

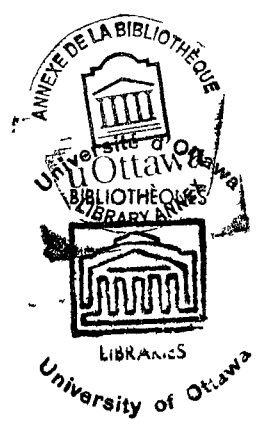
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ERICH FROMM AND VATICAN COUNCIL II:
HUMANISTIC AND AUTHORITARIAN ATTITUDES

by Francis L. Gross, Jr.

Thesis submitted to the Department of
Religious Studies, Faculty of Arts,
University of Ottawa, as partial
fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy



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CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

Francis Linton Gross, Jr. was born in St. Louis, Missouri, November 24, 1929. He received the Bachelor of Arts degree in 1955 from St. Louis University, St. Louis, Missouri. He received the Ph.L. degree from the same institution in 1956. In 1964 he was awarded the S.T.B. from St. Louis University School of Divinity, St. Marys, Kansas. He received the Diplome en Catechese et Pastorale in 1965 from Lumen Vitae, Brussels, Belgium. In 1968 he received the M.A. degree from Fordham University, Bronx, New York.

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INTRODUCTION

We shall introduce this study of Vatican Council II by making three points. First, we shall describe the purpose and method of the study. Secondly, we shall explain how Erich Fromm's thought is used in the study and why. Thirdly, we shall show how the writings of Vatican Council II are used and why.

To explain the purpose and scope of this dissertation we can begin by stating what it is not. It is not, to begin with, a clinical study. It is, rather, theoretical. It applies certain criteria taken from Erich Fromm's evaluation of religions as humanistic or authoritarian to the sixteen official documents of Vatican Council II.

There is no attempt here to evaluate or criticize Erich Fromm's thought in general or his criteria for judging religions in particular. The author does not stand in a position of one defending Fromm's thought. His attempt is to bring it to bear on the writings of Vatican Council II. Likewise, there is no attempt in this dissertation to judge the doctrinal truth or falsity of the dogmatic and moral statements made in the conciliar writings. We wish only to see, from the standpoint of Erich Fromm, whether or not they reflect a religion that is humanistic or authoritarian or a blend of the two.

This is not a narrow study, restricting itself to the evaluation of a single phenomenon as it appears in a given set of writings. It is rather a broad survey which attempts to give, in Frommian terms, a picture of the Church which takes into account many phenomena. In evaluating these phenomena one gains a certain overview of the Church which a study that concentrated on a single attitude or stance would neither give nor attempt to give.

To put it briefly, the purpose of this study is to determine whether the Catholic Church, as she is reflected in the official documents of Vatican Council II, provides an ambience calculated to foster and challenge the capabilities of man. The vision of man and the criteria for making such a judgment with regard to a religious structure are taken from the socio-psychoanalytical stance of Erich Fromm.

In explaining why Erich Fromm was selected for our study, it becomes necessary briefly to situate Dr. Fromm in the world of thought.

J.A.C. Brown has noted that Erich Fromm "is primarily interested in the problem of the relationship between the individual and his society--[...]."¹ Put another way, Erich Fromm has been classified as a thinker whose primary concern

¹ J.A.C. Brown, Freud and the Post-Freudians, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1961, p. 149.

is man's social character. David Riesman defines social character as follows:

"Social character" is that part of "character" which is shared among significant social groups and which, as most contemporary social scientists define it, is the product of the experience of these groups.²

Riesman links Erich Fromm with Abram Kardiner, Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, Geoffrey Gorer and Karen Horney, all of whom have concerned themselves with man's social character.³ We situate Erich Fromm, then, in the field of social psychology insisting that "'social character' is shaped by the adaptation of human needs to the plastic mode of existence of a society."⁴ It is important, too, to recognize that Fromm concerns himself with the effect of religion on man's social character. As Riesman notes, "Fromm sees religion as playing an important part in social struggles, and not merely as a reflection or distortion of those struggles."⁵

We feel that the quotations above, as well as situating Erich Fromm, serve also to show that in the area of social psychology he is a man of sufficient stature to warrant

² David Riesman, The Lonely Crowd, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1950, p. 4.

³ Ibid., p. 4.

⁴ S. Stansfield Sargent and Robert C. Williamson, Social Psychology, New York, Ronald Press, 1958, p. 69.

⁵ David Riesman, Individualism Reconsidered, Toronto, Free Press, 1954, p. 403.

our use of his critique of religion in this study. Furthermore, the popularity of his style makes it possible for an educated student to make use of his thought without having an advanced degree in the field of social psychology.

Let us turn now from the critic whose criteria we are going to use to the writings on which his thought will be brought to bear. We have chosen the sixteen official constitutions, decrees, and declarations of Vatican Council II as a comprehensive and authoritative statement on the Catholic Church in contemporary times. It is not our primary purpose to enter into debate as to whether or not these writings do indeed adequately represent a comprehensive view of contemporary Roman Catholicism, although one could certainly do so. We wish only briefly to situate these writings. We note, firstly, that they are the official pronouncements of an ecumenical Council. Karl Rahner notes that, in Roman Catholic parlance,

Councils (synods) are meetings, chiefly of bishops, which deliberate upon Church affairs, make decisions, and lay down regulations. [...] A council at which the Church as a whole is represented in accordance with prevailing canon law (one which the Pope convokes, presides over, and ultimately confirms) is called an ecumenical council.⁶

That this particular Council is of sufficient stature to warrant analysis may be seen in that it is the most recent

⁶ "Council," p. 103 in Theological Dictionary, New York, Herder and Herder, 1965.

Council and by the fact that nearly a hundred years elapsed between it and the Council which immediately preceded it. Its careful preparation, the freedom of debate in the decision-making process, the heavy representation of non-European Catholic Churches, as well as the presence of observers from non-Catholic Churches have contributed to the stature of the Council.⁷ We note, in conclusion, the concern of the Council with the contemporary Church:

Decisive was the declaration of John XXIII that the task of the Council was not to repeat traditional theology nor to condemn errors but rather to examine abiding doctrine and to interpret it in contemporary terms.⁸

The proposed plan which this study will take is as follows:

Chapter One situates authoritarian and humanistic religion in the thought of Erich Fromm. In order to do this we carefully note Fromm's vision of man and his needs. We then examine the authoritarian character and its humanistic counterpart. We present Fromm's vision of the social structures which surround man--political, economic, cultural--which are seen as contributing to the social character of man. These structures themselves are seen as authoritarian

⁷ "Council," p. 17-18 in Sacramentum Mundi: An Encyclopedia of Theology in six volumes, Vol. II, New York, Herder and Herder, 1968.

⁸ Ibid., p. 18.

or humanistic. Finally, we present a Frommian analysis of religion as a social structure. Humanistic religion is opposed to authoritarian. This presentation of necessity covers a broad range of Dr. Fromm's books and articles. It provides us with our criteria for studying the documents of Vatican Council II.

Chapter Two begins the analysis of the Council documents.⁹ It concerns itself with an analysis of attitudes toward God and sin found therein. In Frommian categories of thought, the Council's attitude toward God and sin can either be a detriment to man (authoritarian) or a challenge to the development of his powers (humanistic). In this chapter and those that follow it, each document will be referred to, after the initial entry, by an abbreviation commonly used among scholars, the appropriate number in the original text, and the page in the translation referred to

⁹ The Documents of Vatican II, New York, Guild Press, 1966. We have used this English translation of the original Latin text because it is the translation used in the only major commentary presently in English and because we have found that it is readable and compares well in our own opinion with the Latin text. If necessary, we will refer to the Latin text to avoid ambiguity.

The two major documents which deal directly with the Church will be referred to in the text most frequently by the customary method of using the first words of the Latin text. Thus "The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church" will be referred to as "Lumen Gentium." In like manner, "The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World" is referred to as "Gaudium et Spes."

above.¹⁰ For a more complete understanding of the documents, two major commentaries on the text will be used extensively.¹¹ Both have been found useful because of their scholarly thoroughness and by the fact that many of the commentators themselves were architects of the documents.

Chapter Three concerns itself with an analysis of the Council's attitudes toward man. We equate an attitude toward man as humanistic in Erich Fromm's understanding of the word if it carries an awareness of and a challenge to

10 Abbreviations referring to the conciliar documents:

- AL - Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity
- AM - Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church
- CPE - Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church
- DOE - Decree on Ecumenism
- EC - Declaration on Christian Education
- EO - Decree on Eastern Catholic Churches
- FP - Decree on Priestly Formation
- GS - Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World
- LG - Dogmatic Constitution on the Church
- LR - Declaration on Religious Freedom
- MCS - Decree on the Instruments of Social Communication
- MVP - Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests
- RD - Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation
- RNC - Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions
- SL - Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy
- VR - Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of Religious Life

11 Vatican II, Textes et commentaires des decrets conciliaires, in the collection Unam Sanctam, Paris, Cerf, 1966-1972. This multi-volumed work is part of an ongoing series of studies of the documents which still continues in composition. Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, in five volumes, New York, Herder and Herder, 1967.

The French commentary will be referred to, after the initial notation, as Unam Sanctam, with the proper volume notation. The other commentary will be referred to as Commentary, with the volume noted.

man's basic needs. The attitude may be termed authoritarian if it tends to thwart these needs.

Chapter Four presents an analysis of certain dynamics of religion as they appear in the Council documents. These dynamics are concrete phenomena occurring within the religious social structure which are the results of the broad religious stance heretofore seen in that structure. These phenomena can be termed either humanistic or authoritarian. Thus we will look for modern forms of humanistic and authoritarian religion. We will survey the Council's attitude toward man's existential encounter with God. We will examine the Church's ritual life and her attitude towards the use of words. Each of these four categories may reveal an attitude in the documents that is either a call to man to be himself or evidence that the Church is not concerned with man.

Thus it is that the specific question posed by this thesis will find its answer: "Do the documents of Vatican Council II call men in general and Catholics in particular to be endowed with the social character termed by Erich Fromm as that of the revolutionary man?" We will find that such a study does not provide a clear cut answer, but will rather conclude that there are trends in the writings under study, some of which can be termed humanistic, others authoritarian. It is the nature of this blend of two contrary tendencies and its effect on the social character of man that we wish to evaluate.

