

The convergent methodology and the non-identity principle are distinct but not separate. They are linked by a critique of establishment social science inherent in both positions.² Fromm stressed the specific task of a convergent theory and epistemology. This task is the critique of Freud's legacy or the dissection and critique of the most advanced forms of bourgeois morality. In both Marx and the critical theorists the task of criticism rests on the critique of reification.

Fromm's early work satisfied Horkheimer's criterion (for critical theory) of criticism of establishment social science. Alfred Schmidt observed in his *Introduction* that Horkheimer's influential stamp on critical theory was his assertion that an alternative higher form of scientific practice would involve the elimination of rigid specialized disciplines with their fashionable relativisms and substitution of the central theoretical problem—the exploration of the “connection between economic life, individual psychic development and narrower cultural changes.”³ The question whether Horkheimer's specification is entirely compatible and synonymous with critical theory and negative psychoanalysis as these are presently understood cannot be pursued here, even though it is vital to a definite attribution of Fromm's work among the ranks of the Frankfurt School.

The question to be answered by a thorough re-examination of Fromm's early essays is: Precisely what does subsumption of Freud's metapsychology under Marx's epistemology mean? The answer to this challenges a fundamental principle of the non-identity postulate.⁴ The non-identity postulate does not entirely escape an important criticism. This criticism is that the real utilization of “critical repositories” in Marx and Freud does not rest on a treatment of their documents as if their structures of ideas were two uninterrupted “discourses.” Numerous works have argued that the ideas of Marx and Freud are characterized by critical interruptions, and that their fragments of methodologies are more vital than their practical sounding conclusions.⁵

*Is Fromm's work an integration of Marx and Freud,
or an attack on the accepted reasons for convergence?*

Fromm's early German essays (1929–1937) are major studies in the sophistry of critical theory. His single most vital thrust is his rejection of Freud's metatheory as ambiguous towards bourgeois tolerance. But

11: J. O'Neill (Ed.), *On Critical Theory*, Seabury 1976 (A Continuum Book)

UB: 18 A 733

DEATH AND REVOLUTION: A REAPPRAISAL OF IDENTITY THEORY

KEN O'BRIEN

The thrust of this discussion is that Erich Fromm's contributions to the corpus of the Frankfurt School's critical theory should be reappraised in a more positive light. This task can only be accomplished with a thorough re-examination of his essays between the period 1929 to 1937, as well as a theoretical assessment of his ideas since that period. Our task is to probe the essays of the early period. We will show that when his work is viewed in the context of critical theory, especially in relation to the still largely imprecise non-identity principle,⁶ Fromm's contributions are vital. The charge that Fromm's work is revisionist in content and methodology is premature and exaggerated. Nevertheless, this charge has inhibited a continuous critical review of Fromm's contribution, and it has been taken up and repeated by more recent reviewers of the work of the Frankfurt School. Fromm's “populist” and liberal democratic ideas have been more widely disseminated while his more serious theoretical work remains largely unexplored. To this extent such one-sided critique has meant that the dialectical reworking of the substance of Marx and Freud to produce critical theory and negative psychoanalysis remains unfinished and sketchy. Critical theory and negative psychoanalysis with its non-identity principle is only one side of the reworking of Marx and Freud. The other is the convergence of the latter two methodologies to produce a convergent theory along more conventional lines.



more than this Fromm rejected programmatic attempts to integrate Marx and Freud on the metatheoretical level. The first argument had to do with Fromm's rejection of the purported abstractions of man, and of society. The second had to do with Fromm's specific critique of Freud's bourgeois conception of morality and tolerance. His comments on the first ground bear quotation in full:

The application of psychoanalysis to sociology must be careful to avoid the mistake of wishing to give psychoanalytic answers where economic, technical and political facts give the real and adequate explanation for sociological facts. On the other hand, the psychoanalyst must point out that the object of sociology-society consists in reality of individual people . . . These people do not have some kind of "Individualseele," . . . and alongside of this a separate "Massenseele". . . . There are no two such souls within man, but only one, in which the same mechanisms and laws are valid whether man appears as an individual, or forms a society, a class, a community or what have you.⁴

The most succinct comment which illustrates both Fromm's theoretical and practical attitudes to Freudian psychoanalysis in the period of Fromm's development under discussion runs as follows:

The psychoanalytic situation is another expression of bourgeois-liberal tolerance. Here one human being is supposed to express to another those thoughts and impulses which stand in the sharpest contrast to social taboos, and this other is not supposed to be startled and angry, nor to adopt a moralizing posture, but to remain objective and friendly, in short to abstain from every critical attitude. This view is only conceivable within the terms of the general tolerance which has developed in increasing measure in the urban bourgeoisie. . . . The tolerance of the psychoanalyst also has the two aspects mentioned above: on the other hand, he shares with every other member of this class the respect for fundamental social taboos and experiences the same antipathy towards the person who breaks them. . . . Freud's writings offer a certain insight into the respect for the social taboos of the bourgeoisie which is hidden behind this tolerance. . . . Certainly Freud took a critical position on bourgeois sexual morality. He was also brave enough to prove that sexual impulses also play a role where other "ideal" motives had been seen before, and even where the acceptance of sexual motives was actually sacrilegious, as in the infant. . . . But even where criticism of bourgeois sexual morality is the issue, in the work entitled "Cultural sexual morality," it emerges that his position is critical, but in no way principally different from that of his class.⁵

The analytical form as well as the developing substantive critique of the two foregoing statements have tended to mould Fromm's earlier and later theoretical stance to psychoanalysis and to the ideological objectives of critical theory. This theoretical stance is neither reductionist (up to 1941) nor supportive of a theoretical strategy for translating psychoanalytic problems into sociological forms. Equally the stance is not revisionist in the sense of emphasizing some ideas of Freud over others.

Fromm's work was an attempt to intersect and so enrich the programmatic task of the integration of theory and praxis assumed by the Institut Für Sozialforschung long before he completed his work on the partial unification of Marx and Freud—which earned him the paradoxical status of fame in North America and estrangement from his earlier colleagues of the Institut. An examination of his essay "Psychoanalyse und Sociologie" indicates that Fromm did not perceive the task of the Frankfurt Psychoanalytic Institute as one of simply providing mediating concepts between individual and society which would somehow reconcile Marx and Freud and therefore theory and praxis. Had this been the sole task for Fromm he would have simply transposed a pared psychoanalytic theory of man's spiritual make up to a materialist theory of social formations, and in this the family would have become the determinate mediating concept in a reconciled theory and praxis.

