



## Erich Fromm's Humanism and the Stranger

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*As the generations pass they grow worse. A time will come when they have grown so wicked that they will worship power; might will be right to them and reverence for good will cease to be. At last, when no man is angry any more at wrongdoing or feels shame, in the presence of the miserable, Zeus will destroy them too. And yet even then something might be done, if only the common people would rise and put down rulers that oppress them.* (Greek myth on the Iron Age, quoted Fromm: 1973. Epigraph)

When numerous, dramatic events seemed to favor human brotherhood at the end of the 80s as, for example: the Fall of the Berlin Wall; Lech Walesa, President of Poland; the crash and fall of the ill-named Soviet „Communism” etc., brotherly embraces, intense joy and well-wishes broke-out all over the world. For a very short time we were all brothers and there were portents of world peace. Too soon, those who until recently had shared a cordial good-neighborhood, became strangers to one another; they were no longer equal... Now they are different because of their color, their religion, because they belong to another ethnic group or to a land that chooses to become a *nation* with good reasons to believe it can be self-sufficient or with only the illusion of being able to become one. They are no longer equals; they are the enemy that will most certainly attack our

security, so that they must be attacked, tortured, raped, murdered without mercy, in a war without quarter.

It is obvious that the stranger or that which is strange (Latin: *extranearius, extraneus*), do not belong, they are not with us. Fromm (1956, p. 44) emphasizes that today there is a tendency to confuse *equality* with *saneness*, as quite frivolously, *otherness* becomes synonymous with *inferiority*. The patterns of who is considered a stranger or what characterizes strangeness are a part of the frame of orientation and devotion learned since neonates in order to survive in our particular milieu. There is no question of the immense impact of the family and social group in the formation of this frame of orientation and devotion, that encompasses all living beings, all things and Nature. The genetic components are still quite guessed-at, but they must also be considered. Yet, what is so awesome and what shakes us is the sudden transition from friend to foe, as if that malignant aggression had been only barely repressed.

We must state that this sudden change in attitudes is because the apparent camaraderie and solidarity had been required by the then prevailing social character, and that would have continued the same if deep threatening cracks had not appeared in the new social-political-economic structure. The simultaneous responsibility of creating new sustaining structures and the need to count with the necessary time to strengthen them, increased the strain. We must



add to this the prevailing corruption, disorganization and authoritarianism of 40 and more years standing in those groups who freed themselves, as well as the fact that the so-called „free” societies are really quite alienated, reified, dehumanized, and also corrupt, corrupt in-so-far as they reverence money and pay lip service to Nature and to life, plus a lack of respect for all human beings. Sometimes this corruption invades all social strata (with very limited and honorable exceptions). Thus, they also repress love and brotherhood, as well as hate and rancour and it is readily understandable that under conditions that breed insecurity and fear, what blossoms forth is rancour, hatred, necrophilia, the readiness to destroy, the capacity to kill, as well as the „rape-rob syndrome” (Fromm: 1990, pp. 103ff.). Rationalizations appear all too readily, as usual, to excuse an inexcusable destructive aggression. Unfortunately, the all too brief mirage of peace, fraternity and freedom, disappeared.

The idea of freedom is central to Erich Fromm’s radical humanism. His concept of freedom considers our genes (the color of our skin; the existence of limiting congenital processes...); our geography and history; the socioeconomic strata of the family... the prevailing social character due to our specific style of life. Because of all this Fromm always places freedom in the terrain of options, of accessible specific alternatives and he never speaks of an unlimited freedom.

