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FROMM, Erich. To have or to be? Harper & Row, 1976. 215p (World perspectives, v.50) bibl index 73-130449. 8.95 ISBN 0-06-011379-0. C.I.P.

This 50th entry in the Harper "World perspectives" series divides all Gual into having and being, and expends a book on transforming the first mode of existence into the second. It is heady stuff, interesting to reflect on, with original views of cultural figures (Meister Eckhart, Marx, Freud), and its own prophetic drive toward the ideal. There are always problems: Fromm's two modes are themselves abstractions, inevitably, subject to disadvantages he ascribes to other abstractions. How does one provide for artistic and conceptual outreach as metaphysical dimensions? The dried bones of having things may not be either the only or the really significant mode of existence, apart from being. Still, Fromm does well with this. It is a good step in social dialogue, not final, but well developed and well taken. Material in the prophetic tradition, it is subject to its limitations: i.e., it is apocalyptic in character, not immediately getting society from Point A (the present) to Point B (condition of salvation). Its great value is that of sharp contrast — the Kierkegaardian leap, so to speak. Recommended for general readers, Fromm disciples, and cultural specialists dedicated to salvation by socio-personal transformation.

Anonymus, 1977b Review E. Fromm, To Have Or to Be? (1976a, English), in: Choice, Chicago, Vol. 14 (May 1977), p. 353.