The consequences of such a theoretical strategy would have been an oversocialized conception of man and society in all of Fromm's subsequent work rather than the concerns with historical evil and death that we see there. Fromm's posture within the Frankfurt Psychoanalytic Institute and his theoretical problematic can therefore be characterized in the following terms:

1. His struggle with Freud's psychoanalysis and a materialist theory (not a Marxist one) was really an attempted sublation of conventional social science specializations.
2. His recognition that the crux of psychoanalysis rested on the function attributed to the family in the development of man's spiritual apparatus as a necessary but not a sufficient explanation.
3. Consequently, the advance of theoretical work rested on distinct analyses in the following areas, among others:
Psychoanalytic contributions to sociological knowledge of the precise extent and ways in which the "spiritual makeup of man has



worked as a cause or as a determining factor on the development and formation of society." Economic and technical factors are other determinants.

Questions emerged such as: To what extent changes in the psychological structure of man—"taken as the growth of the ego structure—and with it the rational control of the instinctive and the natural, represent a relevant sociological factor." (The elaboration of this task is taken by Fromm's detractors to be the sine qua non of his work as a whole, but it is not.) To what extent "the family itself is the product of a definite form of society, and to what extent a change in the family itself, brought about by a social change, could be an influence on the spiritual development of the individual . . ." Another example of this would be the significance of technological growth (technik) for the individual psyche through "an ever increasing satisfaction of desires or conversely, the ever decreasing need for denials."¹⁸

The inference to be drawn from the foregoing is that Freud's psychoanalysis merely opened up these issues for sociology; the problem was to explore them in various ways. What has to be noted is that Fromm extended his own criticism of Freud's ambivalence to bourgeois tolerance to the level of an infrastructural assumption. The existence of this ambivalence within orthodox psychoanalysis was then viewed by Fromm as inhibiting the task of a convergence of Freudianism and Marxism. Fromm's theoretical task became at that point an analytical attack on the prevailing reasons for such a convergence.

In essence Fromm stated that Freud's reality principle also inadvertently accepted death as a human necessity and the goal of human happiness became an impossibility. In Fromm's mind Freud's conceptions of death, as represented in aggression, suicide, and discontent, were really sociologized explanations of evil. Fromm argued in "Die Gesellschaftliche Bedingtheit Der Psychoanalytischen Therapie" (p. 379) that Freud's entire discussion on sublimation was false. Freud chose sexual satisfaction where the choice was between that and neurosis. Nevertheless, for Freud culture as opposed to sexuality was really the nobler and higher road. The inference in Fromm's discussion here is not only that Freud was in this sense ethnocentric—although he does not specify adequately Freud's ethnocentrism—but also that bourgeois culture constitutes a form of death. Implicit in the discussion is also the notion that the context of Freud's dichotomy of

culture versus sexuality is a false one. But for all this Fromm never suggests whether Marx's analyses sublate Freud's own analyses.¹⁹

Fromm's rejection of the Freudian metaphor of death took the theoretically specific form of his attack on the latter's hypostatization of "repression" as caused by the contradiction between sexuality and culture which even as a general case manifests itself in the psychic orientation of the non-neurotic individual. This rejection led Fromm in another direction as well, and that was to question the basic presuppositions about man then held by many "establishment social scientists." Fromm referred to this time and again in his analysis of impotence (1937), as well as in his critiques of the works of Robert Briffault (1933) and of Bachofen (1934). Here he examined the socio-political conditions which conditioned accompanying ideological perspectives on the relationship between theory and action in the modern age. He characterized this relationship as follows:

There is an extraordinary discrepancy in democracies between the ideological notion that the individual member of society controls, in part, the entire direction of society and the distance that in fact separates the individual from political and economic power.²⁰

Another dimension of the connection between socio-political conditions and ideological perspectives is the reification of "authoritarian philosophy." The specific form of this is the reification of impotence to the status of a national law. While the intensification of impotency feelings has its expressions in the neurotic cases of clinical psychoanalysis and its counterpart in normal life in the bourgeois character:

It has its roots in the entire social constellation and in the spiritual (seelich) situation which is determined by this.²¹

The observation that impotence as an individual experience robs the person of courage to "act" is central to Fromm's analyses of method and the relation between theory and praxis. It is also around this observation that Fromm attempts a partial synthesis of Marx and Freud. But a thorough analysis of this problem of consciousness in its specific relation to theory and praxis requires a scientific orientation, only the outlines of which Fromm believed could be traced at this stage. Nevertheless, we will turn our attention to Fromm's sketch, and its significance for his early formulations.



**The conception of impotence as an analogue to
Fromm's critique of non-identity**

*The helplessness of the individual is the fundamental
theme of authoritarian philosophy. (E. Fromm, 1937)*

The foregoing statement is one of the central conclusions of Fromm's essay, "Zum Gefühl der Ohnmacht." It is an expression of his argumentation that impotence has a socially generalized form as well as specific clinical expressions, and that both are dimensions of passivity. Both are expressions of the inability to act, and the extreme form of impotence is death. The malaise of his age (the 1930s) and culture expressed another side of death in its glorification of method without theory. The practical expression of this glorification was a magical ritualization, a "busyness" in contrast to "activity," the latter expressing a combination of correct theory and method. Fromm's emphasis therefore is on the necessity of "correct theory" as a condition for action and social change. It is a Marxist conclusion arrived at by a psychoanalytic route, but one which cannot be disputed today (p. 115).

Fromm's argument attacked orthodox psychoanalysts and other intellectuals as well. He attacked the intellectual posture which asserted that others could not be influenced as a form of rationalized neurotic impotence which failed to distinguish between areas of change within control and areas truly outside control. There is a subtle hint in Fromm's discussion here that tries to establish an analogy between the concepts of impotence and the insistence on non-identity. For throughout this essay (translated as "Some Observations on the Feeling of Impotence") Fromm suggests that theory does not always lead to action while insisting that it is the condition for action. The problem, of course, is that his alternative to impotence is a new awareness; members of society are brought to consciousness through "long work," and his theoretical analogue to this is the principle of "reflexivity" which was later attacked by Frankfurt School members. Reflexivity did not mean for Fromm what it meant for contemporary sociologists such as Gouldner (1970) and Robert Friedrichs (1970). For Fromm reflexivity was to be an essential quality of a special science, similar to psychoanalysis, which would reflect on the operant powers in bourgeois economy and on bourgeois man. He described this intellectual task as the "penetration of facades to discover hidden

causal mechanisms," a task asserted by Marx and Freud as well.¹²

The tone of this early formulation cannot be interpreted as revisionist because it did not take the form of a levelling of the contradictions of bourgeois society. Rather this early work represents Fromm's highlighting of specific social and ideological contradictions into a formulation of a new relationship between theory and praxis. Later in this discussion we will show that Fromm's practical concern was with the specific mechanisms through which the administrative "techniques" of the state and the German school system reinforce the hegemony of the petty bourgeois class and ideology, while simultaneous forms of pedagogy and criminal justice guarantee the submission of the majority. Furthermore Fromm suggested that the implications of these "techniques" signify a preoccupation with "busyness" which is clearly discernible within these administrative and political communities.¹³ We will restrict our remarks at this point, however, to the problems of theory and praxis raised by his analogy between impotence and non-identity.

