



ERICH FROMM
STUDY CENTER
BERLIN

INTERNATIONAL PSYCHOANALYTIC UNIVERSITY BERLIN

Putting Society on the Couch

Second International Erich Fromm Research Conference

Thursday, June 21 – Saturday, June 23, 2018

Conference Program:

Thursday, June 21, 2018

Opening Session (Room 5a/b)

8.15 p.m.: Public Opening Session

Welcome

Prof. Dr. Martin Teising, President of the IPU Berlin (Germany)

Prof. Dipl. Ing. Karl Schlecht, Karl Schlecht Foundation, Aichtal (Germany)

Prof. Dr. Thomas Kühn and Dr. Rainer Funk, IPU Berlin / Erich Fromm Study Center, Berlin (Germany)

Opening Lecture: The art of leading

Prof. Dr. Klaus Leisinger, President of the Foundation Global Value Alliance, Basel (Switzerland)

Welcome Reception

Friday, June 22, 2018

Keynote Speech (Room 5a/b)

9.00 a.m.: Welcome

9.15 a.m.: Erich Fromm: Bringing psychoanalysis and sociology together

Dr. Rainer Funk, Erich Fromm Institute Tuebingen (Germany)

Panel 1: The Sphere of Work between Alienation and Creativity (Room 5a/b)

Chair: Prof. Dr. Dr. Phil C. Langer, IPU Berlin (Germany)

10.10 a.m.: Toward a humanization and democratization of work: References of work psychology to Fromm's concepts

Prof. Dr. Wolfgang G. Weber, Leopold Franzens University Innsbruck (Austria)

10.50 a.m.: Leadership in a digitally transforming world based on Fromm's humanistic approach

Prof. Dr. Thomas Kühn, International Psychoanalytic University Berlin (Germany)

11.30 a.m.: Coffee break

11.50 a.m.: 'The art of living' and the dialectics of social transformation

Dr. Kieran Durkin, University of York (England)

12.30 p.m.: Productive orientation and alienation in social-psychological research in working environments

Dr. Sünje Lorenzen, University of Bremen (Germany)

Panel 2: Fromm's Approach to Psychoanalysis and its Implications for the Therapeutic Practice (Room 4)

Chair: Prof. Dr. Dr. Michael B. Buchholz, IPU Berlin (Germany)

10.10 a.m.: Erich Fromm's importance for the sociocultural turn in psychoanalysis

Prof. Dr. Dr. Roger Frie, Simon Fraser University Vancouver (Canada)

10.50 a.m.: Clinical implications of Fromm's concepts of social character, love, and the sane society

Dr. Sandra Buechler, William Alanson White Institute, New York (USA)

11.30 a.m.: Coffee Break

11.50 a.m.: Necrophilic tendencies in schizophrenia treatment

Dr. Meredith Lynn Friedson, Adelphi University New York (USA)

12.30 p.m.: Revisiting Fromm's social character within de-industrialized working class communities in the UK

Dr. Dr. Luis Jimenez, University of East London, London (UK)

1.10 p.m. – 3.00 p.m.: Lunch Break

Panel 3: The Relevance of Fromm's Concept of Necrophilia for Today's World (Room 5a/b)

Chair: Prof. Dr. Neil McLaughlin, McMaster University Hamilton (Canada)

3.00 p.m.: Erich Fromm and necrophilic humor

Dr. Jarno Hietalahti, University of Jyväskylä (Finland)

3.40 p.m.: "I am not what I am": Iago and negative transcendence

Prof. Dr. Peter L. Rudnytsky, University of Florida, Gainesville (USA)

4.20 p.m.: Coffee Break

4.40 p.m.: Mexican women, social necrophilia and gender-based crimes

Dr. Amparo Espinosa Rugarcía, Instituto Mexicano de Psicoanálisis, Mexico City (Mexico)

5.20 p.m.: Interpersonal psychotherapy in female domestic and partner violence

Prof. Dr. Ezio Benelli, International Foundation Erich Fromm, Florence (Italy) and Prof. Dr. Irene Battaglini, Erich Fromm School of Psychotherapy, Florence (Italy)

Panel 4: Fromm's Approach to Psychoanalysis and Its Implications for Therapeutic Practice (Room 4)

Chair: Prof. Dr. Lynn Chancer, Hunter College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (USA)

3.00 p.m.: Rethinking Fromm's analysis of power dynamics in relation to the concept of the "Social Third" in the clinical encounter

Prof. Dr. Catherine Silver, City University New York (USA)

3.40 p.m.: Standing the test of time: Fromm's social character: an essential in clinical phenomenology

Prof. Dr. Mahmoud El Batrawi, Cairo University, Kasr Al Ainy (Egypt)

4.20 p.m.: Coffee Break

4.40 p.m.: Self-conscious person above social pressures: Fromm's guidelines of individual liberation

Prof. Dr. Dmitry Leontiev, National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow (Russia)

5.20 p.m.: Postmodern philosophy and the subject as a 'process' – Fromm's idea of the 'birth' of the self

Dr. Dražen Šumiga, Erich Fromm Research Fellow, Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Ljubljana (Slovenia)

Dinner (1st floor of Stromstr. 2)

6.30 p.m.: Opening of the Dinner-Bufferet

Saturday, June 23, 2018

Panel Discussion: Nationalism first? Discussing Right Wing Movements as Global Phenomenon (Room 5a/b)

Chair: Prof. Dr. Thomas Kühn, IPU Berlin (Germany)

9.00 a.m.: Opening of the Panel Discussion

9.15 a.m.: Statements and Panel Discussion:

- **Critical theory's response to U.S. Neo-Fascist Resurgence**
Dr. Joan Braune, Gonzaga University, Spokane (USA)
- **Political populism, self-destructive affects and Brexit**
Dr. Gavin Brent Sullivan, Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations, Coventry University (England)
- **Middle class fascism and the hatred of the poor in Brazil today**
Prof. Dr. Jesse Souza, Universidade Federal do ABC, São Paulo (Brazil)
- **Fromm's concept of necrophilia as a key to understanding Polish contemporary politics**
Dr. Ewelina Topolska, Instytut Neofilologii Uniwersytet Pedagogiczny, Krakow (Poland)

11.00 a.m.: Coffee Break

Short Presentations (1) (Room 5a/b)

Chair: Dr. Rainer Funk, Erich Fromm Institute, Tuebingen (Germany)

11.30 a.m.: Erich Fromm and American individualism

Dr. Tomohiro Uozumi, University of Tokyo (Japan)

11.45 a.m.: Erich Fromm's contribution to a critical theory of virtue ethics

Richard F. Runge, Humboldt University Berlin (Germany)

12.00 p.m.: How Erich Fromm "spoke" to Labor Union Leader Sidney Lens

Prof. Dr. Nick Braune, South Texas College, Weslaco (USA)

Short Presentations (2) (Room 4)

Chair: Prof. Dr. Thomas Kühn, IPU Berlin (Germany)

11.30 a.m.: Problems of cross-cultural social character research

Dr. Plamen Minchev, Sofia University (Bulgaria)

11.45 a.m.: Recognition, Prestige and Status: Erich Fromm and the social psychology of the new capitalism

Prof. Dr. Fabrício Maciel, Universidade Federal Fluminense, Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)