Of great illuminating significance are his two aspects of freedom: freedom *for* and freedom *from* that avoids Locke’s pitfall expressed by Mehta (1992 p. 1f.)<sup>1</sup> who believes that free-

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<sup>1</sup> „Locke’s assumption is that human beings are by their nature free and they are therefore capable of murder, theft and mayhem and are hence in mortal danger ... because in such pursuit we encounter others similarly motivated, and finally because such encounters can lead to violence and dire consequences, we agree, within constraints, to have our interests and freedom ordered and limited by an external authority”. Locke’s and Mehta’s view is consonant with Freud’s, who believes that we need to „repress our irrational aggressions and our polymorphous perverse infantile sexual drives”; they do not consider that our creative, constructive feelings of love, warmth, human solidarity etc., are also repressed and thus, there is a need for de-repression

dom, in the best of circumstances, is ambiguous for it means that we can experience hate, destructive desires, the will to kill and also to love etc. All this is true, but it is only part of the truth in-so-far as it relates to *freedom from* all restrictions, when also our destructive and creative options can all become conscious as a continuum. It therefore becomes imperative that we should become conscious of what we wish to be free *for*.

The multiple interfering temptations, the difficulties, the suffering and the immense efforts necessary to attain to *freedom for* are very well described in the Exodus; and they were led by a man invested with the authority of the Lord! The chronicle states that they needed 40 years of living in the desert so that the peoples of Abraham could transcend their submissiveness and their desire to return to the relative „security” of being slaves in Egypt. It is timely to bring to mind this past event because of its similarity to so much that is happening today. Let us hope that present-day humans, equipped with the achievements of science, technology and improved information, may accomplish a harmonious progression in much less than 40 years.

The freedom of individuals as well as of peoples must have clear objectives, a definite and defined purpose of commitment, as well as cognizance of the probable time for perceptible progress otherwise the will to freedom becomes a mere illusion and winds up as a serious frustration. The fear of freedom, the fear of the unknown and of aloneness provokes the rapid loss of the great expectation; all efforts become excessive, sacrifices become senseless and a strong passive-conformist trend appears or the longing for the past that is now embellished, idealized and idolized. The need for a clear objective for *freedom for* is all too true, but there is also the need for *de-repression*, the need to *humanize society* and attempts to change the *having* mode; that the *having* mode ceases to be the primary passion it is today, thus opening pathways to *being*, although even this may seem utopia, as of now.

In some countries today, we have witnessed

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and the liberty to choose *for* what it is that we wish to be free.



their wish to be *free from* exterior forces as „political liberation” (Fromm: 1992, p. 6). Although this is needed it is insufficient for the envisioned freedom; amongst so many others, Vaclav Havel (Draper: 1993, p. 18) and the former checoslovaks have lived the proof that it is not enough to become *free from* their communist oppressors. The incredible success of „the Velvet Revolution” found them unprepared: without a detailed government project, they did not have the trained cadres for a „Parallel Government” and they had not foreseen the need for creative action programs for their universities and schools. Thus, amongst other issues, the lack of foresight has divided former brothers into cheks and slovaks; strangers that struggle independently and painfully looking for their *freedom for*.

In chapter 3 of „The Sane Society” (1955) Fromm describes some human needs and existential polarities (pp. 30-61), and points to all the possible intermediate gradients, which excludes any idea of manicheism. *He is quite clear that mental health, be it of individuals or of social groups, resides in the love of life and of all that lives, in creativity, in human solidarity and fraternity... All human beings have the option of developing their optimum capacity to be, of attaining to human values of peace, integrity, humility and patience, tenderness and warmth... These human values that are accessible to human achievement, are intrapsychic only at first and very briefly, for almost at once they become evident in the dealings with others and with Nature. It cannot be otherwise: to be or to have soon becomes manifest in all our activities: how we walk, how we eat, what we say and do... everything we produce reveals our affects, intimacies of our being. This immediate manifestation to the world outside is quite well known to us as „non-verbal communication” deeply colored by our explicit and implicit affects. Actually, this subtle way of communicating, like dreams, they are royal roads to becoming aware of what is unconscious. This is true of all human beings of all times, particularly of those who have left some material evidence of their passage.*

*Homo sapiens* is unique and equal to all others, in human essence, regardless of sex, age,

color, the ethnic group to which they belong or the religion they profess.

„By radical humanism - states Fromm (1966 p. 13)- I refer to a global philosophy which emphasizes the *oneness* of the human race, the capacity of man to develop his own powers and to arrive at inner harmony and at the establishment of a peaceful world. Radical humanism considers the goal of man to be that of complete independence, and this implies penetrating through fictions and illusions to a full awareness of reality.” (Emphasis added)

It is inevitable that we must search with all our senses for what is universal so that we can know it and grasp it. „What is specific, unique in each being, we must discover it anew at each opportunity. This re-discovery requires an open mind backed by a conceptual hypothesis that will help us observe”. (Horney Eckardt: 1992a). In the discovery and appreciation of differences, lies one aspect of our capacity to be amazed by the marvels of all creation to which we also belong. What is strange exists insofar as it is unknown; the stranger exists also as long as unknown or as long as *we refuse to acknowledge*, as long as we *refuse to know* her/him.

As we become free of imposed false beliefs (for example: that the earth is the center of our planetary system); free from the absolutism of kings and of the believe that they are anointed by God; free from the whims of nature thanks to industrialization, science and technology (with the exception of those countries devastated by hunger like Somalia that, by the way, could be helped with better opportunity, sedulity and efficiency and thus, in all probability without violence and destruction), we are ever more responsible of our destiny; with democracy and secularity and the increase in the number of universities, our horizon of knowledge has expanded and we can say that never before were we able to be so free, nor had we the options for so much creativity and fraternal solidarity... yet, despite all this, once again xenophobia raises it's ugly head.

Fromm (1955) wrote of the impact of advanced technology on armaments, and how this



fact has increased mass destruction and the number and ferocity of armed conflicts. The psychodynamics of this process is the greater alienation and reification, the dehumanization resulting from the capacity to kill at a distance, anonymously; or they can kill close-by, because of the inhumaneness of technological mass-production and the intoxication with power, as in the nazi crematoria.

There is today manifest longing for the return of necrophilous, destructive, totalitarian dictatorships; as also, with renewed fervor, fundamentalist, fanatical religious movements appear in many points of the earth. Many other factors must be at play that impede the generalized well-being and the social peace that are so close if only reason prevailed. Let us look at some of them.

There is today an undeniable prevalence of instability, insecurity and destructive irrational violence. Why? Arthur Koestler emphasizes in „Janus“ what Fromm and others have pointed out: human beings are as ambivalent as the roman god who faces opposite sides simultaneously, so that what we produce can be adapted to build or designed for destruction. The roman observation was confirmed by Fromm (in contrast to Freud) and explained by him in „Beyond the Chains of Illusion“ (1962). When he presents his concept of conscious-unconscious, he shows that human beings *are of necessity ambiguous*, for what is repressed *in all human beings*, what is unconscious is the best and the worse, the most sublime and the most abject, indescribable cruelty and noble aspirations, gloomy sordidness and luminous beauty. Our alienated society also favors this ambiguity in-so-far as it also represses our capacity to love, as it represses the nakedness of our hates and vendettas hiding them under the spurious blanket of rationalizations that try to justify them. This means that if one could be fully de-repressed, one would cease to be ambiguous, which is a theoretical possibility though somewhat rather improbable today.

In fact, one of Fromm's goals for psychoanalysis is to de-repress so that in freedom, individual options can appear as well as awareness of the negative values that family and society have favored, thus deforming the objective vision of reality. Only too well does Fromm know

of human imperfections (and adds that the only perfect human beings are the dead as attested by funeral orations); he well knows that we *cannot* change society; we can only change our own way of being by changing the negative aspects of our character orientation, for our positive ones. Though it is true that we can neither change our family nor our society, we must bear in mind that *we are agents of change* by our own example. This means that we must also talk, teach, struggle with all the means at our disposal in order to fight for those necessary social changes, but never by means of force or violence:

„during the history of man it has been, and still is, force - creating fear - which has made man ready to take fiction for reality, illusions for truth. It was force which made man incapable of independence and hence warped his reason and his emotions“.  
(Fromm: 1966 p. 14)

This is very true and there are a varied range of facts to prove it, from the bitter fruits of communist terror that remain extant in the authoritarian regime in Lithuania, the attempt at a dictatorship in Georgia and the believe of so many that still consider that the stalinist-communist model is desirable as well as the xenocide model of nazism. The persistent and repressed negative roots in the social character of some Americans are the genocidal, racist trends that exterminated so many Indian nations and systematically oppressed the survivors. General Gualteri, fronting for the Argentinian generals, attempted to repress and to cover-up the fratricidal genocide of the „Dirty War“ with the victorious „War of the Falkland Islands“; his rationalization worked while the victory lasted, but his double defeat: in war and politically, did not take long in arriving. It is all to true, that fear and force warps reason, yet nevertheless we must seek other factors that also blunt the capacity to reason, our capacity for rationality and that also obstruct our loving and biophilic affects thus allowing for the prevalence of violence and destructiveness, the hatred of one human being against fellowmen whom he refuses to acknowledge as his brother because of a different color of skin, cus-



toms, religions - factors that also promote the merciless contamination of the earth, air and water, the wanton cutting down of forests and jungles, and the staying and extermination of so many animal species...

Fromm (1956), believes that all the children are equally loved by *mother* without preferences. Theoretically, in a matriarchal or matricentric society, xenophobia and intraspecific destruction should be unknown; Catal Hüyük (Fromm: 1973. pp. 153-158) being an example of this. Is this really true? We do find mostly female figurines with large breasts and generous buttocks in prehistoric remains; I do not know of any female phallic figures then, I recall the Queen of Nature enthroned with her forearms resting on the backs and heads of two leopards, one on each side. There are cave-paintings of female hunters and the „White Lady of Rhodesia“ huntress with bows and arrows (Campbell: 1959 pp. 287 and 382) that show that both women and men were capable of hunting and of killing animals and humans. It is quite probable that in matricentric hunter groups not all its members were considered equal (Mumford: 1961. pp. 31ff) for the favored could be those distinguished in the hunt. The tendency to prefer one of the children seems to have become quite notorious with patriarchy. Fromm (1956) is quite right in stating that if we are blessed by maternal love, our life is luminous and hope-full as it happened to Franklin Delano Roosevelt; but if we are not loved by her, nothing we do, no matter how sublime or how abject, will conquer her love for us.

„Much of our psychic well-being seems to have depended on the equation of the eternal feminine with the eternal maternal. To be told that mother love is not an innate Impulse but a free choice, a gift that can be given and withdrawn at will, confronts each of us with the fearsome possibility that we might have been born into a void of indifference“. (Francine Du Plessix Gray. Foreword in Badinter: 1980)

When Marduk overthrew Tiamat (Fromm: 1951) on discovering the creative and destructive aspect of *Logos*, the displacement and the domi-

nation of women becomes a fact. Once women are marginal, dominated and submissive, in full supremacy of the penis, Astarte-Anath (Ash-toreth in Hebrew) appears, the goddess sometimes represented with a penis between her breasts and the „Matronit (Patai: 1967, p. 158) becomes manifest, explicit in her four characterizations: as chastity; as promiscuous (Lilith); as maternal and as bloodthirsty (destructive) all of them easily identified in mothers that we see in our clinical practice. „In the Kabala, the Matronit assumed the characteristics of a separate, discreet divinity, separate and distinct from the male deity considered her husband, the King“. Did these four characterizations of the Matronit exist in matricentric societies? I know of no evidence on this, at most, we have the legend of the amazons and the above mentioned „White Lady of Rhodesia“. We do have the idea of the Immaculate Conception disseminated over the world, represented in the apache chiricahuas as the great White Goddess, thrown out of heaven by the sun, fecundated by rain that ran between her thighs and later gave birth to twins; in the Delaware branch of the iroquois, the goddess is impregnated by a soft, playful wind and she gives birth to a son; Coatlicue, the mother goddess is made pregnant by a ball of humming-bird feathers and Hultzilopochtli is born, etc.; all this because the role of men in pregnancy was ignored. Everything seems to point out that the narcissism of the penis has to do with emphasizing what is different, what is strange and inferior in relation to women and the stranger.

Male vanity not only turns out lingams and obelisks, but also exacerbates the oppression of everyone and everything who is alien, different, who cannot defend themselves as is the case with the orphan, the alien and women. Why did women accept this? In *Lisistrata*, Aristophanes maps a sure road for their emancipation, (that also deserves to be called the „Velvet Revolution“ of its time). Yet, despite Aristophane, women's lot has been many centuries of oppression, marginal existence and disdain as Philips (1984) amongst others so well describes. There is no doubt that the penis narcissism broke even further, a principle of possible equality and equity between the sexes, just as the vanity of the penis hides man's fear and envy of



women (Horney: 1924; Silva: 1966). Today's „sexism“ is doubtlessly a direct result of male chauvinism, the still prevalent androcracy. The devaluation of women culminates with Freud (1925 and 1931) who considers half of the human race as castrated. *Present day humanism seeks to recover the equality in the essence of all human beings and the right to live of all living creatures.*

Fromm's concept of radical humanism not only deals with the equality of the sexes in their essence, but it implies, even further, their *psychological bisexuality* as a goal of the process of individuation (not to be confused with genital bisexuality). Fromm expresses his thought with great clarity when he states that the individual must become his own mother, his own father and his own child (1955, p. 47) and thus integrates his *being* and assumes the daily risks and responsibilities of life.

What other psychodynamic factors are to be found in xenophobics? They reveal a persistent fixation to the past, an intense longing for an idealized past, worse still if that past has become idolized, because all possibility to objectify is lost; they have passed from the world of what is probable (of what is rationally real), to a world where everything, even the unimaginable becomes possible (Fromm: 1975)<sup>2</sup> they have become fanatics. Fanatism erases all opportunities for reasoning. We see this thoughtless fanatism in the collective suicide of more than 900 people of Jim Jones followings in Dutch Guinea; in the recent mass killing of a group in Waco, Texas; in the fanatical killings in Serbia, Croatia, in Bosnia, in Azerbaijan... and their senseless rejection, often criminal of all that seems alien, strange to them.

All xenophobics require a talisman, someone who will take over the heavy burden of

their lives, because of their intense unconscious fear of freedom and of aloneness creates a fierce dependency. They need someone who will assume full *responsibility* and will show them a way, any way which they will follow gladly even to their death... because their death has also ceased to be *their responsibility*. Thus, another psychodynamic aspect of xenophobics is their *fear of freedom* and of its counterpart, their *fear of aloneness*, two such intense fears that become one very much repressed terror of assuming their own responsibility to search for creative solutions to their present dilemmas. Xenophobic's moral cowardliness becomes rather obvious, as does the fact that they destroy because they're afraid of creating something of their own; as they are also afraid, or refuse unconsciously, to search for new answers to today's problems. Without any doubt, Erich Fromm's radical humanism requires both moral courage and the psychological independence necessary to find new ways for the humanization of man and their fraternal solidarity with nature.

In the religious sphere, we find an increase of fundamentalist orientations, which in itself is rather interesting: stimulated by the moral cowardliness of the xenophobics, there is a renewed search for the support of a frame of devotion (which will also give a much needed frame of orientation) and return, thus, to the shelter of an authoritarian god. This is a far cry from the rational spirit of the mystic who strives to experience an *at-oneness* with God. Fundamentalism is a deeply irrational, non-reasoning fanatism, quite the opposed to the noble spirit of religiosity pregnant with a love of life and for what is alive. Fundamentalism is a return to the ferocity of extreme dogma, where one's life is forfeited if one dare transgress it. The fundamentalist orientation, with its inherent fanatical xenophobia, ignores the many indications that point to the fact that any and all irrational patriarchal gods are dead or should be. One can no longer ignore the death knells of androcracy not that women are the other essential half of humanity.

We must not lose sight of the influence of those holding authority: by their example they seem to allow everything, as was the case with

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<sup>2</sup> His paper „Paranoia and Policy“ appeared in the daily „The New York Times“ on page 45 in the December 11, 1975 issue. It was an abstract of his manuscript „Remarks on the Policy of Detente“ presented before the U. S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee; 93d Congress, Second Session on U. S. Relations with Communist Countries, August-October 1974. Printed by the U.S. Printing Office. Printed in Erich Fromm's Omnibus Edition. Volume V pp 259-264.



Hitler and Stalin and many other dictators. Obviously we are speaking of authoritarian figures and *not* of rational authorities. In his „Nicomachean Ethics“, Aristotle pointed out that if the authority governs for his people we are dealing with a *democracy*; if they govern for themselves, it becomes a *tyranny* which quickly becomes an *anarchy* with the resulting chaos... all of which is initiated and promoted by the person in authority. It becomes apparent that many present-day authorities have initiated and stimulated the armed violence that convulses our *today* as is the case with Serbia and Croatia. In other instances violent aggression is evidence of the absence of a rational authority, as is the case of the tribal feudalism of Somalia. In other instances we are dealing with significant groups, in open rebellion against authority because they believe they have not received what they thought was promised to them, as with the neonazi „Skin Heads“ in what was Democratic Germany.

The responsible authorities in rich countries seem to have lost all serene, objective reasoning when facing the massive emigration of the peoples from poor regions; more so, when their fellow-citizens live these events with the resentment and aggression born of fear. They feel threatened their egocentric enjoyment of their abundant riches, while with disdainful gestures on the one hand they brag of their capacity to generate wastes of all kinds, beginning with energy; and on the other, they create, with their worldwide publicity, the cravings for all the *things* they promote, mostly unnecessary ones. The immigration to their countries seems like a „divine punishment“ for their ostentatious worldwide display and for all their unnecessary consumption. We can say that the immigrants are not so much moved by hunger, as was the case of Joseph's brethren; many are moved by envy, by boredom and, above all, the wish *to have*, to consume more and more, for they have lost the dignity and the self-respect of their way of being and have also lost their group identity swamped by consumerism.

The large demographic growth of the III World populations is another causative factor in massive emigration and consequently of xenophobia: it increases the lack of paid work, so

they are moved by unrest and boredom in their natural habitats, when not moved to increase the forces of violence. The prompting of the market ideology has induced and will continue to induce important changes in everyone's way of life, more so in the III World. Customs and traditions that tied people to their homes have disappeared aided by the enormous facilities granted by rapid roads of transportation, both of people and merchandize. Televised images with some exceptions, promote the idea that *things* will make you happy, as the promote vulgarity, human indignity and sexual libertinage. More and more it exposes crude scenes of violent destructiveness turning such violence into something quite common-place that no longer moves nor alarms. Electronic music exacts its price in high decibels of noise, so the young grow accustomed to it's stridency that blocks out all capacity for reasoning. In fact one could say that whole generations are being stultified; they do not learn to reason and many only search for immediate gratifications. For the market, *having*, consuming is ever so much more important than humanity, nature, life, love ... to *be*. Let us keep in mind that if we only consume what is needed; if consumerism as such ceases to be, the present structure of capitalism will collapse.

The absence of soviet power and of the alternative of a centralized economy has produced a strange phenomenon: an *excess of freedom*, with the appearance of many completely non-viable micronationalisms and xenophobia. It is a well known fact that

„terror has been the principal motivation for the growth in size of many communities, and fear has replaced tribal solidarity more and more, as a factor of social cohesion...“ (Russel: 1949. p. 15. - Translation mine.)

With the disappearance of Stalin's iron-fist control and Brezhnev's, the awareness of the high costs of corruption and of chronic mismanagement plus so many material and spiritual needs such as freedom for, made change imperative in Russia. Communist terror also faded and dismemberment began, the splitting of the spoils.



What is now forgotten is what is convenient and necessary for human solidarity and well-being. Pent-up dreams (some quite to be expected, some grandiose) awaken the thirst for revenge for example in Lithuania, in Croatia and Serbia with their diverse attacks on minority ethnic groups. The *having* mode stimulates the rejection, at times murderous, towards those who do not have, who are weak, as it stimulates the appearance of ultraconservative tendencies like: „Spain for Spaniards only” (the same holds true for Germany, France, Italy etc.).

Is it possible that only the threat of a holocaust can awaken lasting brotherhood feelings like in Ninive? New prophets have come forth like Aldous Huxley („Brave new World”), George Orwell („1984”), Linus Paulin („Why war?”), Leo Szilard („The Voice of the Dolphin”), Erich Fromm („Can Man Prevail?”) etc. They give notice of what can happen and at the same time they propose solutions, some explicitly and others, implicitly; their voices are voices in the desert that the wind carries away, as far as those who wield the power are concerned. And *those who wield power are evermore those who have more*. After them, the Deluge may come for they are only interested in *having* more now. They have become insatiable regardless of any and all costs. There is a definite change in today’s marketing orientation: it is no longer merely reified, it has become destructive, bloodthirsty, necrophilous, while still seeming eager to please, to be what the customer wants, but this is only the outer shell. Underneath there is a ravenous urge for power, and „let the devil take the hindmost”. But the theme is too extensive for the purpose of this paper.

My hope lies in the possibility that individuals can be rescued by those who can objectify the negative aspects of the social and the individual character orientations; in those who will struggle for radical humanism; in those who are willing to make the strenuous effort towards individuation, for their freedom *to* love of life and all that lives. Fromm teaches us to remember that we are not perfect, but that we are perfectible, and like new Jonases, we can preach with our example and with our voice.

If I am not for myself, who?

If I am only for myself, what for?  
 If not now, when?  
 (Ben Hillel)

And the day will come when we can say with Bertrand Russell: „We are citizens of the world”.

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### Zusammenfassung: Erich Fromms Humanismus und der Fremde

Erich Fromms radikaler Humanismus mit seinem Glauben an die Gleichheit aller Menschen, in Frieden und Freiheit-zu, steht im Gegensatz zur Furcht vor dem Fremden (aufgrund von Rasse, Religion, ethnischer Zugehörigkeit, Nationalität etc.) und zu aller Fremdheit, die durch den Narzißmus des Penis, die unglaubliche Gier nach Geld und Macht und die doppelte Furcht vor Freiheit und Alleinsein erzeugt wird; wenn die Menschheit, anstatt sich von dieser doppelten Furcht jagen zu lassen, zur Individuation gelangen würde, so würde der Fremde - so Fromms Ansicht - zu einem Bekannten werden und das Fremde würde unsere Neugier, unser Interesse und unsere Fähigkeit zum Staunen hervorrufen und uns vertraut werden.

Furcht und/oder Impotenz (manchmal ein Deckgefühl für erstere) sind die häufigsten und wichtigsten Ursachen für Wut, Ärger, Groll oder mörderischen Hass; eines dieser Gefühle spielt immer bei der Furcht vor dem Fremden eine Rolle. Viele Menschen fürchten und hassen auf diese Weise die Natur - so wenden sie sich künstlichen, kontrollierbaren Nachahmungen zu, so plündern sie die Natur und wünschen nur noch, sie um jeden Preis zu zerstören. Wir müssen hinzufügen, dass unsere Furcht unsere Fähigkeit zu wachsen behindert und so auch unsere Tendenz zur Destruktivität verstärkt.

Unser Glaube und das Objekt unserer bewussten oder unbewussten Hingabe wird offenbar in allem, was wir in non-verbaler Kommunikation tun - auch dies ein „Königsweg“ zum Unbewussten oder Nicht-Wahrgenommenen. Die Menschen handeln je nach Wahl, in zugänglichen Alternativen; deshalb ist es unbedingt erforderlich, die Einschränkungen unserer Wahrnehmung rückgängig zu machen und unseren Entscheidungshorizont zu erweitern, so dass wir in Bewusstheit und Freiheit wählen können. Für Fromm impliziert unsere Fähigkeit, kreativ zu sein, das Leben und alles Lebendige zu lieben, worin die Erde natürlich eingeschlossen ist, auch, daß wir uns weiterentwickeln und auf dem Weg zur Individuation voranschreiten.

### Riassunto: L'umanesimo di Erich Fromm e l'estraneo.

L'umanesimo radicale di Erich Fromm, con la sua fede nell'eguaglianza di tutti gli esseri umani, nella pace e nella libertà di, è in contrasto con la paura dell'estraneo (a causa della razza, religione, etnia, nazionalità ecc.) e di tutto ciò che è diventato estraneo a causa del narcisismo del pene, dell'incredibile avidità di denaro e di potere e della duplice paura della libertà e della solitudine; Fromm fa capire che se l'umanità riuscisse a superare questa duplice paura potrebbe arrivare all'individuazione, e allora lo straniero sarebbe qualcuno da conoscere e ciò che è estraneo stimolerebbe la nostra curiosità esplorativa, il nostro interesse, e la nostra capacità di sorprenderci e di acquistare familiarità.

La paura e/o l'impotenza (che talvolta copre la prima) sono le cause più frequenti e prevalenti di ira, rabbia, risentimento o furia omicida; uno di questi sentimenti è sempre presente nella xenofobia. Molti esseri umani temono e quindi odiano la natura (e si rivolgono pertanto ad imitazioni artificiali e



controllabili), pertanto la saccheggiano e vogliono soltanto distruggerla, pagando però un alto prezzo. Si deve aggiungere che i nostri timori impediscono la nostra capacità creativa e che anche questo aumenta la nostra tendenza verso la distruttività. Le nostre convinzioni e tutto ciò in cui crediamo, sia coscientemente che incoscientemente, diventano evidenti in tutto ciò che noi facciamo sottoforma di comunicazione non verbale un'altra strada maestra verso ciò che è inconscio, ciò di cui non siamo consapevoli.

Gli uomini agiscono per opzioni, secondo alternative accessibili; vi è quindi un bisogno urgente di de-rimuovere, in modo da aumentare il nostro orizzonte di opzioni e che queste possano essere selezionate con consapevolezza e libertà. Per Fromm, la nostra capacità di essere creativi, di amare la vita e tutto ciò che vive, che naturalmente comprende la terra, comporta che seguiamo la strada del progresso e dell'individuazione.

### **Resumen: El humanismo de Erich Fromm y el extranjero**

El humanismo radical de Erich Fromm, con su compromiso con la igualdad de todos los seres humanos, con la paz y la libertad, contrasta con el miedo a lo extraño y al extranjero (por su raza, por su religión, etnia, nacionalidad etc.) motivados, en una parte importante, por el narcisismo del pene, la voracidad por el dinero y el poder y el miedo, doble, a la libertad y a la soledad. Queda implícito que en el humanismo de Fromm, uno se atreve a enfrentar estos dos miedos y busca su individuación; así el extranjero se convertirá en alguien a quien deseamos conocer y lo extraño estimulará nuestra capacidad de investigación, de curiosidad, interés y de azoro, hasta asimilarlo como algo familiar.

El miedo y la impotencia (que a veces encubre al primero), son las causas más frecuentes de ira, rabia, resentimiento y furia asesina. Alguna de ellas está siempre presente en el xenofóbico. Son muchos los que temen y repudian a la naturaleza (y adquieren flores etc. artificiales y por ende imitaciones controlables) por lo que la despojan y la destruyen de manera inicua ... por dinero. Se debe agregar que nuestros miedos estorban a nuestra capacidad creativa y por ello promueven la tendencia a la destructividad.

Nuestras creencias y todo aquello en lo que estamos comprometidos, sea de modo consciente o inconsciente, se hacen evidentes en todo lo que hacemos y lo comunicamos como expresión no-verbal, otro de los Caminos Reales a aquello de lo que no tenemos conciencia, que nos es desconocido. El ser humano escoge opciones, alternativas accesibles a seguir; es por ello que se impone des-reprimir para ampliar su horizonte de opciones y para que escoja con conocimiento y libertad. Nuestra capacidad para ser creativos, para amar la vida y lo vivo, que desde luego incluye a la tierra implica que seguimos el camino de la progresión y de la individuación.