One of the most polemical issues of Fromm's intellectual career is his extension of Freud's clinical concept of therapy to the sociopolitical dimension of occidental development. As far as his early work is concerned, it is also one of the most misunderstood aspects of Fromm's work in his attempt to unify theory and praxis. For Fromm's early formulation does not constitute a psycho-history in the tradition of later North American versions. Rather, it was an extension of his critique of the intellectual rationalization of impotence—to which we referred earlier in this discussion—to the prevailing clinical practices of psychoanalysis.¹⁴

When the critique of impotence is promoted to the status of an ideological category the clinical component of repression can be utilized as a tool for validating assertions about the broad sociological significance of impotence as a consequence of history and socialization. Simultaneously this strategy allows the critical theorist to formulate propositions about the relative degree of impotence in a given society, and of the cross-cultural components of impotence. The exploration of such a connection between the ideology of impotence and the clinical reality of repression was one of Fromm's major tasks in his revision of the problem of theory and action. The exposition begun in "Zum Gefühl der Ohnmacht" is continued in another essay "Die Gesellschaftliche Bedingtheit Der Psychoanalytischen Therapie,"



(1935). What characterizes both impotence and repression leading to the expression of neurotic symptoms is anxiety in general deriving from the threat of external force, the threat of social isolation, and loss of self-respect derived from the inability to "put across one's own wishes." In the case of the appearance of neurotic symptoms Fromm suggests that the internalization of these "failures" leads to rage and silence in which the individual requires increasing energy in order to maintain the suppressed material beneath the deeper layers of the psyche. It is precisely this ever-expanding repression which makes clinical psychoanalysis a much demanded and lucrative enterprise. What Fromm had to say about therapeutic practice is therefore vital to the task of setting the record straight about the ways in which Fromm extended his critique of Freud's bourgeois tolerance. It is also vital for a partial rebuttal of the allegation that Fromm collapsed theory into therapy in his psychoanalytic revisionism.

"Die Gesellschaftliche Bedingtheit Der Psychoanalytischen Therapie" is a long and rambling essay in which Fromm is less concerned with the collapsing of therapy into theory or vice versa and more concerned with unveiling authoritarian social tendencies in therapy which tend to be masked in the theory itself, that is, tendencies which mask the helplessness of the individual as though it were a metaphysical issue. The method of critique in this 1935 essay is also different in many respects from Fromm's essay four years later, "The Social Philosophy Of 'Will Therapy,'" in which he contrasted Freud's and Rank's conceptions of therapy.¹⁵ While it is clear that in the earlier essay Fromm argued for a specifically more humanist therapy he did so because of his argument against Freud's emphasis on "organic repression," and the inferences which Freud drew from this for the limitations for therapeutic efficacy. Fromm's position on the analytic situation did not resemble that of the "revisionists" such as Ferenczi and Rank for the reasons which his critics would have us believe. He summarized his views of the analytic situation as follows:

The question of the actual conscious, and, more importantly, of the unconscious attitude of the analyst towards the social taboos whose protection consists in threats of revenge, which have led to repressions now to be uncovered, is therefore of decisive importance to the possibility of therapeutic success as well as the duration of the analysis.¹⁶

But how can a critical theory validate the claim that important unconscious attitudes of censure against the patient's transcendence

of bourgeois social taboos exist within the analytic situation? This is the question which has to be posed and answered before subjecting Freud's claims about the limitations of psychoanalysis to the kind of dialectical somersaults which gave Adorno and his followers the concept of negative psychoanalysis.¹⁷ The question is internal to the methods of psychoanalytic therapy as far as Fromm's early work is concerned, and not ultimately aimed at obliterating theory in the interests of therapy—as Fromm's detractors are quick to point out. The allegation that all so-called revisionism seeks to eradicate the "contradiction" (Jacoby's term) or "discrepancy" (Marcuse's term) which Freud maintained between theory and therapy presumes that that contradiction or discrepancy (though the same meanings cannot be attributed to these terms) was a positive or dialectical force in Freud's work. What is not stated by Fromm's critics is that he was concerned with articulating the ideological and ideational links between repression, which was the key to uncovering the metatheoretical truth of Freud's view of culture and civilization, and "resistance" and "transference," which were therapeutic notions for validating the theory of repression. The aim of Fromm's 1935 essay was to establish that the actual use of the concept of "resistance" is an ideational reflection of a bourgeois ideology of tolerance. Fromm argued this position in another form as follows:

He [the patient] comes to analysis, the purpose of which is to lift the repressed into consciousness. The anxiety which originally led to the repression, is transferred to the analyst. But this anxiety strengthens or weakens, depending on the personality and behaviour of the analyst. In the extreme case where the analyst takes a critical hostile position towards repressed urges, one can hardly expect at all that the patient is capable of penetrating the resistance to the repressed. If the patient, even if only *dimly* and instinctively, feels that the analyst has the same critical attitude to the breaking of social taboos as other people he met in childhood and later, then the original resistance will not only be transferred into the actual analytical situation, but will be produced anew.¹⁸

It is clear from Freud's 1915 essay on repression that the theory of repression was not meant to imply that the process of repression is unidimensional or complete at some given point, but that the test of the validity of Freud's propositions was in the clinical observations, to a large extent. The truth value in propositions about repression is



therefore based on the clinical use of the concept of "resistance." Fromm established this point by stating that

The resistance is thus a phenomenon occurring necessarily in the course of the analysis. If one wished to avoid it, this would mean giving up making the repressed material conscious. This is indeed attempted by most non-psychoanalytic psychotherapeutic methods. It is the shorter way, but the price paid is the giving up of deep change in the spiritual structure. The resistance is exactly the most reliable signal that one is touching repressed material and not merely moving on the spiritual surface.¹⁹

The discussion which followed the foregoing remarks can be interpreted as Fromm's attempt to probe what can be termed today the specific class, and indeed racial background, of Freud's notion of the contradiction between theory and therapy. Fromm was not saying that Freud's psychoanalytic theory was thoroughly bourgeois or indeed that Freud was racist. He was saying, however, that the specific use in therapy which Freud made of the concept of "resistance" provides some insight into an area of "blindness" which made the viability of psychoanalytic theory not a theory of civilization as a whole in all respects, but rather one which has ignored non-Judaic-Christian civilizations precisely by pretending to speak for all civilizations. This is an allegation to which critical theory after Freud and Marx has to respond. Fromm's critics have argued elsewhere that therapy can be modified on pragmatic grounds, but not in the interests of a humanism which promises liberation for the individual in an otherwise unfree society, since the real thrust of therapy is that it "issues into a social critique and praxis of liberation." Precisely. But if therapy is not merely a Freudian afterthought, with no systematic conceptual or ideational link to one or more elements in the meta-theoretical case, then its uniqueness as a critique has to be penetrated and developed as well. Otherwise therapy issues into a dangerous reification and mystification of death and impotence, and theory without a vigorous therapy becomes mere ideological rhetoric. For example, a radical academic critic can today develop a theoretically truthful critique of racism and advanced capitalism while personally and unconsciously contributing to the further life of institutionalized racism. The variants of this example are many, but the real question then becomes, "What is 'revolutionary pessimism' in psychoanalysis, and

how is it possible?" This is the challenge to Frankfurt School critical theory. As for Fromm, he put the matter in another form as follows:

We have already said that Freud ascribed relatively little significance to the actual behaviour and special character of the analyst. This is the more remarkable, in that the analytic situation, as created by Freud, is quite unusual and unique in our culture and perhaps in general. There is no situation even approximately similar in which one human being not only "confesses" to another without holding back, i.e. says everything to him which he condemns in himself, but in addition, communicates those fleeting ideas which seem absurd and laughable, and where he pledges to also express all those things which he does not yet know but which could still occur to him, indeed, where he can honestly communicate to the other all the opinions and feelings he has about him, making them the object of dispassionate examination.²⁰ [Emphasis mine]

We suggested earlier in this discussion that Fromm criticized what appeared to be Freud's leanings towards bourgeois liberal tolerance. Now we see that the forms of this critique require elaboration. First of all Fromm was not in the first instance revising orthodox therapy in the interests of a happy, well adjusted individual monad, or in the interest of the primacy of subjectivity. Rather, the critique of therapy was against the particular weaknesses of Freud's use of the inductive method. The basis of Freud's psychoanalytic induction is the analyst-patient pattern of interaction. "Resistance" is therefore an ideational component of Freud's interpretative inductive strategy as he moved toward his general inferences about the opposition between sexuality and culture. "Resistance" is therefore for Fromm a descriptive notion which in Freud's usage passes into and reinforces the theoretical psychoanalytic opposition between sexuality and culture. Fromm's point is that Freud's usage of "resistance" is as though it were itself a theoretical component of the metatheory of psychoanalysis. As such, he was commenting on the Janus-headed nature of "resistance" in Freud rather than reducing the theoretical opposition between sexuality and culture to a new therapeutic format. In short, before undertaking his own critique of the ideology of tolerance, Fromm made the observation that in orthodox psychoanalysis itself aspects of the metatheory were intentionally passed by Freud into therapy.

Only in two points does Freud go beyond the purely technical-medical in a positive sense. Once when he demanded, if not from the beginning,



that the analyst be analysed, so as not only to gain theoretically better insight into the processes in the unconscious, but also to become conscious of his own "blind spots" and to be able to control his own affective reactions.¹¹

The other point in which Freud recognized the problem of theory passing into therapy had to do with an "objective, unprejudiced, neutral and forbearing attitude" towards everything the patient brings up, but in the interests of tolerance. (Extending on Fromm we can say that tolerance is an ideational component of therapy which while guaranteeing it, in turn passes into theory.) If psychoanalytic therapy had a weakness, an anomaly whereby it unconsciously suppressed its own representation of the individual's plea for aid, and self-clarification in the clinical situation, then Fromm's work was to illustrate that this anomaly of suppression had its roots in the ideological ambivalence of Freud himself, and not in the content of psychoanalytic theory, in the first instance. This was precisely the aim of Fromm's critique, to show that the ideational representation of tolerance in therapy manifested a clear middle class ideology of impotence. It was not yet Fromm's aim to revise the theory of repression, or to signify any priority for individual happiness. In fact, his point is that what appears to be a theoretical, and therefore intellectually acceptable, contradiction between the concept of repression and the concept of resistance in the wider metatheory of contradiction between culture and sexuality is not that at all. In Freud, neurosis had become an intellectual *Ding an Sich*, a thing in itself. It had been presented as a theoretical unity constituted of "resistances" which could be experienced by the analyst in a clinical situation, and at the same time, its opposite, repression, the intellectual hypothesization of the psychoanalytic posture. At this stage Fromm was contesting one aspect of the "thing-in-itself" representation of neurosis, that is, the analytic reconstruction, in which Freud underestimated the problem of tolerance of the particular analyst, as well as of the psychoanalytic posture. If the uncovering of resistances is a viable project, then it implies discovery of knowledge of its real opposite, tolerance, and therefore revelation of repression.

How could "neurosis" be a real phenomenon, a thing in itself, and the unity of a dialectical contradiction, a theoretical principle, at the same time? This is the nub of the issue which the critics of Fromm, and of all psychoanalytic revisionism, have to answer in their asser-

tions that the orthodox positions are part of a social theory which transcends the society in a revolutionary form. Many of Fromm's critics have reacted as though the question was an absurd one, but they have not, nevertheless, come up with an alternative explanation of the relationship between tolerance and the analytic situation which would clarify (more thoroughly) than Freud did the anomalous representations of neurosis.¹²

Fromm did not view the source of this anomaly in the contradiction between theory and therapy so much as in the real opposition between Freud's partial attack on tolerance in his theoretical work while at the same time stopping short of its penetration in his clinical posture. What he detected in the clinical situation was a tolerance for the patient to verbalize his new-found consciousness, but a tolerance which stopped short of encouraging him to act out or upon this consciousness, something characteristic of all nineteenth-century bourgeois tolerance as it manifested itself in reform movements. This is a point that was succinctly made about the posture of science and relativism by Wolff and other writers in *A Critique of Pure Tolerance*, (1969) and it makes the entire notion of theoretical revisionism questionable as far as Freud's work is concerned. The inference which can be drawn from Fromm's view of this limitation is that it weakened the critical thrust of the clinical and theoretical work:

Certainly he [Freud] is tolerant, and certainly he criticized bourgeois sexual morality because its overly great strictness frequently led to neurotic illness. But even where criticism of bourgeois sexual morality was the issue, in the work entitled "Cultural Sexual Morality . . ." it emerges that his position is critical, but in no way principally different from that of his class.¹³

Clearly, for Fromm there was a vital distinction between theory and therapy. This distinction which existed in Freud had to be maintained, but not in an unadulterated fashion. Fromm argued that therapy was an incorrect praxis which needlessly extended repression, and therefore reinforced a genetically external, but historical, impotence. Insofar as our interpretation is valid, then, Fromm was adhering to the canons of critical theory established by no lesser figures than Horkheimer and Marcuse when they stated:

Even in a future society, the happiness of its individuals is no equivalent to the destruction of those, now. Theory offers no cure (or healing). to



its adherents, no psychic condition like Christianity. Freedom's martyrs were not seeking the soul's peace: this was not their goal.

And at the end of this paragraph there is a succinct observation as well:

Philosophy which hopes to find peace in truth has therefore little to do with Critical Theory.²⁴

The inference of the foregoing observation means that the non-identity formulation has a paradoxical element. Critical theory cannot be viable without an immanent praxis. Insofar as psychoanalysis is concerned, therapy is an aspect of that praxis (a position that is often ignored by those who hold to the theory-therapy "contradiction"), and therefore cannot be in *dialectical contradiction* (in Marx's sense) with theory. Moreover, one fails to see how the theoretical articulation of an historical opposition between culture and sexuality, as part of critical theory, can be in *real opposition* to therapy. *What one can perceive is a certain confusion among "Frankfurt School theorists" about the distinctions and differences between dialectical contradiction and real opposition* on this point.

A caveat on therapy: philanthropy versus misanthropy

In the latter portion of his essay on "Therapie" Fromm took up what has since been interpreted as a revisionist support for Ferenczi, Otto Rank, Alfred Adler, and Jung, among others. In fact Fromm's goals have little to do with his later wish for a happy, adjusted subject in an age of repression, but rather are a kind of Damoclean sword over the head of Freud's ideology of impotence. Consider the two following prefatory remarks to Fromm's summary of the positions of Groddeck and Ferenczi in the psychoanalytic movement:

It cannot be denied that the lack of humility evokes in the analyst of the patricentric character-type an often unconscious hostility towards the patient and that this hostility not only makes every therapeutic success impossible, but also represents a serious danger for the spiritual health of the patient.²⁵

In short, to the extent that an unconscious authoritarianism lies behind a conscious outward "tolerance," spiritual ill-health becomes

an impotent skepticism which could be adopted by the patient through no independent fault of his own. One of Fromm's goals was a greater insight into the patricentric-authoritarianism of orthodox analysts. He believed that a study of the conflicts within the psychoanalytic movement provides the best sociological data, though indirect, for validating such insight. This second indirect strategy has been adopted by a number of recent critics of Freud. But Fromm made his own position clear in the following statement:

Together with the way we have taken, i.e., directly gaining a certain insight into Freud's attitude towards the patient from his own statements, there is an indirect way, too, namely by the study of the partly strengthened conflicts within the analytic movement between Freud and his innermost circle on the one hand and the "opposition" analysts on the other.²⁶

There are important and still partly unanswered questions as to why Freud and some of his colleagues in his inner circle resisted so ruthlessly the therapeutic revisions of Groddeck and Ferenczi. We cannot hope to examine most of the questions for these conflicts here. But we will summarize the most significant suggestions forwarded by Fromm insofar as they bear on the debate about the identity theory versus the supposed non-identity principle in Freud's work.

Firstly, Fromm suggests that analysts as a rule have the same social interests as other members of their social stratum. Equally, the analyst's understanding of his own drive structure, as well as that of his patient's, has its limits in "his social interests, and in the feelings and insights which are conditioned by these interests." Thus while Freud's attitude was in "contradiction" (the term is Fromm's) with his theory it was logical in relation to his social interests. Ferenczi's therapeutic perspective which advocated the analysis of the analyst as a prerequisite was of limited value because this attitude was in contradiction to the basic structure of his class. What is even more significant, however, is that he was not aware of this contradiction. Fromm put this somewhat dialectical critique of Freud and Ferenczi as follows:

Freud's personality and the peculiarity of his theory are in the end to be grasped not from individual, but from general social circumstances. Also the fact that a personality like Ferenczi was defeated in the fight makes good sense. Freud's attitude is sociologically seen, the logical one.



Ferenczi was an outsider, in contradiction to the basic structure of his class, and he was not aware of his own contradiction.¹⁷

Secondly, Fromm suggests that Ferenczi's opposition to Freud was one of principle, a philanthropic versus a deeply misanthropic attitude, and that this was an insufficient basis for opposing Freud. Fromm implies that, to the extent that Ferenczi did not see that the specific social character of taboos is conditioned by the necessity of the internalization of the exterior force over the majority of society, he failed to see the links between the patient's moral conflicts which are not really moral, the bourgeois-authoritarian character of Freud, and the illusions of analysis.

The effectiveness of analysis however rests now precisely on inhibitions being removed which stand in the way of a person following his interests. On the average analysis of the analyst will thus in no way lead to the removal of the bourgeois-character-structure, but rather to its strengthening. And this especially when in Freud's sense the analysis sets up moral taboos and anxieties about breaking them as being biologically conditioned and natural.¹⁸

In short Fromm's contention is that both Freud and revisionists such as Ferenczi were limited on the question of what constitutes effective therapy. His perspective on the therapists was that neither theoretical insight into the cause of patient anxiety nor analysis of the prospective analysts are fully adequate alternatives. As far as the patient is concerned analytical provision of insight to the patient about his individual childhood anxieties is insufficient because the family is only the "psychological agent" of society, and does not provide insight into real and effective motives of repression.

Given the foregoing, then, what constitutes effective analysis? The answer is simple: "the unconditional affirmation of the patient's right to happiness." Since the peculiarity of bourgeois moral proscriptions rests on its taboistic character the analyst must have no illusions about proving the concrete circumstances about the biological necessity of rigid and abstract morality, or the specific cause of this or that moral anxiety in a patient, or even earthly wisdom about limiting a patient's claim to happiness.

It [the effective attitude to analysis] is rather to be seen as a life-statement of certain people "under the conditions of their origin and dying out." Without evaluation there is no theory of reality at all, but setting values does not need to be tied to the ideals of idealistic morality. The

goal is not the fulfilling of some eternal demands, but the realization of claims to happiness in their different historical forms.¹⁹

Clearly then insofar as this statement can be said to represent an acceptance of some form of identity principle this does not have the same meaning for Fromm and the Frankfurt Institut members if they reject his formulations. For Fromm viewed morality's taboistic character as a function of bourgeois capitalism in theory and praxis. This condition has to be exploded in therapy if psychoanalysis constitutes part of a unique response to bourgeois society. What the patient fears in therapy is that the analyst judges him as a person. The patient knows, and according to Fromm accepts, that certain of his actions will be judged by the analyst.

Thus, as far as Fromm was concerned, to reject the possible reformulation of therapeutic praxis was in reality to affirm the externality of urban-bourgeois-tolerance in action whatever one espoused in theory. Fromm then provided for therapy a specific role which he articulated in the latter portion of his essay on "Therapie" (1935). This role emerged from a question which was only clarified fully in "Zum Gefühl Der Onnmacht" (1937), i.e., what is the function of psychoanalytic theory and therapy in unmasking the feeling of impotence? As he suggested in "Sozialpsychologischer Teil" (1936), the value of a simultaneous focus on the relationship between the structure of authority and its conscious manifestation of impotence in the individual superego is that such a focus reveals the mechanism whereby force is transformed into an internal momentum. Therapy for Fromm provides one of the bases for a "Lebens praxis."

It was specifically in the context of this consideration that Fromm focused on the role of the family, and rejected Freud's claim that the superego is solely the heir of the Oedipus complex, the inheritor of a racial past.²⁰ We turn now to another dimension of Fromm's critique of impotence as it specially manifests itself in socialization processes and in reformist movements.

Fromm's critique of bourgeois reform movements

In an earlier part of this discussion we suggested that Fromm's early critique did not constitute a levelling of the conscious, intra-subjec-



tivity or the unconscious and their relationship to objective material conditions. Rather, he was attempting to get a handle on the specific conditions under which these operate in bourgeois industrial society. In this section we will summarize three essays, none of which were published in the Frankfurt Institute's journal, in which he set out his ideas in some detail. Between 1930 and 1931, at about the time he joined the Frankfurt Psychoanalytic Institute, his focus of empirical concern was the administrative, ideational, and psychological repression of the contemporary community as this was mediated through education, criminal justice systems, and enlightened reformism. It was within this context that Fromm at first appeared to select Marxist sociology combined with Freudian drive theory as a unique method of complete understanding.¹¹

There is no hint in these essays of Fromm's movement towards identity theory. At the same time, however, he did not spell out in greater detail the concept of an alternative "Lebenspraxis" alluded to in his "Socialpsychologischer Teil." What he did was assert particularly in "Der Staat Als Erzieher" ("The State As Educator") that mere criticism of the administrative and psychological techniques of the State's juridical and educative functions and principles which train man into a father-fearing child will not change those principles or functions.¹² The impression given in the review of Bernfeld's work is that if the students' and workers' movements could coalesce to control the "administrative community" this would be the signal for radical social change. But what is this concept of "administrative community," and how is it connected to Fromm's critique of impotence and tolerance?

The concept of "administrative community" was a typification of the specific spheres of activity, within the educational system and the courts, whose functions were co-optation of petty bourgeois students and thereby protection of bourgeois interests in the case of the former; and reinforcement of submissiveness, and deflection and renunciation of drives of the masses, in the case of the latter. Both in the Bernfeld review and in "The State As Educator" Fromm argued that the "educational functions" of these institutions were less important to the ruling classes in modern society than the functions of reinforcing patriarchal authority in its developed form. He therefore argued that radical criticism of the pedagogics of the school (Schulheim in the Bernfeld review was a new type of boarding school) and of the justice system were not vital tasks.

Fromm was saying more than simply that the functions of boarding school and criminal justice really exist behind the rationalized objectives that are presented. For example, in an essay "On The Psychology Of the Criminal And The Punishing Society," published in the "conservative" journal *Imago*, he suggested that the "masses" do not have an awareness of "justice" insofar as the criminal justice system is concerned. They do not have an "inherited lawful moral view." The masses transfer the father-fear from early childhood to the ruling classes, the state and thereby the criminal justice system (p. 247). This maintains social stability, and through repetition makes force unnecessary. The ruling classes are therefore presented to the masses as father through the criminal justice system.

The foregoing argument has, for readers who have interpreted Fromm solely from his later post-Frankfurt writings, a kind of intellectual *déjà vu*. But this is deceptive. In the earlier context Fromm is less concerned with theoretical generalizations of the sort for which he has been much criticized in later writings. In these earlier writings the analysis is more Marcusean—in the tradition of sections of *Eros And Civilization*. In the epoch of advanced industrial capitalism Fromm argued that criminal justice, even in the court room, is concerned with renunciation of drive-satisfying tendencies, and not with fighting crime and rehabilitation (p. 249). Psychoanalytic insight therefore has little practical value as a reformist ideology. He argued that one must remain sceptical. The only positive role delineated for theory was not "judgment" but a "diagnostic" role which would show the operation of combined unconscious factors (such as the satisfaction of narcissistic needs partly mediated through the ego) and economic factors.

Towards a conclusion

In summary it can be argued that while the intellectual context of Fromm is different in each of these three essays discussed above, what they have in common with the writings of the Frankfurt period is the rejection of the division between notions of "healthy" and "neurotic." Fromm made it clear that sublimation is dependent on education which is in turn an economic problem which changes, together with changing cultural and social situations. This general idea provided one of the major bases for Fromm's first use of Marx and Freud. This general conclusion is not based on Fromm's later explanation in



Beyond The Chains of Illusion (1962), which has heretofore been interpreted as a definitive autobiographical statement. Rather our conclusion is based on contextual analyses of the author's earlier statements. Fromm, that is to say, used a combination of Marx and Freud that has not been so far classified as Frankfurt School theory and yet is not clear non-identity or identity oriented in terms of ideology. A re-evaluation of Fromm's early work could provide much needed clarification to salient problems in Frankfurt School critical theory which would suggest that the present non-identity versus identity status of that theory should be re-examined.

From the standpoint of contemporary social theory the single most important thrust of Fromm's early work was the suggestion, perhaps caution, that death and revolution were not incompatible. His critique of impotence is the source of this critique. We have developed this theme at a number of points. We have tried to establish that Fromm's convergence of Marx and Freud—while it may have led to a later accommodation to social democracy—was not primarily identity theory in its early formulation. In attacking Freud at central points Fromm questioned the psychoanalytic notions of praxis (therapy) and action (as possibility) as well. This was Fromm's attack on the ambiguities of Freud's attitudes to bourgeois morality.

In suggesting that Freud's work resonated a certain awareness and yet unconsciousness of bourgeois morality Fromm was de facto attacking one of the major platforms of the non-identity postulate in critical theory. At the same time we have asserted that Fromm was by no means doing so exclusively in the interests of a subjectivist, conformist theory and therapy. This position has been ignored by Marcuse, Martin Jay, and Russell Jacoby but for different reasons in each case. Critical theory unnecessarily narrowed its focus to particular interpretations of Occidental civilization in its uncritical assessment of Freud's contributions of theory and therapy. This insight can be derived from Fromm's detailed argument that Freud's scepticism toward therapy had less to do with his theoretical perspectives and more to do with an authoritarian praxis in his personality and in his ideology. We also argued that the general outlines of such an approach resonate in the works of other critical theorists.

So why is Fromm's work scape-goated as revisionism? A thorough answer to this question would take us well beyond the scope of the present discussion, and into the work of the later Fromm. All we can

suggest is that the identity and non-identity postulates are not mutually exclusive positions. What we can suggest is that Fromm in his essay on "Therapie" criticized the positions of the major revisionists such as Ferenczi by suggesting that they attempted to revise therapy on theoretical grounds without understanding that Freud's position was in keeping with that of his class. This cleared the way for Fromm's attack, even though largely inferred, on the notion that "theoretical critique" can be radical in any sense. Fromm was no Marxist. But he was attacking a form of activity that is acceptable in advanced industrial societies.

NOTES

1. A brief summary of the non-identity principle would be the following:
(a) The principle, developed by Theodor Adorno and Walter Benjamin, that Freud's metapsychology cannot be subsumed under Marx's epistemology, on both theoretical and philosophic grounds.

(b) The rejection of the equation of the dialectical materialist-scientific paradigm with an historically higher truth—first specified by George Lukács. This means the rejection of:

(c) The identity principle or the equation of active individual subjectivity in history and objective historical and social conditions realized in the historical mission of the proletariat.

In short, within the context of critical theory acceptance of the non-identity principle means rejection of the idea that historical revolution can be synonymous with the equation of subjectivity and objective historical reality or Hegelianized Marxism. But this meant that the epistemological skepticism of critical theory rests on the refusal to attribute specific place to Marxism in the archaeology of knowledge.

For more on this, see Susan Buck-Morss, "The Dialectic of T. W. Adorno," *Telos*, no. 14, Winter, 1972, pp. 137-144, esp. p. 143; Martin Jay, *Dialectical Imagination* (New York: Little, Brown, 1973), pp. 86-118; Russell Jacoby, *Social Amnesia* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975), pp. 73-100.

2. It is worth restating that what both positions have in common is the view that criticism of society must start as criticism of the most advanced forms of industrial society, whether bourgeois or not. It is also worth stating that this methodological postulate of "criticism" reminds us of a distinction which is a necessary prerequisite for interpreting Fromm's work, and that is a distinction which has to be drawn between his theoretical and epistemological formulations, on the one hand, and his empirical and historical formulations, on the other. There are some contradictions between the two, but these do not constitute our major focus.

3. Cf. Alfred Schmidt, *Introduction to Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, pp. 29-32. See also Michel Foucault's *The Order of Things* (London: Tavistock, 1970), pp. 373-375.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

5. See Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London: Tavistock, 1972), pp. 21-39; Paul Ricoeur, *Philosophy and Freud: An Interpretation* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1970), pp. 3-19, 59-76; Martin Nicolau, "The



Unknown Marx," *New Left Review*, 48, March—April, 1968, pp. 41—60.

6. "Psychoanalyse und Soziologie," *Zeitschrift für Psychoanalytische Paedagogik*, 3, (1929), pp. 268—270, p. 268.

7. "Die Gesellschaftliche Bedingtheit der Psychoanalytischen Therapie," *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, 4, (1935), Heft 3, pp. 365—397, 374—375.

8. All quotations are taken from Fromm, op. cit., "Psychoanalyse und Soziologie," (1929).

9. The tenor of Fromm's critique of tolerance has important similarities in the work of other institute members. It is the use Fromm makes of it which is different from others.

10. "Zum Gefühl der Ohnmacht," *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, 6, (1937), pp. 95—119, quotation from p. 114.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 110.

12. See S. Freud, *An Outline of Psychoanalysis* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1949), pp. 35—39. Here, however, Freud goes beyond the archaeological posture of psychoanalysis and suggests that the maintenance of internal resistances is the "sine qua non of normality," a notion which allows Fromm to infer the significance of impotence in mental life, as a general category. Parenthetically, this genetic nature and archaeological posture of the "depth psychology" (Freud's term for the metatheory of psychoanalysis) of psychoanalysis was not asserted as being disjunctive with normal, empirical, cumulative science (in Kuhn's sense). Rather, Freud saw it as part of the "scientific Weltanschauung." See S. Freud, *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1933), Lecture XXXV, "The Question of a Weltanschauung," pp. 158—182; see also "Some Elementary Lessons in Psychoanalysis," (1938) in *General Psychological Theory*, ed. P. Rieff (New York: Collier, 1963), pp. 218—224. It should be noted that in this connection the relation between theory and therapy is not at all the programmatic relation between theory and praxis in Marx. There are many references and allusions in the writings of Marx and Engels to a concept of "methodological penetration" of the forms of society to the core of socio-economic relations which conceal the real meanings behind the presented forms. See amongst others the much quoted second edition preface of *Capital*, 1873, Vol. I, Moscow, 1961, Foreign Languages Publishing House, pp. 197—202; F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Part Two (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr, 1935), pp. 148—159. The meaning of methodological penetration is however clearly established as far as a study of Marx is concerned in the foreword to *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy (rough draft)* (London: Penguin Books, 1973), pp. 35—37.

13. Cf. E. Fromm, "Die Schulgemeinde Und Ihre Funktion Im Klassenkampf," *Zeitschrift für Psychoanalytische Paedagogik*, 4, (1930), pp. 116—117. (Tr., "Review of Bernfeld's 'The School Community and Its Function in the Class-Struggle,'" "Zur Psychologie Des Verbrechers Und Der Strafen Gesellschaft," *Imago*, 17, (1931), pp. 221—251. Fromm's synthesis of "busyness" and its explanation in impotence, what has non-identity is not entirely unambiguous. For more on the existing situations, what has to be probed is the disintegration of the old conservatism; the failure of bourgeois partisan politicians to consolidate the "new German middle classes" and the established middle classes into a "Staatsvolk" (due to the inflexibility of the existing party system); and finally the internal and external crises of capitalism which destroyed the traditional ideological visions of identity. For more on this see Larry E. Jones, "The Dying Middle Weimar Germany and the Fragmentation of Bourgeois Politics," *Central European History*, 1, March 1972, pp. 23—54; for in-depth analysis of fascism's internal ideological strategic use of impotence, see Ernst Nolte, *Three Faces of Fascism*, Part 4, Ch. 5 (Mentor Books, New American Library, 1965).

14. Cf. Russell Jacoby, *Social Amnesia: A Critique of Conformist Psychology From Adler to Laing* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975). Here Jacoby puts forward the mistaken view—taken over from Marcuse—that there is a critical tension between theory and therapy in psychoanalysis which is analogous to the tension between theory and praxis in Marxism (p. 37). Jacoby compounds the error with his major point that "The revolutionary edge of psychoanalysis is the refusal to accept social and individual values abstracted from the concrete struggle of men and women against themselves and nature" (p. 37). See also the important summary of the Marx-Freud controversy, and the insightful comment on the Frankfurt School and Marcuse versus Fromm and revisionist polemic in "When Dogma Bites Dogma: Or The Difficult Marriage of Marx and Freud," *Times Literary Supplement*, January 8, 1971, pp. 25—27; M. Jay, op. cit., 1973, p. 109.

15. Cf. E. Fromm, "The Social Philosophy of 'Will Therapy,'" *Psychiatry*, 2, 2, 1939, pp. 229—237. It should be noted en passant that our interpretation leads to the viewpoint that to this point (1939) Fromm had not yet assimilated Rank's usage of the theoretical metaphors of life and death fears into his own theoretic and therapeutic perspectives. The assimilation of such metaphors which undoubtedly came later is ultimately central to an explanation of anxiety, guilt, and, therefore, the meanings of neuroses as "clinical problems." For in Rank's and the later Fromm's perspectives the existence of life and death fears is an existential dichotomy which in turn determines historical contradictions such as passivity and impotence. For more on this aspect of Fromm, see K. O'Brien, *The Humanist Perspective in Social Science*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Simon Fraser University, 1972, pp. 50—85 and p. 104. The most recent exploration of Otto Rank's critique of technique and "busyness" as derivatives of life and death fears, and the negative implications of this for psychotherapy, is Ernest Becker's *The Denial of Death* (1974), and *Escape From Evil* (1975) (New York: Free Press).

16. E. Fromm, "Die Gesellschaft Bedingtheit der Psychoanalytischen Therapie," *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, (tr., "The Social Background of Psychoanalytic Therapy"), 4, (1935), Heft 3, pp. 365—379.

17. Cf. R. Jacoby, op. cit., pp. 121—128. See also H. Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), pp. 224—226. It is ironic that both the somersaults and the social historicisms—the allegations that Fromm is revisionist and therefore pre-theoretical and bourgeois—are carried out by left writers under the aegis of what are obviously pages of multi-national, corporate, capitalist publishing media.

18. E. Fromm, op. cit., (1935), p. 369.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 366.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 370.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 371.

22. Cf. S. Freud, "Neurosis and Psychosis," (1924), in *General Psychological Theory: Papers on Metapsychology* (New York: Collier, 1963). See also H. Marcuse's explanation of neurosis as rebellion of the Id in *Eros and Civilization* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), pp. 224—225.

23. E. Fromm, op. cit., p. 375.

24. M. Horkheimer and H. Marcuse, "Philosophie und Kritische," *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, VI, 3 (1937), pp. 625—647, p. 631.

25. E. Fromm, op. cit., p. 385. It should be noted that there is an important footnote in the original text at the end of this second statement quoted. Here Fromm makes it clear that he recognizes a distinction between the works of Groddeck and Ferenczi whose differences with Freud centered on the therapy, and the works of Adler, Rank, Jung, and Reich who gave up decisive features of the theory in favour of their own schools of thought.



26. *Ibid.*27. *Ibid.*, p. 394.28. *Ibid.*29. *Ibid.*, p. 395.

30. Ref. E. Fromm, "Sozialpsychologischer Teil," in *Studien über Autorität und Familie*, Schriften Des Institut für Sozialforschung (Paris, 1936), pp. 77-135. We cannot explore in this discussion a thorough examination of "Authority and the Family." Suffice it to say that Fromm's project at this time was based on the thesis that the family under bourgeois capitalism has become the "agent" of external physical force, the latter being an insufficient but necessary basis for authority in class society. The super ego is therefore contradictory, expressing a conscious need for love of external authority, and unconscious fear of that authority. This latter is a more reliable basis for society. This is a vital essay insofar as it represents his first attempt to demythologize personality formation in class society, by taking the concepts of masochism and sadomasochism out of the previously exclusive realm of clinical psychoanalysis and placing them within the realm of society. It is the much criticized "sociologization" of psychoanalysis. Another problem which cannot be fully explored here, again for reasons of brevity, is Fromm's exploration of the problem of impotence via the anthropological bases of matrilineality and matricentrism. While this writer does not deny that Fromm sought a convergence between ethnology and social psychology theory, it was one only to the extent that he developed a dialectical materialist analysis of the genesis of matriarchal and contemporary patricentric structures. It is in this connection that Marx's Fromm's work pursued the ontological rather than the methodological status of Marx's concept of "Nature." This synthesized materialist conception of history (which is only one aspect of his work) led in more recent writings both to a search for the historical bases of inequality, and evil, a conception of man's possibilities which has been criticized elsewhere. Our point is that it is a mistake to view his writings out of context. For more on this see E. Fromm, "Die Sozialpsychologische Bedeutung der Mutterrechtstheorie," *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, iii, 1934, pp. 195-227, edited by Max Horkheimer, Paris, Librairie Felix Alcan, 1970 (1935), (tr., "The Theory of Mother Right and Its Relevance for Social Psychology,") in *The Crisis of Psychoanalysis* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1970), pp. 84-109; "Robert Briffault's Werk über das Mutterrecht," in *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, 2, 3 (1933), pp. 382-387. For one of the clearest analyses of the specific weaknesses of Fromm's later utopianism in relation to his use of ethnographic data, see Alfred Schmidt, *The Concept of Nature in Marx*, (tr. by Ben Fowkes) (London: New Left Editions, 1971), esp. pp. 156-163.

31. Cf. E. Fromm, *op. cit.*, 1930 and 1931; also Fromm's review of Siegfried Bernfeld, "Die Schulgemeinde und ihre Funktion im Klassenkampf," (1918), in *Zeitschrift für Psychoanalytische Pädagogik*, 4, (1930), pp. 116-117. See especially the final paragraph of this review. My interpretation of this aspect of Fromm's work differs somewhat from Martin Jay's. His chapter, "The Integration of Psychoanalysis," has tended to supplement the general impression of others that Fromm's so-called convergence of Marx and Freud stemmed from a combination of religiosity, naturalism, and ethnographic interpretation of Marxism. My own interpretation is that this is possibly a later formulation. But the three essays under examination indicate a different focus for Fromm's early concern with Marx and Freud. See M. Jay, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-89.

32. E. Fromm, "Der Staat Als Erzieher," *op. cit.*, p. 9.

BEYOND IDENTITY THEORY

PAUL PICCONE

One of the ironies of critical theory in the 1970s is that, although practically defunct in Germany, its birthplace, it is alive and well in the English-speaking world.¹ This is all the more striking since during their American exile the "founding fathers" were so skeptical about the possibility of their work ever taking root in America that they rarely wrote in English, and their journal, the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, continued to appear in German almost up to the time when it ceased publication in 1941. What is even more ironic is that, while critical theory is catching on in North America and England with a whole new literature developing in the wake of the translation of most of critical theory's classical texts into English, in Germany it is precisely the American social science rejected by the new converts that increasingly reigns supreme. Obviously, the grass is always greener on the other side. Yet, it would be a mistake to seek an explanation of this phenomenon merely in terms of shifting intellectual fads; more substantial political and socio-economic conditions account for this seemingly abnormal state of affairs. An investigation of its historical roots, moreover, will throw considerable light on the very character of critical theory now practically in its third generation of theoreticians.

The question concerning the differences in the development of political consciousness and Marxist theory in Europe and in the New World is, of course, still very much an open one. Whatever the reasons for these historical differences, however, they certainly have nothing to do with America being "so barren of theoreticians that it is under