CHAPTER I

AUTHORITARIAN AND HUMANISTIC RELIGION IN ERICH FROMM

Any study of religious structure from the point of view of Erich Fromm must of necessity do a good deal of backtracking. It must take into account Fromm's analysis of the structures of human society. It must note his analysis of individual human character. It must begin, in fact, with the vision of man's nature which is the basis of all of Fromm's thought.

Our effort here, then, will be to describe first of all what Fromm means by man and his basic needs. From there we will go on to describe what Fromm means by the authoritarian and humanistic character. We will then look at the closely related structures which in part give rise to the various characters of men. Finally, we shall take a look at what he means by religious structure and the two main categories into which he puts all religions--authoritarian and humanistic.

We hope that such a study will give us a Frommian set of criteria with which to study the documents of Vatican Council II. We shall attempt to see whether and to what extent the Catholic Church shows herself in these documents to be authoritarian or humanistic in structure, from Erich Fromm's point of view. Let us begin our work.

1. Erich Fromm's Vision of Man and His Basic Needs.

A comprehensive look at Fromm's works in English is striking in that it reveals that, since he began writing in English in 1941, his vision of man has remained quite consistent. We shall refer in this study to only one work written before this period. This is an essay, entitled in English, The Dogma of Christ,¹ which was written when Fromm was a strict Freudian. We shall situate that work in his thought development when we refer to it. Each of his other books, from Escape from Freedom² through The Revolution of Hope,³ contains somewhere in its pages a description of the condition of man.⁴ Since these descriptions vary only in

1 Erich Fromm, The Dogma of Christ and Other Essays on Religion, Psychology and Culture, Garden City, Doubleday Anchor, 1963, vii-95 p.

2 -----, Escape from Freedom, New York, Avon Discus, 1941 (Foreword II, 1965), xvi-333 p.

3 -----, The Revolution of Hope: Toward a Humanized Technology, Toronto, Bantam, 1968, v-178 p., with an epilogue by Ruth Nanda Anshen.

4 We will cite references to the condition of man in Erich Fromm's works here, taking them in chronological order to show that his basic stance has remained unchanged since 1941: Escape from Freedom, p. 37-38, 48-50; Man for Himself, New York, Fawcett Premier Edition, 1947, p. 48-50; Psychoanalysis and Religion, New York, Bantam, 1950, p. 22-24; The Forgotten Language, New York, Grove Press Evergreen, 1951, p. 104-106; The Sane Society, New York, Fawcett Premier, 1955, p. 29-33, 307; The Art of Loving, New York, Bantam, 1961, p. 6-8; The Dogma of Christ, p. 210; May Man Prevail?, Garden City, Doubleday Anchor, 1961, p. 1-30; Beyond the Chains of Illusion, New York, Simon Schuster, 1962, p. 157-158, 174; The Heart of Man, New York, Harper Colophon, 1964, p. 116-117, 148-149; You Shall Be As Gods, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966, p. 87-89; The Revolution of Hope, p. 62-63.

small details, we shall in this study restrict ourselves to Fromm's most complete elaboration of the condition of man. This is found in Man for Himself.⁵

A. The Condition of Man

(a) Man is an animal, biologically weak in comparison with the higher forms of life in the animal kingdom. He is also lacking in instinct, the means by which most animals survive on this earth. To counter these weaknesses, man, alone of the animal species, is endowed with self-awareness, reason, and imagination. These faculties disrupt the harmony and regularity between man and nature that characterize other forms of animal life. His path is not set according to the instincts of his species.

(b) Man, then, is a freak of nature. He is indeed an animal and hence part of nature, but he transcends nature in that he must determine his own way in the world. He must decide. He must puzzle how to survive if he is to survive.

(c) Man's awareness of himself makes him realize his own limitations and his own powerlessness. He alone, in the animal kingdom, is aware of these things. A certain dilemma arises for man because of his condition. He cannot rid himself of his mind, even if he should want to. He cannot

⁵ Fromm, Man for Himself, p. 48-50.

go back to the simple life where everything is decided by instinct, nor can he rid himself of his body and its needs if he is to stay alive, and his body wants to stay alive. Reason is man's blessing and his curse. Because of it, he alone of the animal kingdom can be discontent with his lot. Because he is aware, he alone can be bored. Man must develop his reason until he masters nature and himself. He must work out his own survival. It is not settled for him. He is, then, by definition a wanderer and a searcher, always in quest of new solutions to his problems. He is Odysseus, Abraham, Aeneas, Hamlet--always probing, always seeking, never satisfied.

(d) From man's condition in life come certain inevitable dichotomies, certain paradoxes, certain contradictions. Fromm labels these dichotomies existential because they are situations that are part of the existence of every man and do not change as man's culture changes in history. These existential dichotomies are three: (1) Life versus inevitable death. Man is driven to live, but he knows that his days are numbered and that death brings the end to his existence. (2) Although man can seek and discover, although he is capable of development, the short span of years allotted to him, of necessity, rules out the development of all his powers to their utmost. He is a pilgrim who will never quite arrive. (3) Man is alone and unique, and yet he desires to be

related. He must make his decisions by his reason, a lonely thing, setting him apart from animals and even other men. Yet his happiness depends on some sort of solidarity with other men. He is a social creature. Man can achieve meaning for his life only by what he himself does, only by unfolding, as best he can, his own potential. He and he alone can give meaning to his life, and that only by his searching, by the use of his productive powers. Unique among these are his ability to reason and his ability to love.

Fromm summarizes what we have said of the condition of man:

The problem of man's existence, then, is unique in the whole of nature; he has fallen out of nature, as it were, and is still in it; he is partly divine, partly animal; partly infinite, partly finite. The necessity to find ever-new solutions for the contradictions in his existence, to find ever-higher forms of unity with nature, his fellow men and himself, is the source of all psychic forces which motivate man, of all his passions, affects, and anxieties.⁶

(e) Related to the condition of man and flowing from it are man's needs. Fromm's descriptions of man's five basic needs have changed little in the years he has been

⁶ Erich Fromm, The Sane Society, New York, Fawcett Premier, 1955, p. 31. In this and subsequent quotations all emphasis is that of the original author unless otherwise noted.

writing in English.⁷ Thus, for the purpose of clarity and conciseness, those needs shall be analyzed as they are fully described in one of Fromm's books, taken from the middle of his productive years of writing in English, The Sane Society.⁸ Here he lists five basic needs of man as flowing from the conditions of the existence of every man. His list of needs is put, rather typically, in the form of paradox, in the form of choices for development or regression, for he says:

Both the mentally healthy and the neurotic are driven by the need to find an answer, the only difference being that one answer corresponds more to the total needs of man, and hence is more conducive to the unfolding of his powers and to his happiness than the other.⁹

7 That the reader may verify our statement of Fromm's consistency, we list here his books as they relate to each of the five basic needs: (a) Relatedness versus narcissism: Escape from Freedom, p. 141-156, Man for Himself, p. 102 ff., Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 66 ff., The Art of Loving, p. 22, The Heart of Man, p. 63 ff.; (b) Transcendence: Creativeness versus Destructiveness: The Sane Society, p. 41-42, The Heart of Man, p. 37-50, Man for Himself, p. 249-250; (c) Rootedness: Brotherliness versus Incest: The Sane Society, p. 42-61, The Heart of Man, p. 95-114; (d) Sense of Identity: Individuality versus Herd Conformity: The Sane Society, p. 103-138; (e) Need for a Frame of Orientation and Devotion: The Sane Society, p. 64-66, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 21-62, Man for Himself, p. 48-50.

8 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 33-66.

9 Ibid., p. 34.

B. The Needs of Man

The five needs, as Fromm defines them, are: (a) relatedness versus narcissism; (b) transcendence: creativeness versus destructiveness; (c) rootedness: brotherliness versus incest; (d) sense of identity: individuality versus herd conformity; (e) a need for a frame of orientation and devotion: reason versus irrationality. We proceed now to a discussion of each need.

(a) Relatedness versus Narcissism.- Since man is torn from his primary union with nature, he must find a new relatedness. Living alone with the existential dichotomies of life would drive him to insanity. He then seeks union. There are, however, various forms of union with one's fellow man, with nature, with family, culture, and state. He can seek a union that is based primarily on submission to a person, to a group, or to God. On the other hand he can seek power over others as a form of union, making others a part of himself and thus transcending his aloneness by domination. Both submission and the seeking of power to overcome loneliness are characterized by the loss of integrity on the part of the seeker. Fromm describes this syndrome as symbiotic union and refers to it in detail in Escape from Freedom.¹⁰ He entitles the submission syndrome as masochism and the power syndrome as sadism. The positive

¹⁰ Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 157-201.

alternative to masochism and sadism is love. Fromm feels that love is the only passion that leaves man integral as he uses it in overcoming aloneness:

Love is union with somebody, or something, outside oneself, under the condition of retaining the separate-ness and integrity of one's own self. It is an experience of sharing, of communion, which permits the full unfolding of one's own inner activity.¹¹

But one need not seek relatedness. He may turn instead to narcissism. Narcissism in its primary form, that of the infant, is a complete self-centredness. It is considered normal in an infant because an infant is helpless. It should, however, slowly recede. In a narcissistic adult, just as in the infant, there is only one reality, the self. Narcissism is the opposite pole to objectivity, reason, and love. Utter failure to relate to the world is insanity.

(b) Transcendence--Creativeness versus Destructiveness.- Man from his self-awareness, from his lack of protection by instinct, is driven to create, to search. He, unlike other animals, cannot be passive, letting nature rule him. He can create life, with work and care, or he can destroy life in order to transcend it. Destruction is the alternative to creativeness.

(c) Rootedness--Brotherliness versus Incest.- In an infant there is an initial tie to mother. This is normal,

¹¹ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 37.

but it must gradually be left behind. The umbilical cord, in a symbolic sense, must be severed. In later life, however, the physical mother can be replaced by a mother figure: the clan, the country, the political party, the company, the Church. It must be noted that there are certain positive aspects to an initial and a later controlled attachment to the mother figure:

The positive aspect is a sense of affirmation of life, freedom and equality which pervades the matriarchal structure. Inasmuch as men are children of nature, and children of mothers, they are all equal, have the same rights and claims, and the only value that counts is that of life.¹²

On the other hand, attachment to mother can be a negative thing in a man, a crippling thing:

[...] by being bound to nature, to blood and soil, man is blocked from developing his individuality and his reason. He remains a child and incapable of progress.¹³

In Fromm's view there can also be in man's search for rootedness an incestuous bond to the father or the father figure. This relationship has positive and negative aspects, just as the attachment to mother or mother figure. The two forms of attachment are different:

¹² Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 48.

¹³ Ibid.

The submission to the father is different from the fixation to the mother. The latter is a continuation of the natural tie, of the fixation to nature. The former is man-made, artificial, based on power and law, and therefore less compelling and forceful than the tie to the mother. While the mother represents nature and unconditioned love, the father represents abstraction, conscience, duty, law and hierarchy. The father's love for the son is not like the unconditioned love of the mother for her children because they are her children, but it is the love for the son whom he likes best because he lives up most to his expectations, and is best equipped to become the heir to the father's property and worldly functions.¹⁴

Such is the difference between fatherly and motherly love. Motherly love is like an act of grace. You can look for it in a magical way by trying to become helpless like an infant. Then the magic helper, the unconditional mother love, must appear.

Dr. Fromm sums up fatherly love:

To sum up: the positive aspects of the patriarchal complex are reason, discipline, conscience and individualism; the negative aspects are hierarchy, oppression, inequality, submission.¹⁵

In the mature man, Fromm feels that motherly and fatherly aspects should become internalized; a man should gradually become his own mother and his own father. His conscience should become the voice of reason, and he should love and respect himself unconditionally for what he is.

¹⁴ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 49.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 50.

(d) Sense of Identity--Individuality versus Herd-Conformity.- Fromm describes man as the animal who can say "I," apart from other men. Primitive man and the infant have no sense of "I." They identify with father and mother or the primitive clan. Such a man cannot see himself as existing apart from his group.

We live today in a world where man does not live in an unalterable station by his clan or class. We have economic and political mobility, and yet, in Fromm's vision, real individualism is not found by most modern men. Modern western man identifies with his nation, his class, his occupation. In the United States a sense of identity shifts to what Fromm calls herd-conformity. As man searches to belong, he sacrifices everything. Modern economic systems are based on the person's making himself a pleasing package for the prospective buyer. Hence the herd-conformity slogan: "I am--as you desire me." Such an attitude militates against a man's being his real self, developing the potential that is uniquely his. In short, it is just as big a problem as the one confronted by the primitive man who identified with his clan or the medieval peasant who identified with his lord. In each case true individuality is lost.¹⁶

16 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 63-64.

(e) The Need for a Frame of Orientation and Devotion

--Reason versus Irrationality.-- Man is seen not only as needing a sense of identity but also as needing to orient himself in the world intellectually. Objectivity in thought is difficult. A man may be very intelligent, for example, but not really reasonable, in that somehow he uses his native capacity to reason, to rationalize his thoughts. The frame that Fromm here discusses includes man's emotions as well as his thoughts, his body as well as his mind. Fromm judges all such frames of orientation and devotion by the sole criterion of whether or not they contribute to the development of man:

But whatever their contents, they all respond to man's need to have not only some thought system, but also an object of devotion which gives meaning to his existence and to his position in the world. Only the analysis of the various forms of religion can show which answers are better and which are worse solutions to man's quest for meaning and devotion, "better" or "worse" always considered from the standpoint of man's nature and his development.¹⁷

We have seen the basics, then, of Erich Fromm's vision of man, including man's basic needs. We shall now take the next step in our process of establishing parameters by establishing Dr. Fromm's vision of the authoritative versus the productive character in man.

17 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 66.

2. Authoritarian versus Humanistic (Productive, Revolutionary) Character.

A. The Authoritarian Character

The phenomenon of authoritarianism as it exists in a man's character can take two classic forms, neither of which is really separate from the other. These two forms have been mentioned briefly earlier in this discussion in the section entitled "Relatedness versus Narcissism." These two classic forms are labelled by Fromm as masochistic and sadistic strivings. They are both involved in attempts at fusion with other human beings. The masochist is the self-accuser, the accident-prone man, the user of compulsory rites to avoid guilt, the man who hurts those whom he likes. Besides these masochistic trends in the authoritarian character one regularly also finds sadistic tendencies:

They vary in strength, are more or less conscious, yet they are never missing. We find three kinds of sadistic tendencies, more or less closely knit together. One is to make others dependent on oneself and to have absolute and unrestricted power over them, so as to make of them nothing but instruments, "clay in the potter's hand." Another consists of the impulse not only to rule over others in this absolute fashion, but to exploit them, to use them, to steal from them, to disembowel them, and, so to speak, to incorporate anything eatable in them. This desire can refer to material things as well as to immaterial ones, such as the emotional or intellectual qualities a person has to offer. A third kind of sadistic tendency is the wish to make others suffer or to see them suffer. This suffering can be physical,

but more often it is mental suffering. Its aim is to hurt actively, to humiliate, embarrass others, or to see them in embarrassing and humiliating situations.¹⁸

The root of both of these tendencies is seen by Fromm as an attempt to escape aloneness and powerlessness-- to escape freedom and the self. There is a relationship between the self-annihilation of the masochist and wanting to become part of a larger whole. Sadism is also rooted in isolation and the feeling of weakness. The sadistic character is not independent of those whom he manipulates. Without them he would again be alone, a condition he cannot tolerate as a man. Such a relationship, such a dependence, seen as characteristic of both the sadist and masochist character, is labelled by Fromm with the adjective "symbiotic." But let us have him describe this state of symbiosis himself:

Symbiosis, in this psychological sense, means the union of one individual self with another self (or any other power outside the own self) in such a way as to make each lose the integrity of its own self and to make them completely dependent on each other. The sadistic person needs his object just as much as the masochistic needs his. Only instead of seeking security by being swallowed, he gains it by swallowing somebody else. In both cases the integrity of the individual self is lost. In one case I dissolve myself in an outside power; I lose myself. In the other case I enlarge myself by making another being part of myself and thereby I gain the strength I

¹⁸ Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 165.

lack as an independent self. It is always the inability to stand the aloneness of one's individual self that leads to the drive to enter into a symbiotic relationship with someone else. It is evident from this why masochistic and sadistic trends are always blended with each other. Although on the surface they seem contradictions, they are essentially rooted in the same basic need. People are not sadistic or masochistic, but there is a constant oscillation between the active and the passive side of the symbiotic complex, so that it is often difficult to determine which side of it is operating at a given moment. In both cases individuality and freedom are lost.¹⁹

It is interesting to note that sado-masochism is often confused with love. What seems to a person as loving his child or his mate might well be an effort to control him or to be controlled by him. We note also that the sado-masochistic syndrome, taken purely, is not destructive; it needs its object. For a sadist to destroy his victim would leave him alone, and he does not want that. Destructiveness, however, can be combined with sado-masochism in its more extreme forms. These remarks have been taken largely from Fromm's first work in English, Escape from Freedom.²⁰ It would be well, however, to note some adjuncts to the authoritarian character developed in a later work, The Heart of Man.²¹

It is noted there that the authoritarian generally regards other men as both weak and evil. They need his

19 Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 180.

20 Ibid., p. 163-201.

21 Fromm, The Heart of Man, p. 17-23.

guidance, and without it they will be lost and possibly destructive. Another characteristic of such a character is that he is more interested in death than he is in life. Such an attitude is labelled by Fromm as necrophilia. The man who is not really interested in life is force-oriented and driven by a compulsion to possess, regardless of the consequences of life-crippling on those whom he seeks to possess.²² An example of such a syndrome is that of intelligent men in today's world seriously considering the feasibility of atomic warfare, insensitive to the inevitability of the holocaust of millions of human lives. Such men, according to Fromm, cannot have a real reverence for life, which is the opposite of necrophilia.²³

The narcissistic man, the man who knows and has interest only in himself is, according to Dr. Fromm, often the man who possesses extraordinary power. We have here the commonplace of history, popularly known as Caesarean madness. A man for whom outside reality is unimportant is prone to manipulate other men, to use them as tools or pawns for his own self-centered aims.²⁴

22 Fromm, The Heart of Man, p. 37-61.

23 Ibid., p. 56.

24 Ibid., p. 62-94.

Fromm further allies what he calls incestuous ties with the authoritarian character. He defines incestuous ties as tied to a man's passion for protection, for satisfaction to his narcissism. He ties it to man's craving to be freed from the risks of responsibility, freedom, and awareness. He feels it is the outcome of man's longing for unconditional love, offered without any expectation of a loving response.

The tendency to remain bound to the mothering person and her equivalents--to blood, family, tribe--is inherent in all men and women. It is constantly in conflict with the opposite tendency--to be born, to progress, to grow. In the case of normal development, the tendency for growth wins. In the case of severe pathology, the regressive tendency for symbiotic union wins [...].²⁵

And so, once again we see our Frommian word symbiosis. Symbiotic union, as we have seen earlier, is at the root of the authoritarian, the sado-masochistic character. It militates against independence and freedom and inevitably becomes involved in manipulation of others for one's own designs, which is the outcome of authoritarianism.

It should be noted here that Fromm uses the word character in the dynamic sense of Sigmund Freud. It does not refer to the sum total of behavior patterns characteristic of one person, but to the dominant drives that motivate

²⁵ Fromm, The Heart of Man, p. 107.

behavior. Fromm differs from Freud in that he feels that the fundamental basis of character is not seen in types of libido organization but in the specific facets of a person's relatedness to the world. He feels that, in living, man relates himself to the world basically by acquiring and assimilating things and by relating to people. This latter process he calls socialization. With these qualifications, then, we can quote Dr. Fromm's definition of character:

[...] character can be defined as the (relatively permanent) form in which human energy is canalized in the process of assimilation and socialization.²⁶

The authoritarian character we are attempting to delineate in Frommian terms, then, has been discussed largely in terms of how he gets things (assimilation) and how he relates to people (socialization).

We make here a few notes and conclusions as regards the term authoritarian character as used by Erich Fromm. Fromm uses the term primarily to refer to normal rather than to neurotic personalities, to the man who admires authority and tends to submit to it, but at the same time wants to be an authority and have others submit to him. It is this personality factor that is the human basis for Fascism.²⁷

26 Fromm, Man for Himself, p. 67.

27 -----, Escape from Freedom, p. 186.

In any discussion of authority we must realize that authority in itself is not bad, unless one be an anarchist. Fromm uses the distinction between rational and irrational authority in his discussion. Rational authority is simply accountable authority. It must give reasons for what it dictates, must be subject to the criticism of reason, and be subject to replacement if proved to be unreasonable. Inhibiting or irrational authority is a law unto itself, is above criticism and not replaceable. Authority is not always visible. It can appear in the form of duty or conscience, and merely be the internalized form of unquestioning submission to someone or some ideology. Closely allied to this is what Fromm calls anonymous authority. He sees it as especially present in contemporary democratic countries. It is disguised as common sense, psychic health, normality, public opinion. It is evident in the soothing voice of the soft-sell adman. The great effectiveness of anonymous authority lies in its hidden character. It exists unnoticed, and yet those seduced by it, unbeknownst to themselves, have shed their human reason and hence their integrity. Anonymous authority is an often used tool of the authoritarian character in today's western world.²⁸

28 Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 208-230.

The remarks immediately above have gone beyond, strictly speaking, our discussion of the authoritarian character and have gotten us briefly into forms of authoritarianism as they exist in western society. We will discuss them further under a section of this chapter concerning authoritarian structures.

Returning to our treatment of authoritarian character, we note that it is a corollary to the sado-masochistic character that one possessed of such a trait is often rebellious. Fromm opposes the word rebellious, basically symbiotic, to the word revolutionary. Speaking of the rebelliousness of authoritarian men, he has this to say:

They look like persons who, on the basis of their inner strength and integrity, fight those forces that block their freedom and independence. However, the authoritarian character's fight against authority is essentially defiance. It is an attempt to assert himself and to overcome his own feeling of powerlessness by fighting authority, although the longing for submission remains present, whether consciously or unconsciously.²⁹

Another obvious trait following from Fromm's delineation of the authoritarian character is fatalism. The authoritarian character, on his masochist side, is a fatalist. He loves those conditions that limit human freedom; he loves to submit to fate in whatever form it comes to him. He has various ways of rationalizing this trait--for one man it is

29 Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 192.

the sacredness of the orders of his commanding general. For another it is God's will. For yet another it is his Destiny, to which he must submit. Hitler, for example, thought of himself as a man called by some higher fate to lead the German people.³⁰

Yet another manifestation of the authoritarian character is what Fromm calls automaton conformity. He finds it especially common in the contemporary western world:

This particular mechanism is the solution that the majority of normal individuals find in modern society. To put it briefly, the individual ceases to be himself; he adopts entirely the kind of personality offered to him by cultural patterns; and he therefore becomes exactly as all others are and as they expect him to be. The discrepancy between "I" and the world disappears and with it the conscious fear of aloneness and powerlessness. This mechanism can be compared with the protective coloring some animals assume. They look so similar to their surroundings that they are hardly distinguishable from them. The person who gives up his individual self and becomes an automaton, identical with millions of other automatons around him, need not feel alone and anxious any more. But the price he pays, however, is high; it is the loss of his self.³¹

The conscience of the authoritarian personality is described by Fromm as:

[...] the voice of an internalized external authority, the parents, the state, or whoever the authorities in a culture happen to be. As long as people's relationships to the authorities remain external,

³⁰ Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 260.

³¹ Ibid., p. 208-209.

without ethical sanction, we can hardly speak of conscience; such conduct is merely expediential, regulated by fear of punishment and hope for reward, always dependent on the presence of these authorities, on their knowledge of what one is doing, and their alleged or real ability to punish and to reward. Often an experience which people take to be a feeling of guilt springing from their conscience is really nothing but their fear of such authorities. Properly speaking, these people do not feel guilty but afraid.³²

Still yet another consequence of the authoritarian character, another manifestation of it, is the authoritarian's attitude towards faith. Of faith Fromm has the following definition:

[...] faith is the conviction about the not yet proven, the knowledge of the real possibility, the awareness of pregnancy. Faith is rational when it refers to the knowledge of the real yet unborn; it is based on the faculty of knowledge and comprehension, which penetrates the surface and sees the kernel. Faith, like hope, is not prediction of the future; it is the vision of the present in a state of pregnancy.³³

Fromm sees the possibility of this rational faith being threatened by irrational faith. Irrational faith

[...] is submission to something given, which one accepts as true regardless of whether it is or not. The essential element of all irrational faith is its passive character, be its object an idol, a leader, or an ideology.³⁴

32 Fromm, Man for Himself, p. 148.

33 -----, The Revolution of Hope, p. 13-14.

34 Ibid., p. 14.

Such a submission of one's reason is again symbiotic, submissive, the masochistic side of the authoritarian character. It is seen as irrational, hence an unwarranted submission to authority.

We have seen, then, the authoritarian character as Erich Fromm delineates it. It is sado-masochist. It has connected with it elements of necrophilia, narcissism and incestuous fixation. It is characterized by rebelliousness and yet is fatalistic. One of its most frequent manifestations in contemporary western society is automaton conformity. Its conscience is not a recall to reason but authoritarian and unthinking, its faith basically irrational.

We pass from this summary of the authoritarian character to its opposite, termed by Fromm the humanistic character, the productive character, the revolutionary character.

B. The Humanistic (Productive, Revolutionary) Character

We shall describe the humanistic character under five headings: (a) loving, (b) biophilic, (c) free and independent, (d) true to its conscience and rooted in rational faith, (e) revolutionary. The last of these five tends to sum up the other qualities.

(a) Loving.- We have already seen immature love as characterized by symbiosis. One may ask what the qualities of mature love are. We may understand it in terms of man's powerful desire for interpersonal union.³⁵ In terms of man's five basic needs it can be seen in relation to the first and third as delineated above: relatedness and rootedness. Fromm understands loving as an expression of a power, a creative thing, an active thing.

In contrast to symbiotic union, mature love is union under the condition of preserving one's integrity, one's individuality. Love is an active power in man; a power which breaks through the walls which separate man from his fellow men, which unites him with others; love makes him overcome the sense of isolation and separateness, yet it permits him to be himself, to retain his integrity. In love the paradox occurs that two beings become one and yet remain two.³⁶

Fromm defines love as follows:

Love is the active concern for the life and the growth of that which we love.³⁷

A key to Fromm's understanding of love is what he means by activity; activity is basically the using of one's own power. It is not a frenzy one works himself into out of a sense of guilt, for example. It is the active use of one's own potency and it is characterized by giving.

³⁵ Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 35.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 17.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 22.

For the productive character, giving has an entirely different meaning. Giving is the highest expression of potency. In the very act of giving, I experience my strength, my wealth, my power. This experience of heightened vitality and potency fills me with joy. I experience myself as overflowing, spending, alive, hence as joyous. Giving is more joyous than receiving, not because it is a deprivation, but because in the act of giving lies the expression of my aliveness.³⁸

Fromm gives a sexual analogue to giving: giving semen is an act of potency, for a woman receiving the semen is giving in her receiving. The most important form of giving is the giving of oneself. In this I enrich another person by giving myself. I help make him alive. This is joy. There is a mutuality. A teacher, for example, is taught by his students as well as they by him. It presumes not using people as objects. It presumes a productive orientation, i.e., the overcoming of dependency, narcissistic omnipotence, the wish to exploit others. It assumes a rational faith in one's own powers. Basic to it are care, responsibility, and respect.

The relationship of Jonah toward the Ninevites in the Bible, for example, is such that he does not really care for them. He does not wish to convert them. Responsibility means to be able and ready to respond. Cain's famous question: "Am I my brother's keeper?" shows a lack of awareness of this aspect of love. He was not willing (perhaps

³⁸ Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 19.

not able) to realize that the life of his brother Abel was indeed his business.³⁹

The third characteristic of love is respect. It means to look at, in its Latin root. It means concern for the other person as he is. It implies knowledge: you can't love one whom you don't know. Man naturally is curious, desirous of knowing, of wresting the secret of the things he doesn't know. Fromm sees loving as a way of knowing.

Love is active penetration of the other person, in which my desire to know is stilled by union. In the act of fusion I know you, I know myself, I know everybody--and I "know" nothing. I know in the only way knowledge of that which is alive is possible for man--by experience of union--not by any knowledge our thought can give. Sadism is motivated by the wish to know the secret, yet I remain as ignorant as I was before. I have torn the other being apart limb from limb, yet all I have done is to destroy him. Love is the only way of knowledge, which in the act of union answers my quest. In the act of loving, of giving myself, in the act of penetrating the other person, I find myself, I discover myself, I discover us both, I discover man.⁴⁰

Because knowing the other is essential to love, love varies as its object varies. There are, then, various kinds of love. Of these Fromm considers "brotherly love"⁴¹ to be the most fundamental form of love. Its Christian expression

39 Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 22-23.

40 Ibid., p. 25-26.

41 Ibid., p. 39.

is "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Hence it is a love for all men. He sees it at root as a love between equals, based on the common dignity of all men. Love of the stranger and the poor is the beginning of brotherly love. It means basically recognizing them as equals, even though they are temporarily deprived in some sense.

The love of a mother toward her child also has special characteristics. It is an unconditional affirmation of the child's life and his needs.

It is the attitude which instills in the child a love for living, which gives him the feeling: it is good to be alive, it is good to be a little boy or girl, it is good to be on this earth!⁴²

This love is not a love of equality, like brotherly love, and yet it is a self-dissolving love:

But the child must grow. It must emerge from the mother's womb, from the mother's breast; it must eventually become a completely separate human being. The very essence of motherly love is to care for the child's growth, and that means to want the child's separation from herself.⁴³

Erotic love again has its own characteristics. Erotic love means fusion with one person. It is an activity in which deception, symbiotic union of one form or another, is always a danger. It is more than just a feeling; it involves judgment and promise and decision. It is not just something

⁴² Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 41.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 43.

you fall into, as is often implied in the expression "falling in love." It should not be looked at as easily dissolvable or as completely indissoluble.⁴⁴

Self-love is seen as a condition for all other forms of love. If I have no respect for my own powers and no awareness of them, then I will not use them. Self-love is seen as an eminently rational thing:

If it is a virtue to love my neighbor as a human being, it must be a virtue--and not a vice--to love myself, since I am a human being too.⁴⁵

Fromm sees selfish people as not only unable to love others, but equally unable to love and respect themselves.

In concluding our discussion of love in Erich Fromm's terms, we must note again that symbiosis is the chief enemy of mature love. We note also that rational faith is closely allied with mature love.⁴⁶ Such a faith is founded in a belief in ourselves, in our potential to reason and to love, and includes faith in the potential of others. The basis of rational faith is productiveness: to live by faith means to live productively, hence to experience one's reason, one's ability to love.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 44-48.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 49.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 102.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 102-108.

Our discussion of the productive or humanistic character in contradistinction to the authoritarian character continues with another characteristic of such a character: biophilia.

(b) Biophilia.- Biophilia is simply the Greek word for love of life. Biophilia in its roots is basically sexual and reproductive, but we must remember that sex can be used for almost any purpose or orientation of character. It is seen as basically constructive rather than retentive. A person who is a biophile has a sense of wonder toward life. His approach to life is functional and flexible rather than fixed. He has the capacity to see wholes. A biophile does not have a narrow intellectual vision. Such a person is strongly influenced, then, by love and reason. He enjoys life. The ethic under which he directs his actions is basically life oriented, placing life as the highest value. He is characterized by joy. For him sadness is a sin.⁴⁸

The person who fully loves life is attracted by the process of life and growth in all spheres. He prefers to construct rather than to retain. He is capable of wondering, and he prefers to see something new to the security of finding confirmation of the old. He loves the adventure of living more than he does certainty. His approach to life is functional rather than mechanical. He sees the whole rather than only the parts, structures rather than summations. He wants to mold and to influence

⁴⁸ Fromm, The Heart of Man, p. 46-48.

by love, reason, by his example; not by force, by cutting things apart, by the bureaucratic manner of administering people as if they were things. He enjoys life and all its manifestations rather than mere excitement.⁴⁹

Fromm completes his description of the biophilic character by noting that few men are pure biophiles or necrophiles. In most men there are elements of each, struggling for dominance.

(c) Freedom and Independence.- This third characteristic of the productive character is tied to three of man's basic needs: (1) rootedness: brotherliness versus incest; (2) sense of identity: individuality versus herd conformity; and (3) the need for a frame of orientation and devotion: reason versus irrationality. A premise of the notion of the idea of freedom and independence is that man does have a nature. We have referred to the Frommian concept of the condition of all men in the first part of this chapter. Still, it will help to clarify and refresh the memory of the reader if one states briefly Fromm's position on man's nature:

[...] as to the question of the nature of man, we arrive at the conclusion that the nature or essence of man is not a specific substance, like good or evil, but a contradiction which is rooted in the very conditions of human existence. This conflict in itself requires a solution, and basically there are only the regressive or the progressive solutions. What has

⁴⁹ Fromm, The Heart of Man, p. 47.

sometimes appeared as an innate drive for progress in man is nothing other than the dynamics of a search for new solutions. At any new level man has reached new contradictions appear which force him to go on with the task of finding new solutions. This process goes on until he has reached the final goal of becoming fully human and being in complete union with the world. Whether man can reach this final goal of full "awakening" in which greed and conflict have disappeared (as Buddhism teaches) or whether this is possible only after death (according to the Christian teaching) is not our concern here. What matters is that in all humanist religions and philosophical teachings, the "New Goal" is the same, and man lives by the faith that he can achieve an ever increasing approximation of it. (On the other hand, if solutions are sought for in a regressive way, man will be bound to seek for complete dehumanization which is the equivalent of madness.)⁵⁰

Man's condition, his nature if you will, is founded then on alternatives for regression or progression. Progression is seen as the full development of man's powers. Yet one may ask whether man is free to develop his powers or to regress. Does he have a choice, and hence a responsibility? Fromm sees human awareness as the key to freedom and liberation. He sees certain fundamental errors often made in a discussion of freedom. First among these is to treat man's freedom in the abstract. One often asks the question "Is man free?" rather than the question "Is this individual free?" He feels that there is no such thing as freedom in man. One must treat individual cases. Here too we must speak in

⁵⁰ Fromm, The Heart of Man, p. 120-121.

terms of inclinations rather than in terms of absolutes. Freedom is a dynamic rather than a static thing. It is not something one has or doesn't have. It is something one works for in concrete areas, something one builds to, something one strives for.⁵¹

If one is to discuss responsibility as a corollary to freedom, there is again room for deception. Often the notion of responsibility is used to denote that one is punishable or accusable. Again man is taken in the abstract. Responsibility, according to Fromm, asks the question, "Am I aware of what I have done?" Awareness, we repeat, is the decisive factor in freedom--awareness of what constitutes good or evil, awareness of which action is the appropriate means to the desired end.

Often a man is unaware of the forces driving him. There are often unconscious forces. It is here that the process of psychoanalysis can be useful to a man in his quest for freedom, for it can help a man be aware of the hidden factors in his desires. It is important, too, that one seeking freedom have the capability of seeing the real possibilities between which he can choose. The high school student dreaming of becoming a lawyer must know whether he has the capability of mastering the law. One must further be aware of the consequences of one choice against another.

⁵¹ Fromm, The Heart of Man, p. 127-128.

The student dreaming of being a lawyer might, for example, be unaware that his family could not possibly afford to send him to school or that if they tried, the others in the family might suffer severe deprivation as a consequence of helping achieve his dream.

If Erich Fromm sees awareness as the key to man's self liberation, he is equally conscious that such awareness is of no avail unless it is accompanied by the will to act, by the readiness to suffer the pains of frustration that necessarily result from an action contrary to one's passions. We conclude our discussion of awareness as the key to freedom with the author's own definition of it:

Awareness means that the person makes that which he learns his own, by experiencing it, experimenting with himself, observing others and, eventually, gaining a conviction rather than having an irresponsible "opinion." But deciding on the general principles is not enough. Beyond this awareness one needs to be aware of the balance of forces within oneself, and the rationalizations which hide the unconscious forces.⁵²

And again, in the context of alternativism:

We conclude, then, that man's actions are always caused by inclinations rooted in (usually unconscious) forces operating in his personality. If these forces have reached a certain intensity they may be so strong that they not only incline man but determine him-- hence he has no freedom of choice. In those cases where contradictory inclinations effectively operate within the personality there is freedom of choice. This freedom is limited by the existing real possibilities. These real possibilities are determined

⁵² Fromm, The Heart of Man, p. 133.

by the total situation. Man's freedom lies in his possibility to choose between the existing real possibilities (alternatives). Freedom in this sense can be defined not as "acting in the awareness of necessity" but as acting on the basis of the awareness of alternatives and their consequences. There is never indeterminism; and sometimes alternativism, and sometimes alternativism based on the uniquely human phenomenon: awareness.⁵³

Man's freedom, then, is understood on the premise of understanding man's nature. It is progressive and dynamic; it is rooted in awareness and the will to act. The productive character is a character well on the way to freedom.

(d) The Humanistic Conscience.- As a subsidiary and yet helpful means to understanding the productive man, it would be well to examine what Dr. Fromm calls "the humanistic conscience."⁵⁴

Humanistic conscience is described as man's recall to himself; it is its own voice, basically, and not the voice of another.

Humanistic conscience is the reaction of our total personality to its proper functioning or disfunctioning; not a reaction to the functioning of this or that capacity but to the totality of capacities which constitute our human and our individual existence. Conscience judges our functioning as human beings; it is (as the root of the word conscientia indicates) knowledge within oneself, knowledge of our respective success or failure in the art of living. But although conscience is knowledge, it is more than mere knowledge in the realm of abstract

⁵³ Fromm, The Heart of Man, p. 142-143.

⁵⁴ -----, Man for Himself, p. 162-175.

thought. It has an affective quality, for it is the reaction of our total personality and not only the reaction of our mind. In fact, we need not be aware of what our conscience says in order to be influenced by it.⁵⁵

This conscience, then, cares for itself. Its goal: productiveness, in the Frommian sense. Note that the hearing of the voice of conscience is very difficult. Hearing and discernment are seen as arts. Men often listen, for example, only to others instead of listening to themselves. To listen to one's conscience requires a certain reflection, a certain solitude. Since modern man hates to be alone, it is difficult for him to hear his own voice. Rationalization and the fear of disapproval from others are other factors that make it difficult to hear one's conscience.

We note in concluding Fromm's discussion of humanistic conscience that it rarely exists in a pure state. Most men's lives are a battleground between the voice of true or humanistic conscience and the voice of authoritarian conscience.

(e) The Revolutionary Character.- We conclude our discussion of the productive or humanistic character with a short summation taken from an essay by Dr. Fromm entitled "The Revolutionary Character."⁵⁶ In this section we attempt to summarize and clarify the thoughts that we have expressed

⁵⁵ Fromm, Man for Himself, p. 162.

⁵⁶ -----, The Dogma of Christ, p. 149-171.

above in slightly different words. It is our purpose to show that the revolutionary character is the same as the productive or humanitarian character.

Fromm describes the revolutionary character as a man who can say "No." He is not a rebel who wants to be an authority himself. Nor is he a fanatic for whom the cause is an idol with whom he identifies himself. He is not a man who is cold and unrelated to the world. Putting the matter positively, he is an independent man. He thinks, feels, desires, and decides for himself, and yet he is related to others. He identifies with humanity and has a deep reverence for life. He is critical of the majority opinion. For him power is not holy, and it does not replace truth. He is, then, capable of disobedience. He is Adam, Prometheus. We would say, he is the New Adam, although Dr. Fromm does not.

This summary may suggest that what I have been describing is mental health and well-being, rather than the concept of a revolutionary character. Indeed, the description given is that of the sane, alive, mentally healthy person. My assertion is that the sane person in an insane world, the fully developed human being in a crippled world, the fully awake person in a half-asleep world--is precisely the revolutionary character. Once all are awake, there need no longer be any prophets or revolutionary characters--there will be only fully developed human beings.⁵⁷

We have quoted this summary of the revolutionary character because it contains within it reference to a sick

⁵⁷ Fromm, The Dogma of Christ, p. 171.

society, a reference to structures. We have discussed Fromm's view of the human situation and compared the humanistic and authoritarian characters with the purpose of preparing for a treatment of how societal structures themselves contribute to man's becoming more or less human. We come, then, to a description of authoritarian (crippled) structures versus humanitarian (developing) structures in the world of man.

3. Authoritarian versus Humanistic Structures.

In the view of Erich Fromm, the structures of society have a great deal to do with the character of man. Let us allow the author to speak for himself:

The point of view taken here is neither a "biological" nor a "sociological" one if that would mean separating these two aspects from each other. It is rather one transcending such dichotomy by the assumption that the main passions and drives in man result from the total existence of man, that they are definite and ascertainable, some of them conducive to health and happiness, others to sickness and unhappiness. Any given social order does not create these fundamental strivings but it determines which of the limited number of potential passions are to become manifest or dominant. Man as he appears in any given culture is always a manifestation of human nature, a manifestation, however, which in its specific outcome is determined by the social arrangements under which he lives.⁵⁸

Fromm's point of view, described in the first part of this chapter, is that man does have a nature; hence our

⁵⁸ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 22.

description there of the condition of man and the five basic needs of man. If man were infinitely malleable in every sense but the physiological, then he could adjust himself to any culture, any set of values. His main task in life would be to adjust to the culture and societal structure, whatever it might be. This point of view leads us to see that there are large groups of people who have managed to fit into a given culture to the detriment of their own human nature. They may fit in, but they may also have lost their integrity in the process. There is, then, a real possibility of a folie à millions. Oftentimes the man who does not fit into a social structure whose values are basically inhuman is seen to be more noticeably a misfit than the others. Such a man is often labelled as neurotic. It is possible that he is the sane man fighting an insane culture, while those who fit in are really the neurotic ones.⁵⁹

It is our aim in this chapter to investigate those societal structures which are conducive to full human life. We also intend to expatiate on societal structures which are damaging to the nature of man. We will treat first what Fromm calls the authoritarian or idolatrous societal structure, that militating against the development of the humanistic or productive character.

59 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 21-28.

A. The Authoritarian (Idolatrous) Structure

We shall treat such a structure from the viewpoint of four characteristics: (a) its ethic, (b) the sort of thinking it promotes, (c) the use of manipulation, and (d) the concept of alienation that is characteristic of all authoritarian structures whether they be political, industrial, cultural, or in the area of consumption.

(a) Ethics in the Authoritarian Structure.- It must be noted first of all that an ethic or code of living is a thought structure. A widely accepted ethic will inevitably affect the lives of those who live where it is accepted. In terms of man's basic needs, it corresponds to man's need for a frame of orientation and devotion.

Authority can be rational or irrational. Irrational authority does not have its source in competence but rather in power over the people, whether physical or mental. Its tools are power and fear. Criticism is forbidden or powerless. An authoritarian ethic denies man's capacity to know what is good or bad. Such a structure, according to Fromm, inevitably leads to the ethic having as its first aim whatever is the prime interest of the authority. Basically, it is exploitative. The main virtue in such a system is obedience. The only real sin is disobedience.

Some distinctions are in order in describing an authoritarian ethic. One can oppose, for example, an ethic that is subjective to an objective ethic. A purely subjective ethic, not bound by the nature of man, leads inevitably either to an authoritarian ethic or the abandonment of all claims for universal and generally binding norms for human conduct. If there is no basis for an ethic, then inevitably one will have a society of chaos or a society in which norms are imposed according to the whim of someone with sufficient power to bring the population to act as he sees fit.

One can oppose an objective ethic to an absolute ethic. Are they the same? Need an objective ethic be absolute and unchanging for all men in all times? Fromm feels that there can be an objective ethic. This code is based on an admittedly incomplete understanding of man, yet open to development as man's understanding of himself develops and as man himself continues in his gradual evolution. He uses the parallel of objective scientific thinking, which remains at the same time open to development, to new hypotheses.

For instance, a statement of probability, of approximation, or any hypothesis can be valid and at the same time "relative" in the sense of having been established on limited evidence and being subject to future refinement if facts or procedures warrant it. The whole concept of relative vs. absolute is rooted in theological thinking in which a divine realm, as

the "absolute," is separated from the imperfect realm of man. Except for this theological context the concept of absolute is meaningless and has as little place in ethics as in scientific thinking in general.⁶⁰

We shall leave, for the present moment, the divine aspect of relative ethics for our discussion of religious structures, which follows this section.

We note again that authoritarian thinkers see human nature as fixed and unchangeable. Hence the institutions and the structure of an ethic remain fixed and unchangeable. An ethic built on the notion that man is infinitely malleable except for basic physiological needs can lead to disaster. A psychologist, for example, might attempt to help a man adapt himself to slavery, or any other evil, since there is no objective norm for any man.⁶¹

It follows from the notion of an authoritarian ethic that the authority must cause the subject to want what the authority wills him to want. To take one example, the wants of the consumer may be so manipulated in an authoritarian structure as to be at variance with what the consumer really wants. The consumer becomes alienated from his real desires by the skillful voice of the adman. This process called alienation by Fromm will be discussed later in this section.

⁶⁰ Fromm, Man for Himself, p. 25-26.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 18-34.

(b) Authoritarian Thinking.- This process is called by Fromm pseudo-thinking, and is closely allied with ideology. Here again, we find the root of the problem in man's need for a frame of orientation and devotion. Man must have a framework for his thoughts. Pseudo-thinking is evident, according to Fromm, in both the totalitarian world of the Iron Curtain and in the democracies of the west. The connection between pseudo-thinking and ideology is apparent in Dr. Fromm's definition of an ideology:

An ideology, then, is at the same time a deceptive substitute for an idea and its preservation, until the time has come for its revival.⁶²

Ideology is basically a manipulative thing. It arises in the period following a time of great intellectual creativity, perhaps a time when a new ideal was presented to men by a great philosopher, religious leader, or political leader. The original idea becomes systematized and is used to control the people. It is the tool of men seeking power over other men.⁶³ The ideal becomes an ideology. The words are the same as those used in the original period of creativity but they are now idols. Men worship the idea, submit to it, and use it to justify irrationality and immorality.

62 Fromm, May Man Prevail?, p. 124.

63 Ibid., p. 122-124.

Ideology binds people together, hence giving them some security, but makes them submit to those who administer the ideological ritual. It rationalizes and justifies, having only the advantage that it does preserve the words, and hence the ideas, which always contain the possibility of coming to life again. Ideology, then, as was noted in the definition above, is a deception and a substitute for ideas, and yet a preserver of the seed of ideas until some future intellectual revival.

Fromm notes that not only those who submit to ideology but also those who administer it are often sincere people. The process of rationalization is hard for a man to detect in himself.⁶⁴

We conclude, then, that ideology is a tool of an authoritarian system, whether it be the saying of Chairman Mao,⁶⁵ the present Soviet catechism, or the dictum that America is "the land of the free."⁶⁶ Fromm sees ideology as the secular counterpart of what in religious circles is called dogma.⁶⁷ We shall leave this latter notion, however, for our discussion of religion as a structure.

64 Fromm, May Man Prevail?, p. 127.

65 Mao Tse-Tung, Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung, Peking, Foreign Languages Press, 1966, 1-312 p.

66 Fromm, May Man Prevail?, p.134.

67 Ibid., p. 136.

(c) The Use of Manipulation.- This heading is tied very closely to the notion of pseudo-willing and a false ethic as well as to the notion of pseudo-thinking and ideology. Fromm describes well the old-fashioned uses of manipulation and more contemporary modes. The industrial structure of nineteenth century capitalism was characterized by a kind of authoritarianism that was quite plainly visible. The great industrial barons were well known. They controlled the capital and owned the enterprise and the labor that they hired. They were highly visible as aggressive, manipulative men, as far as the worker was concerned, but nothing could be done about their injustice to the working class.⁶⁸ The manipulation characteristic of the twentieth century in western countries and more increasingly even in Soviet Russia, is no longer overt but hidden. This is especially notable in capitalistic countries. Anonymous authority is characterized by conformity and submission. Its goal is for men to fit into the team, to work smoothly without thinking too much. One works in the world of capitalistic industry without questioning its goals and without knowing its leaders. The wonder is that man does not question a society where production is made more important than man.⁶⁹

68 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 93-94.

69 Ibid., p. 138-147.

Why does man not think? Why is his thinking called automaton thinking? Fromm describes automaton thinking as as manipulative:

I refer especially to unauthentic, automaton-thinking. The process is simple: I believe something to be true, not because I have arrived at the thought by my own thinking, based on my own observation and experience, but because it has been "suggested" to me. In automaton-thinking I may be under the illusion that my thoughts are my own when actually I have adopted them because they have been presented by sources that carry authority in one form or another.

All of modern thought manipulation, whether it is in commercial advertising or in political propaganda, makes use of the suggestive-hypnoid techniques which produce thoughts and feelings in people without making them aware that "their" thoughts are not their own. The art of brain-washing that the Chinese seem to have brought to a certain perfection is actually only a more extreme form of this hypnoid suggestion. With increasing skill in suggestive techniques, authentic thinking becomes more and more replaced by automaton-thinking, yet the great illusion of the voluntary and spontaneous character of our thoughts is kept alive.⁷⁰

A brilliant example of this sort of hypnoid thought and feeling manipulation is found in the "doublethink" of George Orwell's novel Nineteen Eighty-four, where people are taught to accept contradictory beliefs by Big Brother, the all-powerful political-economic machine.⁷¹ Another description of manipulative conditioning, according to Fromm, more akin to the type of conditioning practiced in western

70 Fromm, May Man Prevail?, p. 26.

71 George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-four, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1949, p. 16.

democracies is illustrated in Aldous Huxley's Brave New World.⁷²

In Fromm's latest book he writes, concerning contemporary American civilization, that we are not moving to mass individualism but to mass manipulated civilization. Our contemporary industrial revolution finds human thought replaced by machines, a small number of mammoth enterprises managed by a self-perpetuating bureaucracy, an alliance between private industry and the government. We are headed towards an increasingly manipulated and dehumanized society.⁷³

Manipulation of thought and feelings is always allied to and an example of the replacement of reason and true feelings by power. It makes use of all the regressive tendencies of man. Men in a group are manipulated to narcissism, to destructiveness, to incest, to herd-conformity. Above all, in contemporary society, the need for a frame of orientation and devotion is exploited in terms of hidden irrationality and pseudo-feeling.

What has been discussed earlier in this chapter under the heading of matriarchal and patriarchal love is used by Fromm as characteristic not only of individuals but of whole

⁷² Aldous Huxley, Brave New World, New York, Bantam, 1932, 1-177 p.

⁷³ Fromm, The Revolution of Hope, p. 26-28.

cultures.⁷⁴ These are treated under the heading of man's need for rootedness. We analyze them here primarily because they will have a bearing on our discussion of religious structure.

Fromm sees, in his evolutionary view of man, that primitive man tries to regress to nature, hence the use of totems and nature worship and his close ties to the soil. Gradually he becomes more independent of nature as his skills grow. He cultivates the soil; he travels; he trades. The artisan man makes gods of wood and gold, then of human beings. The great mother god appears, bringing with her the matriarchal complex of man's equality, reverence for life. Nevertheless, she also brings lack of freedom, inability, in a symbolical sense, to cut the umbilical cord attaching men to her, thus crippling man's search for freedom and independence. A later stage is seen in the switch from the matriarchal god to the patriarchal god. This brings reason, laws, principles to society and the severing of ties to nature. At the same time there is the threat in the patriarchal society as well as the patriarchal religion of giving up one's own reason to the voice of patriarchal society, the threat of blind obedience, and the loss of integrity. It is germane to this discussion to say that Fromm hopes that man will develop

⁷⁴ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 47-61.

beyond both the matriarchal and the patriarchal structure, keeping at the same time the positive values he has learned from each, but becoming independent, as it were, his own mother and father.⁷⁵ The implications of this for religion will be treated later when we discuss religious structures in Fromm's thought.

In completing our exposition of the authoritarian structure, and with an eye toward our discussion of religious structure, we will here take a look at the use of ritual in its manipulative sense. What does Erich Fromm mean by ritual?

Even the most primitive history of man shows us an attempt to get in touch with the essence of reality by artistic creation. Primitive man is not satisfied with the practical function of his tools and weapons, but strives to adorn and beautify them, transcending their utilitarian function. Aside from art, the most significant way of breaking through the surface of routine and of getting in touch with the ultimate realities of life is to be found in what may be called by the general term of "ritual." I am referring here to ritual in the broad sense of the word, as we find it in the performance of a Greek drama, for instance, and not only to rituals in the narrower religious sense. What was the function of Greek drama? Fundamental problems of human existence were presented in an artistic and dramatic form, and participating in the dramatic performance, the spectator--though not as a spectator in our modern sense of the consumer--was carried away from the sphere of daily routine and brought in touch with himself as a human being, with the roots of his existence. He touched the ground with his feet, and in this process gained strength by which he was brought back to himself. Whether we think of the Greek drama, the medieval passion play, or an Indian dance, whether we think of Hindu, Jewish or Christian religious rituals, we are dealing with

75 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 50-51.

various forms of dramatization of the fundamental problems of human existence, with an acting out of the very same problems which are thought out in philosophy and theology.⁷⁶

The uses of ritual in mass manipulation have been well understood by authoritarian leaders. Hitler, for example, understood well the use of mass rallies, oratory, and song in bending the masses of the people to his will.⁷⁷ Fromm quotes from Mein Kampf in his description of the psychology of Nazism to this effect:

The mass meeting is necessary if only for the reason that in it the individual, who is becoming an adherent of a new movement feels lonely and is easily seized with the fear of being alone, receives for the first time the pictures of a greater community, something that has a strengthening and encouraging effect on most people. [...] If he steps for the first time out of his small workshop or out of the big enterprise, in which he feels very small, into the mass meeting and is now surrounded by thousands and thousands of people with the same conviction [...], he himself succumbs to the magic influence of what we call mass suggestion.⁷⁸

Other examples of the mass rallies of Communistic dictatorships in both Russian and China are too obvious to need comment.

76 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 131-132.

77 -----, Escape from Freedom, p. 247-248.

78 Adolph Hitler, Mein Kampf, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1940, p. 715-716, quoted in Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 248.

From a treatment of manipulation we now pass on to another key Frommian term used in discussing authoritarian structures, the term alienation.

(d) Alienation.- Dr. Fromm sees the phenomenon of alienation as the outcome of authoritarian structures. We shall begin with his description of the phenomenon:

By alienation is meant a mode of experience in which the person experiences himself as an alien. He has become, one might say, estranged from himself. He does not experience himself as the center of his world, as the creator of his own acts--but his acts and their consequences have become his masters, whom he obeys, or whom he may even worship. The alienated person is out of touch with himself as he is out of touch with any other person. He, like the others, is experienced as things are experienced; with the senses and with common sense, but at the same time without being related to oneself and to the world outside productively.⁷⁹

Fromm equates the word alienation with the Old Testament word idolatry--man's worship of a thing. This can happen in monotheistic religion when a man projects his power to love and to reason to God, and then prays to get it back. Fromm sees this as submission and alienation. This same phenomenon can happen in the political area when one does for the political leader what is described above for God. The political leader can become an idol, robbing man of his powers. So too alienation can occur within the self. One can become a slave to one of his drives and thus become alienated from his higher drives. For example, a man's greed for money may

⁷⁹ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 111.

exclude his drive to love. In all these cases man experiences himself as an impoverished thing.

Fromm sees modern society as almost totally alienated. The worker has no creative and meaningful relationship with his work; it is just a means of making a living. Managers of industry are seen as slaves to the impersonal giants of industrial bureaucracy. Even the owner of a small enterprise is subject to great pressure. Stockholders in industry are passive agents, not actively engaged in its direction.

Consumption is alienated. Man is more concerned with possession than with actual utility or enjoyment. Possession is more tied to social status than to the thing possessed itself. Man buys labels in the supermarket, having been conditioned to buy them by the hypnotic advertising techniques of the seller. Cultural consumption, the occupation of leisure, is largely passive. One reads cheap literature and is reduced to the role of spectator in sporting events. Our economy, in short, is geared to consumption, ever increasing consumption, at any cost, even if the cost be the dehumanization of man. The economy has replaced man as the value center in the western world. Neither the politics of the giant state nor the development of our economy is controlled by the people affected. They are passive agents. They are alienated. The tragedy: man's deepest powers of

reason, willing, loving are muted. Man becomes a personality package on the market. He strives to sell himself in order to fit in, often doing violence to what he really is. Thus he loses his sense of self.⁸⁰

This summary of the phenomenon of alienation, chiefly situated by Fromm in western democracy, finishes our description of authoritarian structures--political, industrial, cultural.

B. The Humanistic (Man-centered) Structure

Let us begin by recalling two salient features of the thought of Erich Fromm concerning the development of man: the importance of social structures in the formation of man's character and the proposition that men do have a common nature. Man's character then is definitely social:

We can restate the principle in terms of social character: The social character results from the dynamic adaptation of human nature to the structure of society. Changing social conditions result in changes of the social character, that is, in new needs and anxieties. These new needs give rise to new ideas and, as it were, make men susceptible to them; these new ideas in their turn tend to stabilize and intensify the new social character and to determine man's actions. In other words, social conditions influence ideological phenomena through the medium of character; character, on the other hand, is not the result of passive adaptation to social conditions but of a dynamic

⁸⁰ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 111-137.

adaptation on the basis of elements that either are biologically inherent in human nature or have become inherent as a result of historic evolution.⁸¹

Having recalled these fundamental premises, we shall discuss humanistic structures under three headings: (a) a universal and evolutionary ethic, closely allied to true willing, (b) a wisdom that is based on truth but is at the same time ongoing, and (c) participation (activation) on a broad level in the political, industrial, cultural and spiritual level.

(a) A Universal and Evolutionary Ethic.- The formal criterion of a humanistic ethic is that man and only man can determine the criterion for virtue and sin. This is based on the principle that the good is what is good for man and evil is its opposite. It is an ethic that is objective in the same sense that scientific thought is objective, remaining open, as science does, to further development and new insights. It is based on the fundamental premise that man can know what is good and what is evil. Fromm sums up humanistic ethics in the following terms:

[...] good in humanistic ethics is the affirmation of life, the unfolding of man's powers. Virtue is responsibility toward his own existence. Evil constitutes the crippling of man's powers; vice is irresponsibility towards himself.⁸²

81 Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 326-327.

82 -----, Man for Himself, p. 29.

Let it be noted here that the gift of psychoanalysis to such an ethic is that, through its discovery of man's unconscious, in a more scientific manner than in the past, man is more aware of his hidden desires and thoughts.⁸³ The art of psychoanalysis helps man to see what he really wants, what he really wills, thus being able to uncover pseudo-willing in its various forms.

(b) An Ongoing Wisdom.- Fromm notes that we are the inheritors of the culture of the past, that the writings of great thinkers are available to us. Often, however, great schools of thought have fought one another instead of seeking to see what they have in common. Under the rubric of education critical thought needs to be emphasized instead of ideology and manipulation for authoritarian ends. Man can know the truth as long as the system he belongs to does not try to manipulate his thought.⁸⁴

(c) Participation (Activation) on a Broad Level in the Political, Industrial, Cultural and Spiritual Level.- Transformation on these various levels is largely a process, put negatively, of eliminating alienation, a concept described by many humanistic thinkers of the past; we shall briefly recall it here for the reader:

83 Fromm, Man for Himself, p. 39-46.

84 -----, The Sane Society, p. 298-306.

[...] man has lost his central place, that he has been made an instrument for the purposes of economic aims, that he has been estranged from, and has lost the concrete relatedness to, his fellow men and to nature, that he has ceased to have a meaningful life. I have tried to express the same idea by elaborating on the concept of alienation and by showing psychologically what the psychological results of alienation are; that man regresses to a receptive and marketing orientation and ceases to be productive; that he loses his sense of self, becomes dependent on approval, hence tends to conform and yet to feel insecure; he is dissatisfied, bored, and anxious, and spends most of his energy in the attempt to compensate for or just to cover up this anxiety. His intelligence is excellent, his reason deteriorates and in view of his technical powers he is seriously endangering the existence of civilization, and even of the human race.⁸⁵

It is also the key to Fromm's thought that sanity and mental health

[...] can be attained only by simultaneous changes in the sphere of industrial and political organization, of spiritual and philosophical orientation, of character structure, and of cultural activities.⁸⁶

The structure of the sane society is seen as a society in which no man is a means for another's ends but is always an end in himself. Man is the center in all areas of structure. Acting according to one's conscience is fundamental. Man must be a participant in these structures as well as the master of his own life. Such structures must promote love and production in the true sense, and they must stimulate reason and its expression in art and ritual.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 237.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 238.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 241-242.

Economic transformation. Interest and participation must be important as motivation for those involved. Many, for example, would find interest in being railroad engineers, waiters, taxi-drivers, or miners if other factors--social and physical prestige--did not militate against such work. They are total work situations and give satisfaction. It is important to be personally concerned with one's own work. The housework of the wife is different, in this regard, from the housework of the hired maid.⁸⁸

Erich Fromm's vision of the man engaged in industry as a worker is that of a well informed participant. He is aware of what his product contributes to mankind in general. He has a place in ownership, management, and corporate decision making. As a consumer he also has a voice in controlling the quality and purpose of the product he buys. We shall not go into detail as to just how Erich Fromm seeks to attain this objective.⁸⁹ For our purposes it is sufficient to point to the general lines of total activation of the worker in the industrial sector. In Erich Fromm's thought such activation is crucial to man's participation in the political and cultural sectors of his life. In Fromm's thought all of these sectors

88 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 261-265.

89 Ibid., p. 279-294.

have to do with man's frame of orientation and devotion, his religion.

Political transformation. Democracy cannot work in an alienated society, for the voter has no will, feels powerless in the hands of the great political machines and bureaucracies.⁹⁰ His access to information is managed by the state. Everything is unreal, unlimited, impersonal.

Fromm further notes that majority vote does not mean that the majority is right. The majority can be duped, even persecuted. Voting, as has been noted, is usually only a chance to choose between political machines. His proposal is a return to a kind of grass-roots democracy.

It is not our purpose to go into the details of such a political structure. We wish merely to note that the decision making in the political sphere is seen as flowing up from the people. It returns from the legislators as formed by professional expertise. Fromm's ideal is for the citizen to be more involved, less alienated from his government. Activation of the citizen is key.

Cultural transformation. We have treated it in another context above. We merely note here that the emphasis is on a return to real thought and real feeling.⁹¹ Fromm

90 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 294-298.

91 Ibid., p. 298-306.

notes that culture is not confined to reason. It includes all the senses. Men need to express and celebrate who they are in a variety of ways. Great stress is put on dialogue, creativity, participation by the whole population. As in Erich Fromm's political and industrial models, the small, face-to-face group is key to the activation of the whole populace. Fromm discusses religion under cultural transformation, but we shall reserve that for our section on religion as a structure.

Economic, political, and cultural transformation are all seen, then, in the context of a structure that permits and encourages real participation on the part of man. His emphasis is on the productive power of each man, not just the few. The chief enemy of such humanistic transformation is authoritarianism. It cripples the common man in various fields of activity. Its primary characteristic is alienation. Man should be in the center of the world. His chief enemy is any force that would alienate him from his powers.

We turn now to consider Erich Fromm's analysis of the structure of religion. We do this with an awareness that the religious frame of reference is never separate either in its ethic, its dogmatic belief, or its ritual from the other social structures that surround it.

4. Religion as a Structure: Authoritarian
versus Humanistic Aspects.

Prenote: It would be well in summarizing Dr. Fromm's thoughts about religion as a structure to investigate whether or not his basic definition of religion has changed through the years. It is our opinion that his thought on the subject has not changed in stance. The earliest of his works on the subject was written in German in 1930.⁹² It was written at a period in the author's life when he was a strict Freudian, and differs in stance from all his other works which have appeared in English. The German article was first published in English in 1963 in a book of essays entitled The Dogma of Christ.⁹³ In the Foreword to this collection Fromm says, regarding this early essay:

[...] it was written in a period when I was a strict Freudian. In the meantime my psychoanalytic views have undergone enough of a change so that many formulations in this essay would be different if I wrote them today. Furthermore, I one-sidedly stressed in this work the social function of religion as a substitute for real satisfaction and as a means for social control. While I have not changed my views in this regard, today I would also emphasize the view (which I held then as now) that the history of religion reflects the history of man's spiritual evolution.⁹⁴

92 Erich Fromm, "Die Entwicklung des Christus Dogma," Imago, Vol. 16, 1930, p. 305-373.

93 -----, The Dogma of Christ, p. 3-95.

94 Ibid., p. vii.

In this same foreword there is a reminder to the reader of something basic to all Fromm's thought concerning ideas and ideologies.

I tried to show that we cannot understand people by their ideas and ideologies; that we can understand ideas and ideologies only by understanding the people who created them and believed in them. In doing this we have to transcend individual psychology and enter the field of psychoanalytic social psychology. Thus, in dealing with ideologies, we have to study the social and economic conditions of the people who accept them, and try to recognize what I later called their "social character."⁹⁵

Fromm's view of religion is that it is a shared form of fantasy satisfaction.⁹⁶ He has stated numerous times in his work that he himself is not a theist. We shall refer to this position later on in detail. Here it suffices to be aware of this position and its logical conclusion, that religion itself is fantasy when it is taken with reference to God. I say this because in all his later works, Fromm uses a very broad definition of religion, including a theist and a non-theist notion. This broader definition is the one from which we shall be working.

[...] I want to make it clear at the outset that I understand by religion any system of thought and action shared by a group which gives the individual a frame of orientation and an object of devotion.⁹⁷

95 Fromm, The Dogma of Christ, p. viii.

96 Ibid., p. 20.

97 Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 22.

One must distinguish what is religious from what is merely a system of ethics. Fromm puts the difference in the area which he labels "religious experience."⁹⁸ Although he points out that the phenomena of religious experience are hard to delineate, he does describe certain aspects of religious experience.⁹⁹ The ability to marvel at life and life's experience, to be able to wonder at the puzzling problems of relatedness with the world is the first. A second aspect is described as an ultimate concern with the meaning of life, with the self-realization of man, with the fulfillment of the task life sets us. It excludes a division between the secular and holy. For Erich Fromm all life is holy. The third and last characteristic of religious experience is described as an attitude of oneness not only in oneself, not only with one's fellow men, but with all life, and beyond that, with the universe. This is not opposed to individuality, but is seen in terms of polarity:

Some may think that this attitude is one in which the uniqueness and individuality of the self are denied and the experience of self weakened. That this is not so constitutes the paradoxical nature of this attitude. It comprises both the sharp and even painful awareness of one's self as a separate and unique entity and the longing to break through the confines of this individual organization and to be one with the All. The religious attitude in this sense is

98 Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 90.

99 Ibid., p. 90-92.

simultaneously the fullest experience of individuality and of its opposite; it is not so much a blending of the two as a polarity from whose tension religious experience springs. It is an attitude of pride and integrity and at the same time of a humility which stems from experiencing oneself as but a thread in the texture of the universe.¹⁰⁰

And so we see religion as tied in with man's need for a frame of orientation and devotion. The importance of seeing religion in this framework is explicated in The Revolution of Hope.¹⁰¹ It is here noted that this basic need in all men can lead man into a regressive submission to power. Ideologies play an important role in such a submission. Fromm points out here that man is not a sheep, that he can grasp reality and become independent. Still he needs a social atmosphere conducive to rational thought. Man needs also to be related. However, a repressive frame of orientation and devotion can lead him into incestuous fixations of various kinds and into secondary narcissism. Religion can be one of the frames of orientation and devotion that can either liberate man or encourage him to strengthen his ties to other men in such a way as to block the development of his reason and his capacity to love. With these preliminary notions let us proceed to a discussion of religion under the headings of authoritarian and humanistic.

100 Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 92.

101 -----, The Revolution of Hope, p. 65-70.

A. Authoritarian Religion (Idolatry)

We shall treat authoritarian religion under four headings: (a) its attitude towards God, (b) its attitude towards man, (c) its attitude towards life, and (d) its dynamics.

(a) Its Attitude towards God.-

(i) The authoritarian God. One notes first, in the theistic religions of the west, matriarchal and patriarchal forms of religion. Fromm has commented that the religion of the Reformation was basically patriarchal in character.¹⁰² After outlining the helplessness and powerlessness typical of the middle-class society of northern Europe, Fromm points out that the theology of Luther and Calvin was a theology which demanded total submission to an all-powerful God. Fromm does not attempt to attack the truth or falsity of Luther and Calvin's theology; he merely points out what such a theology did to man. For Luther submission to God meant being loved. Man is basically evil and helpless of himself. He achieves salvation primarily by submission. The pre-destination doctrine of John Calvin also had the effect of robbing man of his power. He became a tool in the hands of a God who could save him or not, regardless of man's effort.

¹⁰² Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 81-122.

Both these theologies are seen as used by men as ways of coping with their own anxiety, their own helplessness.

Thereby the new religious doctrines not only gave expression to what the average member of the middle class felt, but, by rationalizing and systematizing this attitude, they also increased and strengthened it. However, they did more than that; they also showed the individual a way to cope with his anxiety. They taught him that by fully accepting his powerlessness and the evilness of his nature, by considering his whole life an atonement for his sins, by the utmost self-humiliation, and also by unceasing effort, he could overcome his doubt and his anxiety; that by complete submission he could be loved by God and could at least hope to belong to those whom God had decided to save. Protestantism was the answer to the human needs of the frightened, uprooted, and isolated individual who had to orient and to relate himself to a new world. The new character structure, resulting from economic and social changes and intensified by religious doctrines, became in its turn an important factor in shaping the further social and economic development.¹⁰³

We note in passing that Dr. Fromm's description of the Nazism of Hitler's Germany was to his mind a form of authoritarian worship which comes under his broad heading of religion. In this case it was the state, the German people, personified by Hitler which was the object of worship.¹⁰⁴

Fromm makes the distinction in religion between matriarchal and patriarchal forms, showing that in man's evolution religion has generally begun with a matriarchal form and progressed to a patriarchal one. