spiritual world, of love, truth, and justice." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 56) The ultimate concern for the adherents of this iconoclastic and symbolic approach to theology is the full development of human potential, and to "long for the attainment of the full capacity to love." (56) Fromm thus posits a final stage in the emergence of a mature approach to God, in which we finally grasp that we possess all the powers that were once projected upon external authorities. Developing the theological critique of Ludwig Feuerbach, Fromm's *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (1950) describes how his own method excavates the dynamics of the human developmental situation which lie concealed behind our systems of thought.[149] This means that the projection of human attributes onto the symbolic God is rooted in a particular type of character structure, and hence continues in some people beyond its historical eclipse. Thus, as we shall see in Section 4.2.1, the continued presence of authoritarianism in religion is a rationalization of the need to escape fear in those who do not embrace freedom, and a projection of what was earlier sought in parental protection (Fromm [1956] 1995, 56).[150]

[148] Given that Fromm was writing in 1956, when the concept of the Christian Father-God was arguably a far more prevalent social symbol, we might ask now the intervening years have produced new paths of regression and progress, and perhaps paths which might lead us out of the impasse between anthropomorphism and negation.

[149] Feuerbach (1989) had claimed that the concepts of God employed in traditional theology were projections of the infinitude of our human powers, based on our inability to appropriate them for ourselves and our consequent need to locate them in an exterior absolute.

[150] Elsewhere, Fromm identifies parent-fixation as a modern analogate of ancestor worship, and one variant of authoritarian religion (1950, 29ff).

4.1.4 Negative Theology and Non-Theistic Negation: Transcendence and Humanism

I will explore the extent to which Fromm's psychodynamics of religion is sufficiently concrete in Sections 4.3 and 4.4, having first elaborated the correspondence and the difference between negative theology and the non-theistic approach that is more akin to Fromm's own position.[151] These non-theistic traditions (among which he specifies early Buddhism, and Taoism) have to be distinguished from any theistic approach, including the theology that culminates in negation. The distinction turns on the assumption of transcendence, since even negative theology assumes "the reality of the spiritual realm, as one transcending man, giving meaning and validity to man's spiritual powers and his striving for salvation and inner birth." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 56) By contrast, the non-theistic posits no such realm, and sees its ideals as simply developments of the powers of humanity. From this point of view, meaning is derived from the evolution and expression of our immanent potentialities, rather than depending on some exterior ideal for which we can strive and upon which we depend.[152]

Fromm continues to develop the main consequence of his own perspective: love of God is not a matter of belief or thought, but of action and experience. When concepts collapse under the weight of paradox, all that remains of truth is "the experience of oneness" such that "love of God is neither the knowledge of God in thought, nor the thought of one's love of God, but the act of experiencing the oneness with God." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 61) Fromm sees the focus on and quest for the experience of unity as implying an additional emphasis on right action, something he argues is reflected in three of his principal European sources: Spinoza, Marx, and Freud. All of this leads to a further distinction between paradoxical or negative thought and what Fromm calls the Aristotelian standpoint: the first prizes tolerance, self-transformation, and experience of unity, whilst the other centralizes thought, belief, concepts, and ultimately scientific knowledge. Love of God is

[151] In *You Shall Be as Gods*, published a decade later than *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995), Fromm defines his own position as "nontheistic mysticism," (1967, 19) before going on to develop a theory of religion based on the idea that each symbol is merely an approximation of the experience of unity with the world and of the development of our powers. Fromm then names this the x-experience, which – no matter the tradition or its symbols – culminates in letting go of egoism and entering into union (57-60). His account of the x-experience is much the same as the mystical attitude from *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (Fromm 1950, 93-95; see Section 4.2.2), and I will prioritise that text given its addition concern for psychodynamics.

[152] It would be legitimate to question whether Fromm simply reads his own thought into other traditions, particularly relative to the merely evolutionary basis of powers such as intellect and will, or the concept of transcendence in Taoism.

viewed in the latter as belief in God, whilst in the former is "an intense feeling experience of oneness, inseparably linked with the expression of this love in every act of living." (63) We cannot attribute the Eastern position to Fromm, given that explicit statements of his own perspective are sparing. Nonetheless, he does clarify how the negative, mystical turn relates to his own thought in the closing section. Since this is the most succinct statement of the whole section it is with this statement that my own elaboration of it will culminate, before I turn to critique and re-contextualisation.

4.1.5 Concepts of God and Human Empowerment

First, Fromm introduces his own position in the context of the transcendence/immanence distinction: "to me the concept of God is only a historically conditioned one," a symbolic naming of our own "higher powers," and a "longing for truth and unity at a given historical period." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 56) Consistent with his phylogenetic and ontogenetic trajectories, Fromm subsequently returns "to an important parallel between the love for one's parents and the love for God" (63) in which we see his own position clarified. This relates the whole narrative of this section of *The Art of Loving* to the treatment of the themes of regress and progress (Fromm ([1956] 1995). There is a direct correspondence between the phylogenetic evolution of human-divine relationships and the ontogenetic emergence of young humans from parental dependency. Fromm describes three stages of this twofold process: (i) dependent attachment to mother (feminine divinity); (ii) father as a "principle of thought and action" and the need to acquire praise and avoid displeasure (masculine divinity); (iii) maturity, which is the absence of the need for protection and command and the incorporation of all that is legitimate and healthy in parenthood into what Fromm calls elsewhere "the humanistic conscience" ([1947] 2003, 124-29; see Section 5.2.6). This final ontogenetic stage is mirrored in the transition from helplessness and obedience to the

> mature stage where God ceases to be an outside power, where man has incorporated the principles of love and justice into himself, where he has become one with God, and, eventually, to a point where he speaks of God only in a poetic, symbolic sense. (Fromm [1956] 1995, 63)

This is the most comprehensive expression of Fromm's own theological perspective, depicting the human who has re-claimed her own powers from the spectres of theological projection. Without this emergence from "incestuous attachment to mother, clan, nation," (Fromm [1956] 1995, 63) and the avoidance of punishment, no mature love of God is possible. Fromm follows Freud in seeing each ontogenetic phase also present in adults, but it is clear in his work that a regressive notion of God is a mere - although common - possibility.[153] His account of productive activity, spontaneity, and love shows that regress is an alternative to maturity, and that a mature and humanistic religion is possible in those who emerge from the dominion of the transcendent and authoritarian God. Nonetheless, the possibility remains that if we do not achieve the birth of freedom and empowerment in ourselves, our need for security will necessitate regress to prior stages of development and dependence.[154] This original relation to parental authority may thus morph into symbiosis with political, social, religious, economic, or pseudo-personal, authoritarian bodies.[155] Hence the mature concept of God is constantly in tension with God-concepts that do not facilitate the appropriation of our own powers – i.e. which are not understood symbolically – and which are simply expressions of this regressive tendency and our failure to become mature. Fromm's own view thus seems to mirror the symbolic phase that he has depicted in the history of theology and religion, and as ever culminates in the individuated person who has claimed full responsibility for the potentialities previously projected onto the authoritarian God.

4.2 The Symbolic God and The Expanded Self

It is implicit in the previous section that our infantile and authoritarian God-concepts entail the eclipse of the self, since they mask and impede the development of our powers by projecting them outwards. I will now reconsider this with recourse to both *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (Fromm 1950) and *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (Fromm 1960), and the expanded notion of self found in each.

[153] It is important to point out that Fromm differs from Freud in still allowing some positive content to the relationship with God-concepts, providing they are seen in light of the trajectory of individuation.

[154] *The Fear of Freedom* contains a section entitled "The Period of the Reformation," which discusses how this tendency towards surrender and authoritarianism is reflected in the theologies of Luther and Calvin (Fromm [1941] 2001, 54-89).

[155] It may also remain as parent-fixation/dependency long into adulthood.

4.2.1 *Psychoanalysis and Religion*: Authoritarian and Humanistic Religion

In a series of lectures published as *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (1950), Fromm explores the contribution that psychoanalysis can make to both ethics and religion. Pointing to theorists from classical Greece and modern Europe, Fromm emphasises currents in ethics concerned with the relationship between happiness and psychology (as a study of human faculties). This is intended to enable him to propose some aspects of his appropriation of Freud as a foundation for a humanistic re-evaluation of religion, particularly the idea that Freud is concerned with the search for truth and human well-being and freedom. This analysis turns on a distinction between authoritarian and humanistic religion, analogous to the series of binaries that we have seen in Chapter One. Understanding religion as any point of orientation and devotion, Fromm portrays authoritarian religion as developing along the regressive pole, and as involving the evasion of negative freedom through the surrender of our powers (Fromm 1950, 36-37). Humanistic religion, on the other hand, is any orientation and devotion in which we cultivate our powers fully (37). It is at this point that the text becomes especially pertinent to this thesis.

4.2.2 *Psychoanalysis and Religion*: From Repression to Unity

Part of Fromm's intention is to rehabilitate the notion of soul - conceived as the principle of our powers - and psychoanalysis as cure of soul, rather than mere symptom-treatment. This also involves his proposal of a variety of experiences by which true/humanistic religion transcends the ethical sphere. It is here that we begin to find the basis of my critique of the merely individuated self, which is especially helpful given that Fromm is explicitly expounding his own position. Following the aspects of wonder and questioning existence, and being ultimately concerned with human self-realization, the third trait Fromm proposes for humanistic religion is an "attitude of oneness." (1950, 95) This oneness is felt in ourselves, with other humans, and with the universe, and involves both the excruciating awareness of separation and the longing to break through into unity. Hence it involves a paradox: "the religious attitude is simultaneously the fullest experience of individuality and its opposite." (95) In a point which will provide a clear connection to a fleeting but by no means peripheral point in *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm [1941] 2001, 226; see Section 4.2.6), it involves "experiencing oneself as but a thread in the texture of

the universe." (Fromm 1950, 95) Even more illuminating for my line of enquiry, Fromm proposes a powerful analogy between (i) the psychoanalytic process of breaking through the confines of one's organized self – the ego – and of getting in touch with the excluded and disassociated part of oneself, the unconscious," and (ii) the "religious experience of breaking down individuation and feeling one with the All." (95)

The importance of this discussion of *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (Fromm 1950) – and particularly that of the last citation - is two-fold. First, it re-iterates the importance of repression (in this case through the condition of dissociation) in establishing unity with oneself, and stipulates that the emergence from repression leads to unity with the All/Universe. Secondly, it demonstrates that individuation is merely a phase in full human development, to be succeeded by a subsequent unity.[156] We have seen in the first chapter how the scheme of emergence and return operates in Fromm's early works, and it is an important point of development to note that here we also see the motif of harmony put in the context of unity with the All/Universe. Moreover, this takes place not by will, emotion, intellection, or sense, but by a desire which is never quite ascribed to any one of the faculties (Fromm 1950, 94-95).[157] Perhaps the most significant point here is the connection between the corresponding poles of each pair: (i) breaking through the ego/organised self and the rediscovery of repressed elements of the self; (ii) recovering the dissociated unconscious and experiencing unity with the All/Universe.[158] A few pages later, Fromm summarises this by stating first that entering the hitherto "dissociated world of the unconscious" is a path from repression to "permeation and integration." (97) Perhaps most significant of all is his assertion that "in dissolving repression we permit ourselves to sense the living process and to have faith in life rather than order." (97-8) Hence the emergence

[156] It might be suggested here that there is some relation between unity and how harmony is portrayed in the earlier texts. In *The Sane Society* ([1955] 2002), however, Fromm states that harmony between animal and nature is simply a matter of the meeting of need, and does not expand on how the new interpersonal harmony differs from this (see Section 1.8). This suggests a tension between harmony in the earlier texts and unity in the later ones, mainly given the stress on how unity involves the collapse of the distinction between subject and object (see Sections 4.2.4 and 4.2.5). Fromm also uses harmony in the later texts, but again does not explain how it relates to unity or how it might differ from the way it is employed in *The Sane Society*.

[157] Fromm refers to intuition in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (1960, 64), but again never quite manages to incorporate this into previous approaches to our powers.

[158] Given that Fromm refers to both All and Universe as the culmination of the same mystical attitude, I will often refer to them in tandem or interchangeably. This is simply a reference to Fromm's own work rather than indicating any metaphysical or cosmological identification of our universe with all that exists.

from repression is associated not only with the breaking through of the ego, but with integration, entering into the process of life, and ultimately experiencing unity with the All.

4.2.3 *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism*: Repression and Relation

In order to develop a deeper understanding of the connection between repression and unitive relationship, I will first return to Fromm's *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (1960). Here we see one instance of a consistent concern in Fromm's work to distinguish between psychoanalysis conceived as the treatment of neurotic symptoms, and understood as addressing a general malaise, or "inner deadness." (27) According to this second humanistic paradigm, the root of suffering is alienation "from himself, from his fellow man, and from nature." (16)[159] Rather than mere liberation of libido, the remedy for this is the development well-being. Fromm understands well-being to mean being

> fully related to man and nature affectively, to overcome separateness and alienation, to arrive at the experience of oneness with all that exists – and yet to experience *myself* at the same time as the separate entity *I* am, as the individual. (36)

Again, we encounter the tension of unity and individuality, the liberation from separateness and the importance of unity with the universe. Concluding his discussion of well-being, we read that it means "to be and to experience one's self in the act of being." (36) Arguably consistent with Suzuki's stress on Zen as discovering self, it also echoes – and yet seemingly enlarges – Fromm's consistent emphasise on selfhood from *The Fear of Freedom* ([1941] 2001) onwards. Moreover, Fromm is also clear throughout that emerging into this unity involves lifting the veil of repression, which we have also seen as the basis of alienation (Section 2.11). Although the explicit references to selfhood are fairly scattered in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism,* I would argue that it is possible to read this notion (including terms such as himself, oneself, myself) as organizing the whole text. In doing so we can see that *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* continues and develops the process of making visible the range of the self in Fromm's work, a new self that leaves behind the self which "thinks of God, instead of experiencing being God." (37)

[159] We might also ask how Fromm sees trauma contributing to suffering.

4.2.4 *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism*: Self and the Subject/Object Split

Elaborating on this expanded notion of self, Fromm contrasts authoritarian religion with to the "objectivity" of Taoism and Buddhism, in which "each man has within himself the capacity to awake and be enlightened." (1960, 19) Most emphatically, considering now the principles of Zen, "knowledge of self in Zen is knowledge which is not intellectual, which is non-alienated, it is full experience in which knower and known become one." (76) Much like the dynamism towards loving knowledge in Section 3.3, this clearly equates the apprehension of self with the collapse of the distinction between knower and known. This is re-iterated in Fromm's argument that the Freudian aim of making the unconscious conscious ultimately leads to "overcoming alienation, and of the subject-object split in perceiving the world." (101) Hence, we have a selfhood which transcends the boundaries between subject and object, and which encounters within itself the totality of the Cosmos (34). Finally, to relate this to the account of productivity and harmony in my first chapter, Fromm states that "the state of productiveness" includes the synthesis of the subjectivity-objectivity in which "there are no veils which separate me from the 'not-me.'" (74) In summary, and to add to the aspects considered in Section 4.2.2*,* in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* we have encountered a self which when fully developed transcends the ego (Fromm 1960, 27), is one with the world (27), unites knower and known (76), synthesizes subject and object (64, 72), tears down the veil between me and not-me (74), and bears the universe within it (34).[160]

4.2.5 Reason in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* and *Man for Himself*

As an aspect of this expanded self, Fromm also emphasises the full development of reason as part of the apparatus by which unity is established (1960, 27, 39). It is legitimate to ask, therefore, how the function of reason in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (1960) corresponds to the role it plays in *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003). In the earlier text, Fromm specifies love and reason as the faculties by which we develop a new harmony with the world, love by feeling and reason by thought.[161] Distinguishing the abstract use of

[160] It is important to point out that the rejection of the subject-object relationship may also follow from other ways of framing relationship - such as radical difference - rather than necessarily entailing union.

[161] I have discussed the tension between love as an emotional power and love as a volitional power in Sections 2.1 and 2.5.

reason from practical intelligence, Fromm claims that part of the function of reason is to "penetrate the surface of things in order to discover their essence, their hidden relationships and deeper meanings […] the generic and the universal […] freed from their superficial and accidental (logically irrelevant) aspects." ([1947] 2003, 76) Given this seemingly Aristotelian notion of the function of reason – that of discovering genera, essence, substance, etc. – we might be led to think that there is some inconsistency between the relationship of knower/subject and known/object in *Man for Himself* and in the latter texts. This may well be the case, and a result of the revision of Fromm's own thought through his ongoing encounter with Zen and various mystical traditions.

An alternative explanation, however, might also seek to find seeds of the synthetic role of reason – as well as the transcendence of individuation - in the earlier texts. Coming directly after his account of productive thinking in *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003), Fromm's treatment of objectivity may shed some light on the matter. Objectivity entails the "ability to see an object as it is," (77) and not according to our wishes. This capacity bears striking resemblance to the nature of respect in Section 3.3.2, and involves seeing objects "in their uniqueness and their interconnectedness." (77) This interconnectedness also involves perception of "the totality of the phenomenon […] the whole." (77) To emphasise this, Fromm cites Max Wertheimer's call for "a new, deeper structural view of the situation." (77)[162] In attempting to reconcile an apparent disparity – or at least offer some explanation which reduces incoherence to paradox – we can now recall the harmonious view of reality introduced towards the end of *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm [1941] 2001) . This will enable me to suggest that we already see in *Man for Himself* a hint of the reason that penetrates the boundaries of isolation, and hence corresponds to the expanded notion of self that I am elaborating in Section 4.2.

4.2.6 Self as Part of the Whole in *The Fear of Freedom* and *Psychoanalysis and Religion*

In the closing section of *The Fear of Freedom* Fromm asserts that the spontaneous individual who is productively related to the world "ceases to be an isolated atom [but

[162] Wertheimer was one of the early proponents of the Gestalt psychology to which I have referred to above, and it is curious that this idea of the relationship between whole and part in the structure of perception has no impact upon the way that Fromm conceives unconsciousness (see footnote 83 in Section 2.11).

instead is] part of one structuralized whole." ([1941] 2001, 226) This reflects the general focus on harmony in his work, and also the mystical roots that have been emphasised by Durkin and others. In Fromm's account of the mystical attitude in *Psychoanalysis and Religion*, this is echoed in the claim that religious experience involves "experiencing oneself as but a thread in the texture of the universe." (1950, 95) Given the focus on independence that runs throughout both works this is a far less emphatic tone, but nonetheless provides an analogy to the two roles of reason seen above. As well as seeing self in its independence and uniqueness, Fromm's account points to the interconnectedness of self and whole. Given the general tendency in Fromm's early work this is mostly concerned with how the activity of the self establishes unity, and the question of how unity facilitates agency is absent from *Psychoanalysis and Religion*. In other texts, however, there are fleeting references to how activity can indeed be conditioned by the experience of unity, as I shall now discuss.

4.2.7 Harmony and Agency in *The Fear of Freedom* and *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism*

In the section of *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm [1941] 2001) concerning spontaneity and freedom, there is a rare reference to the consequences of finding a new harmony with the world. Fromm states that "if [we are] related to the world by embracing it in the act of spontaneous living, [we gain] strength as an individual and […] security." ([1941] 2001, 226) This is arguably the only instance in Fromm's early work of how finding harmony or unity enhances our ability to act, in giving us strength, again perhaps because of the emphasis on breaking free from dependence. Whilst statements such as this are, again, notably absent from his account of humanistic religion and mysticism in *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (Fromm 1950; see Section 4.7), there is some indication that the enlightenment experience in Zen Buddhism has an impact on our powers as well as our consciousness. For instance, the well-being that results from the awakening enables us to become fully born, and more responsive to others (Fromm 1960, 36, 72), as well as entailing deeper perception (74). Like the de-repressive process, Zen liberates our energies and enables the development of the faculty of love (71), and *entails* ethical transformation as well as being premised on it (83).

Given the overall context of the text and its focus on unity with the universe, these are the most direct statements in Fromm's work that the process of developing a new harmony

both results from the exercise of our powers and augments them. Hence, they add a new dimension to the nature of the expanded self, shifting from the mere expansion of consciousness and relation, towards the self which is in some fashion depends on the whole in order to act. In the first place, Fromm's expanded self is unitive, and possessed of a power of reason which transcends the boundary between subject and object. These citations in this section, however, also show that a comprehensive view of self in Fromm is not only broader than his primary account of individuation suggests, but also deeper, since the power to act and to love is rooted in the universe of which it is a part. I will place this in sharp relief with the narrower account of self in the conclusion to this chapter, after having applied my existential revision of Fromm to his approach to God-concepts.

4.3 The Concrete God-Concept

In *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (1950), Fromm's central methodological thesis lays the foundation for his distinction between humanistic and authoritarian religion. This is his observation that the main critical function of psychoanalysis is to unearth "*the human reality behind thought* systems." (Fromm 1950, 62) Rather than taking beliefs at face value, a psychoanalytic method will attempt to consider the situations out of which they emerge. This enables consideration of whether they are – for instance – attempts to evade responsibility, to escape fear, to placate, etc. Relative to Fromm's humanistic psychoanalysis, the purpose is to identify regressive thought patterns and behaviours and begin to address the underlying conditions in which they are rooted. The most significant diagnostic tool used in this method is that of rationalization, which Fromm takes to be the most important contribution of psychoanalysis to the quest for truth. The exploration of rationalizing tendencies operates by uprooting the unconscious processes underlying a belief or behaviour, based on the recognition that what a person consciously attests or believes as their rationale is often a contrived justification for unconscious processes (58-60). For example, the profession of belief in an all-powerful God might be said to be based in theological reasoning, but really be rooted in regression and the need to escape negative freedom. The psychoanalytic approach to religion is thus a matter of uncovering any concealed motives for belief and behaviour, as well critiquing the human situation from which they arise. At least in the case of Fromm, the intent behind this remains the ability to accept and live that situation consciously and to the full extent of our potential.

Relative to the present thesis, my own rationale for introducing these aspects of Fromm's method is to begin to question whether his own take on the God-concept is genuinely concrete, and whether Fromm's account really apprehends the human reality behind theology. In his *You Shall Be as Gods* (1967), Fromm discusses how the concept of God becomes alienated from the experience which it is supposed to symbolise. Concepts become mere ideology by assuming a meaning that becomes frozen, and by ceasing to adapt to the development of human experience and capacity. This can render a theological concept "an artefact of man's mind […] that usurps the place of the underlying reality within the living human being." (18) The obvious line of enquiry concerns whether Fromm's God-concept is faithful enough to experience, to concrete human reality. I will explore this question in two dimensions: (i) Fromm's account of ontogenetic development in theology; and (ii) the connection between repression and concepts of God.

As we have seen, Fromm has argued for a correspondence between love for one's parents and love for God. Mature love for God culminates in the renunciation of positive theological speech and the re-appropriation of powers that we had projected onto God, and is measured by the degree of individuation that we have achieved. To the extent that we remain dependent on unconditional maternal love and protection, or live in fear of paternal punishment, we will project these experiences onto a God of our own making. This is analogous to a phylogenetic and historical development in human culture and theology, namely the totemism-matriarchy-patriarchy narrative discussed in Section 4.1.2. It is also clear that in his own cultural situation he sees all three as present possibilities of regress within a society still partially based on patriarchal religion. The extent to which this regress remains a reality in specific circumstances is an ontogenetic matter, dependent on the capacity of each person to become free of parental dependency and to embrace their own freedom. If we remain in childlike dependency, our God-concept will mirror our need for a parent, whereas the development of freedom from dependency will also entail liberation from limiting theological concepts.

This question of the development of concepts of God arguably involves empirical observation as well as theory. Given the decades that have passed since *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995), it is necessary to consider clinical approaches and evidence grounded in subsequent human experience, especially since Fromm states that his own theory of the psyche is based in his analytic work ([1962] 2006, 10). A comparison with

other empirical approaches will have the advantage of rooting an assessment of Fromm in a wider range of concrete data, as well as in historical developments in psychotherapy. This is even more necessary given cultural shifts (e.g. from religion to spirituality) in the intervening period. Fromm's theory of the emergence of the God-concept is rooted in a theory of human existence that emphasises our dichotomised situation and the exercise of our powers. The range of the significance he ascribes to the concept is therefore confined within this paradigm and his developmental trajectories. By looking to the work of Ana-Maria Rizzuto, I will argue for a much more concrete approach to the question of the development of the God-concept. This provides the ground for a critique of both God and self in Fromm, based on repression, power, idol, and icon.

4.4 Psychoanalysis and the God-Representation: Ana-Maria Rizzuto

In considering the work of Ana-Maria Rizzuto, it is necessary to specify at the outset that her *The Birth of the Living God* (1979) primarily proceeds on a genetic level, meaning that the intention is to provide a broader empirical foundation on which to base a theory of the origin of God-concepts. Whilst drawing on this genetic approach, my own concern is primarily phenomenological, focusing on the implication of the experience of the concept. From the phenomenological perspective, Rizzuto's work is important in its insistence that some concept of God is inevitable among Western children. She argues that this is the case even if they are raised in an atheist environment or grow into adulthood assuming that they have no such concept. Fromm's claim is that the God-concept originates in the need to evade our freedom and shelter under the wing of an all-powerful parent. In contrast to this, Rizzuto looks to the prevalence, content, and atmosphere of the language of God in Western societies as the major factor in the emergence, ubiquity, and experience of the concept. Hearing the name of God spoken and noting the powers attributed, children begin to develop the process of creating a representation to which to relate the name.

In psychoanalytic terms the development of this representation involves a process of illusion, whereby what is wished for or feared is projected onto the environment.[163] Moreover, this differs from other potential experiences of illusory wish-fulfilment simply

[163] In phenomenology this might be referred to as an intentional content to which to relate the phenomenal correlate. It also seems to me analogous to the way in which Marion's idolatrous gaze measures the visible.

because of the gravity with which God-language can be spoken. We might hear invocations for help, or warnings of omniscience relative to sin, and be gripped by the serious tone of the language. One crucial point of Rizzuto's approach is her insistence that the concept is drawn not only from a variety of sources in the early environment, but also from the child's own creative powers. This is contrasted with Fromm's historical and developmental accounts of concepts of God, which form according to structured patterns rather than human creativity or freedom. This means that Rizzuto's genetic account is far more flexible and layered than Fromm's mere progress from mother to father to negation and symbol (as well as the exclusively paternal model of Freud, which is the object of her critique). That said, she is also quite clear in her belief that discourse around the power of God naturally leads to the process of modelling based on parents, given that they are the primary exemplars of power in the infant world (Rizzuto 1979, 194).

These childhood experiences of authority and the gravity of God-talk are the first in a series of processes by which concepts are formed and reformed in response to the environment. In this respect, Rizzuto's account is again important phenomenologically since it roots the development of the God-concept in a sociolinguistic experiential context. Whilst Fromm's approach is simply about the evolutionary and individual development of faculties, Rizzuto depicts a far more immersive process. This occurs "in a wider context of the family, social class, organized religion, and particularly subcultures." (Rizzuto, 209) Moreover, Fromm operates merely with the notion of a *concept* of God , whilst Rizzuto distinguishes between concept, image, and representation. According to Nicholas Gibson, Rizzuto's work "argued for a propositional level God concept and multiple emotional-related God images, all composing the God representation." (Gibson 2013, 229)[164] Rizzuto's complex account of the emergence of each of these is beyond the scope of this project, but we can still see that she paints a more comprehensive picture of the concrete variables involved, and of the particularity of each person and our concepts. Finally, it also accounts for the dialectical nature of the process, which involves continual reshaping of the representation of God through the relationship between the environment and the creativity and needs of the person at every stage of life.[165]

[164] I will refer to the 'God-representation' in Rizzuto's work from now on to reflect this complexity, whilst continuing to use 'God-concept' relative to Fromm.

[165] I have added that this is a dialectical process since it entails that the social concept of God will also be affected in some cases by the concepts of persons, as well as the converse.

As well as seeing the representation growing out of the changing world in which the person is immersed, Rizzuto's account also offers a second major advantage. In addition to the conscious aspects of the God-representation, her research also illuminates the repressed/unconscious dimensions (Rizzuto 1979, 134, 140, 144, 179, 202). Whilst Fromm does say that there can be disparity between our actual love of God and how we believe it to be ([1956] 1995, 64), he is silent on whether our concept of God can be repressed. In *The Fear of Freedom* ([1941] 2001) and *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003), Fromm is deeply concerned with the process of repressed needs and strivings, and how they drive our quest for relation. There is less focus, however, on how relational objects become internalised and repressed, though I have discussed his few mentions of this in Section 3.4. This is also an omission in his view of the God-concept, which seems to function merely as a conscious object for a symbolic projection of powers that we are afraid to take possession of. Whilst this may well be the case in some instances, Fromm's approach to the question of God-images neglects the idea that we can have unconscious theological representations, and so points again to the need for an existential critique based on the interpretative and psychodynamic dimensions of life. Like any unconscious representations, these would have the potential to channel energy, disrupt experience, and distort phenomena. Before discussing this in more depth, I will frame it with a brief account of idolatry in Fromm and Marion.

4.5 Idolatry in Erich Fromm and Jean-Luc Marion.

4.5.1 Idol and Icon in Marion

In his *God Without Being*, Marion's critique of ontological approaches to theology is based on the claim that theological concepts based on the category of being are idolatrous. Idolatry is conceived here as a concept that obscures the emergence of the invisible, by being a mirror beyond which the human gaze does not pass. When confronted with an idol, our gaze "culminates in a position that the idol immediately occupies and where every aim is exhausted." (Marion [1982] 1991, 13) In doing so, "the idol consigns the divine to the measure of a human gaze." (14) By contrast, the icon "lets itself be measured by the excessiveness of the invisible that enters into visibility through infinite depth." (23) Concerning theological concepts, the key point is that icons are not concerned with the essences of traditional metaphysical theology, but with determining "an intention – that of

the invisible advancing into the visible and inscribing itself therein." (23) The opposition thus might be conceived as mirror distinguished from window, with the idol-mirror obscuring the visibility of another by being merely a reflection of an image that originates in the gaze. The icon-window transcends this by allowing what is otherwise invisible to become visible, an understanding of theology which recalls the aim of Marion's phenomenology (Section 3.7). Whilst the idol can clearly be compared to the impact of limiting metaphysical conditions upon a phenomenon, the icon is analogous to the aim of structuring phenomenality according to the capacity of the phenomenon to give from itself.

4.5.2 Idolatry in Fromm

Fromm's understanding of idolatry again concerns the conditions of human empowerment, and the contrast between regress and progress. Relative to religion, what is important is that genuine or humanistic religion is not concerned with conceptual content. Instead, it furthers human development and the unfolding of our powers, rather than their paralysis (Fromm 1950, 26). The authoritarian alternative is "surrender to a power transcending man," since by submitting to such an authority "man escapes his feeling of aloneness and limitation [and] loses his independence and integrity as an individual." (35) This is merely one of many expressions of idolatry in Fromm's work, in which the foundational process of surrendering our powers has a variety of disempowering correlates, in this case a concept of God. The ramification of idolatry is always alienation, the separation of persons from their powers (or more broadly conceived from some aspect of reality or experience). Fromm reframes worship of God – at least in the regressive personality - as an attempt to get in touch with the lost powers through idolatrous projection (50). This is immensely significant for Fromm, since "the real fall of man is his alienation from himself, his submission to power, his turning against himself even under the guise of worshipping God." (53) Contrasted with theological concepts such as original sin or total depravity, Fromm situates the fall of humanity – in this passage at least – as the failure to take possession of our powers, and in their projection onto a theological idol.

4.5.3 Complementary Approaches to Idolatry in Fromm and Marion

I would argue that Fromm and Marion's concepts of idolatry are complementary, much as I have suggested a connection between psychodynamics and phenomenology in Section 3.8. Fromm is a sociologist and psychoanalyst particularly concerned with ethics and human potential, and so he develops a theory of idolatry in which humans are despoiled of their powers by retreating into the security of a divine authority. As a philosopher occupied with the appearance of phenomena, Marion attacks the idol as something that consumes the gaze and merely reflects our power to form concepts of being. Notwithstanding contrary approaches to the transcendence of God, in each case our human powers are mirrored in an idolatrous projection which prevents us from acting freely or seeing clearly. This digression into these concepts of idolatry has been in order to frame a further question, concerning whether Fromm's notion of self in *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995) is an icon which enables us to see clearly, or an idol which both absorbs our powers and obscures the visibility of something else.

4.6 Unconscious Gods, Negative Theology, and the Icon-Self

In Chapter Three I discussed Fromm's account of repression in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (1960), particularly in his treatment of the relationship between repression and perception. One aspect of this is the concept of parataxic distortion, by which we "experience the world with a false consciousness." (89)[166] Rather than seeing things as they are, parataxic distortion means that a person "puts his thought image into things, and sees them in the light of his thought images and fantasies, rather than reality." (89) In doing so, "another person is experienced as a significant person of one's childhood, and not as they really are." (89) Repression thus leads to illusion, understood as the distortion of reality due to psychological processes, with the result that the world is falsified. As we have seen, this is an alternative meaning of transference, which now involves repressed images mediating the appearance of phenomena (Sections 3.4, 3.6). Fromm also asserts that one origin of repression is the perceptual social filter of "language, logic, and taboos," (55) which broadens the range of repression and illusion to encompass conceptual content.

[166] Fromm attributes this concept to the relational psychoanalyst and psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan (see Sullivan 1953).

These two aspects – images and concepts – provide us with a sound basis on which to relate Fromm's work on repression and transference to that of concepts and images of God.

We have seen how Fromm's account of the mature God-concept turns on the progression from paternal constructs to negation, as we abandon any prospect of a positive theological concept in order to reclaim the human powers which God symbolises (Section 4.1). By placing this in the context of Rizzuto's theory of repressed inner theological objects, we can glimpse the relationship between de-repression and negative theology. Much like a phenomenological account of persons, this involves critiquing the way in which repressed inner objects or images inhibit the visibility of a phenomenon. In this case, the inner objects in question are the repressed representations, images, and concepts of God discussed in Section 4.4, although the nature of the phenomenon which becomes visible is less straightforward. In traditional theological theory and practice involving God as a transcendent divine person or being, the relationship between psychotherapy and theology would function by dismantling repressed images of God in order to be open to a true understanding. In *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995), however, given the symbolic relationship between God and the mature self, it is arguably the case that the repressed theological objects would inhibit the visibility of self rather than the God of traditional theologies. Relative to my account of self in this chapter, this points to a process of bringing repressed and regressive God-concepts out of the shadows of unconsciousness in order to allow the self to emerge into view. This can enhance Fromm's account of how any concept of paternal or maternal Gods entails regression, idolatry, and heteronomy, by supplementing it with a psychodynamic dimension based on repression.

Given my focus on later Fromm texts, moreover, it is not merely the self that would emerge. We have seen the relationship between self and All/universe in *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (Fromm 1950), and between repression and reality in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (Fromm 1960; see Sections 4.2.1, 4.2.3). Based on this, the dismantling of repressed theological images and the emergence of the self would be one part of the process of the discovery of the world, universe, and All. If conscious and unconscious concepts of God obscure the self, and the mature self is one with the universe, then it follows that our God-concepts must be dismantled before the universe can be seen. Hence, implicit in Fromm's work is the relationship between any conscious or unconscious concepts of God (and other, for that matter), self-phenomenality, and the phenomenality of

the Universe/All. According to the logic of Fromm's own work, the God-concept might then be conceived as the idol-mirror which obscures the appearance of the ultimate object of the gaze, in this case the self and its union with the universe.[167] In the same way, the mature and expanded self can be conceived as an icon-window, since it is in the fullness of the mystical attitude that we discover ourselves as a "thread in the texture of the universe." (Fromm 1950, 95) Liberated from limiting concepts of anthropomorphic gods and the merely individuated self, this enlarged self appears as an opening by which we may step into and rediscover our unity with the universe.

In earlier texts, Fromm's self is merely the seat of reason, will, and emotion. By contrast, when divested of the limitations of repression, God, and subject and object, the mystical/enlightened self developed subsequently (Fromm 1950, 1960) is the means by which our harmony with the All/Universe becomes known. Whereas in the earlier texts, this harmony was established through productive activity, reason, and love, these ultimately give way to the mystical attitude or the Zen awakening, and the expanded notion of self found in each. In the context of Jean-Luc Marion's discussion of theological idols and icons (Section 4.5.1), the expanded self can arguably be seen as an icon-window by which the universe is seen, but which ultimately is no different from what is seen. Fromm himself is clear on this relationship between self and universe, as I have shown in Section 4.2, but this is still in need of being made more concrete, and critiqued through the importance of interpretation and of repression. In order to develop this experience of self and All I have built on the work of Ana-Maria Rizzuto, and argued in this section that a more concrete understanding of God concepts and their repression is necessary. I will now develop this to ask a subsequent question, exploring whether this argument entails that Fromm's original and most prevalent notion of self is idolatrous.

4.7 The Idolatrous Self in *The Art of Loving*

In Section 4.2, I have argued that the individuated notion of self as conceived in Fromm's early work can be either contrasted or complemented with the expanded self found primarily in both *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (1950), and *Psychoanalysis and Zen*

[167] In Marion, the idol makes way for the appearance of God interpreted through the language and experience of love.

Buddhism (1960), but also in a qualified way in *The Fear of Freedom* ([1941] 2001). Developing this theme, this section concerns the question of whether Fromm's expanded self should serve as a corrective to the concept of self in *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995). This mainly involves the issue of agency, and asks whether Fromm's individuated self is in fact idolatrous and simply a passing phase on the path to genuine selfhood and unity. Having seen how the God-concept obscures the visibility and activity of the self, we now move to the matter of how the concept of self that Fromm emphasises most often conceals the emergence of the expanded self. In both *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003) and *Psychoanalysis and Religion*, Fromm discusses two contrasting notions of power, implying in each that the path from authoritarianism to humanism also involves the transition from power conceived as dominion to power as human capacity or potency (see Section 4.8.1). The capacity to exercise our powers – intellectual, emotional, sensual, volitional – is also at the centre of *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995), with the focus being on the power of and desire for interpersonal unity. In that text Fromm's selves discover that our "higher powers" of love, reason, and justice exist "only because, and inasmuch as, man has been able to develop those powers in himself through the process of his evolution." (56)

Building on my account of this expanded self in Section 4.2, I would argue that the idea that we are the origin of our own powers raises deep questions for Fromm's focus on the All/universe in *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (1950) and *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (1960), the universe of which we are merely a thread (1950, 95). Moreover, this is connected to the binary approach to power that I will discuss in Section 4.8.1, in which Fromm assumes that the only alternative to an authority which despoils humans of our powers is that we ourselves are the origin and the sole potency from which they emerge. Fromm's drive to rehabilitate power as capacity emerges merely as an antithesis to or negation of that of dominion-power, and in doing so ignores the question of how power conceived as human capacity might itself be limited and in need of revision. In keeping with my method of critiquing *The Art of Loving* (Fromm ([1956] 1995) based on concrete existence, the approach to selfhood developed there becomes vulnerable to one based on the expanded self that we have seen depicted in other texts. Whilst this expanded concept does begin to address the cosmological context of humanity, I would argue that a more concrete theory of love will incorporate the ramifications of that self, particularly concerning the agency which is paramount for Fromm.

Fromm's expanded notion of self in his principal and most sustained treatment of love clearly focuses the powers of the individuated self, largely due to his insistence on the need to critique co-dependency misconceived as love. Granting this, there is nonetheless nothing in that work that suggests that the self is part of anything broader, the universe or All as described in other texts. In fact, the focus in *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995) is on how the individuated self reclaims powers traditionally attributed to God, such as love, truth, and justice. God is hence identified with self, clearly in contrast to the universe of which we are merely an "atom" or "part" (Fromm [1941] 2001, 226), "thread" (Fromm 1950, 95), or "speck" (53). Moreover, there is simply no suggestion that the universe or All is a ground of agency, or that experiencing this unity has any impact on our power, as we have seen in Section 4.2.7.

In other words, I am suggesting that Fromm's notion of human power in his most focused account of love is alienated in terms of activity, since it overlooks our contingency upon the All/universe. Moreover, it ignores the idea of the empowering harmonious relationship that Fromm depicts elsewhere, albeit with far less insistence (Section 4.2.7). This means that as well as de-repressing and dismantling conscious and unconscious God-concepts to allow self to emerge, Fromm's own work calls for the unmasking of another idol (both as impediment to visibility and surrender of power). This unacknowledged idolatry is towards that of the self-positing humans who are the origin of love and unity, the origin of their powers rather than a mere thread in the universe. Given Fromm's warning against the abstraction of the concept of God, we should also ask how this possibility of a revised account of self and of power impacts on his treatment of theology. Sixty years on, the sociological influence and conceptual hold of the authoritarian God is arguably far less prevalent that the period in which Fromm's main works emerged. In light of this, it is appropriate to consider whether Fromm's self is in need of a synthesis with an alternate notion of divine power, incorporating his shift to power conceived as capacity rather than dominion. To provide more ground for my discussion of how this is the case (Section 4.9), I will turn to the work of Sally Kempton, and her *Awakening Shakti*.

4.8 Fromm's Divine Feminine and the Ground of Potency

4.8.1 Towards a Revised Approach to Power, and Divine Power

The characteristic focus in Fromm's work is with the development of the independent self and the possession of our own powers. Consistent with this, *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003) contrasts the idea of power as dominion with that of power as capacity, adding ethical nuance to the largely political account of power in *The Fear of Freedom* ([1941] 2001). Fromm argues that power can convey either of two contradictory senses, and that the relation between them is again dialectical. Power as dominion is premised on the erosion of power as capacity, and hence capacity depends on freedom from the dominion which perverts it ([1947] 2003, 65). This again roots the notion of power in Fromm's general focus on potency, but is vulnerable in supposing merely two ways in which power can be understood. This results in a false dichotomy which leaves little room for a power which is enhanced by relation rather than simply diminished by it, in which independence is developed in interdependence.

In theological terms, Fromm's development of the individuated self and his critique of power relate to the authoritarian concept of religion and of God. In diagnosing authoritarian concepts of parental Gods which impede individuation, this is an important process in the development of the empowerment which Fromm focuses on. As well as limiting the range of the powers that can be re-appropriated, however, it is also important to consider how the self-concept – at least as it emerges in *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995)- might also exclude alternative theological concepts. In my view this disparity arises due to the absence of any analogous concept of All or universe in *The Art of Loving*, which perhaps results from Fromm's eagerness to reject the idea of any power beyond humanity, or upon which we are dependent. Although the All does appear, it is merely attributed to belief systems that Fromm is exhibiting, and is absent from the brief sections in which his own view becomes clear ([1956] 1995, 56, 63). In these sections we long for truth and unity, and incorporate the powers of love and justice, but nowhere are we said to be part of something higher, deeper, or broader. Fromm argues that individuation and genuine love of God recapitulate the power of activity, but fails to see that the range of powers traditionally attributed to God are ontological as well as moral: God as ground and cause of being, rather than merely agent or sovereign. Any account of

theology which claims that God has merely been a projection of powers must consider the full spectrum of the powers that have been projected, including the ontological.

4.8.2 Sally Kempton, *Awakening Shakti*, and Fromm's Divine Feminine

I have elected to draw on Sally Kempton here because of her forty-year experience as disciple, monk, and teacher in the tantric tradition. Initially a successful journalist in the United States, Kempton "entered a life of full-time study and spiritual practice in 1974," (Kempton 2013, 373) receiving monastic training in the texts and practices of Vedanta, Kashmir Shaivism, and yoga, and teaching independently since 2002. Her work is salient because it is rooted in the *experience* of the relationship between the divine feminine, energy, and the human psyche, and particularly in how the connection between the energy of Shakti (the divine feminine) and human power is portrayed.[168] This has two functions for the present thesis: first, it provides a point of contrast for Fromm's view of the supposed historical and theological progression from feminine to masculine to symbol; second, it suggests the possibility of a cosmic or divine source of power and energy upon which to ground the activity of love and the bodies that are the agents of it.

To begin, we can recall Fromm's claim (Section 4.1.2) that the idea of a maternal God is a stage in phylogenetic human development, or a subsequent regress to it in the individual human. This God represents protection and unconditional love, and is a blissful refuge from lostness and despair (Fromm [1956] 1995, 51). Given the trajectory of Fromm's theogony, this unconditional love turns out to be nothing more than a projection of the corresponding human power. It is important to stress here that human love in this stage of development is said to be akin to the infant insofar as the priority is to be loved. This is contrary to Fromm's mature human, for whom the task is to act lovingly. This is significant because it indicates that Fromm does not see matriarchal worship as involving receptivity to divine love for the activity of the adherents, since the retreat into the arms of the mother goddess is also a withdrawal from our own powers.

[168] The experiential aspect is particularly important when dealing with energy, since at its more subtle levels energy is said to be transparent to conscious experience alone.

4.8.3 Shakti as Source of Power of Being and Acting

Kempton is relentless in identifying Shakti as the source of our power to be and to act. She points out that this Eastern tradition is contrary to the traditional Western gender dichotomy in which femininity is said to be the receptive pole, contrasted to masculine power (Kempton 2013, 6, 12). Instead, the masculine and feminine are said to work in synthesis, through the masculine consciousness (Shiva) and the feminine power and energy upon which its work depends. When depicted like this, the divine feminine becomes not merely protective love, but also the "empowering mother." (10) The mother transforms the practitioner, activating long-forgotten energies and aspects and qualities of the psyche. Rather than gods symbolizing powers of the human psyche, the adept of Shakti worship is said to "embody the subtlest powers of the universe." (12) This is arguably an inverse claim from that of the symbolic god as projection of humanity, since the tantric worshipper receives powers from divine, rather than being despoiled of her own powers.

4.8.4 Shakti as Energetic Ground

Another aspect of Kempton's work involves the divine feminine as origin and womb of the universe. The world is seen as "filled with divine energy," (Kempton 2013, 25) and as a tapestry of all the varieties of that energy. The most significant aspect of this is that all individual energies are forms of the primal energy, and divine energy is therefore the source of power, conceived as potency (29-32). Fromm's re-evaluation of power envisages a shift from authority to human capacity, but in Kempton's work there is a further shift around the most remote origin of that capacity. Kempton also sees tantric practice as a matter of awakening "dynamic psychological forces" (9) and "creative dynamism," (26) which is significant given Fromm's focus on dynamic psychology. The possibility of a move from human capacity to divine or cosmic capacity thus also suggests a more existential approach to our dynamisms, here on the level of contingency, energy, and inter-subjectivity or relational. Moreover, this also relates to the critique I have developed in Sections 2.14-2.16, since it is clear that any energetic ground of the universe will also have ramifications for embodiment, placing our bodies in relation to the energetic ground upon which Kempton proposes we depend. It is important to re-iterate that this concerns not only ontology or existence – the human who depends on the universe or on the divine to be – but also activity. The energy of love is thus envisaged to originate not merely in the

human powers of affectivity and volition, but on an energetic ground out of which all phenomena from the subatomic to the astral emerge.

4.8.5 Relating to the Ground of Love

There is clearly the danger here of slippage between conceptual symbols, particularly between divine and cosmic, and so I merely wish to highlight the ambiguity which is found in Fromm's own work rather than to endorse any particular concept. This is particularly important with respect to the universe of *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (Fromm 1950), and the All of *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995). Whether we envisage this energetic ground as personified in divinities, or as cosmic, or as understood in terms of sub-atomic physics is a hermeneutic question, with all the developmental and socio-historical complexity that interpretation implies. The most important point raised by Kempton and absent in Fromm is that the manner of our relationship to this ground is decisive in the extent to which welcome and activate the power to love. The divine feminine is described as empowering, and as a ground of love in both a practical and ontological sense. This means that the way that we comport ourselves towards and relate to this power is significant for the extent to which we can love. In Kempton's tantric tradition, this is bound up with the variety of meditative practices related to the minor goddesses depicted in *Awakening Shakti* (2013). The main point, however, can also be abstracted from this to merely involve a source of power, activity, energy, and love, which is beyond the individuated self depicted in *The Art of Loving*. The individuated self, that is, obscures the possibility that humans can relate to a power that – at least in terms of our experience – transcends us without necessarily disempowering us.[169] Crucially, this (non)relationship to our ground can therefore be conceived as entailing disempowerment and alienation from the origin of activity, which I will now place in the context of the whole chapter and thesis.

[169] The nature of transcendence is clearly also up for debate here, but at a minimum I mean that I am normally conscious of being myself to the exception of being conscious of being other aspects of the Universe, or the All should we assert some sort of universal consciousness. Transcendence is thus approached phenomenologically, viewed through the prism of consciousness rather than metaphysics. There is ground for this in *You Shall Be as Gods*, in which Fromm maintains that transcendence is to pass beyond ego and individuality (1967, 59-60).

4.9 Conclusion: Active Love, Individuation, and Universe.

My intention in this chapter has been analogous to that of the previous two, in subjecting Fromm's account of love to an existential critique based on embodied finitude, intersubjectivity, interpretation, and psychodynamics, drawing on his own work and on other approaches. In this chapter I have focused on his account of love of God, and argued for it to be made more concrete, in terms of both the emergence of the God-concept and of the place afforded to Fromm's individuated self and its relation to the universe. I began this with an account of Fromm's trajectory of the phylogenetic development of concepts of God in human history, from totemic to matriarchal to patriarchal, and ultimately to the ongoing stage of the human who re-appropriates divine powers hitherto projected outwards. That Fromm argues that this phased account of theology also depends upon human character shows that the concept of God also has a personal, developmental, familial, and ontogenetic content, since our own concept of God will depend upon the extent to which we have become independent of parental authority. However, in both historical and personal development, Fromm sees theology culminating in negation of the concept of God, and in a non-theistic, non-transcendent approach in which the fully empowered human emerges in place of God (Section 4.1).

A second aspect of this chapter concerns how the fully empowered human depicted in *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995) can be contrasted with an expanded notion of self found in other texts roughly contemporary with it. This began with the account of the mystical attitude which is portrayed as the culmination of humanistic religion in *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (Fromm 1950; see Section 4.2.1), which displaces the merely individuated self discussed in Section 4.1.5. Secondly, I have shown how both *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (Fromm 1950; see Section 4.2.2) and *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (Fromm 1960) describe the process of de-repression as one which leads to the development of relation to and unity with the All, or Universe (Sections 4.2.2-4.2.3). This was supplemented with the account of the dissolution of the distinction between subject and object entailed by Fromm's conceptions of self and reason in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* and suggested in the holistic notion of reason in *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003; see Sections 4.2.4-4.2.5). Each of these points to a self which is merely part of a whole, a thread in the universe, as found in less emphatic sections of *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm [1941] 2001) and *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (Section 4.2.6). In addition, each also concerns the notion of an expanded self which re-situates the comparatively isolated self

found in *The Art of Loving*. A further and more significant ramification of this, moreover, was found in the connection between agency and harmony in *The Fear of Freedom* and *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (Section 4.2.7).

As well as this aspect of the expanded notion of the self, my recontextualization of Fromm's love of God has a second aspect, in which I have approached the matter of a concrete theory of love from the angle of the development of our God-representations in the work of Ana-Maria Rizzuto (Section 4.3). This concerns how Rizzuto's approach to the personalised development of concepts of God in unique contexts of family, history, language, and society is far more flexible and attentive to individuality than Fromm's merely historical and characterological approach. Building on my introduction of the complementary accounts of idolatry found in Fromm and Jean-Luc Marion (Section 4.5), I have used Rizzuto's consideration of repressed God-images to reshape Fromm's approach to negative theology and the emergence of selfhood. As well as leaving behind our regressive paternal Gods as the focus of our conscious activity, I have argued that we must also attend to how repressed God-concepts can be imposed on our horizons of universe and self, and so must be dismantled if our mature self is to emerge (Section 4.6).

Building on this re-interpretation of self in terms of the expanded self and the repressed God, I have turned in the final sections of this chapter to my own claim that the individuated self also represents an idol, with particular import for the question of agency (Section 4.7). Connected to Fromm's binary notion of power (dominion opposed to capacity), and to his account of matriarchal images of God as comprising a passive phase of human development, I have introduced Sally Kempton's account of power in tantric worship (Section 4.8). Here the divine feminine, Shakti, is seen as an empowering energetic ground, and hence the source of both our existence and our agency. Crucially this is distinguished from any concept of God through which we are divested of our powers. And so, in the closing sections of this chapter we have glimpsed a subsequent and more subtle dissociative process, a fissure between self and the unity within which it is embedded.

This issue arises most urgently when we consider love as an active power, since *The Art of Loving* makes no connection between the All-Self/One and human agency. Fromm's

treatment of agency and empowerment in *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995) is always simply a matter of becoming individuated, taking possession of powers that belong to the individual. This means that his account of love of God in *The Art of Loving* has no indication that the way in which we relate to the universe or the All is significant for the realization of our potencies, despite this being found in other texts both preceding and following it. This means that in focusing his attention on human capacity he neglects the possibility of our own powers being grounded in or enhanced by some deeper potency, such as Shakti. This is compounded by the absence of the possibility that in order to realize that potency something more than the exercise of intellect and will is necessary, some cultivation by which we become more receptive and empowered (such as the practice of meditation in Zen or Tantra, for instance).[170]

This omission is especially significant given how Fromm makes any genuine love a love which is without exception or limitation. Given this, we can ask whether such a universal practice of love would depend on the enhanced consciousness and union with the All that he depicts (presuming such a practice is even feasible). There is no end to the limitations and particularities inherent in existence, and hence a love which was genuinely unconditional could only be premised on the type of consciousness that transcends the mere individual, the "Cosmic Consciousness" which Fromm refers to in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (pointing to the work of R.M. Bucke) (Fromm 1960, 99; Bucke, [1901] 1991). This is the case because only such a consciousness in its cosmic breadth could be genuinely unconditioned and unconditional (providing that it is even feasible).[171] Again it seems that both the practitioner of love in *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995) and the mystic of *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (Fromm 1950) are alienated in practical terms, from the Cosmos upon which we are contingent and upon which we rely for the power of activity. This is even more relevant given how Fromm depicts love as a form of energy, since on this contingent view of the human our energy originates in and is enhanced by our relationship to the All/One/Shakti/Universe, etc.

[170] Fromm does stress meditation in *The Art of Being* in terms of being more awake, but this is merely in the context of being aware of self rather than any other ground ([1993] 2007, 49-54).

[171] This is related to Kempton's concept of the Chit Shakti (2013, 32f), and is also reflected in May's critique of the theological assumptions involved implicit in the idea of unconditional human love (May 2019, 11-19; see Section 6.3).

Ultimately, in looking at impediments to love we must look not merely to psychological processes which are repressive, but to the depiction of a self which has implicitly built into it repression of its origin and dependency on the All/universe. Fromm's focus on dismantling idolatry and unveiling what it obscures has merely allowed another idol to emerge, the self which is the origin and possessor of its own powers. This self hence appears alienated from its cosmic context, from the whole which Fromm asserts elsewhere that it is a part of, and which Sally Kempton has identified as the energetic ground of our powers. Given that love is framed as an active power, it is even more significant that both *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm [1941] 2001) and *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (Fromm 1960) contain several threads that also concern the relationship between agency and harmony. Contributing to my overall concern, I have argued that this subtly entails an existential critique based on a more concrete understanding of our place in the universe, involving embodiment, contingency, energy, and ultimately our interpretation of God, self, and universe. Based on aspects of Fromm's own work, *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995) supposes a self without interdependence, nurture, receptivity, born without any relation to a womb, and ultimately analogous to a fish which supposes itself to have outgrown the ocean.[172] That this re-reading of his approach to love takes place through developing some threads of interdependence and relation in Fromm's other texts also opens the door to my final chapter, in which this existential approach to love based on our life in the universe will be supplemented by our intersubjective context.

[172] This has some correlate with Fromm's account of love of life in *The Heart of Man* ([1980] 1964), since biophilia involves love merely conceived as giving, rather than as receiving life from nature.

Chapter Five: The Intersubjective Conditions of Love

5.1 Love: the Intersubjective Context of Repression and Expression

Having thus far explored the theme of how repression inhibits love, I will now focus on the converse. The focus of this final chapter is to ask how our love – both in our formative years and subsequently – gives shape to our repressive processes. In other words, I will move from considering how psychological dynamisms impact upon relation, to exploring how relation affects psychological dynamisms. In Chapter One, I emphasised how Fromm's early work centralizes the need for independent, spontaneous selfhood and the need to be free from powers that would otherwise hinder the development of our potentialities. This must be understood through his concern to unmask the dangers of surrendering our powers to others, and in this sense it is clear that Fromm's work is relational insofar as it names structures that must be negated in order for independence to develop. The shift to focusing on the context of repression also entails the task of supplementing the account of independence with an exploration of how Fromm's work also contains a lesser emphasis on interdependence, in other words how relation can contribute to the development of self. This again concerns the extent to which Fromm's work is sufficiently existential, assuming both the intersubjective and interpretative dimensions of concrete life.

A dialectical approach is present from *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm [1941] 2001) onwards, since character and self are consistently depicted as in danger of being warped by both structure (economic, political, social, religious) and relationships with other people (symbiosis). The focus there, however, remains on the way in which self is individuated through the negation of these structures, and hence there is a dialectic of contrast rather than cooperation: selfhood and the love which is based upon it chiefly depend upon resistance to others. To attempt to balance this, I will return to Fromm's theory of love as a primary potentiality activated by relation, in *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003). This will be supplemented with a series of occasional passages in other texts from that period which have similar implications. I will draw on Fromm's foundational texts and on others to exhibit his deep appreciation of the extent to which ourselves and our capacity to love are

formed by our environment, both in our early years and throughout our lives.[173] By showing how Fromm is aware of the extent to which the potency of love is first conditioned and activated by receiving and by passivity, I will also give some balance to the idea that love is primarily the giving of self. In addition, this chapter will complete the tour of the objects of love in *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995), by involving both maternal love and the love of self.

Finally, I will develop the method of exploring the connection between love and psychotherapy. In connection with the idea that repression originally develops in the context of relation, the chapter culminates in exploring the way that loving relations in the present can be spaces of emotional awareness and expression, leading to de-repression. In particular, I shall consider Fromm's account of both love and psychotherapy in light of the intersubjective psychoanalysis of Robert Stolorow and George Atwood (2014). The chapter begins with an account of how the recent work of these psychoanalysts envisages psychotherapy as a phenomenological contextualism of intersubjective fields. This example of the intersubjective paradigm contributes to my existential critique of Fromm through its approach to the intersubjective context of existence, rather than merely therapy, and does so in a more sustained and focused way than does Fromm. Given that his account of these themes is more scattered, the account of Stolorow and Atwood will enable me to argue that Fromm's work displays many of the established themes of intersubjective psychoanalysis.[174] Finally, this involves a shift in emphasis in my own approach, which until now has been largely critical. Although the phenomenological approach of Stolorow and Atwood will provide further ground for this in the conclusion, this chapter is mainly an account of how his work anticipates the subsequent shift to intersubjectivity in psychotherapy and in existence.

5.2 Intersubjective Psychoanalysis in Robert Stolorow and George Atwood

My main intention in drawing upon the work of Robert Stolorow and George Atwood is to elaborate the claim that both relationship and repression develop in our intersubjective

[173] There is a clear caveat to this that emerges from Sections 4.2 and 4.8, since it is clear that in some texts from neglects the question of a cosmological context for our powers.

[174] For an account of how Fromm relates to the intersubjective tradition see Funk (2013).

contexts. This means that as well as impacting on our ability to relate, repression is a consequence of formative relationships in which the freedom to communicate experience is absent. This malattunement is contrasted with the attunement in which we have the communication of our emotional states held and validated by a receptive other (Stolorow and Atwood 2014, 104). The clinical experience of Stolorow and Atwood has led to an enduring search for the philosophical tools with which to conceptualise this. This focuses on the basic insight that personal worlds develop and are experienced and transformed relative to the relational contexts in which we live. Transposed into the concerns of the present project this means that both repression and the development of the love which it inhibits must be understood through intersubjectivity. As well as being ordered towards relationships with others, love depends on those relationships. My account of the work of Stolorow and Atwood has three main elements, beginning with their focus on the experiential world of the subject (Section 5.2.1). I then continue with the intersubjective context of affectivity and repression (5.2.2), and conclude with the consideration of psychotherapy, and relation in general, as restorative dwelling (5.2.3).

5.2.1. The Experiential World of the Subject

We begin with *Structures of Subjectivity: Explorations in Psychoanalytic Phenomenology and Contextualism* (2014). In this text, Stolorow and Atwood describe how their re-interpretation of traditional psychoanalysis takes the "the experiential world of the individual as its central construct" (115). This entails the rejection of "the Cartesian doctrine of the isolated mind." (115) Writing in an autobiographical voice, both attest to how they

> have been positively allergic to this doctrine, again and again crying out against its bifurcation of the experiential world into outer and inner regions, its severing of mind from body and cognition from affect, and its picture of the mind as a quasi-objective entity, a decontextualized "thinking thing" that looks out on an external world from which it is ontologically separated. (115)

Whether or not this is a comprehensive account of Descartes, the conception of the subject that emerges from this bifurcation is equally significant regardless of its philosophical

origin.[175] As a corrective to this alienating and abstracting tendency Stolorow and Atwood turn to existential and phenomenological philosophy, from which they identify sources upon which to build an understanding of the irreducible contextuality of human subjects. This leads to a method for psychoanalysis in which the experiential world of these subjects is the only point of departure.

In centralizing experience, Stolorow and Atwood testify to their dependence on phenomenology. They depict how the works of Husserl, Heidegger, and Sartre share the concern to distinguish between mere objects and the consciousness to which the objects appear and by which they are shaped or constituted. The influence of phenomenology on this approach to psychoanalysis thus turns on the shift from seeing a patient as an object to be understood scientifically to being a subject with experience that is ineluctably personal. This means that the person-patient should not be seen in universal diagnostic terms, a critique of objectification which is arguably analogous to Heidegger's ([1927] 1962) critique of the ontic or Sartre's ([1943] 2003) exploration of the in-itself. Instead they must be encountered empathically and respected as the bearer of a unique world of meaning.[176] The conception of the function of the analyst thus shifts from diagnosis or interpretation to understanding. This also necessitates a transition from a metapsychology based on "impersonal psychical agencies or motivational prime movers," (Stolorow and Atwood 2014, 115) such as in any theory of psychological drives or a mechanistic cosmology. Instead, the intersubjective approach is based on descriptive communication of the world of experience and the exploration of its formative context.

This focus on world and understanding reveals the second major philosophical current in this approach, hermeneutics, and primarily involves turning to the work of Martin Heidegger. Both theoretically and in shaping Stolorow's personal response to the trauma of bereavement, Heidegger is a major influence upon Stolorow and Atwood. Continuing to depart from a critique of Descartes and the isolated mind, they instead adopt Heidegger's

[175] Taylor Carman points out that Descartes also writes "I and the body form a unit," whilst also stressing that the reception of Descartes' philosophy emphasised what has come to be known as substance dualism, or the radical distinction of mind and body (2012, 287n2).

[176] This has clear echoes of the manner in which Laing ([1960] 2010) describes his attempts to empathically enter the world of patients previously assumed to be unintelligible, which Laing saw as part of the practice of love.

([1927] 1962, 91-145) phenomenology of worldhood. This emphasises that the subject is always found in the context of entities, and of others, and in an interpreted world of meaning (Stolorow and Atwood 2014, 20). In addition, this contextual world is both the arena of the emergence of these phenomena and an existential (i.e. basic and constant) property of the whole subject.[177] This can be distinguished from any theory which sees mind as isolated from its physical context and hence unaffected by the world. The importance of critiquing that idea of mind is that it might otherwise lead to an account of inner experiences such as emotion or of unconscious processes, like repression, that sees them merely as internal, rather than arising in relation.

The second major aspect of hermeneutics in psychotherapy concerns the intersection of the subjective worlds of person and therapist, for which the authors recall the distinction between the natural and human sciences. The former are based on external observation and investigation, and often claim to be free of human perspective and bias. The human sciences, on the other hand, deal with phenomena which involve subjectivity and intention. These are interpretative rather than factual, since conscious human experience can never be measured or captured objectively. It is this "fundamental difference in attitude toward their respective objects of investigation" (Stolorow and Atwood 2014, 3) that informs the psychotherapeutic task. The therapist is one who can enter her own world of meaning – conscious and unconscious – and draw upon it in the practice of empathic understanding. Here "the knowing subject is one with the object of knowledge." (4) This entails that the "meaning [which] belongs to an individual's personal subjective world becomes accessible to understanding in the medium of the analyst's empathy." (5)

Both points – irreducible world-hood and the intersection of worlds – are of deep significance for this last chapter, and hence in subjecting the theory of love to an existential critique. Firstly, they depict us as always existing in a network of others and objects. Elaborating on this elsewhere, Stolorow draws up Heidegger's concept of *Befindlichkeit* (2011, 25, Heidegger [1927] 1962, 172-177). He interprets this to mean that every experience must be seen in the context of the immersion of consciousness and body in a world of phenomena, meaning, and other subjects. Seen in this light, there is no mere

[177] As we have seen in Marion, the notion of subject might itself be seen as a metaphysical entity, but it is clear that it is not intended as such in Stolorow and Atwood, and so I will maintain the usage as it stands. It is also questionable that Heidegger's *Dasein* is rendered as 'subject'.

emotion, no mere thought or mood, since each has a relational context. Hence its arising is not independent but has to be seen in light of a world. This can be applied both to the development of Fromm's self and to our power to love, as I will argue in Section 5.6. Secondly, some of these other persons in their own worlds of meaning have the capacity to enter own world of meaning and empathically mirror it to us through attunement.[178] In addition, these empathic others become basic and constant requirements and components of selfhood, affectivity, and experience. In Section 5.2.2 I will explore these points in relation to the early development of selfhood and the capacity to love. In Section 5.2.3 they will feature in their importance for the concept of loving relatedness as a therapeutic dwelling, or way of being.

5.2.2. The Intersubjective Context of Development

Stolorow and Atwood continually refer to the concept of an intersubjective field, as the arena in which the appearance and meaning of phenomena take place. This concept is an attempt at naming "the notion that all personal experience is embedded in irreducible relational contexts," and refers to "a system of interacting, differently organized subjective worlds." (Stolorow and Atwood 2014, 127) At the heart of this concept of field is the claim that the interaction of two subjects has an impact on the consciousness of both. In certain cases this interaction enables particular phenomena to appear, be felt, or thought, when previous environments might have prohibited them or been indirectly intolerant of them. For instance, if a person was harbouring hidden feelings or subversive beliefs in some context of a reactionary tradition, the thoughts may not emerge if they are likely to affect her standing in the tradition or entail danger. On the other hand, with a receptive other, the possibility of and willingness to discover and express such thoughts would be enhanced.[179] In terms of childhood development, this involves "the unique interplay between the vulnerable, evolving subjectivity of the child and the more complexly organized and firmly consolidated subjectivities of caretakers." (53) This means that a child who, for example, was experiencing hostility to a parent, will most likely repress the impulse unless there is a receptive and safe context in which to express it. It is important to elaborate on this to

[178] See also my comments on resonance in footnote 43 in Section 1.1.

[179] This has a counterpart in Fromm's (1960) own concept of social filters, which I will explore in Section 5.3.5.

emphasise that it is a temporal process, since it involves the way that the child develops, and the concrete nature of the intersubjective field is said to be formative in several ways.

The most fundamental of these ways concerns how the intersubjective field in which a person first lives leads to the development of various "configurations of self and other." (Stolorow and Atwood 2014, 105) At this point it is important to note that the concept of intersubjective field is itself an abstraction, since it is more accurate to say that we exist in a variety of fields at various points of our lives, and even at various points of a day or hour. Stolorow and Atwood are silent on the point that it would be more accurate to say that we can live in a variety of fields at one time, given the continual interaction between persons that we are involved in. Nonetheless, the issue here concerns the circumstances of a developing child and her caretakers. It focuses on how the ways that the child learns to perceive self and others are largely shaped by the responding and mirroring functions of its primary caregivers. In phenomenological and hermeneutic terms, this means that the "particular thematic structure of the child's subjective world will evolve organically from the critical formative experiences that mark his or her unique early history." (32) In other words, the interpretative worlds that we live in in the present are deeply shaped by our past contexts.

Concerning the experience of self and others, Stolorow and Atwood introduce their own concepts of personality, character, and self, which I will summarise briefly. Although the distinction in the texts themselves are lacking in depth, I would argue that personality structure is nonetheless the concept that governs the others. Personality, viewed phenomenologically, refers to "*the structure of a person's experiencing*," meaning "the distinctive configurations of self and other which shape a person's subjective world." (Stolorow and Atwood 2014, 28) This phenomenological approach is clearly in marked contrast to any approach to personality which is based on the delineation of a variety of types by which a person can be defined. Instead the point of departure is the consciousness of the subject. This entails an understanding of personality which is primarily based on the capacity to communicate experience, rather than diagnostic criteria. The theory of character is also traditionally based on types, and is again subject to phenomenological

revision. Viewed from the perspective of the subject, character is simply the way in which the experience of personality translates into human conduct.[180]

The plot thickens when we encounter the relationship between personality and selfhood in *Structures of Subjectivity*, which is again treated in a rather cursory manner. At first glance the description of personality might seem to absorb the concept of self. I would, however, suggest that the distinction turns on the point that there can be a plurality of configurations of self in any one personality structure. This means that the selves experienced by the subject may be manifold, fluid, and even incoherent, depending on the intersubjective field in which the subject is found. Stolorow and Atwood begin by describing self as "a more delimited and specific term referring to the psychological structure through which self-experience acquires cohesion and continuity, and by virtue of which self-experience assumes its characteristic shape and enduring organization." (Stolorow and Atwood 2014, 28) Whilst the descriptions of self and personality are clearly overlapping, it seems that self is distinguished by being the source of cohesive and continuous experience and that by which experience is shaped. Personality seems to be more of an accumulation of the multitude of these different configurations – including those of others – regardless of consistency.

Despite the lack of clarity in the concepts, the central point is subsequently made clear, and concerns the relationship between selfhood and the intersubjective field. Development refers to the way in which experience is structuralized, and involves the processes or actions by which the structures come into formation. The crucial point is that the contextualist viewpoint being developed is contrasted with any view that sees personality simply as an unfolding of a variety of phases or stages which take place roughly chronologically and which can be merely arrested rather than shaped in a different manner. Since it is not seen in terms of developmental types, personality development emerges here as something which is completely shaped by the intersubjective field of child and caregiver. The process of acquiring a variety of drives or capacities consistent with a phase-based chronology of change in the psyche is therefore contrasted with the interpretative process by which the child comes to understand self and other. Stolorow and

[180] Although it is not made clear, this seems to imply that the distinction between personality and character is akin to the distinction between interior experience and observable behaviour.

Atwood stress that is it this approach which is truly dynamic (5), since we are formed by interaction with the ever-changing intersubjective field rather than unfolding as part of some merely innate process. In this sense, they offer something more like a phenomenology of how personality, self, and character, become structured, experienced, and communicated, rather than a description of the various abstract types of their structures and processes of development (Stolorow and Atwood 2014, 30-32).

This intersubjective process of structural development in Stolorow and Atwood is primarily described through the lens of Heinz Kohut's concept of 'selfobject' (Kohut, 1971). Since the concept of selfobject is developed by Stolorow and Atwood to encompass more than merely child development and is delineated relatively clearly, I will remain with their own usage of the term. In the first place this does concern childhood, as the selfobject is crucial in the process of an infant becoming differentiated, or developing a sense of self distinct from its perceptual world. A selfobject is described as "an entity that a person experiences as incompletely separated from himself or herself and that serves to maintain his or her sense of self." (Stolorow and Atwood 2014, 32) This is a phenomenological description from the point of view of the person, which Stolorow and Atwood suggest is analogous to "the exquisitely coordinated reciprocal regulatory patterns disclosed by infancy researchers." (54) The function of the selfobject is to serve as a mirror by which the emerging consciousness of the infant can be reflected, and facilitate the development of an independent and cohesive sense of self. This could be conceived in a merely transitional fashion, as simply necessary for development of self rather than maintenance. It can, however, also be interpreted simply as a property of the person, meaning that the person somehow internalizes the presence and function of the selfobject. Stolorow and Atwood suggest that this puts "into bold relief the profoundly intersubjective nature of human development in every phase of the life cycle." (54) The selfobject is thereby considered to be the central aspect of the intersubjective field, a lens by which the understanding of self develops.

Of course, as with any lens, the selfobject can have varying degrees of transparency, which entails a selfobject spectrum which Stolorow and Atwood describe in binary terms. In the first place, the ideal "is the presence of a holding, containing other who, by virtue of firmly integrated perceptions, is able reliably to accept, tolerate, comprehend, and eventually render intelligible the child's intense, contradictory affective states as issuing from a

unitary, continuous person." (Stolorow and Atwood 2014, 60) These others are "able reliably to recognize, affirm, appreciate, and pridefully enjoy the unique qualities and independent strivings of the child." (55) Because of this they facilitate the child's own development "of self-other differentiation and of stable self-boundaries." (55) A crucial point here is that this takes place through "demarcated and firmly structured sense of self and others" (55) enabled by the relationship with the selfobject. The aim of all of this is encapsulated in the idea of "optimal structuralization," (32) by which we maintain equilibrium between having a cohesive and healthy sense of self and openness to a variety of experiences and others.[181]

The means by which the selfobject facilitates the cohesion of the emerging self of the child is perhaps the most important point of the present section. This is the principle of attunement, by which the selfobject welcomes and holds the full range of the affective states of the child. These states will be communicated initially through mere movement and gesture, but eventually also through language.[182] Our need for attunement is portrayed as the root of our need for others, because the process of validation is crucial in integrating emotional experience and indeed the whole emotional dimension of our existence (Stolorow and Atwood 2014, 116). Here is the basis of the intersubjective context of emotional experience, in which our capacity to open to and fully feel and process experience is not seen in terms of an isolated mind or as the capacity of the organism to handle instinctual energy. Instead we are understood as relational beings with affective states indissolubly bound to the process of communication or expression. In this view mere affectivity is inconceivable, firstly because affective states emerge in particular contexts, and secondly since they depend on receptive contexts for their expression and integration.

The welcoming and attuned selfobject is merely one end of the spectrum. The alternative pole is the caregiver who facilitates not expression and integration of affect and cohesion of self, but repression, defence, and fragmentation. The intersubjective context is thus also one of the "origins of differing forms of unconsciousness," (Stolorow and Atwood 2014,

[181] This can be contrasted with any idea of selfhood based on self-regulation or homeostasis, or on the mere regulation of internal dynamics.

[182] A ground-breaking account of this process can be found in Axline (1964), which depicts the emergence of selfhood of a highly unresponsive child through the validation of his emotional and linguistic expressions in play therapy.

104) an unconsciousness which should again be viewed phenomenologically. Doing so, repression emerges "as a kind of negative organizing principle, always embedded in ongoing intersubjective contexts, determining which configurations of affective experience were not to be allowed to come into full being." (104) It is important here to distinguish between repression and other forms of unconsciousness, especially since we have seen Fromm fail to do so (Section 3.4). Stolorow and Atwood speak of two forms of unconsciousness that can arise from a lack of attunement in the intersubjective field. First, the outright rejection of some types of affectivity, and secondly the mere absence of somewhere to articulate the affect and have it validated. These are two distinct failings in the "responsiveness of the surround to different regions of the child's affectivity." (104) Only the first leads to repression proper, since here the child and later adult will strive to prevent the affect from emerging.

This in turn leads us to a distinction between the dynamic unconscious and the unconsciousness which is merely pre-reflective. The first is understood as "that set of configurations that consciousness is not permitted to assume, because of their association with emotional conflict and subjective danger." (Stolorow and Atwood 2014, 29) This and the system of defences by which it operates are "transformations of the subjective world that prevent dreaded configurations from emerging by radically altering and restricting the person's experience of self and other." (29) Pre-reflective unconsciousness concerns "the organizing principles of a person's subjective world," (29) which recalls the schemas of interpretation from the discussion of transference in Section 3.6, as well as the filtering activity of our brains that I have referred to above (see Sections 2.11, 3.4, 3.6.6). Pre-reflective unconsciousness involves the way the world of perception is constituted and organized according to the perspective of the subject, but is not rooted in defensiveness. This means that these structures are not intended to protect us from assumed threat, but are simply the natural interpretative and perceptual structures with which we habitually experience our world.[183] Of course, we might be aware of the extent to which this is the case, but the pre-reflective unconscious involves structuring which takes place prior to reflection and outwith awareness. In this case the "patterning and thematizing of events that uniquely characterize [our] personal reality are thus seen as if they were properties of those events rather than products of subjective interpretations and constructions." (30)

[183] This is a further example of the cognitive approach that I have discussed in Section 3.6.

Bringing these unconscious structures into awareness is understood as one of the central aspects of psychoanalysis, and Stolorow and Atwood's approach to repression re-iterates the extent to which their method is phenomenological. Much like Fromm, repression is seen as an interruption of consciousness, and of the way in which a person experiences self, other, and world.[184] Again, it is depicted as having its origins in the intersubjective context, in the deficiencies of malattunement, where the caregiver either fails or refuses to receive and validate the affective states that arise in the child (Stolorow and Atwood 2014, 104).[185] This leads to the perception that affectivity is intolerable, and to it becoming unbearable. Repression also entails failure to integrate the whole range of experience into our perception of self. Intolerable affect hence becomes "the source of lifelong emotional conflict and vulnerability to traumatic states, because they are experienced as threats both to the person's established psychological organization and to the maintenance of vitally needed ties." (103) The child, in other words, finds herself torn between expressing and processing the painful affect, and remaining safe and accepted by the guardian.

Stolorow and Atwood see the experience of conflict as the central feature of trauma, when an affect is rendered intolerable and unbearable through a lack of receptivity in the environment. They maintain that this leads to a disintegrated child, a split between consciousness and affectivity, and "thereby, to an unbearable, overwhelmed, disorganized state." (Stolorow and Atwood 2014, 104) As well as leading to vulnerability in situations in which the forbidden affect is likely to arise, and to a person overwhelmed by conflict, repression can lead to a warped self-image. Here "the child acquires the unconscious conviction that unmet developmental yearnings and reactive painful feeling states are manifestations of a loathsome defect or of an inherent inner badness." (104) This can lead to erection of a "defensive self-ideal […] representing a self-image purified of […] affect states that were perceived to be unwelcome or damaging to caregivers." (104) As with Laing and a way of relating based on protection, our relationships become ways of

[184] This could be contrasted with an interpretation of repression in terms of a theory around the restriction of libidinal or emotional energy. It might even be more phenomenological to see repression in terms of energy, but this would involve a phenomenology of the experience of energy in the body.

[185] It is important here to ask how broadly we should understand the range of caregivers, especially in light of Stolorow and Atwood's attention to how the experience of self can shift with each relational context. The work of Conraad Baars (2002) also provides a social analogate for this interpersonal malattunement in the idea that anger, primarily, was for centuries the subject of a Catholic prohibition on the basis of its supposed sinfulness.

maintaining the purified self-image, which in turn leads to the perpetuation of the repressive defences and the inner conflict.[186]

Stolorow and Atwood add another dimension to the false self structure in exhibiting the extent to which it is dynamic. Insofar as particular contexts provoke different emotions, each may elicit a distinct aspect of the protective self. This emerges most clearly in the sections of the texts focusing on the horizons of experience, which are "emergent properties of ongoing dynamic intersubjective systems." (Stolorow and Atwood 2014, 105) This is of particular importance because it implies that our structures of experience are "fluid and ever-shifting," and a function of "the intersubjective fields that constitute [our] current living." (105) This focus on current living is highly significant, since it implies that our emotional and experiential horizons can shift from moment to moment as the context changes. Given what we have seen of the intersubjective context of both emotion and selfhood, this entails that these can both be seen from a deeply situational and dynamic perspective. On this view, a change in circumstances can lead to a change in, firstly, what affective states are considered tolerable, and secondly, what aspects of self can be both experienced and shown to others. We will now move to the psychotherapeutic aspects of this.

5.2.3 Psychotherapy as Restorative: Being Therapeutic

This chapter has focused until now on the ramifications of the intersubjective context for developing children. As we have seen, however, Stolorow and Atwood also consider the importance of context throughout life, particularly the continuing importance of validating and attuned selfobjects. The present section therefore turns to the place of psychotherapy in the development of self at later stages. This transition from our original relationships to present ones will mirror my treatment of Fromm in this chapter, with the intention of developing the claim that love as a giving of self is first premised on the reception of self from others. Stolorow and Atwood primarily conceive psychotherapy as hermeneutical, insofar as it is concerned with the meaning of self, other, and world, reflected to the patient by the therapist through empathy (2014, 47). This interpretative process consists in "a

[186] This is also reminiscent of the theory of false self developed by Horney (1950), since it is the threat of experiences that would contest our self-image in which Horney proposes as the origin of anxiety.

series of empathic inferences into the structure of an individual's subjective life." (5) Again this is framed as dynamic since it entails "a dialogue between two personal universes" (5) and hence continual fluidity. Guided by the therapists grasp of her own world and self, the therapeutic context is said to "permit the structure of a patient's subjective universe to unfold maximally and find illumination." (50) It is this empathic space in which a world is able to rise to awareness. Furthermore, the empathic context allows the person to learn to both differentiate self from other, and to integrate those aspects of self which have been repressed and hence have lain beyond awareness and acceptance.

It is crucial to emphasise the significance of psychotherapy being viewed as an intersubjective process, since the therapist is seen as observed – by both self and other - as well as observer. This entails the importance of the therapist being self-aware, since it is her awareness and response that will shape the ongoing revelation of the world of the patient. What is most subtle in this view is not simply that the words of the therapist will guide the conversation but that it will also be shaped by her *world*: the therapist as subject, possessed of her own nexus of configurations of self and other, beliefs, dynamisms, repressions, traumas, etc. The experience and awareness of the therapist thus become of immense and decisive importance in what emerges in the therapeutic arena. This also means that the process of transformation is intersubjective, since the therapist is also shaped in the experience (Stolorow and Atwood 2014, 25, 34). This is the genuinely dialectical content of the approach, in which both participants are challenged and changed by what arises in the relationship. It also represents a dialectical model of consciousness, in which we are reciprocally shaped in our awareness and our personalities by the content of our relationships and the worlds and actions of each person.

The emphasis in these texts is on the implications of this dialectic for the psychotherapeutic process, but it is central to my own method that there are also a series of subtle acknowledgements that this empathic attunement and transformation can happen in any relationship. Stolorow and Atwood assert that "psychoanalytic comportment may be characterized as a kind of emotional *dwelling*." (2014, 105) This means that the therapist is trained in being present to the affective states of others and in helping these states emerge into awareness and acceptance. In addition, there is clear scope for suggesting that the potential to be this dwelling exists in any person who is willing to develop it. The key

point is that the emotional horizon depends not only on intersubjective history or therapeutic expertise, but on the fields that constitute "a person's current living." (105) The various permutations of this current living are endless, and there is no reason to suggest that psychotherapy is the only context in which attunement can develop.

Of course, the therapist should be specifically trained and experienced in being this dwelling for others. Nonetheless, the minimum required is simply "a context of human understanding in which [experiences] can be held, dwelled in, borne, and integrated into the fabric of one's emotional world." (Stolorow and Atwood 2014, 127) Finally, this is referred to simply as a "mode of relatedness" wherein "the distinctive structures of individual worlds are respected and preserved." (127) This comportment and emotional dwelling enables the "emotional worlds" of the person "to shine with a kind of sacredness [and] traumatized states [to] be gradually transformed into bearable painful feelings." (105) Given that any parent can be a place of receptivity and validation for a child, and that the current living of any person will encompass a vast multitude of contexts, it seems implicit that any person can develop this comportment. Hence, anyone can be – or at least learn to be - this dwelling for others, reminiscent of Fromm's assertion of the natural potential for unitive love latent in all people. I will now return to Fromm to explore the extent to which this intersubjective dialectic is mirrored and indeed universalised in his work.

5.3 Love and Interdependence in Fromm: The Formative Years

5.3.1 Primary Potentialities: Love and Destructiveness

In a section of *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003, 158-182) entitled "The Moral Powers in Man," Fromm addresses the question of whether human beings are good or evil. His approach here is of great importance for an analysis of his work in general, both developing themes present previously and anticipating subsequent emphases. For the present work the section is particularly significant in showing the contextual nature of Fromm's theory of love, insofar as it sees the development of the potency of love firmly embedded in relationships. We are portrayed as neither simply good nor simply evil, but as having two fundamental potencies which will be actualized dependent on the conditions in the formative environment. Both of these are "part of the nature of an organism." (Fromm

[1947] 2003, 163) Nonetheless, these potencies are distinguished as primary and secondary, illustrating that Fromm does see one of them as fundamental and another derivative. Having considered this in the context of psychotherapy in Section 1.9, I will consider it here as it concerns relationships generally.

This distinction is rooted in the evolutionary and teleological bases for Fromm's thought, as discussed in Chapter One. *The Fear of Freedom* culminates in the assertion that whilst "man is neither good nor bad[,] life has an inherent tendency to grow, to expand, to express potentialities." (Fromm [1941] 2001, 231) This important claim is re-iterated in "The Moral Powers of Man," where Fromm develops the idea that this tendency or potentiality is in fact the primary one, the natural inclination of all organisms. Using the example of a seed, Fromm argues that given the proper conditions in the environment – water, sunlight, fertile soil – the seed will realise its natural tendency to develop into a tree. The claim that the tree is present in potency in the seed must be contextualised with the qualification that "a tree will grow from the seed *provided* that the seed is placed in the specific conditions necessary for its growth." (Fromm [1947] 2003) Hence a potency can never be understood abstractly, but only in "connection with the specific conditions required for its actualization." (163) Hence the distinction between primary and secondary: the primary potentiality "is actualized if the proper conditions are present," and the secondary "if conditions are in contrast to existential needs." (163) The former occurs "under normal conditions," and the latter "only in the case of abnormal, pathogenic conditions." (163)[187]

In the case of the seed, these abnormal conditions – lack of sunlight, soil, or water – will lead to it rotting, whereas in the case of the human the outcome is the development of destructiveness. Fromm describes two species of destructiveness (also referred to as hate), both of which are the outcome of the thwarting or blockage of the tendency to grow. These two kinds correspond to whether the thwarting of potentiality is sporadic or chronic, which will determine whether the destructiveness is merely a reaction to an isolated event or embedded in the character. In the latter case, destructiveness becomes a habitual way of relating to the world, whilst in the first, reactive (or rational) hate is an isolated response to a threat to our or someone else's "freedom, life, or ideas." (Fromm [1947] 2003, 161) Hence, reactive/rational hate is rooted in "respect for life," (161)and ideally is the affective

[187] Fromm doesn't seem to see that this botanic analogy is limited in its relevance to human freedom.

precursor to action intended to protect life. Character-conditioned hate, on the other hand, is a response which has become "a character trait, a continuous readiness to hate, lingering within the person." (161) In becoming embedded in the character it arises as a habitual response to situations which may be merely perceived as threatening, with the person "using every opportunity [for it] to be expressed, rationalized as reactive hate." (163) Fromm does not comment on the remote origin of this in *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003), but is clear in his earlier paper "Selfishness and Self-love" that it is also is rooted in the "reaction to certain experiences undergone by the individual in childhood." (1939, 8)

It is this connection between the original environment and the stable traits of character that develop in later life which is especially significant for us here. Fromm argues that "life-furthering" tendencies "such as love" will be hindered in a degree inversely proportionate to the development of "life-destructive" forces ([1947] 2003, 162). This means that the capacity to practice love is intimately connected to the formative environment. As well as this inverse proportionality between love and hatred Fromm states that the "degree of destructiveness is proportionate to the degree to which the unfolding of a person's capacities is blocked." (162) Rather than meaning simply "occasional frustrations of desire," Fromm specifies that he is referring to "the blockage of the spontaneous expression of man's sensory, emotional, physical, and intellectual capacities, to the thwarting of his productive potentialities." (162) In addition, this involves an energetic component. The energy that would otherwise have been expended on the expression of the powers does not simply vanish, but "undergoes a process of change and is transformed into life-destructive energy." (162)

5.3.2 Dynamic Adaptation, and Freedom from Primary Ties

Given the distinction between primary and secondary potentialities, we are not "necessarily evil but [become] evil only if the proper conditions for growth and development are lacking." (Fromm [1947] 2003, 162) Although the section on potentialities itself does not describe the concrete conditions for the development of human primary potentialities, there are other references scattered around Fromm's work that do. Although Fromm's approach to this becomes more comprehensive as his body of work grows, there is some perspective on it in most of his texts, always filtered through the particular concerns of the relevant work. As with most of the prominent issues in this

thesis, there is some anticipation of it in *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm [1941] 2001), at least insofar as the matter of the relationship between the environment and the development of potentiality is concerned. Although there is little on the actual content of the conditions for the development of the primary potentiality, we nonetheless can see the development of two themes which are particularly germane. First is that of dynamic adaptation, and second the freedom from primary ties. *The Fear of Freedom* is especially concerned with character structure and its relation to society. Early in the text we therefore find the idea that character develops through the adaptation to social structures, including the family (which is said to be the primary instrument of the imprint of society upon the young).[188] The first type of adaptation is "static adaptation," (Fromm [1941] 2001, 11-12) which need not concern us here as it refers to superficial adaptations which have no impact on the structure of character traits or drives (such as etiquette around table manners, for instance).

Dynamic adaptation entails changes of a lasting nature, and which produce fundamental shifts in the dynamics of character. Fromm uses the example of a child submitting to a "strict and threatening father" (Fromm [1941] 2001, 12) out of fear. While there is the external appearance of obedience, something nonetheless "happens in him." (12) This could include the development of hostility towards the parent, based on the chronic reaction to the thwarting of free expression of potentiality discussed above. In such cases, both the hostility and the anxiety that may develop around the danger of it being transparent become "dynamic factor[s] in [the] character structure." (12) This means that the environment is a condition in the development of the basic dynamisms that drive activity and relation. Most importantly, Fromm lists these possible dynamisms as including "love, destructiveness, sadism, the tendency to submit, the lust for power," (13) and others. These become virtually fixed after a certain point, but initially are flexible insofar as "individuals, particularly in childhood, develop [some] need according to the whole mode of life they find themselves in." (13)[189] This point is worth underlining, since it clearly shows that at this early and fundamental point in Fromm's trajectory he is emphatic about

[188] Clearly this is not always the case, but Fromm is speaking of trends that he saw as generally pervasive in his time.

[189] Fromm continues by asserting that this mode of life primarily refers to the economic structure, since the person is impelled to adapt to the conditions necessary to earn a living. Nonetheless the citations in this section clearly demonstrate that he also sees this adaptation as involving the traits of parents.

the relationship between environment and the dynamisms of character, including the drive to love.

Concerning the freedom from the primary ties introduced in Section 1.2, the basic idea is that the freedom and development of self occurs proportionate to the extent to which a person becomes individuated. This involves a gradual independence from the structures within which security had previously been sought, primarily those of family and society. If the growing independence of the child is not met with receptivity on the part of the parents, powerlessness and frustration will develop.[190] On the other hand, if the burgeoning independence of the child is met with acceptance, the self can develop unhindered in its tendency towards expression of its powers and harmony with the world (Fromm [1941] 2001, 18-25). This second point is further clear evidence that at this early stage of his work Fromm is attentive to how the development of the freedom to love is intimately related to the nature of the original social context. Moreover, despite the overall content of *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm [1941] 2001), here this concerns whether we have been accepted by others in our formative years, rather than liberation from authoritarianism. For the most part, however *The Fear of Freedom* is concerned with how the environment functions as the condition for the development of *regressive* drives (such as submission to authority), and is largely silent on the specific content of the environmental conditions to the emergence of a loving self. It is to other texts of this and subsequent periods that we must turn for more a more concrete appreciation of precisely how it is that environment relates to the flourishing of the primary potentiality and the power to love.

5.3.3. Maternal Love and Faith

It is perhaps not immediately apparent how the freedom from primary ties recounted above impacts on the intersubjective context of the capacity to love, and particularly how it relates to the positive conditions necessary to activate the potency. To understand this better I will now turn to the concept of maternal love in Fromm's work, and explore the idea that he is expounding a love which is personalist. This will also help re-iterate the connection between love and freedom, and particularly the developing freedom which is the process of becoming individuated from primary ties. We are not concerned with

[190] Powerlessness and frustration are also said here to be the origin of the hostility discussed above.

phylogenetic development at this point, since it concerns the evolutionary emergence of humanity from ties to nature and social systems prior to what Fromm sees as the birth of the individual. Ontogenetic, on the other hand, refers to the development of individuals, from the original dependence and symbiosis with parents to the growing development of our powers and eventual independence, and so it is there that maternal love becomes crucial. *The Fear of Freedom* (Fromm [1941] 2001) describes this process merely in terms of the natural tendency towards growth, and the kind of authoritarian social or interpersonal conditions that can inhibit it. In doing so it remains silent on the conditions in relationships that are necessary to facilitate independence, and on the parental ways of relating that enable the natural development of children to proceed unhindered. For a complete understanding of the individuation process and the ontogenetic freedom from primary ties we must therefore supplement this account with recourse to other texts, primarily *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995), and *The Art of Listening* (Fromm 1994).

In the section of *The Art of Loving* dealing with the objects of love, Fromm follows brotherly love with motherly love ([1956] 1995, 38-41). Like the other aspects of love, motherly love shares the basic constituents of brotherly love, but is distinguished by the aspects which follow from its object, children. Maternal love is described as "unconditional affirmation of the child's life and his needs." (38) Adding to this Fromm distinguishes two aspects, the first being the familiar care and responsibility for the child's life and growth. The second is a new theme, that of communicating love for life. Here the love of the mother "instils in the child a love for living, which gives him the feeling: it is good to be alive, it is good to be a little boy or girl, it is good to be on this earth!" (39) Fromm also reverts to the biblical symbol of milk and honey flowing from the promised land, claiming that milk symbolises the care and affirmation which are the basic relational nutrients of life, and honey "the sweetness of life, the love for it and the happiness in being alive." (39) The latter, which he also contrasts with the mere desire for survival, comes from the happiness of the mother. Hence it is uncommon, an assertion which is best understood in the context of Fromm's views on the general alienated condition of Western humanity. What is most important for the present chapter is the claim that this sort of love is "infectious" and has "a deep effect on the child's whole personality." (39) In this we have a clear example of the extent to which Fromm sees love as developing in relation.

In a previous section, Fromm ([1956] 1995, 38) had argued that in her closeness to the child in the first years, the mother "has the function of making him secure in life" (contrasted with the father and his teaching role). His additional comments here enable us to begin to shed light on the role of the mother in enabling the child to break free of the primary ties. First, as well as communicating love for life, there is the danger that the child could absorb excessive anxiety from the mother. Again, this is better understood when placed in the context of the claim that the extent to which we create a new loving harmony with the world in love will also be the extent to which we are liberated from the anxiety of isolation (Fromm [1941] 2001, 25). If love is the antidote to anxiety, these are also the two basic states which a mother can instil in the child.[191] In these sections of *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995), the components of the capacity to facilitate love are two: faith in life, and unconditional love. Both of these are crucial in allowing the child to develop the freedom to relate, and are also reflected in other texts. The first, faith, has itself two aspects, comprising faith in life and faith in the potentialities of the child. In the first instance, it is the mother's own faith in life which prevents her from becoming anxious about the welfare of the child. This in turn enables her to endorse and facilitate the growing freedom of the child rather than maintaining the dependence of the child longer than necessary. (34)

This is an extremely important point, as is the subsequent point about the relationship between the mother's love and the ability to allow the child to develop its own independence. Since the love between mother and child is originally one of dependence and helplessness on the part of the child, Fromm argues that the real test of love comes at the point at which the child begins to grow. This is a test of the love of the mother since it will ultimately entail wanting and cultivating "the child's separation from herself." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 41) Contrasted with the erotic love in which two become one, the ultimate tendency in motherly love is that "two people who were one become separate." (41) This is a process which demands a new type of unselfishness from the mother: the ability to give without demand of return, other than "the happiness of the loved one." (41) Fromm connects this with his previous study of character types to suggest that this type of mother is relatively scarce (which again is only understandable if we bear in mind how rare Fromm finds genuine love). This type of loving unselfishness is hence deeply connected to

[191] The caveat on Fromm's approach to gender and family also applies here, since he neglects the possibility that any consistent care-giver might communicate anxiety to a child. See footnote 17 in Section 0.2.7.

Fromm's theory of love and existence. Only "the really loving woman, the woman who is happier in giving than in taking, who is firmly rooted in her own existence, can be a loving mother when the child is in the process of separation." (41) As well as the love for the child, this must be understood in the context of Fromm's claim that those who love one person really love all. The test of maternal love is therefore twofold. It is first met in the capacity to relinquish authority over and care for the child, and it arises secondly in the basic readiness to love all people, which is the cornerstone of all genuine love in Fromm's eyes.

The independence of the child therefore entails both the faith and love of her mother. With love, the mother can act so that the child can grow into freedom without the need to fulfil her mother's needs, whereas with faith, the loving mother has the basic trust in life necessary to allow this to happen. In one respect these two are inseparable when the four elements of love are properly probed. We can see this since the capacity to see another clearly - respect – also entails being able to see and have faith in that other's capacity exercise her own potentialities. In *Man for Himself*, Fromm discusses this claim, in a section entitled "Faith as a Character Trait" ([1947] 2003, 148-157). Consistent with his general approach and opposition to authoritarianism, Fromm first makes clear that he sees the type of faith which is based on "emotional submission" to authority as irrational, since it does not "result from one's own experience of thought or feeling" (151) but from escapism. Rational faith is opposed to this in being "based on productive intellectual and emotional activity," (153) which involves both faith in others and faith in oneself. This latter faith concerns being certain of "the existence of a self, of a core in our personality which is unchangeable, and which persists throughout our life in spite of varying circumstances." (154)[192] In the absence of faith in self, "our feeling of identity is threatened and we become dependent on other people whose approval then becomes the basis for our feeling of identity with ourselves." (154) Hence faith in self is a bulwark against heteronomy.

The endurance of the unchanging self is less important for love than another aspect of faith between persons, which also refers to "the faith we have in the potentialities of others, of

[192] There is of a question mark over just how such a self, should it exist, might be known, but perhaps this involves something like the intuitive knowledge that I have discussed in Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3. See also my account of the critique of Fromm by John Schaar (1961) in Section 0.3.

ourselves, of mankind." (Fromm [1947] 2003, 155) As well as the basic physiological, sensory, and motor potentialities, Fromm is primarily concerned here with properties which to a greater extent are contingent on the enabling conditions of the environment. These are "potentialities to love, to be happy, to use […] reason, and more specific potentialities like artistic gifts." (155) Here Fromm supplements the condition of unconditional love that we have discussed above with that of faith, specifically "that the significant persons in a child's life have faith in these potentialities." (155) This is the difference between, one on hand, allowing the young person to unfold her own potentialities and emerge into existence, and, on the other, the manipulation of the child's development based on the priorities of the family or social system. I would argue that this model of faith is one that is deeply informed by Fromm's understanding of love, and particularly respect. As we have seen in Section 3.2, respect is that element of love through which we are able to allow another to "grow and unfold for his own sake, and in his own ways, and not for the purpose of serving me." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 22) This essentially means allowing the potentialities to develop. It is also connected to care and responsibility, given that this growth of self is the deepest need of the person.

5.3.4. Personalism in Family and Society

Fromm's approach here can be called personalist, insofar as its concern is the development of a full and loving person who unfolds according to her own aims and potential. This refers both to Fromm's theoretical emphasis of the personal self and its powers, and to how he conceives the attitude of the caregivers. Namely, it entails that those responsible for the development of the child welcome her with unconditional love. Furthermore, this demands that her caregivers have faith in her powers, the same faith which is ultimately a component of love. Hence in addition to Fromm's theory of individuation being concerned with the development of a loving self, this attitude is mirrored by the importance for this development of parents who love. Personalist parents are those who work towards the eventual independence of the child, again regardless of the fact that to do so entails the development of the child's own freedom from parental authority. Parental authority, in summary, should function in a way that it eventually develops the conditions for itself to be unnecessary (Fromm [1956] 1995, 40).

In a brief section in *The Art of Listening* (1994), Fromm contrasts this with some strong observations putatively based on his clinical work. The section begins with a critique of Freud's claims around the guilt of the child in accusations of parental abuse. Fromm's own contribution is to place this in the sociological context of the time, specifically the absolutization of parental authority. The continual insistence on the guilt of children is said to be understood "as a consequence of the need to defend parental authority: to defend authority and thus defend the parents." (53) He relates this to Roman law regarding the rights of fathers over children, and biblical law concerning the stoning of the rebellious son. This frames his argument that in the context of the lives of most children, "parental love is one of the greatest fictions that have ever been invented [since] the main interest of most parents is control of their children." (53) Again, this is connected to character structure, and particularly with Fromm's understanding of the authoritarian personality and of sadism. In each, the primary way of relating to the world is through exerting authority over others, and Fromm suggests that the main and perhaps only way many people can do so is with their children (54).

Whilst these claims may seem strong, it is important to remember that Fromm's understanding of love is one in which the development of freedom and selfhood in the other is given full priority, which entails a deep capacity to be able to see clearly and unite with others from our centre. The power of genuine love in parents, therefore, will perhaps be as rare as the power of love generally. Whether Fromm is correct in his observation is of course another matter, and ultimately one that would be very difficult to judge, especially given that his perspective is consistently Western and necessarily of his own time. In my view the main importance of the point is not a political or psychoanalytic one, but concerns the fundamental spectrum of possibilities around relation, and relating to growing people specifically. In other words, I would argue that personalism in Fromm functions as another way of understanding the dichotomy of basic relational dispositions which shapes his work in general. Personalism here involves both the way that we relate to others – in our concern for their own development and needs – and Fromm's fundamental concern with the cultivation of our own personal powers. By way of contrast, authority is depicted in a specific fashion, in which the main aim is the submission of children to domestic, political, legal, and religious structures. Fromm's warning is that this results in the hindering of the child's potential. Although this is not explicit in this section, it will ultimately entail the anxiety which comes from the enduring alienation and destructiveness which emerge out of being thwarted in development.

Elsewhere, Fromm states that one of the principle methods of perpetuating the dominion of this type of authority is to impose upon the mind of the child the relationship between disobedience and badness. This weakens the will by arousing a sense of guilt (Fromm [1947] 2003, 117). From my own perspective, this authoritarian model of family and society is also highly likely to be a context of repression, since its emphasis is on obedience rather than the development of our emotional potentialities. The focus is on authority for the sake of dominion and order, such that every affective state is judged relative to its compliance with whatever power structure is dominant. This is contrasted with the rational authority which Fromm endorses elsewhere and which is ultimately concerned with the full development of the personality (6). To grasp the relationship between emotional maturity and society in more detail, we can turn to the concept of social filters found in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (Fromm 1960).

5.3.5 Social Filters

The argument I have been developing above can be summarised in Fromm's statement that our potentialities "develop only in a social and cultural context." ([1947] 2003, 129) This mainly concerns the human qualities necessary to instil in a child love for self, and the faith and security to grow. In *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (1960), Fromm augments these basic assertions with some more nuance upon how social structures – including the family – can be the origin of a variety of restrictions around experiencing, feeling, and thinking. Fromm calls this "the stultifying influence of society," (1960, 60) and stresses that it happens in the form of social filters or taboos which regulate what can enter consciousness, grouped according to language, logic, and content.[193] For the present task content is the most important of these, and so the first two can be summarised briefly.

The basis of all three is the idea that our capacity to be aware of some phenomenon depends on the "categories in which conscious thought is organised." (47) In each person

[193] As I have mentioned in Section 2.11, this also involves the social unconscious, in which the need to be part of a group entails the forms of repression typical in a given society and based on what is tolerated socially ([2006] 1962, 84-126). See Panfilova (2015) for an account of the content and importance of Fromm's social unconscious and social character.

these categories will be initially shaped by social environment. The mode of "relatedness, of feeling, and perceiving" of a society results in "a system of categories which determines the forms of awareness," (48) and which phenomena must penetrate in order to be experienced. Relative to language and logic, Fromm's focus is primarily a cultural one, concerning how grammatical and logical structures will condition our mode of seeing and experiencing. This might involve the relationship between emotional experience and vocabulary, since "an experience rarely comes into awareness for which the language has no word," and a language "contains an attitude of life." (49) In terms of logic, Fromm contrasts the Western paradigm of subject, predicate, and non-contradiction, with an Eastern framework which he terms paradoxical. In the latter the focus is on upholding unity amid contrast, and particularly in the synthesis of opposites.

The most important filter for my own line of inquiry is that of content, the thoughts and feelings that a society excludes from awareness. These elicit in the one who experiences them deep tension and the probable emergence of some psychosomatic symptom such as panic or nausea. Fromm's own example is of a person who has a revulsion towards robbing or killing, but who lives in a society with a thirst for death and theft. The full emergence of this revulsion would entail being ostracized and consequently isolated, and so it will be prevented from entering awareness, and perhaps converted into vomiting. The inverse possibility is much the same, in the bloodlust of a member of a peaceful society. So far this is descriptive rather than explanatory, and Fromm continues to consider why it might be the case, from the perspective of both society and individual. In the first case, Fromm draws on his own study of social character, asserting that the most prevalent ways of relating within a given context are driven by the economic and social needs of the time. From the group perspective, the overall aims of a society will depend on the development of a pliant populace. Social structures will therefore be geared towards inducing in the inhabitants the desire to do whatever leads to the cohesion and development of society. By contrast, this will involve the person erecting defences against the awareness of the desire to do or experience anything that is contrary to the needs of the social system. From the individual perspective, refusing to conform entails isolation, which Fromm sees as our greatest fear (1960, 53-54). The tension that results from experiencing feelings and

thoughts which are contrary to social expectations is therefore far easier to manage when cast from consciousness.[194]

As significant as the social aspect of this is, the main relevance here is in the context of the family, which is the instrument of inculcating social character in the children (Fromm [1947] 2003, 43f). In addition to socially determined aspects, there are "individual elaborations of these taboos which differ from family to family," (Fromm 1960, 55) such as the child who feels impelled to stifle sexual energy because of the fear of abandonment. An additional example might concern a child in whom artistic desires are repressed because of the wish of her parents that she concentrate on other forms of learning. Although this section in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (Fromm 1960) is brief, the implication is nonetheless clear, since the experiences that we tolerate and the beliefs that we develop will be profoundly shaped by context. This is primarily depicted as a negative process, but the inverse is also true, since if the family prohibits certain emotions then it is implicit that it permits others. Whether pleasant or distressing emotions, the crucial point is simply that family structures have the power to determine whether an emotional experiences is permitted to enter awareness. Hence the development of integrated selfhood is intimately related to both family and social structures.[195]

5.3.6 Parental Love and Conscience

Finally, this section on love and interdependence in Fromm culminates in the intended end of both maternal and paternal love, which are geared towards the synthesis of a conscience which incorporates both. Fromm's view here is deeply conditioned by notions of gender and family prevalent in his time, but I would argue that there is still something to be said for his claims providing that they are shorn of strict correlation between types of love and specific gender roles. Arguing that the first years of life are primarily focused on the unconditional nurture of a mother, Fromm claims that in this period the child incorporates the capacity to love self unconditionally. This means that regardless of achievement or

[194] Fromm also elaborates on this relationship between being complicit and being related. While on the animal level we most fear death, on the human and existential level we are "most afraid of being utterly alone" (1960, 53-54).

[195] Fromm's *The Sane Society* ([1955] 2002) elaborates this in social terms (see Section 0.2.10).

ability, the person develops an attitude towards self in which nothing will impede self-love. The love of the father is said to be prevalent from the age of six onwards, and be instrumental in the development of such powers as judgement, reason, law and order, discipline, etc. The crucial distinction here is that the love of the father, whilst ideally "patient and tolerant," (Fromm [1956] 1995, 34) is conditional: failure to develop the requisite maturity and absorption of the ethical, legal, and rational content results in sanction and the necessity of change (33-35).

Rather than simply endorsing unconditional love, Fromm argues that the mature conscience is one in which both of these principles are held together. This entails a self which is capable of loving acceptance of limitation and also possesses the critical impulse to correct behaviour which is unconducive to growth. The two principles of love and reason are hence said to be embodied in the mother and father. We can dispense with the strict division of gender and chronology, whilst still arguing that this can be viewed in terms of the integration of the various aspects of the self ideally mediated through the various dimensions of parental love (Fromm [1956] 1995, 33-35). In other words, the general point that our formative relationships can enable us to incorporate both gentleness towards our faults and the desire to grow need not depend on the roles that Fromm attributes to each parent, which could be fulfilled through a range of adults instead.

Elsewhere, Fromm discusses at some length what he calls the humanistic conscience, which emerges out of a social context in which authority is ordered toward the development of our potencies. In a similar fashion to the later account of maternal and paternal conscience, the humanistic conscience can discern the appropriate action based on its coherence with the "proper functioning or dysfunctioning" of the "total personality." (Fromm [1947] 2003, 119) This account of the social development of conscience again concurs with the general direction of this section: to demonstrate how Fromm's focus on individuation through resistance to authority is balanced with a deep and consistent sensitivity to how the potentialities of self are profoundly contextual and intersubjective. Fromm repeatedly shows that our potentialities always develop in relation to the attitudes and structures in which they emerge. In the context of love, the foremost of these potentialities, this ideally culminates in a social setting in which "one's own power to love produces love." (74) Having seen how this functions in the realm of development I will now turn to a similar account of healthy adult relationships, with emphasis on the

psychotherapeutic relationship. There will also be a stress on how relationship in general can be restorative, in cases where development has failed to contribute to the development of the potency of love.

5.4 Love, the Intersubjective Context of Awareness and Expression

5.4.1. Psychotherapy and Self-development

This section will be somewhat shorter than the previous section, simply because the scope of the concepts involved is narrower. In addition, much of the groundwork for this section has been laid in my discussion of the content of love in previous chapters. In the first instance it is important to recall my account of Fromm's conception of psychotherapy in Section 1.9, although now adding in some perspective from later texts. Fromm's own approach centres on his critique of Freud's drive theory, since Fromm sees our primary dynamisms as being ordered towards relation. Hence the major aim of psychotherapy, and the prevalent focus from his early texts, which is to enable our potentialities for growth, well-being, and relationship, to function fully (Fromm 1950, 65-99; 1960, 16-20, 29-42, 82-109; [1993] 2007, 55-66; see Section 1.9). Psychotherapy is therefore primarily about the development and integration of self, through the full development of our powers. In addition to this, I discussed how this involves insight into dissociative structures, including repressed emotions and thoughts. Adding to these earlier emphases, Fromm would later describe therapy as a process of making what is unconscious conscious. This involves allowing aspects of experience that we have previously been unaware of to enter awareness (Fromm, 1960, 42ff).

These two aims are reciprocal, since (i) there is no purpose for developing awareness other than the fulfilment of our strivings for growth, and (ii) the development of these strivings depends precisely on the emergence into consciousness of that which was previously repressed. In the ideal family and society that has been discussed above, the conditions for growth of self are in place from the outset. This would also include the development of the emotional potency - the freedom to feel - unrestricted by social filter, so that the need to repress emotion would never arise. In concrete families and societies, however, no matter how humanistic they may be, the reality will likely be otherwise, and so the development of the child will be hindered. Fromm's approach to how relationships in general and psychotherapy in particular can be a corrective to this, an arena of the development of self,

is peppered throughout his work. I will now reconstruct this, beginning with the psychotherapeutic relationship.

5.4.2. The Qualities of the Therapist

Like Stolorow and Atwood, Fromm's view of the effective therapist revolves around empathy. Whilst Stolorow and Atwood see this as a matter of attunement, Fromm tends to understand it more as a process which facilitates awareness in the patient through the therapist's awareness of the same experience in herself. This means that the empathy of the therapist is pivotal in the experience of the other person, similar to the intersubjective field of Stolorow and Atwood. Fromm's approach to therapy centres on how the therapist's own experience of being human facilitates her understanding of others (1994, 101). This focuses on the way in which the therapist discovery of the whole range of human traits and possibilities - including the irrational and destructive – in herself. This increased awareness of being fully human in turn facilitates empathic appreciation of the patient's experience, which enhances the awareness of the patient. Fromm also holds that this process involves the therapist being willing to reflect any resistance to experience on the part of the patient, in whatever structure that resistance has become embedded. In this sense it seems clear to me that the therapist does not merely reflect what was already visible. Instead she should also be capable of allowing new aspects of the patient's experience and personality to emerge into view (99). This is more significant since Fromm groups resistance with transference in being "among the most powerful emotional forces which exist." (115)

The experience of relatedness in therapy is not merely a matter of mirroring feelings and resistances, since Fromm discusses the concept of therapy from a different perspective in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* (1960), an earlier text with a broader focus. *The Art of Listening* (1994) sees empathy primarily as a matter of therapist and patient participating in the same humanity and same range of human experiences and capacities. Due to Fromm's audience and interests at the time, *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* is thoroughly informed by his interpretation of the writings of D.T. Suzuki, and so the respective emphases in the nature of therapy are thus conditioned by the priorities of each text. This means that the focus in *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* is partly on the capacity of

consciousness to experience the unity of reality.[196] Elaborating on this, Fromm also introduces his re-interpretation of Harry Stack Sullivan's participant observer, but argues that it would be more accurate to reverse the emphasis (i.e. "observant participant" [1960, 66]).[197] Even this would remain an inadequate expression of the nature of the relationship, and so Fromm turns to his own concept of central relatedness to reframe it. Since participation is said to still entail exteriority, Fromm proposes again that the therapist "experiences in himself all that the patient experiences," (66) this time adding more detail. Here the condition for "understanding and cure" is the therapist "being fully engaged with the patient, in being fully open and responsive to him, in being soaked with him, as it were, in this centre-to-centre relatedness." (66)

This full engagement could still be interpreted in a variety of ways, and so might be inconclusive as to the depth of the relationship that Fromm intends. It should thus be contextualised by the affirmation that immediately precedes it: "knowledge of another person requires being inside him, to *be* him." (Fromm 1960, 66) In "On the Limitations and Dangers of Psychology," an essay written in 1959, Fromm discusses and elaborates upon the same experience, stressing that this is an intuitive and inexpressible experience of unity, in which separation is nonetheless maintained ([1963] 1992, 195-200). This is clearly consistent with his emphasis on love as unity in which the integrity of the individual is upheld (Fromm [1956] 1995, 16). What is most important here is his assertion that this type of relatedness is an essential condition of cure. This illustrates the importance of Fromm's concept of central relatedness in psychotherapy, and consequently as an instrument of the restoration of our spectrum of potencies (1960, 66). As much as this is important in therapy, it also provides the ground for the possibility of making a broader connection between loving relationships and a therapeutic (although non-clinical) way of being and relating.

[196] Even so, Fromm merely exhibits Suzuki's claim that the concept of empathic relatedness betrays that of non-duality (1960, 78).

[197] It is not clear why the concept is absent from the later essays in *The Art of Listening* (Fromm 1994).

5.4.3 Central Relatedness and the Therapeutic Way of Being

In the section in *The Art of Loving* concerned with brotherly love ([1956] 1995, 37-38), Fromm expounds his theory of central relatedness, as I have touched on in Section 3.3.1. Here the experience of human unity comes through the ability to "penetrate from the periphery to the core," (37) and from perceiving our identity. This is to relate from centre to centre, core to core, or elsewhere from essence to essence. Fromm draws on the work of Simone Weil, who speaks of how the ability for us to hear what is communicated in language depends on the "'depth of the region in [our] being from which they proceed'" (Weil [1947] 2002, 67; quoted in Fromm [1945] 1995, 37) and by which they are received.[198] Whilst this is the extent of the account of central relatedness in this section, there is an extension of the concept in a subsequent section, which is of the utmost importance for the present chapter and whole thesis. Addressing the claim that love entails the absence or avoidance of conflict, Fromm expounds his alternative theory of cathartic conflict. These are conflicts in which the experience of each person is communicated openly, and are "experienced on the deep level of inner reality to which they belong." (80)

In upholding this clear communication, deep conflicts "produce a catharsis from which both persons emerge with more knowledge and more strength." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 80) From this basic endorsement of productive conflict, Fromm continues to elaborate upon the nature of love as central relatedness: "[l]ove is possible only if two persons communicate with each other from the centre of their existence, hence if each one of them experiences himself from the centre of his existence." (80) If this is interpreted in the context of all of Fromm's work, it would entail that the core is the locus of our powers, physical, emotional, volitional, and intellectual. Also, our ability to experience ourselves from this centre primarily involves taking possession of these powers. This involves both the emotional and volitional powers which are the basis of love, and the intellectual and intuitive powers of seeing and uniting with others in a mysterious and non-conceptual way.

[198] In the context of my critique of his voluntarist approach to love, it is noteworthy that Fromm has elected to terminate his quote before the end of the passage, resulting in the omission of "without the will being able to do anything" (Weil [1947] 2002, 67). The citation is from Weil's *Gravity and Grace*, and the theological content of that text raises questions for Fromm's use of the excerpt, even if the relationship between Weil and traditional theology is complex (see Rozelle-Stone and Stone, 2013; McCullough, 2014).

Communicating from core to core is thereby the culmination of the appropriation of our powers, both in terms of our ability to act and our emotional receptivity.

As well as this focus on centre, the crucial aspect here is that Fromm adds that love is "a constant challenge […] a moving, growing, working together." ([1956] 1995, 80) Here love begins to emerge in a clearer light as the space – and the only space – in which growth is possible. I would suggest again from the context of Fromm's work that this is perhaps particularly so relative to respect and knowledge.[199] Firstly, it is the element of respect that determines the extent to which the person enables other persons to manifest and communicate themselves. Second, Fromm describes how his concept of knowledge enables us to penetrate through the surface of what someone might appear to be feeling. This enables us to understand any deeper root, for instance seeing anxiety, guilt, or loneliness, underpinning the appearance of anger (23; see Section 3.3). Insofar as this is the case, it would entail loving relationships being a means of a deeper level of awareness of the primary dynamics of the self. This is especially significant in the current context of intersubjectivity, since love is clearly seen as the power which enables the manifestation of self, and of aspects of self which have been hidden. In addition to this, Fromm specifies that in giving self the lover gives "of his understanding," (19) suggesting that any love relationship is one which can be potentially empathic.[200]

I would argue that this account of respect, knowledge, and understanding, provides an adequate ground on which to show that loving relationships themselves can be – and perhaps essentially are – therapeutic spaces. We have seen that these qualities and central relatedness are *themselves* conduits to awareness, and from this we can imply that the loving relationship is one in which the barriers of repression can be lifted and the transition from unconsciousness to consciousness continued. Some of this is merely implicit in Fromm's own writings, and some of it expressed in other ways. Nonetheless it is a legitimate line of progression from central relatedness as the condition of understanding

[199] I am grateful to George Pattison for pointing out that this also reflects the recent importance of acknowledgement or recognition in modern philosophy and theology, and its roots in Kant and Hegel.

[200] Although there is clearly no necessary connection of understanding and empathy, I would argue that from the citations from *The Art of Listening* (Fromm 1994) in this section there ample ground to suggest that they the former is related to the latter in this context. Fromm also states that brotherly love is compassionate (1994, 38), again supporting the idea that love is at least potentially empathic.

and cure, to the existence of love itself as at least potentially therapeutic, regardless of clinical context.[201] In a section discussing practical methods of developing the power to love, Fromm lists among them concentration, which "in relation to others means primarily to listen." ([1956] 1995, 89) Given that our powers include those of emotion and language, I would thus also argue that the extent to which love from others enables the development of our powers is also the extent to which receiving love enhances our capacity to feel and express. In enabling deep understanding and communication, any loving relationship can serve as a conduit to deeper awareness of self and world, and hence liberation and growth. This again shows how Fromm's development of self should be seen as intersubjective.

Finally, this is also evoked by the passage from Fromm's *You Shall Be as Gods* that was quoted in Section 3.8. Since it is there merely in the context of transference and self-expression, this highly important passage (somewhat incongruous in its place in that text) is worth citing again. This will re-iterate and deepen the point about loving relatedness and growth:

> Whether it is art or science, joy or sorrow, work or play, whatever happens is a stimulus to his becoming stronger, and more sensitive. This process of constant inner transformation and of becoming part of the world in the act of living is the aim toward which all other aims are subordinated. Man is not a subject opposing the world in order to transform it; he is in the world making his being in the world the occasion for constant self-transformation. Hence the world (humanity and nature) is not an object standing opposite to us, but the medium in which we discover his own reality and that of the world ever more deeply. (1967, 59)

This process can now be illuminated by the work discussed in the present section. *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995) portrays the loving relationship as a place of growth in awareness, and frames the ideal world along these lines, a world of unity and deep relatedness. Here the salient point is that all human activity is ordered towards self-transformation and developing harmony with the world. If "his being in the world [is] the occasion for constant self-transformation," (Fromm 1967, 59) this is clearly also particularly true of relationship. Loving relationship thus becomes something of a mirror in which our own reality can be discovered, as well as the reality of self and world.

[201] Fromm hints at this in his assertion that "In the love between man and woman, each of them is reborn." ([1956] 1995, 26)

Moreover, this discovery of our selves and world is highly reminiscent of the language with which Fromm speaks of the therapeutic process. This enables us to posit the possibility of an attitude to the world which is therapeutic in itself. Here the experiences, trials, and encounters of each day are seen as opportunities for deeper awareness, more consciousness of that which we have kept concealed from ourselves, analogous to my argument about the dynamic function of transference in Section 3.8. Viewed in the context of the love which is the answer to the problem of human existence, the primary spaces of this self-transformation are the loving relationships which enable us to communicate with the most depth and with ever-increasing insight. Love is not only the end of unity, but the means. Any account of this process, however, would be incomplete without introducing the final 'object' in Fromm's approach to love, that of self.

5.5 Self-Love, Self-Awareness, Self-Analysis: The Intrapersonal Context of Growth

In Fromm as well as in Stolorow and Atwood, we have seen how interpersonal relationships form a context of experience, including both repression and transformation. Fromm is also keenly aware of the importance of intrapersonal context. From his earlier "Selfishness and Self-Love" (1939), to *Man for Himself* ([1947] 2003) and *The Art of Loving* ([1956) 1995], and to his final writings compiled posthumously as *The Art of Being* ([1993] 2007), Fromm consistently recounts the vital importance of the way that we relate to ourselves. A constant theme of this is that since love entails the readiness to love all humans, it must also entail the same attitude towards self. This means that we must be concerned not only with the growth and well-being of others, but also of ourselves. In fact, Fromm bases his whole approach to love on this point, claiming that if we are incapable of relating to ourselves in a loving way, by extension we will not have the capacity to relate lovingly to others. Love is thus said to be "*indivisible as far as the connection between 'objects' and one's own self is concerned*." (Fromm [1956] 1995, 46) Ultimately this means that "my own self must be as much an object of my love as another person." (47) Concretely expressed, this means the "*affirmation of one's own life, happiness, growth, freedom* […] i.e. care, respect, responsibility, and knowledge." (47)

We see here again the intimate connection between love and growth. This is essentially a matter of the development of our powers, and perhaps most significantly our emotional power. Given that repression is most often concerned with intolerable emotional experience, and given Fromm's reflections upon the post-Cartesian dissociation of the emotional power (1960, 17), I would suggest that self-love also begins to emerge here as an intrapersonal context of de-repression. In addition, this is confirmed in the last of Fromm's writings, that of *The Art of Being* ([1993] 2007). This text was originally intended to have formed part of *To Have or To Be* ([1976] 2009), functioning as a practical complement to the theoretical sections on the having and being modes of life. Publishing the whole text in its entirety proved impossible, and so each was published separately. *The Art of Being* is important to the present section because of its focus on how from Fromm envisaged the achievement of the ability to simply be, a way of living which includes love ([1993] 2007, 4). As well as being important in its own right, *The Art of Being* can serve here as a supplement to the notion of self-love, since it exhorts self-analysis and the consequent development of self-awareness.

Fromm states that the goal of psychoanalysis is "self-liberation by optimal self-awareness; of the attaining of well-being, independence; of the capacity to love." ([1993] 2007, 64) This is in the context of the potential of the traditional analytic space, but nonetheless establishes Fromm's view of the connection between self-awareness and the development of the power of love. He proceeds to address the question of whether "one can analyze himself as part of his meditation practice," (66) arguing that whilst it is preferable that we be taught this practice by a trained analyst, self-analysis is nonetheless possible. The conditions for this are simply the strength of the will to "achieve the goal of liberation," (68) and our organic and somatic tendency to well-being. The actual methods which Fromm recommends need not concern us here, since the salient point is simply that through the consistent practice of self-analysis we are able to lift the veil of repression. The importance of this is amplified by recalling the extent to which repression inhibits loving activity and perception, and as our capacity to enter unity with others. Hence the practice of self-awareness, in enabling repressed concepts to come to consciousness, necessarily enhances the power to love, even if it does not mean that self-analysis – or psychoanalysis of any sort – is necessary for the practice of love. My main point in arguing this, finally, is to suggest that the context of repression, experience, and the development of our powers is not merely intersubjective. It is also *intrasubjective*, necessarily entailing the practice of self-love, but also involving self-analysis where appropriate and possible. Having

exhibited the work of Stolorow and Atwood, and subsequently that of Fromm, it remains to add some reflections on the relationship between the two approaches, concerning the extent to which they both contrast and supplement one another.

5.6 Conclusion: Relational Drives and Fluid Worlds

The main argument of this final chapter and the way in which it shifts the focus from previous chapters can be expressed in several ways. First, from the other chapters first considering how repression impacts upon love, this chapter has explored how love shapes the process and content of repression. This means that the focus moves from considering how our unconscious dynamics inhibit our ability to relate, to looking at how relation informs our dynamisms. From another perspective, I have been examining how Fromm sees the ability to give love as shaped by the extent to which we have received love, even if this is a less emphatic focus in his work. In Fromm this has primarily been through an analysis of a variety of themes which can supplement his emphasis on independence, most importantly his understanding of how both our primary (loving) and secondary (destructive) potencies are activated through environmental conditions (Section 5.3.1). In the context of character, the development of love also involves a process of dynamic adaptation, which shapes our drives – including that of love - through our response to the relational context of our early years (Section 5.3.2). Our freedom from primary ties (Section 5.3.2) was then seen not to be merely a process of negation, but also as involving the love and faith of others, particularly our mothers (5.3.3), and the incorporation of the conscience of both mother and father, unconditional love and standards of conduct (5.3.6). Ultimately this involves the argument that Fromm's account of human life is personalist, both in theoretically focusing on the development of our powers and total personality, and in exhorting a way of relating which facilitates the freedom of persons (5.3.4).

As well as being concerned with the free development of personality and power through an intersubjective context of love and expression, it is also important to note that Fromm sees repression as intersubjective. This is important given my focus on the impediments to developing love as well as the conditions that enable it to grow. In Section 5.3.5, I discussed how Fromm's social filters of language, logic, and content, function as part of his concept of social character. This entails that the extent to which we are able to feel, think, speak, or act, is deeply shaped by both family and society. This ultimately means

that what we repress depends upon what we are permitted to feel, with both a social component and an individual component based on specific family structures. Psychotherapy is seen as a corrective to this, in which the self-awareness, empathy, and humanity of the therapist allow the person to see elements of herself that had previously been repressed (Sections 5.4.1-5.4.2). Moreover, I have also argued that Fromm's central relatedness and cathartic conflict, based on love as a way of seeing and uniting that penetrates the periphery and enters the core, mean that love is a therapeutic way of being. Understood in this way, any loving relationship can be the intersubjective context both of the development of the power to love and of the process of de-repression (5.4.3). Finally, as well as reflecting these aspects of the intersubjective approach modelled by Stolorow and Atwood, I have argued that Fromm's focus on self-love and self-awareness supplements that approach, in showing that our context is also intrasubjective (5.5).

Hence, it is clear that Fromm's work shows a deep appreciation of the extent to which self is shaped by relational context, and of how power to love is developed by receiving love from others as well as by negation of the authoritarian structures which are the main focus of *The Fear of Freedom* ([1941] 2001). I have, however, highlighted a point of contrast which leads to a critique of Fromm based on the intersubjective and phenomenological approach in Section 5.2. In my account of Stolorow and Atwood, the primary focus on intersubjective psychotherapy concerns how the experiential world of the subject is shaped by context, primarily by the capacity of another person to attune to our emotional states and welcome their expression (Section 5.2.1). This focus on world signals a divergence in the meaning of character, personality, and self, which are all understood through the lens of personal experience rather than a typology of ways of relating, or characterology (Section 5.2.2). Psychotherapy, and relationships of attunement in general, are hence seen as spaces in which our personal worlds and configurations of self and other can come to awareness, meaning that intersubjectivity is both developmental and restorative (Section 5.2.3). Whilst Fromm has some aspects of this in his work, there is a contrast that emerges in the distinction between world and dynamism. This is part of a general difference based on the phenomenological approach of *Structures of Subjectivity* (Stolorow and Atwood, 2014), which shows that Fromm's intersubjective approach is limited.

Stolorow and Atwood reject any theories based on drives such as "impersonal psychical agencies or motivational prime movers." (2014, 115) This is clearly a point of contrast with Fromm given that he does not reject drive theory but merely reshapes it in relational terms. This means that Fromm's potencies are contextual, but that he differs from Stolorow and Atwood inasmuch as they are habitual forms of relationality based on character type and relational drive rather than concrete and fluid experiential worlds. Fromm's approach to context is thus focused on the development of our potentialities, rather than the impact that relation has on experience and meaning. Stolorow and Atwood argue that their phenomenological approach is genuinely dynamic, and it is here that the most salient point of contrast is found. This development of the dynamic aspect is found in the idea that the experiential world of the subject is formed not only in context, but in an intersubjective field that is constantly shifting. Given the contextual nature of self and world, this shifting context entails a fluid and ever-changing experience of self, contrasted again with the type of self that develops in the early social and economic context and remains relatively fixed. This means that a fully intersubjective approach is one that is more open to plurality in ways of perceiving world and self, both among distinct persons and in the changing perspectives and interpretations experienced by particular people.

This point is most significant given how Stolorow and Atwood relate our fluid horizons to "the intersubjective fields that constitute [our] current living," (2014, 105). This fluidity clearly accounts more comprehensively for how human experience can change from moment to moment, and how our perception of self can assume a variety of forms depending on our environment. This continues the process of revising the work of Fromm to render it more concrete, suggesting that our capacity to love may not be relatively fixed and based on character type, but that it will wax and wane based on the situations in which we find ourselves. This again contests the idea of the basic readiness to love all others, which, whilst certainly possible, is vulnerable to a concrete approach that appreciates limitation and circumstance. That a genuinely intersubjective approach depicts the way in which we are acutely affected by ever-shifting contexts shows that loving is not merely a matter of the development of character and will, but also fundamentally dependent on our environments and the selves that emerge in them.

Nevertheless, Fromm's approach can supplement that of Stolorow and Atwood by showing how the context of the full emergence of personhood is a loving attitude that enables

growth, and which sees and unites, whilst also attuning to emotion. The flexibility of *Structures of Subjectivity* nonetheless renders this more concrete than Fromm's typological approach allows, showing how variable it can be in our everyday experience. This again develops my existential critique of Fromm with more attention to our concrete intersubjective context, and also develops the contingency that has emerged in Chapter Four relative to our relationship with the universe. Here, in addition to any cosmic ground, the context of our power to love depends on the worlds which we inhabit and interpret, and the others who welcome us into it.[202] Following a recap of my main themes, my conclusion will turn to how this phenomenological approach impacts upon Fromm's approach to love as the answer to the problem of human existence.

[202] There is significant scope to connect the energetic focus of Chapter Four with the intersubjective account developed here, to consider how the interplay of energy impacts upon the power to love.

6. Conclusion: Love, Existence, and Wisdom

I began this thesis by pointing to Erich Fromm's assertion that love is "the answer to the problem of human existence," ([1956] 1995, 6) stating my intention to take this as a point of departure for my own existential revision of Fromm's *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995). Throughout each chapter, I have argued that Fromm's active power of love can be critiqued with increased attention to our existential situation, with additional attention to the psychodynamic concepts of repression and transference. Given the controversy of the label existentialist and the wide range of content that has been ascribed to it, it is important to be clear about my own use of the term. As I have employed it, the existential revolves around the concrete conditions of embodied finitude, inter-subjectivity, and the interpretational world, and some of the limitations that these entail. Before re-iterating and expanding on this critique, I will begin this conclusion by summarising my presentation of Fromm's approach to love, starting with his own concept of the existential.

6.1 Summary of Thesis

In Chapter One, I grounded my critique by focusing on how Fromm himself sees existence as involving a series of dichotomies that follow from our evolution and exile from a putative original harmony with nature. From this starting point, Fromm bases his own account of human life on the need to develop a new and interpersonal harmony that culminates in love. Chapter Two saw the beginning of my focus on the content of love as Fromm sees it, paying attention here to how he depicts love as an active power of giving self that is ordered towards the whole world, through the elements of care and responsibility to the needs of others. Contrasted with this stress on activity, Chapter Three explored Fromm's focus on respect and knowledge as loving ways of seeing and being united to others, as well as discussing how these have concrete content in erotic and brotherly love. Chapter Four continued the presentation of the objects of love with a focus on love of God, culminating in Fromm's account of how the full development of the human powers once attributed to God entails unity with the universe (or the All). Finally, Chapter Five shifted the focus away from the emergence of the powers of self through individuation in order to develop the less emphatic way in which Fromm is also attentive to the intersubjective context of the growth of these powers, including the power of love. Throughout each chapter, I have explored how the repression of fear, embodied emotional

energy, inner representations of others, and God-concepts can inhibit love, before again turning in the final chapter to consider how repression itself is subject to interpersonal context.

6.2 Simon May's Types of Love

Given the diversity of theories of love throughout history, it is important to explore how Fromm's own account of love can be situated in the context of other approaches. To frame this, I will draw on the account of the six types of love found in *Simon May's Love: A History* (2011), and May's own approach to love from *Love: A New Understanding of an Ancient Emotion* (2019). I have chosen these texts because of the clear delineation of six main conceptions of love in the latter, and the historical account of love in Western philosophy and religion from ancient to modern times found in the former. May defines six major ways in which love has been understood in the history of Western culture, critiquing each in favour of his own perspective. These are "Responsibility for Our 'Neighbour,'" (May 2019, 24-25) whether based on biblical commands, reason, duty, utilitarianism, eudemonism, or anything else; "Desire for Ultimate Goodness or Beauty" (25-25) and all of its implications of perfection, transcendence, and eternity; "Yearning for Wholeness, for Our (Unique?) Other Half," (26) and the corresponding hunger for completion and an end to separation; "Friendship," (26-27) primarily through the idea of the friend whose qualities resemble ours, and who enables us to see and to become ourselves; "Idealizing Those We Sexually Desire or Regard as Reproductively Suitable," (27-29) whether expressed in philosophical tradition, psychoanalysis, or biochemistry; and "(Divine and Then Secularized) Agape," (29-31) in which we ultimately ascribe to ourselves the unconditional and perfect power of divine love.

6.3 Unconditional Love as Secularised Theology

With the development of this sixth type, May argues that Western culture has come to view love as the supreme concern, and a new religion. Because of this, human love has subtly assumed a variety of qualities previously attributed to God and to the power of grace in humans. This entails that both popular and academic discourse regularly assume that love should be unconditional (insofar as not contingent on the perception of value or utility in the beloved); comprehensively affirming of the other; selfless and disinterested;

benevolent and harmonious; eternal; able to transport us into a place of purity; and redemptive and bestowing of meaning and value (May, 2011, 2). Although originally seen as empowered by divine grace, May argues that the shift away from religion and towards human love has involved the power of unconditional love being ascribed to and taken up by merely human power. By contrast, May distinguishes this "divinisation of human love" from a concept of love that is "conditional and time-bound and earthy," (5) and which depends completely on the extent to which others elicit in us the hope and joy of "ontological rootedness." (7) [203] May argues that love is an emotion which responds to the promise of a home found in others, whether in "friends, children, spouses, works of art, landscapes, God, or any of its other many possible objects and expressions" (2019. 193). It is this aspect of love that uniquely accounts for the way in which love is selective, or, in other words, how it is a response to particular others, one person among many possible others (2019, 193). The main relevance of May's work for my own project is found in the claim that any theory involving the idea of unconditional love involves subtle assumptions carried over from theologies which involve the power of grace. This relates to my own argument that Fromm's work is grounded in the idea of an unfailing voluntary power rather than one which is conditioned by existential or psychodynamic limitations. Before elaborating on this I will consider how Fromm's love relates to each of May's six types.

6.4 *The Art of Loving* and May's First Five Types

Fromm's approach revolves around the idea that love is a unitive power and basic orientation premised on the gift of self, which answers our need for relation and tends towards the growth and good of others. Of May's six types, this relates most clearly to "Love as Responsibility for our Neighbour." (2019, 24-25) It is, however, important to point out that Fromm's responsibility is not based on command or duty or eudaimonia, but on the need to escape isolation by developing the powers or dynamisms of our own nature, as well as nurturing relationship, harmony, or unity. May's second type is the "Love as Desire for Ultimate Goodness or Beauty" (25-26) exemplified in Plato's *Symposium*. Whilst Fromm does not explicitly discuss beauty, I would nonetheless argue that his

[203] Whilst both depict a narrative of exile and return, Fromm's conception of love as a power that we exercise in order to establish this differs from May's feeling of joy or rapture which we experience for those who give us a secure sense of rootedness in the world. I have not defended Fromm against this or other theories of love, or this or other theories of love against Fromm. To do so would necessitate finding some foundation upon which I could argue that love is x and not y, and hence entail a method of verification which is far beyond the aim of this thesis, if it is possible at all.

ultimate focus on the need for unity with the whole suggests possible roots in this type of approach, although probably refracted through his grounding in several spheres of mysticism rather than the platonic approach. May's third type, "Love as Yearning for Wholeness, for Our (Unique?) Other Half" (26) is clearly present in Fromm's treatment of erotic love. Like May's, however, this would have to be qualified by pointing out that it also tends towards relationship with the universe, the All, or with all people through the erotic partner. There is no obvious comparison with May's fourth figure, "Love as Friendship," (26-27) although I would argue that there is an analogy between the friends who find themselves in one another and Fromm's individuated selves being realised in relation to those whom we love, whether friends or not.

As well as being analogous in various degrees to these types, Fromm's love has major distinctions from May's other types, firstly with the fifth, "Love as Idealizing Those we Sexually Desire or Regard as Reproductively Suitable." (2019, 27-29) Although I have not focused on the critical aspects of *The Art of Loving* (Fromm ([1956] 1995), Fromm has a consistent refrain against what he calls pseudo-loves, with his characteristic focus on independence meaning that these revolve around surrendering our power to others. Whilst there is no attention to idealizing others based on reproductive fitness, I would nonetheless argue that the idea of idealizing another for any reason at all is clearly contrary to his approach, given the extent to which it involves taking possession of our own powers. Furthermore, the concept of idealization of another on the basis of desire or reproduction might entail the sort of relationship that limits the extent to which either partner could develop the basic orientation towards all that Fromm holds as fundamental to genuine love. Ultimately the contrast between Fromm and this interpretation of love is founded on a more basic distinction, since love conceived as a mere product of biochemical or libidinal desire is incompatible with Fromm's insistence that love is a power, regardless of the extent to which it might lead to desire for or the regressive idealization of one particular other.

6.5 *The Art of Loving* and Secularized Agape

May's sixth historical classification of love is "Love as (Divine and Then Secularized) Agape," (2019, 29-31) and it is here that the implications for *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995) become more significant. Whilst the first four types are compatible to some

extent with Fromm's love, and the fifth seems vulnerable to Fromm's insistence on independence and orientation to the world, the sixth illuminates what I have argued are the major flaws in Fromm's theory. It is important to note that May is critical of this conception of love, basing his objection on the claim it invests love with a capacity previously only attributed to humanity through the possession of divine power. This means that love as secularized agape inherits – perhaps subtly or implicitly – the capacity to be unconditional, selfless, all-affirming, and enduring. May argues that this places unreasonable expectations on our power to love, particularly since the feeling of love – conceived here as joy and desire - will endure only as long as we perceive the promise of ontological rootedness in another.

Hence, rather than being a power that endures without end, without self-interest, and without being based on any quality in the beloved, love is completely dependent on the capacity of the other to fulfil our deepest need, that of a home. Whilst May bases the conditionality of love in the ability of the other to fulfil our own need – and therefore in conditions found in others – my own argument focuses instead on how conditions *in ourselves* might limit our capacity to love. Each chapter has involved some way in which Fromm has neglected the extent to which our existential context can entail some conditions and limitations to our capacity to love. The remainder of this section will therefore build on May's critique of the theological basis of human love by recalling how each chapter of my own critique has focused on conditions of love implicit in our own existence, rather than in the promise of rootedness that a beloved can offer us.

6.6 Existential and Psychodynamic Conditions of the Power to Love

Fromm's approach to love is putatively existential, since it is based on the claim that our experience of the world involves a series of existential needs and dichotomies that we must resolve in order to escape isolation and anxiety. Whilst not contesting this, my own method involves broadening the meaning of existential to encompass more of the aspects of concrete human life, the limited life of embodied finitude (including spatiality, temporality, energy, contingency, and particularity), inter-subjectivity, and the interpretational world. In addition to these themes, my own method has been consistently concerned with elaborating the implications of repression and transference for our experience of self, others, world, and God. My approach has consequently involved a

revision of Fromm that is both existential and psychodynamic, and often existential insofar as it is psychodynamic. While May argues for the conditional nature of love based on the extent to which others offer the promise of home, my own approach supplements this with attention to our how own power to act in love is utterly rooted in the conditions of concrete existence. In other words, a love that is unconditional is an abstract love abstract, a love that somehow transcends or eludes the conditions in which we exist.

This exploration of the conditional and existential nature of love commenced in Chapter Two, in my discussion of how four themes that feature prominently in Fromm's work – repression, alienation, transference, and narcissism – can function as psychodynamic conditions that limit our capacity to love. This has been primarily envisaged as involving both disembodiment and the stifling of emotional and biochemical energy, and ultimately as entailing a corrective to the manner in which Fromm understands love as "entirely voluntary" ([1956] 1995, 22). Repression - and the alienation from our bodies that it entails – can involve a restriction on our capacity and energy to choose freely, to give of self, and to be oriented towards the world. Hence Fromm's theory of love calls for more attention to our embodied and energetic existence. In addition, I have argued that our capacity to respond is measured by the basic limitations of spatial and temporal finitude, and by our particular capacities and tendencies, and that this is not reflected in Fromm's claim that love is necessarily open to the whole world.

The concept of transference employed in Chapter Two referred to the surrendering of our powers to an exterior authority who/which assumes dominion over our activity, a usage which is arguably idiosyncratic relative to the history of psychotherapy. Fromm, however, does draw on a more common meaning of transference, to which I turned in Chapter Three. Here I discussed how transference entails the distortion of experience and relationships, based on the claim that our parents and other significant figures in our development can become internalized images in our psyches and interrupt perception. The focus in this chapter was on how repression of these inner others again entails a challenge to Fromm's claim that love – here in the element of respect – can see others clearly, as they are. I have argued that this idea neglects the possibility of distortion through transference, and that whilst this is present in several of Fromm's works, it is nonetheless absent from *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995) and Fromm's work on love generally.

Again this signals deeper attention to the concrete conditions of life, this time concerning the interpretative dimensions of perception. In this context, I have argued that the importance of repression and transference calls for a psychodynamic reduction, which would develop existing approaches to the visibility or intelligibility of phenomena. Hence, this relates to the aspect of our existence that is always interpretational. Furthermore, the stress on cathexis in Object Relations Theory also implies that in certain cases transference will channel the energy otherwise intended for loving relationships towards inner representations of people from our past. Finally, the spatial and temporal conditions of existence are neglected in the idea that in a relationship based on erotic love we are in effect loving all, since our concrete commitment to one other at least potentially limits the extent to which we are committed to all others.

The focus on repression, interpretation, and perception continued in Chapter Four, in the context of Fromm's claim that the history of theology culminates in the realization that powers once projected onto a variety of concepts of God are actually human powers. I have argued that Fromm's historical, gendered, and sociological approach to this question is vulnerable to an existential critique in two ways. First, more attention to the concrete and specific context of the psychological development of theological representations suggests both that the trajectory is far more personalised and particular than Fromm claims and that he neglects the possibility and importance of repressed God-concepts. When viewed in the context of the process of individuation and re-appropriation of our own projected powers, these images are highly significant in obscuring the visibility of self and Cosmos, as well as our interpretation of our worlds and of our own existence. Secondly, I have argued that Fromm's perception of the pre-historical – and supposedly obsolete – matriarchal culture ignores any traditions that view the divine feminine as the cosmic and energetic ground of our own finite power, including the power to love. Whilst an existential approach might otherwise be assumed to involve freedom from any concept of divinity, I have argued that Fromm's focus on love as a power and an energy demands attention to other possibilities around the foundation and contingency of agency. This is especially true given the mystical aspects of his own work elsewhere. Again this relates to May's approach by stressing that our power to love is grounded in the conditions of our relationship to the universe, arguing alongside May that unconditional love would entail the influence of some transcendent power. Each of these chapters has therefore developed ways in which the conditional nature of love is rooted in conditions inherent in ourselves, either as

contrasted or complementary to May's condition of the promise of rootedness from those whom we love.

Continuing this critique, I have argued in Chapter Five that Fromm's emphasis on individuation and freedom from authority accompanies a consistent but less systematic attention to receptivity and intersubjective context. Nonetheless, whilst Fromm claims that his own work is phenomenological (1992, 20), an account of existence which is genuinely concrete would culminate in a far greater attention to the fluidity and contextual conditioning of human selfhood, experience, and activity. This can be contrasted with Fromm's comparatively stable interpretation of our dynamisms and typology of character. Since Fromm's priority is with the development of our potencies, he neglects the extent to which our concrete existence can involve a far more situational content in our character, and so in the channelling of our energy towards the world in love. Whilst Fromm depicts character as a relatively fixed way of relating, thorough attention to concrete existence and experience would reflect how our power to feel, act, and love can be intimately bound up with our fluid experience of the world and our relational context. This also points to a lacuna in Fromm's account of existence, with its focus on our existential dichotomies. This emphasis, perhaps inherited from the dialectical approach of Hegel and Marx, and perhaps Kierkegaard's paradoxes, is contrasted with a lack of attention to the interpretative and intersubjective dimension of existence. The focus on worldhood and interpretation found in other strands of existentialism is absent in Fromm, perhaps due to his own somewhat emphatic evolutionary and exilic account of our existence.[204] Whilst this absence is problematic in itself and for the absolutized conception of human life, it is also important for *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995) given the extent to which Fromm's active power to love responds to a defined series of existential dichotomies and an assumed situation of need.

[204] This absence is more curious given the well-known tradition of existential psychotherapy, which focuses on themes such as freedom, death, worldhood, alienation, guilt, identity, and meaning, and which would have been well-known Fromm's time through writers such as Medard Boss, Ludwig Binswanger, and Rollo May.

6.7 Love and Need

In addition to the emphasis on inner objects, my third chapter also began to develop a line of argument that is crucial to my overall critique of Fromm, concerning the relationship between love and need. This will also contribute to my existential critique by ultimately re-iterating the importance of intersubjectivity. Before discussing how Chapter Five lays further ground to explore the importance of this point, I will recall how it emerges in the previous chapters. In Chapter Two, I began to suggest that there is a tension between the idea that love originates in the need of the agent and a separate idea that it responds to the needs of others for their own sake. This recurs in Chapter Three, since knowledge of another – the fourth element of love – is said to be our ultimate dynamism, and the goal of all our strivings. Knowledge and erotic love are hence governed by need. Although Fromm states that this is the case for any species of love, he also states that brotherly love also loves the helpless ones who are without purpose. Whilst it is possible that erotic commitment and purposeless commitment to the helpless could co-exist to some extent, I have argued that there is nonetheless an implicit tension around which commitment we prioritise, again due to our finitude and particularity. Hence as well as their being a possible theoretical tension between love conceived as a response to the need of others and as the fulfilment of our own need to escape isolation, there is also an arguable practical tension between our intense and exclusive commitment to a partner on the basis of the need for knowledge and our commitment to those without purpose.

In connection with this, in addition to arguing for the existential and relational context of the experience of self and the capacity to love, the phenomenological approach developed in Chapter Five also invites a critique of the foundations of Fromm's approach to love and need. Fromm's account of both human existence and of the love that resolves our dichotomies is utterly grounded in the idea that every human being is driven by need to be united with the universe through interpersonal relations with others. Need is a universal dynamic of our psyches, and a basic constituent of our existence. This claim is rooted in his naturalised or secularised appropriation of the Hasidic tradition of human exile from God, given scientific content through evolutionary theory and some rudimentary neuroscience, even if Fromm himself asserts that his interpretation of life is based on his own therapeutic work. Placed in the context of the first-person phenomenological model presented in Chapter Five, the main difficulty here is that Fromm simply imposes his own view upon human experience in general, as well as his theory of love. In doing so, he again

neglects the interpretative and subjective dimension of life. Having claimed that Fromm's understanding of love calls for an existential and psychodynamic critique based on the conditions of embodied finitude, inter-subjectivity, and the interpretational world, the remainder of this conclusion will explore the ramifications of the phenomenological and hermeneutic view of existence for the foundation of Fromm's work.

6.8 Need and Phenomenology

To recap, this phenomenological view focuses on first-person worlds rather than objective theory. This involves bracketing – or placing into question – any concept otherwise taken for granted prior to conscious experience. Whilst there may well be some grounds for concepts which are prior to or structure our experience, I have argued that the relationship between love and need assumed by Fromm is vulnerable to a critique based on incoherence, both theoretically and practically (primarily in Section 3.3.3). This difficulty is compounded by the intersubjective and phenomenological focus on personal experience, which calls into question the claim that every human experience and activity – be it regressive or progressive – originates in the need to escape anxiety and isolation. Whilst isolation and need may well drive some - or even all – human experience, attention to the particularity of concrete experience nonetheless means that this possibility must be placed in question, and that the ramifications of doing so must be explored. In other words, the possibility of a plurality of experiences of life and world leads to the possibility of a plurality of rationales for the activity of love, in contrast to love as necessarily governed by exile and need. In practical terms, this means that even if some people see their experience as incoherent, unpredictable, and dangerous, and experience self as exiled from nature and from others and strive to love on that basis, others may view existence as abundant, and so love not out of need but out of gratuity. Even given the consistent existentialist theme of the experience of absurdity, Fromm's work assumes that this is the result of exile. A genuinely subjective approach, on the other hand, would be open to the possibility that we are simply cast into the world without any prior harmony to recover. This would again entail openness to another ground for love, perhaps seen not as a need and quest for unity, but simply compassion based on proximity, shared suffering, or mutual delight.

As well as raising difficulties for the place of need in Fromm's thought, a more concrete approach must also question the importance of unity, the unity that is our ultimate

dynamism and hence the goal of our love. This becomes problematic insofar as it is assumed to be the motivation of every person, and also insofar as it is presumed to be possible. Firstly, the assumption of an existential need for unity clearly reflects Fromm's religious and philosophical background. Secondly, the presumption of the possibility of the fulfilment of the need for unity assumes a metaphysical position that is neither explicit nor supported. Whilst there, again, may be convincing arguments for these views, the idea that they are necessary and basic conditions of experience simply does not stand up to the attention to the plural and concrete that is necessary to ground love in human existence, and particularly the interpretative dimension of human life. Whilst Fromm is clear that each of us must respond to the question of meaning for ourselves (see Section 1.4.5), he assumes that the optimal solution to this is the development of our powers towards the goal of unity. In doing so, he neglects the possibility that each person may have a distinct interpretation of meaning, purpose, well-being, and life in general. This insistence on unity suggests that Fromm's work is a subtle example of the type of totalizing interpretation of human life opposed both in existentialism and by the Institute for Social Research. Specifically concerning love, if we eschew the possibility of unity – or even merely of interpersonal unity of essences – in favour, for instance, of radical difference or otherness, Fromm's approach implies either that we are deceived and unconsciously seeking union, or that we do not love.

To put this in the context of the argument of my conclusion so far, it will be useful to recap. I have initially explored the arguments of Chapters One to Five, arguing for an existential revision of Fromm's work based on a number of consequences of our concrete life, and contrasting these conditions to the conditions inherent in May's promise of ontological rootedness. I then began to develop my critique of the relationship between love and need, opening up the question of the place of need in Fromm's approach generally, and with it the union that it is assumed to seek. This questioning of need and unity has shaped my argument that Fromm's work ignores the possibility of a plurality of ways of experiencing our existential situation, either through an experience other than isolation, or an isolation that is not exilic. In addition to this, I have argued that the focus on unity also shelters metaphysical assumptions, and that both unity and need ignore the possibility of alternative motivations for love.

Having done so, it is nonetheless important to stress that this bracketing is merely intended to invite alternative foundations for love, rather than serving as a negation of Fromm's approach. In fact, in a sense it merely opens up the possibility that Fromm's is in fact one of the methods made possible by the plurality and particularity of experience. Rather than the rejection of Fromm's art, this simply entails that it be assessed on the basis of its own merits, as one possibility amongst others. In the remainder of this conclusion I shall therefore argue that Fromm's account is at once coherent and flexible enough to respond to the variety of the usages of love in language, as well as being based on a paradigm of human integrity.[205] In addition, however, I will also argue that two issues of coherence in Fromm's account demand an alternative way of framing love's motivation and activity, based on interpretation, multiplicity, wisdom, and freedom.

6.9 The Flexibility of *The Art of Loving*

One of the main strengths in Fromm's approach is how it refers to a variety of ways in which the name of love is typically used, whilst also providing a ground upon which to reject others. This is found in the claim that love involves any type of activity which strives for the flourishing and development of the powers of others, premised on the cultivation and gift of our own powers. This enables Fromm to argue both that erotic, paternal, fraternal, divine, and self are all adjectives which can be applied to love, and simultaneously that these only merit the name of love insofar as they are premised on developing the integrity of all parties. This means that affective experiences as distinct as erotic fusion, fraternal compassion, paternal affection, divine fusion, and self-esteem can be rendered alike through the condition that they accompany rather than replace consistent striving for the flourishing of the other. Fromm's conception of love thus accommodates many of the varied ways in which the term is used, whilst at once providing a criterion – mutual integrity – upon which they can be critiqued. It also means that love can involve volition, affectivity, and perception, even if I have argued that the somatic aspect of life is underemphasised. In addition, Fromm's subsequent elaboration of biophilia extends the practice of love towards the whole sphere of life, although admittedly merely as a foundation rather than a coherent exploration of the implications of this.

[205] In fact, this also relates to the idea that Fromm's language is intended as prophetic, rather than strictly logical, since this suggests that his depiction of love is simply intended to evoke in us the desire to do so, to set out upon the path of loving.

6.10 The Coherence of *The Art of Loving*

However, it is when we consider the coherence of Fromm's approach that we begin to encounter the re-occurrence of problems that I have introduced throughout the text. I have identified two main difficulties, each of which invites the suggestion that some of the aspects of Fromm's account of love are in mutual tension. These concern the relationship between good of self and good of other, and the consistency between the various ways in which Fromm sees unity, from his initial formulations of our existential needs to the interpersonal and mystical fusions portrayed in later texts. It is important to point out that this will involve taking Fromm's use of need at face value, which may appear an inconsistency in my own approach given that I have argued above for it to be bracketed. This objection can be addressed simply by pointing out that the need which was bracketed above was need as the basic constituent of human existence, and hence the foundation of love rather than merely a component. Need is considered here as a possibility rather than a fact, and also assessed on the basis of the coherence between two particular needs rather than assumed to be the universal foundation of human life.

Concerning the first point, this revolves around the question of whether Fromm's approach involves an incoherence between love conceived as tending towards the needs or good of others, and conceived as ordered towards the needs or good of self.[206] There are two clear strands running through Fromm's work, which I would argue can be framed as the philosophical context and the practical content.[207] In the first case, as I have stressed throughout, love is informed by the trajectory of exile and return, an arc of harmonies from lost to new. This is the aspect by which love tends towards the fulfilment of the need or good of self, insofar as it achieves the unity that we crave. On the other hand, the practical content of Fromm's whole body of work from *The Fear of Freedom* ([1941] 2001) to *The Art of Being* ([1993] 2007) focuses on the development of our own powers so as to respond

[206] It might be said that there is some slippage in this section between need and good, but I would argue that this is justified given that Fromm's work equates our good with the fulfilment of our existential needs.

[207] There is an interesting possibility that this distinction could be framed relative to the influence of Annis Freeman – Fromm's third wife – on *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995; see Section 0.2.11). Given that the philosophical foundations of the text can easily be charted from Fromm's early life and sources, it is worth asking if his relationship with Freeman might have had a decisive influence on the content rather than the context (see Funk, 2000, 138).

to the needs or good of others. The first difficulty hence concerns the question of whether our activity can be fundamentally driven both by our own good and by the good of others, especially given that most approaches to love have tended to emphasise one pole of this (May, 2011, 235). Whilst it is possible that one of these poles is central and the other simply follows from it, there is no basis in Fromm's writings to suggest that either is prior. Fromm, that is, never addresses the question of how they relate and merely asserts the significance of each separately at various points. In his approach to self-love, Fromm does maintain that in order to respond to the needs of others I must first of all respond to my own needs, but this concerns our capacity to love rather than the ultimate motivation for doing so. The point remains, therefore, that Fromm proposes two separate and perhaps opposed rationales or goods for our activity without any account of how they relate.

The second difficulty concerns the question of unity, and again involves the possibility of incoherence both internal to *The Art of Loving* (Fromm [1956] 1995) and between that work and subsequent Fromm texts. This involves the question of whether unity can or should be understood hierarchically, graded dependent on the level of fusion involved. Each of the existential needs from Section 1.4 clearly cultivates unity or harmony in different ways, and can be added to the care, responsibility, respect, knowledge, compassion, affection, erotic fusion, and mystical unity from later texts. The difficulty here is that Fromm argues at times for the necessity of fusion whilst at others merely endorsing the adequacy of the fulfilment of the other relational needs. As I have suggested in Section 3.3.3., this leads to the suggestion of incoherence between erotic love on one hand and brotherly and parental love on the other, since the first entails a fusion of essences whereas the latter might simply involve care for the material needs of another. Fromm may well intend that this brotherly love also penetrates to the core of the other in the same degree as erotic fusion, but it is hard to see how we can equate a type of union which entails reciprocity and *mutual* self-giving with one that need not, and perhaps often cannot. In questioning whether Fromm's account of love is coherent, we are left with the suggestion that the various ways in which we can achieve unity demand some treatment of how they relate to one another, and whether or not they need to be graded in terms of completion or intensity. It seems very different to say that we achieve union with the world through merely responding to someone's need to be sheltered and that we also do so through full fusion, and problematic to simply assume that mere care and responsibility entail a different type of fusion without suggesting why or how. In considering whether Fromm's

love is coherent, we must therefore seek some ground upon which to suggest that erotic fusion and brotherly compassion can both be said to be species of unity.

6.11 Phenomenology and the Psychodynamics of Need

In Section 3.3.3, I introduced the argument that there is an implicit incoherence between the love that responds to my own need and that which responds to others, and that Fromm offers no indication of how they relate. In addition to this, I would also argue that there are major problems with proposing either pole on its own, and that this points to the inadequacy of the psychodynamic method as an abstract interpretation of generic human life. In the first place, we might ask what is implicit in love being an escape from isolation by considering the possibility of a person who was either born and lived unscathed by need or separation, or who simply developed to outgrow it. If love is primarily an escape from our own need, we would have to question whether such a hypothetical person would have any desire to love others. At least when considered as an escape from isolation, Fromm's love is unable to respond to this, and to how intuitively unsatisfactory it seems to say that without separation and anxiety we would have no striving to love. In the second instance, however, the idea that love primarily responds to the needs of others, falls prey to a basic objection against the idea that life can somehow be completely dis-interested in self, acting merely out of pure desire to fulfil the needs of others. Whilst of course it is possible to say that I can put the needs of *some* others *before* my own needs, it is hard to see on what basis we could ever consider ourselves to have attended to enough people so as to say that the time had come to attend to our own. If love is first for the needs of others, there is little ground in Fromm's work to say that it would ever arrive at the needs of self. Given our own tendency towards self-development and our need to survive and evolve, upheld by Fromm himself, this again seems inadequate.

Perhaps, however, the real inadequacy is a deeper one, rooted in the psychodynamic assumption itself, in the idea that there can be an interpretation of human motivation that accounts for activity generally, for all people and in all of their strivings. Perhaps, that is, the question of whose need love responds to is simply an abstract one, a phantom born of the assumption that human life is transparent to observation, that our dynamisms can be penetrated and diagnosed, and that a theory of the *context* of love can be constructed upon what we have ascertained. The alternative recalls the interpretative and phenomenological

first-person approach that I have discussed in Chapter Five, and also in critiquing the assumption of need as a given in Sections 6.7 and 6.8. Here, applied to the incoherence of different needs rather than the supposed self-evidence of one need, the idea of the plurality of human experience simply entails that love need not be construed as grounded in the need of the beloved nor in the need of the lover. Perhaps, in other words, love is simply mysterious, rooted in some enigmatic impulse to give life, to help flourish, to behold, to open, to express value, or in some other motivation following from any of the innumerable ways that humans have been able to peer into the pool of life, perceive some phenomenon, and be moved to response, even if merely their own need.[208] The point, again in the context of my existential critique of Fromm, is that love can be seen as irreducibly particular, and that perhaps what matters is not the motivation but the activity itself. This also gives us a possible response to the second question, that of the gradation of goods in Fromm's ways of relating.

6.12 Love, Unity, and Practical Wisdom

Here we return to a problem that I have introduced in Section 3.3.3, and developed in Section 6.10, concerning how to understand the relationship between the multiple ways in which Fromm frames union. In particular this involves the claim that our ultimate dynamism is towards full erotic and/or mystical fusion, and his separate claims that we can be fulfilled by a series of other existential needs or elements of love. Ultimately this involves the question of whether the different types of unity and relation that Fromm depicts entail gradation between them, given that Fromm claims that erotic love entails full fusion and reciprocal self-giving and yet does not claim this with brotherly love, for instance. Rather than a question of which need is more basic, this is simply a matter of whether one union is preferable to the others, and again there is little basis in Fromm's

[208] This relates to the approach to love taken by both SørenKierkegaard ([1847] 1964) and Emmanuel Levinas ([1961] 1969, 144-147), who each portray love as a command based on the need of the neighbour. Kierkegaard argues both that the ground of love is hidden and interior, and that the lover simply needs to love for love's sake. Although both of these are in the context of a theological command, they are analogous to my point here insofar as I am arguing that love perhaps can just be based on the value of love itself, understood as the impulse to give life. Secondly, Levinas' maintains that our responsibility to others arises out of the call that we see in the face, rather than out of any natural lack of our own, or some need to return home. This is arguably also based on how our natural love for and enjoyment of life provides the foundation for our response, and whilst I do not wish to assume that this is the case it is nonetheless salient in the idea that love does not entail any need to return.

own work to ground any comparison, since each is simply endorsed on its own terms without comment as to how it relates to the others.[209]

Again, I would argue that a return to particularity and activity, through the first-person viewpoint, can navigate this issue, simply by placing into question the idea of the hierarchy of goods or any suggestion of a superior degree of unity.[210] Rather than maintaining that there must be a way to separate and grade the degrees of unity that Fromm depicts, I would argue that a truly existential approach simply accepts the reality of plurality, of a multiplicity of ways in which we can and do respond to the world, and a variety of intensities in our relationships. Again we return to the person, and again by way of suspicion of the idea that any one love or any one unity is the answer, or indeed that there is any one question. Instead, the concrete experience of life leads to an immense spectrum of persons, each with particular gifts, capacities, interests, and possibilities, and to looking at particularity from the perspective of potential rather than limitation. Each person, a unique phenomenon, can love only in their own way, unite according to their own capacities, and act according to their own possibilities. Rather than excluding legitimate approaches to love through the supposed superiority of one specific approach, this also makes space for love to be appreciated in all of its manifestations, wherever it gives and receives life, and whatever good it cultivates.

Finally, acknowledgement of this also leads to a question that I have introduced first in Section 2.8, in that case concerning just how to distinguish between persons to respond to. In this instance, I would argue again that the particularity of love means again that our activity can and should be guided by whatever faculty or power it is that enables us to make wise choices, whether it is named prudence, practical wisdom, intuition,

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[209] Kierkegaard's *Works of Love* ([1847] 1964) is also a possible point of contact here, since he forcefully asserts throughout that Christian love of neighbour is simply superior to any type of preferential love. This attests to the implicit tension between types of love, here on the theological level. Ultimately, however, it relies on a distinction based on a theological command, and is therefore contingent upon all of the problems involved in authenticating itself.

[210] I am open to the possibility that Fromm's own approach to the unity of the whole, and to the collapse of the subject-object distinction, might enable us to circumvent this question through the possibility of a relational or universal good rather than particular goods. This would involve a pre-existent unity which is discovered and expressed in love, rather than craved. I have elected to remain on the critical level, however, rather than the speculative departure that this would entail. A scientific defence of a relational view of existence has recently been developed by the physicist Carlo Rovelli ([2014] 2017).

discernment, or something else. This means that each person must choose how, where, and when to respond, unite, affirm, or give, and must do so according to their own potentialities rather than by striving for some goal superimposed on life by theory. This means that the psychodynamic method – of apportioning one particular structure of striving to all humans - gives way to one premised on multiplicity. Finally, this also recalls my own concrete method again, here with a dimension of life that has always been fundamental to existentialist critiques of totality. Love, as well as being informed by some principle of wisdom, is always dependent on the freedom of persons to choose, and to give according to the conditions of their own life trajectory. Notwithstanding the possibility that this might entail an entirely different view of both the context and the concept of love, Fromm's perspective implies that it must be both wise and free. The genuinely existential approach must resist the temptation to measure the life of persons with the assumption of need or the supremacy of one type of activity over another, and instead honour the immense multiplicity of lives and worlds.

6.13 Existence, Psychodynamics, and *The Art of Loving*

My existential and psychodynamic revision of Erich Fromm's *The Art of Loving* ([1956] 1995) has culminated in the an endorsement of Fromm's theory of love both in terms of its flexibility and its coherence, at least in revised form. In terms of adequacy, however, both the particularity of our perspectives and a view of language as a power that reveals the truth of phenomena each imply that people be free to explore Fromm's approach for themselves, and to be moved (or otherwise) with his call to empowerment. This is a call for care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge, through the gift of self, in openness to all people and life. I have argued, however, that concrete human life entails that this openness must be considered as conditional, measured not by May's promise of ontological rootedness in the other, but by a series of existential and psychodynamic limitations to our own power to act. I have maintained that a genuinely loving view of love eschews Fromm's claims that it must be perfect and respond to the world as a whole, in favour of interpretations of love that seek to navigate the immensely deep and mysterious waters of concrete existence. The power to love, as I see it, is limited by repression of emotional and biochemical energy, and of inner representations of God and others. It is mediated and misplaced through the distorting interpretations of transference. It is inescapably finite and embodied, spatial, temporal, particular, energetic, and contingent upon the universe and upon our formative and present relations, upon intersubjectivity. Love, finally, entails wise

choices that respond to our limitations and opportunities in a personal way, in freedom, and in the context of our own worlds of experience and interpretation. Love cares and responds, beholds and unites, cultivates and enjoys, gives and receives, but always aware of plurality, guided by wisdom, and ever rooted in the conditions of existence.

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