12.00 p.m.: Contemporary Fascist chauvinism in terms of Erich Fromm's theory of alienation: as seen in the world of liberal democracy

Dr. Takamishi Sakurai, Keio University (Japan) and University of Heidelberg (Germany)

12.15 p.m.: Human solidarity. Discussing Fromm's perspective on an ethical approach of high currency

Katrin Voigt, IPU Berlin (Germany)

12.30 p.m.: Lunch Break

Panel 5: Towards a Sane Society (Room 4)

Chair: Prof. Dr. Peter Rudnytsky, University of Florida, Gainesville (USA)

2.30 p.m.: Thoughts about liberation: On the way to a humane society

Prof. Dr. Burkhard Bierhoff, University Cottbus-Senftenberg, Cottbus (Germany)

3.10 p.m.: Fromm's contribution to the analysis and critique of ongoing social change (in Germany)

Dr. Patrick Ehnis, IPU Berlin (Germany)

3.50 p.m.: Coffee Break

4.10 p.m.: Developmental roots of biophilia and necrophilia

Dr. Sonia Gojman de Millán and Dr. Salvador Millán, Seminario Sociopsicoanalítico A.C. Mexico-City (Mexico)

4.50 p.m.: Post-truth politics as a pathology of normalcy: Beyond alienation and narcissism in the age of globalization

Prof. Dr. Takeshi Deguchi, University of Tokyo (Japan)

Panel 6: Towards a Sane Society (Room 5a/b)

Chair: Prof. Dr. Catherine Silver, City University New York (USA)

2.30 p.m.: Fromm, feminist theory and sadomasochism: Exploring an overlooked affinity

Prof. Dr. Lynn Chancer, Hunter College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (USA)

3.10 p.m.: Positive freedom and species being: Feuerbach, Marx, and Fromm

Prof. Dr. Charles Thorpe, University of California, San Diego (USA)

3.50 p.m.: Coffee Break

4.10 p.m.: Human potentials and needs, eurocentrism and global hermeneutics

Prof. Dr. Boike Rehbein, Humboldt University Berlin (Germany)

4.50 p.m.: Toward a humanistic social science: Integrating Fromm's social character and Bourdieu's habitus

Prof. Dr. Neil McLaughlin, McMaster University Hamilton (Canada)

Conclusion

5.40 p.m.: Closing Remarks (Room 5a/b)

Dr. Rainer Funk and Prof. Dr. Thomas Kühn

6.00 p.m.: Conclusion in the Biergarten "Paulaner" (Alt-Moabit Street 98)

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Batrawi, Prof. Dr. Mahmoud El

Standing the Test of Time: Fromm's Social Character. An Essential in Clinical Phenomenology

Fromm demystified phenomenological concepts relevant to psychiatric practice. His phenomenological approach includes methods such as reasoning and respect, which allow objects to show themselves, and his interpretative method is built on his concept of the social character. As the latter is essentially a concept of the intersubjective influences taking place between the individual and the molding society, his phenomenological approach is especially equipped to discuss the following three contemporary issues: 1) the concept of impairment in psychiatry, 2) the centrality of values in psychiatric practice and lastly 3) the concept of self in schizophrenia.

Battaglini, Dr. Irene and Benelli, Prof. Dr. Ezio

Interpersonal psychotherapy in female domestic and partner violence

The aim of this paper is a psychodynamic analysis about the female violence in contemporary society, and the several declinations of the female aggressive behaviour, e.g. the violence putted against males in intimate relationship, on new-borns and children, and in the female groups, examining the actuality of Fromm's social-analytical approach and the psychoanalytical interpersonal setting of intervention. The central purpose of this work is to explore the psychic structures involved in female violence at the light of Erich Fromm's theories about the human destructiveness, relating the nature of problem, the myths involved, and the individual, collective and social unconscious levels of conflicts; the processes of internalization of social structures and their transgenerational transmission, in connections with Erich Fromm's studies on social character and the necrophilia dimension.

Bierhoff, Prof. Dr. Burkhard

Thoughts about Liberation. On the Way to a Humane Society

The present epoch seems to be dominated by necrophilic structures alloyed with industrialism and negating human progress. The unleashed material productive forces lead to an increasing destruction of nature. By avoiding cultural pessimism, the liberating potentials and tendencies in the development of technological civilization, which influence the way of life and working, are to be re-evaluated. A special perspective is given to the changes in nature and environment. On the one hand we can point to the increasing plundering and destruction of natural resources, and on the other hand to the increasing alienation of Western civilization from nature. An important question in this context is how relationships and social structures can be created to promote the development potential of all members of society against social erosion processes and to reduce alienation and related phenomena such as poverty and disintegration to a minimum. With Analytical Social Psychology, Erich Fromm has created a solid basis for questioning the superiority of scientific-industrial civilization and exploring the problems associated with the industrial way of life. Important for this are his understanding of the relationship between man and society, the theory of social character and his revision of psychoanalysis in the dispute with Herbert Marcuse. They provide the basis for criticism of industrialism and its effects and for building a free and humane society.

Braune, Prof. Dr. Nick

How Erich Fromm "spoke" to Labor Union Leader Sidney Lens

Sidney Lens did not go to college but was educated in and by the socialist movement and labor struggles. A voracious reader with a limber mind, he eventually wrote 20 books. Lens was touch with Erich Fromm for quite a while. This presentation explores that relationship. Young Lens had been

heavily involved in the labor militancy upsurges of the 1930s Great Depression and became the head of a small (200-300 person) ex-Trotskyist group, the Revolutionary Workers League, which disintegrated in the 1940s although having done pretty good work. In the McCarthyism of the early 1950s, strangely, labor unions grew immensely -- but with almost no strikes. Corporations were courting the unions and the unions were reciprocating by witch-hunting out the communists and preventing "wildcat strikes." The AFL (the old trade unions) and the new CIO (the new industrial unions) with great fanfare merged into the AFL-CIO in the mid-1950s, creating "Big Labor" which supposedly could counter "Big Business." And something was happening to the workers when Lens was a union leader in Chicago in the 1950s. As Big Labor grew and was carrying more weight in public and civic matters, the workers were surprisingly feeling smaller -- Lens couldn't even get his membership to attend meetings. Lens needed new intellectual resources to understand the situation. Lens as a labor union representative and scholar was awestruck by Sane Society, and working with some of Fromm's themes, he started to understand that his rank and file could be saying things about solidarity and internationalism and union pride as they always did, but with a different characterological "relatedness" to what they were saying! Lens immediately seeks out Fromm, and works with him to some degree, as I will show, on five different projects.

Braune, Dr. Joan

Critical Theory's Response to U.S. Neo-Fascist Resurgence

Erich Fromm's 1930s empirical study of the German working class formed a significant basis for the Frankfurt School's 1940s studies of U.S. anti-Semitism. In his 1941 *Escape from Freedom*, Fromm saw fascism as a pathological attempt to flee from the responsibilities of freedom and to fill a void of meaning, a theme that recurs in Adorno in *Authoritarian Personality* (1950) and Leo Löwenthal in *Prophets of Deceit* (1949). The attempt to fill voids of meaning can motivate the individual to submit to authorities and false ideologies or "idols," rather than relying on her own agency and reason. As Fromm's research and the Frankfurt School's 1940s research on anti-Semitism showed, fascist ideologues are engaged in the defense of phony identities that are at constant risk of dissolution, attempting to fill a void of meaning with hateful mythologies, slogans, pseudo-science, and eventually violence. Fromm's concept of idolatry is closely connected to his work on necrophilia; necrophilia, like idolatry, is a pathological attachment to what is static, "dead" and capable of being owned and controlled. The paper has three sections. In Part I of the paper, I briefly trace the trajectory of Fromm's critique of fascism, focusing on "escapes from freedom," idolatry, and necrophilia and focusing on the 1930 Weimar working class study, *Escape from Freedom*, and *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*. In part II, I illuminate parallels between Fromm's analysis and Leo Löwenthal's study of U.S. fascists in *Prophets of Deceit*. In the third and final section, I examine escapes from freedom by U.S. "alt-right" neo-fascists. The "alt-right" recruits not with facts or arguments by offering a promise to "meaning, purpose, and identity" to the alienated and enraged. Constructing a humanistic alternative to the "alt-right" movement requires understanding the psychological and social conditions from which it arises. Fromm and Löwenthal assist us in this analysis.

Buechler, Dr. Sandra

Clinical Implications of Three of Fromm's Concepts of Social Character, Love, and the Sane Society

In this lecture, I explore the clinical implications of three core concepts in Fromm's theoretical framework. How can these ideas inspire and guide today's clinician? Fromm's thinking about society is inseparable from his clinical wisdom, in that each informs the other. With his ideas about social character, love, and the sane society, Fromm expressed a unique vision of human relationships. While not always cited, Fromm's thinking has had great impact on other figures central to the

Interpersonal movement. I discuss how these three concepts can be applied to clinical issues, such as the goals of treatment and its "therapeutic action", or method.

Chancer, Prof. Dr. Lynn

Fromm, Feminist Theory and Sadomasochism: Exploring an Overlooked Affinity

Neil McLaughlin has referred to Erich Fromm as a 'forgotten intellectual' of the Frankfurt School even though, arguably, Fromm's work is going through a small but significant contemporary renaissance in terms of academic, scholarly and conference-related interest. This began before, but is now especially relevant to, contemporary events in the late 2010s that have brought a resurgence of authoritarian movements and the election of President Donald Trump in the US. But one area where Fromm's "radical humanism" (a term used by Kieran Durkin) has not been treated as relevant to contemporary issues relates to ongoing sexism in the US and global contexts. Most people do not associate Fromm and feminism: the two seem almost as though strange bedfellows and are rarely connected, even though radical feminists from Juliet Mitchell to Ellen Willis have tried to bring psychoanalysis and feminist thought together in their intellectual and journalistic writings. In this paper, I offer a broad analysis of how Fromm and feminism are more compatible than has often been recognized. I begin by summarizing three ways in which Fromm's critiques of romantic love (via his writings on love, sadomasochism and patriarchal relations) are important and germane to contemporary feminist theorizing. Here, I also discuss Fromm's admirable and anti-patriarchal critique in his famous case study of Dora. On the other hand, Fromm's ideas about maternal love seem in retrospect as essentialistic, based on similar anthropological evidence as has often been criticized when used in the work of Friedrich Engels. The paper will integrate advantages and issues in Fromm's work to make the overall case that, while the relationship between Fromm's ideas and feminist ideas is complex, it is a connection worth pursuing especially as feminists struggle to find ways to connect with other social movements about different kinds of social justice (most notably class and racism). Feminism's goal is arguably its own eradication – its own no longer 'needing to be' -- making Fromm's humanism and beliefs in both autonomy and connectedness (or interdependent human relationships) significant to bear in mind in the contemporary contexts of feminist and other social movements.

Deguchi, Prof. Dr. Takeshi

Post-truth Politics as a Pathology of Normalcy: Beyond Alienation and Narcissism in the Age of Globalization

'Post-truth' has been a popular topic of discussion among the general populace as well as one of the most important keywords for understanding the recent sociocultural tendency since the Oxford University Press has chosen the term as the UK Word of the Year. 'Post-truth', according to Oxford Dictionaries, primarily refers 'to circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than the appeals to emotion and personal belief'. The United Kingdom European Union membership referendum and the United States presidential election in 2016 are often considered typical political events of this phenomenon; however, a mental structure of neglecting objective facts or the outer reality in a very affective way cannot be disregarded when we want to dissolve political and cultural conflicts both inside and outside of the nations and to have a prospect for a future 'sane society' in Fromm's understanding. My lecture aims to clarify the mental structure of post-truth situations by using Fromm's theory of narcissism and to show the way towards a sane society by conquering the above mentioned situations. In Fromm's opinion, narcissism is a double-alienating process, wherein an alienated person loses contact not only with objective facts or the outer reality but also with his true self or the inner reality. Therefore, to overcome post-truth circumstances, people must recover from self-alienation. My lecture is divided into three steps. First, I reconstruct the development of Fromm's theory of narcissism which appears in his work explicitly as well as implicitly and argue that in his theory, three elements such as narcissism, self-alienation

and cognitive and affective distortion of objective reality can never be separated. Second, I focus on a 'cerebration' process discussed by Fromm with relation to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis in his study on Zen Buddhism and relate this cognitive distorting process to the affective processes of repression and projection. Third, I explore a possibility to recover from narcissism through obtaining a non-alienating experience. However, Fromm's description of this mental state is not necessarily clear. Therefore, I introduce the 'logic of becoming' presented by the Japanese sociologist Keiichi Sakuta and explain non-alienated experience theoretically. Sakuta is a famous translator of Fromm's books such as *Revolution of Hope* and *Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*; he has even developed the 'sociology of becoming' by expanding Fromm's humanistic anthropology with the help of N. Brown, E. Schachtel, E. Minkowski and H. Bergson.

Durkin, Dr. Kieran

'The Art of Living' and the Dialectics of Social Transformation

This paper will explore the connections that exist between Fromm's account of the 'art of living' and social transformation at large. In particular, it will look at the role that individual transformation plays in Fromm's thought, and how this individual transformation may be seen to be both pre-figurative of and also conducive to transformation on the societal level. In so doing, Fromm's 'practical philosophy' will be reworked, making clear its radical transformative potential and putting it into dialogue with the thought of other influential thinkers (such as Alain Touraine, Michel Foucault, Theodor Adorno, Franz Fanon, and Judith Butler), as well as those from the more orthodox Marxist tradition. The central argument of the paper is that Fromm's programme for the 'art of living' can help counteract the adverse effects visited on individuals living under late modern consumer capitalism and, crucially, that it can also help point beyond this form of social relationship towards another more satisfactory type of society. As such, it will argue that Fromm's writings offer us an often overlooked critical-restorative resource which can fulfil the dual function of helping to unify the self and to revolutionize the subject – which I contend, along with Fromm, are central prerequisites to any sustainable form of social transformation.

Ehnis, Dr. Patrick

Fromm's contribution to the analysis and critique of ongoing social change

One of the most important political changes in Europe, the USA and beyond is the growth of nationalistic parties, authoritarian structures within states and aggressive exclusions of the so constructed strangers. Nationalism, not only being dangerous for the 'stranger' within Germany, but from a global perspective also leads to aggressive behavior between states. Consequently, military options are increasingly part of the political day-to-day-business. This contribution aims to demonstrate, how the concepts of Erich Fromm can contribute to a social-psychological understanding of nationalistic trends, as presented above. In the presentation I will claim, that nationalism has little to do with the behavior of the concrete other, but rather with the construction of the self and the socially transmitted emotional matrix. Exclusion becomes a tool, to stabilize the self-worth. Socially transmitted feelings like indifference towards the concrete other as well as fear and the feeling of impotence are mainly leading the process of group narcissism. This form of social narcissism promotes the feeling of relatedness via a constructed national identity, to fulfill the psychological need for rootedness and relatedness.

Espinosa Rugarcía, Dr. Amparo

Mexican Women, Social Necrophilia and Gender Based Crimes

The life stories of women secluded in Mexican prisons lay bare - and could be considered emblematic – of the dehumanizing and necrophilic trends of present-day Mexican society. A qualitative analysis of twenty-five autobiographical testimonies -- randomly chosen from among 400

texts written and/or narrated by secluded Mexican women, and collected directly by the non-for-profit DEMAC organization over 20 years -- reveals the violence and objectification that most of those women have experienced throughout their life and, particularly, during their imprisonment processes. Gender-based violence, indiscriminate subordination of women to men, social alienation, the absence of humanistic values and an unlimited greed underlie the motives leading those women to commit a crime.

Frie, Prof. Dr. Dr. Roger

Erich Fromm's Importance for the Sociocultural Turn in Psychoanalysis

In contemporary psychoanalysis, social and cultural issues have become an accepted part of clinical and theoretical discourse. Psychoanalysts today, whatever their persuasion, are more willing to wade into the waters of pressing political realities. Within psychoanalytic therapeutic settings, social and cultural issues are no longer seen only as projections of patients' psychic needs and wishes, but as a reflection of the social world in which patients and analysts live. While the growing appreciation of the social and cultural in psychoanalysis, especially in North America, is a welcome and necessary change, I will argue that it has a long history that must be traced to the pioneering work of Erich Fromm. My paper will discuss Fromm's contributions to the sociocultural turn, from his major theories and personal outlook to his public media interviews, and thus demonstrate the utility of his ideas for contemporary psychoanalysis. My discussion seeks to address the gap in the current psychoanalytic literature that continues to overlook the influence of Fromm's work. Fromm's early banishment from the psychoanalytic establishment and the Frankfurt School, together with his status as a member of "loyal opposition" and the tendency to disregard what Fromm had to say because he spoke to a broader audience, often stands in the way of recognizing his importance. This paper will show Fromm's essential role in our field by tracing the historical threads that link the past with the present, and Fromm's early ideas with the state of contemporary psychoanalysis and the sociocultural surround today.

Friedson, Dr. Meredith Lynn

Necrophilic Tendencies in Schizophrenia Treatment

Putting society on the couch is essential if we are to use psychoanalytic thought to radically pursue an improvement of the human condition, especially when people deemed mentally ill by society often speak uncomfortable truths that the mainstream would rather deny. My hope in this paper is, in part, to provide an indictment of social norms that turns inside out concepts such as "sane" and "insane" and further critiques the sickness of institutionalized mental health care, in which a focus on pathologizing behavior instead of attempting to recognize the person results in a process of dehumanization. As a result, our patients – especially those who are institutionalized – are often deemed Other in order to justify destructive practices. In this lecture, I will discuss the proliferation of malignant aggression and necrophilic attitudes that are prevalent throughout the human society. I will discuss the ways in which these predilections actually result in a negation of meaning through an erasure of nuance, and that this is at least partially responsible for recent trends that attempt to deny psychoanalysis its legitimate position as a valid therapeutic approach. This has detrimentally affected the overall field of mental health. The emphasis on behavioral plans, manualized interventions, and "evidence-based" practices (to the exclusion of psychoanalytic thought in many institutional settings) has perverted the very notion of treatment. Psychoanalysis is one of the few remaining tools we have to pursue existential meaning in the human experience without resorting to self-destructive defenses. Attempts to "objectify" and simplify what our patients present merely reduces their dynamic lived experiences and communications into caricatures that we cannot hear, see, or understand. This dynamic allows treatment providers to impose their own goals, values, and sense of reality on patients in an attempt to eliminate symptoms without taking the time to understand their origins. Mental health professionals in a position of power then implement their expectation that

patients conform to their demands, instead of listening first to what the patients are saying they think, feel, and need. This tendency in treatment providers can be seen as an embodiment of what Fromm described as the necrophilous character. Throughout this paper, I will consider the work of Erich Fromm and other psychoanalytic thinkers and how their ideas can be applied to address these contemporary societal ailments. In addition, I will explore clinical case examples from my work with adults grappling with schizophrenia on a long-term inpatient psychiatric unit.

Funk, Dr. Rainer

Bringing Psychoanalysis and Sociology together

In my overview of the development of Fromm's theories, I want to show, first of all, how Fromm and his theory of relatedness and social character aimed to understand the individual and society in a different way from what was usual at that time. Secondly, I shall show how relevant the often ignored social psychoanalytical approach is for current thinking in terms of relatedness, and how open his approach is to insights stemming from human biology. Whether his social psychoanalysis, with its emphasis on the unconscious irrational behavior of the masses, has a chance in today's scientific culture -- this is a question that applies to psychoanalysis also.

Gojman de Millán, Dr. Sonia and Millán, Dr. Salvador

Developmental roots of productive and unproductive Social Character Traits

Erich Fromm's concepts of Productive and Unproductive Social Character and their developmental roots studied through the Social Character questionnaire administered to 17-18 year old Nahuat youngsters who have been followed through their longitudinal Social Character and Attachment development will be presented. The Seminario de Sociopsicoanálisis SEMSOAC is conducting a longitudinal study of early attachment and social character development of 14 Nahuat mother-infant dyads since the infants were 11 to 15 months, having assessed them at 8 to 9 years of age and again in their late adolescence at 17 to 18. Seventeen more were assessed at infancy and age at 9 but are not 17 years old yet. We plan to assess them when they reach that age. Our work has been possible thanks to the existence of a social humanizing project named the "Intercultural Participation Project" that has been taking place in the Nahuat village. First, we will introduce the "Intercultural Participation Project." We will then describe and reflect on the longitudinal study of 14 boys and girls conducted by the Seminario de Sociopsicoanálisis that were studied when they became young adults, in 2015.

Hietalahti, Dr. Jarno

Erich Fromm and Necrophilic Humor

My topic "Erich Fromm and Contemporary Entertainment: Necrophilic Humor" refers to the core theme number 2 of the conference "Contemporary Tendencies of Objectification in Society and Social Sciences – Discussing the Relevance of Fromm's Concept of Necrophilia for Today's World." In this presentation, I claim that humor can be a form of social pathology. In opposition to the general humor-affirmative atmosphere, I develop the critical tradition of humor research, and suggest that there is a darker side to fun and laughter. Using insights from Henri Bergson's theory about laughter and Erich Fromm's critical social thinking, I formulate a novel theoretical combination which opens up fruitful perspectives on contemporary humor and its social nature. This empirically motivated conceptual position helps us to understand the role and function of humor and laughter. My conclusion is that parts of the contemporary humor catalogue reflect collective destructive and even death-orientated tendencies. The main argument is that if humor is not in line with humanistic values and is not based on a life-orientated worldview, it is in danger of becoming pathological. However, I do not argue that humor is always negative or destructive. Quite to the contrary, in the light of Fromm's social theory, I argue that humor can be both biophilic (life loving) and necrophilic (death

loving, non-sexual meaning). I suggest that there are necrophilic tendencies present in the contents of humor (e.g. contemporary jokes), in the forms of humor (e.g. produced television comedies), in reactions to humor (e.g. relating to humor as a product of consumption), as well as in the ways that contemporary humor research is done (e.g. so called clinical humor studies). The central problem of modern humor studies is that it is based so heavily on positive (social) sciences which mainly record the products of social processes and claim that only these are the important facts to be accepted. This gives birth to an inward circle: humor research measures what is considered to be funny, and freezes these results as the ultimate answer to the question, what is (good) humor. This kind of approach to humor does not respect the dynamic nature of the subject matter, and does not allow new or alternative perspectives (compare with Thomas Kuhn's idea about paradigm shift, and also with Fromm's idea on the struggles between different kinds of social character orientations). The presentation, however, is not merely negative approach to modern humor discussions. After the criticism, my aim, eventually, is to show how Fromm offers a humanistic and non-objectifying possibility to understand humor and entertainment. Based on the critical insights received during the conference, I will be happy to enhance this paper further, and offer it for the conference publication.

Jimenez, Dr. Dr. Luis

Revisiting Fromm's social character within de-industrialised working class communities in the UK

This paper uses Fromm's concepts of social character and social change to re-frame a contemporary understanding of the changing relationships between work, community and identity in the neoliberal context of the aftermath of massive redundancies and unemployment experienced in some post-industrial working class communities in the UK. It also highlights the relevance of Fromm's concepts within psychosocial research and policy on addressing the inter-generational traumatic legacy of loss of stable work, identity community and historical memory within a global context of insecure labour and emerging neoliberal forms of social character.

Kühn, Prof. Dr. Thomas

Leadership in a Digitally Transforming World Based on Fromm's Humanistic Approach

In social sciences, the consequences of a digitally transforming social world for the institution of paid employment are a controversial issue. There are different point of views how social change has an impact on good leadership in contemporary societies. With the presentation, I aim to contribute to this debate, by building on basic ideas of the humanistic approach of Erich Fromm and highlighting the associated possibilities for an adequate understanding of contemporary leadership demands. In this context, leadership is primarily understood from an organizational-psychological perspective, but at the same time, cross-references to political leadership are also possible. Within the presentation, I will especially reflect on the meaning of the workplace for identity constructions and I will argue why it is important to focus on different modes of perceiving and dealing with ambiguity and ambivalence.

Leontiev, Prof. Dr. Dr. Dmitry

Self-Conscious Person Above Social Pressures: Fromm's Guidelines of Individual Liberation

Among the leading psychologists of the 20th century Erich Fromm was probably the only one who succeeded to embrace with equal depth all the main aspects of human existence: unconscious dynamics, social formative influences and self-determination of human being as a conscious agent. He did not only reveal our being conditioned by the society and by the unconscious, following Marx' and Freud's paths, but also investigated the ways of liberation from them, following Spinoza's thrust.

This last aspect of Fromm's heritage, explicated especially in "Man for himself", "The Sane Society", "Die Seele des Menschen" and "To have or to be" allows speaking of him as existentially minded thinker. He rarely, if ever, referred to existentialists, and this aspect of his heritage is usually underestimated, but his analysis of human situation, theory of existential needs, view on human nature as undefined, theory of freedom and theory of being as opposed to having make a priceless contribution to the existentialist line of thought. What is especially important is that these ideas were developed not isolated from the ideas on social and psychodynamic determinants of human conduct, but rather as aspects of a unified picture. In Fromm's works (in particular, "Human situation") personality is treated not in terms of biosocial interaction; rather, both biological and social determinants appear as equally distant from the person proper. Both systems create fields that allow the person to function without awareness, needing no freedom; an alternative is the personal way of awareness, awakening, choice and courage. No one can help being the object of social pressures, but following them choicelessly is not the only option. In case of insane society the person's creating one's independent personal philosophy as the supporting ground may be a real way from being caught in social conflicts, and Fromm's works show the guidelines. The illustrations will be given from the recent Russian social history.

Lorenzen, Dr. Sünje

Productive Orientation and Alienation in Social-Psychological Research in Working Environments

Erich Fromm has developed an independent critical theory of society in which psychoanalytic, sociological, social-psychological, political-economic, philosophical and cultural perspectives are mediated. Fromm's theory goes somewhat against today's division of labour in Psychology and Social Sciences in terms of both empirical and theoretical findings. Fromm is one of those critical social analysts and theorists who is oriented towards psychoanalysis to develop the critical impulse in research and thought, contrary to all positivist methods suffering from methodological constraints. Many social science studies rightly describe the bad circumstances of working conditions. With Erich Fromm, we can understand the bad circumstances of working conditions as an expression of social alienation. In this perspective, I would like to discuss empirical and theoretical contributions from Social Psychology Research. It is also important to examine the productive orientation of work. I would like to combine my own empirical research experience with the Fromm perspective, and to interpret further relevant social psychological approaches in the perspective of Fromm. I would like to refer to the work of Marie Jahoda, „Wieviel Arbeit braucht der Mensch“, as well as the study „Betriebliche Lebenswelt“ by Birgit Volmerg, Eva Senghaas-Knobloch and Thomas Leithäuser and a previously unpublished evaluation of a group discussion with automobile workers, by Thomas Leithäuser. In addition to the theoretical investigations of Fromm, I also refer to the new theoretical study by Rahel Jaeggi „Entfremdung“ for the discussion of the social alienation phenomenon. I would like to discuss the relationship between productive orientation and alienation in my presentation. As an empirical example, I take Erich Fromm's analysis of the self-governed watch-case factory from his study „Der kommunitäre Sozialismus als Weg zu einer gesunden Gesellschaft (The Sane Society)“ (1955a). At the end of my lecture, I interpret an alienation experience of a young worker from the biographical novel „Die Rückkehr nach Reims“ by Didier Eribon.

Maciel, Prof. Dr. Fabricio

Recognition, Prestige and Status: Erich Fromm and the Social Psychology of the New Capitalism

In this communication, I would like to explore the hypothesis that a new capitalism is currently structured on a global scale. To understand it, I propose a discussion of its "social psychology" and the insanity of current capitalist culture. From a research on executives in Brazil, in progress, we

identify as a starting point a critique of the moral goals of capitalism, which impose an insane search for success, prestige and status (MILLS, 1956). Prestige is understood here as a specific kind of recognition, that is, the "recognition of the elites," which is effective in the social space of "high wheels." The acquisition of prestige is crucial, in this direction, to guarantee the status of the "winner". This seems to be the fundamental content of "social psychology" of "new capitalism" (SENNETT, 2006). Executives of big business today are an essential part of an economic and moral elite, that is, a "market nobility" that, at the same time, through its "corporate habitus," incorporates and creates the insane goals of success and signs of status that must be pursued by all, but which will only be achieved by some. Its function is decisive in the reproduction, naturalization and legitimation of inequality. Its effectiveness is also hidden by the discourse of "teamwork" and cooperation, which marks current capitalism (GORZ, 2004; BOLTANSKI & CHIAPELLO, 2009). This new system updates and perfects a promise of happiness and social freedom (HONNETH, 2015) through work and consumption that is fake and creates a fictitious path to recognition. In this direction, Erich Fromm's work is incisive and current because it allows us to show how these moral goals of the race to prestige (MILLS, 1953) are a central aspect of an "alienating morality". What Fromm proposes as a "humanistic psychoanalysis" in his book *The Sane Society* (FROMM, 1970) can be understood as a method for denaturalizing these moral goals that alienate us through false promises of happiness. Thus, the present corporate world has proposed a non-creative and alienated work format in that it promises satisfaction through teamwork, but in practice annihilates the intelligence and critical capacity of the worker. Today's executives are a kind of vanguard in the constant reconstruction of this current alienating culture, thus perpetuating the moral foundations of an insane society.

McLaughlin, Prof. Dr. Neil

Toward a humanistic social science: Integrating Fromm's social character and Bourdieu's habitus

Erich Fromm's theory of social character is largely unused within contemporary social science. This is true despite the fact that the rise of Donald Trump and the emergence of farright movements throughout Europe cannot be fully understood without a theory of how the social glue that social character represents in normal times has turned to dynamite when the emotional attitudes that guaranteed successful adaptation to the economy no longer fit the social structure and economic realities of the times. Fromm's theory of social character is quite similar to French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus, and since Bourdieu is the dominant contemporary scholar in the discipline we argue that the project of re-tooling social science to face current cultural and political realities will benefit by blending Fromm's insights with Bourdieu's. We attempt to further this larger project by comparing and contrasting Fromm's theory and research agenda on social character (particularly *Escape from Freedom* (1941), *The Sane Society* (1955) and *Social Character in a Mexican Village* (1970 with Michael Maccoby) with Bourdieu's discussion of peasant life in Algeria and his broader theory of fields, social capital and habitus. Although Bourdieu, we argue, was a more complete sociologist, his concept of habitus lacks an adequate sociological theory of emotions and places too little focus on irrational passions, something Fromm provides for sociologists wishing to fully understand the current crisis in democracy.

Minchev, Dr. Plamen

Problems of Cross-Cultural Social Character Research

Some methodological points from a study of two ethnic groups of teachers – Bulgarians and Bulgarian Turks (16 respondents) are discussed in the presentation. Some experience regarding the development of the questionnaire (Fromm & Maccoby, 1970b; Funk et. al., 1995) is shared and a summary of the findings from the research is presented. There were difficulties in defining the social character orientation of the Bulgarian Turks which were resolved after consulting Dr. Rainer Funk and taking the advice to consider the categorization used by Fromm and Maccoby in the Mexican

study (Fromm & Maccoby, 1970b). The difficulties arise from the fact that the Bulgarian Turks are not as individualized as the Bulgarians (Riza, 2010) and the social character questionnaire works better with people who are more individualized. The aim of the study is to apply Fromm's method of studying the social character and to find what the social character orientation of the teachers is. The researcher finds that the teachers are strongly attracted to authority. Most of the teachers from the Turkish ethnicity have an authoritarian character which contains no sadistic traits (according to Fromm & Maccoby's categorization) and the teachers from the Bulgarian ethnicity have an authoritarian character with sadistic traits. In both groups of respondents (in the group of the Bulgarian Turks it is more clearly displayed) is found a patriarchal attitude to the family, especially regarding the woman's role and children rearing. Both men and women support, often consciously and more often unconsciously, the hierarchical structure of the family. Many teachers lack faith in their own children and also in the children they teach at school. They raise their children in a very particular way which doesn't allow them to take responsibility for themselves and the others making them dependent, especially the boys on their mothers.

Rehbein, Prof. Dr. Boike

Human Potentials and Needs, Eurocentrism and Global Hermeneutic

Erich Fromm has proposed the concept of a sane society, which aims at the full development of human potentials and the fulfilment of human needs. He also tried to define these potentials and needs. Against the background of the globalized world, these attempts have a somewhat Eurocentric touch, since they are thoroughly grounded in European intellectual history. In the contemporary world, radically different ideas of life and society have to be taken into consideration. They are rooted in non-European traditions and based on very different epistemological and ethical foundations. Therefore, the ideas have to be dealt with in a more fundamental and self-critical way than ideas developed within the European tradition. This is the goal of a global hermeneutic. The paper explains the concept of global hermeneutic and then deals with the question if Fromm's concept of a sane society might serve as the unifying horizon of the attempts at mutual understanding within that hermeneutic.

Rudnytsky, Prof. Dr. Peter L.

"I Am Not What I Am": Iago and Negative Transcendence

"One of the perennial questions in Shakespeare studies concerns what Coleridge called the "motiveless malignity" of Iago. Instead of looking at Iago as an individual, however, I will argue that he is best understood as a representation of the "social character" of early modern bourgeois man. Iago's denial of spiritual values and his mercenary nature can be understood in this light. Fromm's theses concerning the interconnections among anal libido, the death instinct, malignant aggression, and necrophilia all find support in Shakespeare's supreme villain. Iago's enigmatic statement, "I am not that I am," an inversion of God's declaration to Moses in Exodus, "I am that I am," illustrates Daniel Burston's observation that "'evil as negative transcendence" means that it serves "as a compensation for the impotence and isolation occasioned by the inability to love" (Legacy of Erich Fromm, p. 70). Or, as Fromm writes of Hitler in *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, "What is special in [his] case is the disproportionality between the destruction he ordered and the realistic reasons for it" (p. 446); and, "as long as one believes the evil man wears horns, one will not discover the evil man" (p. 480). Scholars have long pointed to Iago's descent from the Vice character in the medieval morality play tradition, and Fromm again allows us to see the connection between this literary genealogy, Iago's embodiment of the "whole character structure" (p. 451) of man in a market economy (cf. "put but money in thy purse"), and his reincarnation in a twentieth-century "demi-devil" such as Hitler."

Runge, Richard Friedrich

Erich Fromm's Contribution to a Critical Theory of Virtue Ethics

The renaissance of virtue ethics in the 1990s had initially led to an increasing interest in Erich Fromm's ethical account that has, however, faded since the turn of the millennium. The recently emerging debate about a critical theory of virtue ethics, which has been inflamed by contributions of Lisa Tessman and Fabian Freyenhagen, has not paid any attention to Fromm's position so far. In my doctoral thesis "A Critical Theory of Virtue Ethics", I argue that Fromm's ethical account can still serve as a valuable point of reference for the development of a critical theory of virtue ethics. In my presentation, I will highlight one aspect of Fromm's thought that suggests an innovative and critical interpretation of a central virtue-ethical theme.

Virtue ethics underlies an understanding of the influence of natural and cultural factors on the conception of virtue and the good human life. An overestimation of culture's influence on the standards of virtue, which had to go along with a negation of human nature, stands in danger of sliding into conformism. A misconception of human nature could, on the other hand, lead into conservatism. Erich Fromm's dialectical approach, which focuses on finding (cultural) solutions to contradictions that are generated by (natural) existential dichotomies, has the potential to overcome the still prevailing juxtaposition of naturalism and culturalism within virtue ethics. I argue that this dialectical position, which may enable virtue ethics to avoid conformism as well as conservatism, is worth of future investigation, especially from the perspective of critical virtue ethics.

Sakurai, Dr. Takamichi

Contemporary Fascist Chauvinism in Terms of Erich Fromm's Theory of Alienation: As Seen in the World of Liberal Democracy

My short input intends to describe the present socio-pathological phenomenon of authoritarian populism in liberal democracy (not in social democracy), which can even be called 'fascist chauvinism', referring to Erich Fromm's theory of alienation. The purpose of my presentation is, in its theoretical terms, to identify the socio-psychological base of the current political movement, fascist, racist chauvinism, that has gradually spread in advanced societies, as can be seen particularly in the emergence of President Donald Trump – the theoretical basis of this research was already presented in my publication (Sakurai 2017). In this presentation, I first examine the two concepts of fascism and chauvinism by finding out the conceptual connection between them and their contemporary significance as well as the possible similarities and differences between fascism and populism in line with the category of democracy. Second, I clarify the socio-theoretical meaning and relevance of Fromm's conception of alienation, elaborated by his theory of narcissism. Third, in terms of the conception I critically analyse authoritarian populism in the US, as seen particularly in the Trump movement, characterising its political phenomenon as a typical example of contemporary Western fascism in the liberal side. Finally, I conclude that contemporary fascist chauvinism in the system of liberal democracy is essentially induced by the socio-pathological phenomenon of alienation, based on a contemporary way of life under the conditions of routine daily labour which aims simply to maintain one's existence as well as the system and of the ideology of the worship of industrial production which underlies one's desire in the system of mechanism, through developing people's narcissistic dissatisfaction and hostility towards internal and external enemies, due to their existential conflicts concerning their human needs of narcissism (narcissistic antagonism), and though transferring group narcissism to its narcissistic object (social transference).

Silver, Prof. Dr. Catherine B.

Rethinking Fromm's analysis of power dynamics in relation to the concept of the "Social Third" in the clinical encounter

In this paper we explore aspects of Fromm's analysis of socio-psychoanalytic concepts of power and power relations as they apply to the analysis of social change. We discuss how Fromm's ideas have been used in recent empirical research—System Justification Theory, and in my clinical work around the concept of "The Social Third". These approaches illustrate and expand Fromm's ideas about the interplay between psychic structure and social structure, between individual unconscious and social unconscious. Fromm's analysis of power dynamics using cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural perspectives is an original contribution that we need to learn from, celebrate and diffuse.

Souza, Prof. Dr. Jesse

Middle Class Fascism and the Hatred of the Poor in Brazil Today

The presentation aims to develop trends of rationalization of social fear and fascism in the political situation of contemporary Brazil. In a way that resembles the analysis of fascism in Germany in the 30's, as analysed by Erich Fromm, middle classes in contemporary Brazil created a legitimization discourse in order to oppress the poor and carry out a regressive political agenda to dismantle the basis of a welfare state in Brazil today.

Sullivan, Dr. Gavin Brent

Political populism, self-destructive affects and Brexit

The Brexit EU Referendum result of 2016 for the UK to leave the European Union came as a surprise mainly to educated, urban and cosmopolitan voters who were unaware of the social decay outside of the large cities of England and Wales. In this analysis of Brexit as a form of right-wing populism, I explore features of the vote that are common to psychoanalytic or psychosocial explanations. This includes the notion of social necrophilia from Fromm which has been applied to the politics of hopelessness in Greece (Gounari, 2014). While not endorsing an account focusing on the binary of biophilia-necrophilia or, indeed, the political unconscious (Rogers & Zevnik, 2017), ambivalent responses to the self-destructiveness of Brexit are nevertheless explored through analysis of 20 UKIP voters anticipating the EU Referendum and post-Brexit interviews that includes voters in the 2017 UK Election who revived the at one point "politically dead" Jeremy Corbyn-led labour party. Engaging with alternative analyses focusing on "affective practices" (Wetherell, 2012), I argue for the need to address rather than ignore the complex and mixed emotional dynamics of right-wing political populism and left-wing variants as well as clarify notions of collective action fuelled by emotional contagion (i.e., as exemplified by the disproven domino account of the spread of right-wing populism). The paper is an attempt to show also why social identity accounts fail to do justice to the complexity of analysing the life that can be found in contemporary forms of social and political "necrophilia" (e.g., in the simultaneously self-esteem increasing and destructive attachment to group-based and collective nostalgia).

Šumiga, Dr. Drazen

Postmodern Philosophy and the Subject as a 'Process' – Fromm's Idea of the 'Birth' of the Self

Erich Fromm was a radical and visionary thinker. He addressed some important philosophical themes, such as focus on interpersonal relationships, the question of the development of being mode and the critique of alienated and consumer society. In this lecture we will argue that Fromm's work

is deeply rooted in the existential (importance of concrete and embodied existence) and humanistic tradition (deep respect for every human being).

The fundamental premise of psychoanalytic or psychotherapeutic work is the intimate relationship between the two in(ter)dependent subjectivities: analyst and client. Despite the postmodern critique and deconstruction of the humanistic and Enlightenment notion of autonomous, self-aware and free subject (Lyotard, Žižek, Lacan, Foucault) we will re-actualize Erich Fromm as a thinker of dialectics of presence and absence of authentic being. On the theoretical level he made an important move from drive to relationship and emphasized the ontological level or interpersonal matrix where we meet as real (authentic) persons. We will develop the idea that subject is not 'dead' and his decline calls for new conceptual tools. The postmodern theory and psychotherapeutic praxis has to take into account the deconstructive reading of the autonomous and unchangeable subject. On the other hand, we can still accept the notion of the subject as a process. Even though there was an exclusive focus on the 'death of the subject' in the 20th Century, 'death of God' (Nietzsche) and on the critique of metaphysics (Heidegger), we can still explore the genesis of the subject and his 'birth' (Fromm) in the therapeutic safe space. We will emphasize that in the psychotherapeutic séances we can on the epistemological level accept the sharp constructivist or postmodern propositions (fragmentation and de-centering of the subject, subject as an epiphenomenon of language and discourse) but then we will lose the most important factor – the use of self in therapy or in interpersonal space.

In conclusion, we will argue that postmodernism can undermine the human agency, will for change, reflexivity and self-consciousness – but all these elements are crucial for the development and growth of the subject. In this connection we follow Fromm who emphasized the 'birth of self' in time (history) and in the interpersonal or 'intersubjective space' (Stolorow). Fromm's work offers some important and powerful conceptual 'tools' which are helpful in therapeutic work: empathy, authenticity, here and now process, importance of truth, deconstruction of illusions and demands of Society, being mode and analyst as a human being and active participant. At the end we will explore and explain the concept of being as a 'paradox' (Fromm's existential dichotomy) and importance of human agency for development of the subject.

Thorpe, Prof. Dr. Charles

Positive Freedom and Species Being: Feuerbach, Marx, and Fromm

The conflict between negative and positive freedom is at the heart of Erich Fromm's social psychology and critical theory of modern society. Negative freedom is a particular characteristic and problem of capitalist society, which has released the individual from traditional authority and cultural restrictions to an unprecedented degree and yet trapped the individual in a state of isolation producing profound insecurity. The psychological pressures of living in capitalist society arise from the intolerability of freedom in its merely negative form. Overcoming the pathologies of capitalist society means moving toward a different kind of freedom, which Fromm calls positive freedom. This movement toward positive freedom, however, holds a deeper anthropological significance according to Fromm. The problem of negative freedom is the fundamental existential problem faced by human beings. Negative freedom is experienced in extreme form under capitalism. But it is more deeply rooted in the human condition, arising fundamentally from the state of the human being as an instinctually under-determined being. Fromm argues that the human being is a "freak of nature," a creature that is not at home in nature, but which must make its own nature as a historical task. This historical task is the movement from negative to positive freedom. To become free in a positive sense is also to become fully human. However, Fromm's conceptualization of positive freedom was underdeveloped and his formulation of positive freedom in terms of 'spontaneity' does not do justice to the concept. In order to adequately conceptualize positive freedom, it is necessary to explore Karl Marx's idea of the historical self-formation of the human species. In *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Marx wrote "The nature which develops in human history – the genesis of human society – is man's real nature." I will argue that the concept of species being, which Marx

derived from Ludwig Feuerbach, must be placed at the core of our understanding of positive freedom. This paper explores the way in which the realization of positive freedom is also the realization of species being. It insists, however, that Marx's transcendence and rejection of Feuerbach's abstract philosophical humanism must not be abandoned and, therefore, seeks to understand species being not as abstract essence but as concrete historical social process. Conceptualizing the relationship between positive freedom and species being illuminates the Marxian goal of world socialism. This would be nothing less than a leap in the historical-social-natural evolution of humankind.

Topolska, Prof. Dr. Ewelina

Fromm's Concept of Necrophilia as a Key to Understanding Polish Contemporary Politics

Recent Polish politics has become a cause for concern for other European Union members, with a notable exception of Hungary. Poland, headed by the government of the Law and Order party, is drifting away from the democratic values embraced in 1989, when Communism was abolished, and the values once again reassured in 2004, when Poland became a member of the European Union; as a state it is also rejecting, in an ever more patent manner, certain human rights and humanitarian solidarity (e.g. Poland has firmly closed its doors to the refugees; we hear a vice-minister of justice calling publicly for the restoration of torture and death penalty). Summing up the political situation in Poland, it has clearly taken an authoritarian and regressive turn, which was only possible thanks to the massive support the Law and Order party cherishes – around 40% of the voters are in favour of the present government. Erich Fromm's concept of necrophilia seems to be the key to understanding this situation. On one hand, many behaviours, comments and decisions of the members of the present government can be viewed as expressions of the necrophilic orientation as described by Fromm; on the other hand, though, and maybe more importantly, these politicians themselves are products of the Polish symbolic culture, with its long-standing myths and narratives, shaped, according to prof. Maria Janion, one of the authorities of the Polish literary world, according to the martyrological model. This model promotes such values as an apotheosis of death, suffering and exclusion; the ideological discourse of the Polish right harnesses these deeply rooted concepts, reviving the "traditional" Polish identity – something to hold on to for those seeking solace and reassurance in group narcissism.

Uozumi, Dr. Tomohiro

Erich Fromm and American Individualism

This presentation shows that Fromm's discussion is curiously connected to American individualism tradition. In "Escape from Freedom", Fromm analyzes that authoritarianism derives from aloneness as a result of modern individualism and entrusts his hope for democracy to spontaneous activity and solidarity. But why is spontaneous activity and solidarity hopeful of democracy? The interesting thing is, this conclusion, probably he reached by his theory and psychoanalytic experiences, is close to the discussion of "American Democracy" by Alexis de Tocqueville. He also regards spontaneous relationships as important foundation of democracy. Based on Tocqueville's insight, there is a tradition in sociology that argue the relationship between democracy and individualism, such as David Riesman's "The Lonely Crowd" and Robert Bellah's "Habits of the Heart". The characteristic of these study is that they look community as a basis on a democracy and regards collapse of community by individualism as a danger of democracy. This tradition of individualism studies is related to Fromm's theory. For example, Riesman was directly influenced by Fromm and used social character theory. This presentation try to show how Fromm was influenced by American individualism tradition and also discuss Fromm's impact to later American individualism studies.

Voigt, Katrin

Human Solidarity – Discussing Fromm’s Perspective on an Ethical Approach of High Currency

Fromm’s theory of social narcissism is of alarming relevance for the analysis of contemporary social formations, characterized by a surge of nationalist movements, group self-glorification, and a general trend of devaluation of the other. Given the destructive forces on individual, as well as social levels of such exclusionary practices, Fromm’s normatively framed quest for emancipative alternatives is of equally high importance.

In my short presentation, I will sketch out Fromm’s approaches to a) limiting the damaging forces by redirecting a malign into a benign group narcissism and b) overcoming group narcissism in general. Furthermore, I will supplement the Frommian radical humanism with contemporary approaches that renew the call for a ‘new common’ in spite of differences. I am arguing that a radical humanism, grounded on the unchangeable *conditio humana*, needs to remain open for constant evaluation of its emancipating value. The implementation of critique, e.g. from postcolonial or feminist discourses may contribute to the emancipative force of a ‘new common’. Furthermore, I will outline the importance of empirical research in order to be able to argue for a concrete universalism based on subject experiences.

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Toward a Humanization and Democratization of Work – References of Work Psychology to Fromm’s Concepts

Deeply rooted in his conceptualization of the development of social alienation and its embodiments in social characters in several phases of capitalism, on the one hand, and in his philosophical analysis of the *conditio humana* leading to the derivation of basic human needs, on the other hand, Erich Fromm formulated concepts of non-alienated activity, reflexivity, communication and living together in solidarity which represent building blocks for a humane society and its economy (cf. Fromm, 1960, 1968). Fromm’s concepts, often further-developed by representatives of analytical social psychology, are of great importance for contemporary scientific work and organizational (w&o) psychology - and vice versa. Unfortunately, a lot of w&o psychological research seems to be driven more by profitseeking, improved performance, and retention of power (consequently dominating and instrumentalizing human potentials) than by promoting working persons’ personality and supporting the development of sane societies based on democratic and humanistic planning of the economy. Thus, relevant concepts and empirical findings of analytical social psychology are often neglected in w&o psychology.

In my lecture, I will present several concepts and findings from scientific w&o psychology that can be related to Erich Fromm’s conceptualizations, exemplarily. For example, Self Determination Theory (E. Deci, R. Ryan, T. Kasser) and the Psychological Ownership approach (J. L. Pierce et al., H. Dittmar) have proposed empirically supported concepts of basic human needs that can be brought together with Fromm’s (more socio-historical) perspective upon human nature. Further, the polarity of intrinsic vs. extrinsic life-aspirations (Self Determination Theory) is closely related to Fromm’s To Have or to Be? Moreover, notwithstanding its manipulative potential, I would like to discuss in how far the concept of Collective Psychological Ownership can be considered as a counter-concept concerning social alienation at work (e.g., is there a positive form of objectification of employees’ mental and social capabilities fostering both individual and communitarian growth in social responsibility)? Finally, I will present some empirical findings concerning effects of working in democratic enterprises and of experiencing a sociomoral work climate upon employees’ attitudes and behaviors within and beyond work (based on a meta-analytical research review by W. G. Weber

et al.). All in all, the findings support Fromm's (1960, 1968) vision of a humanization and democratization of work.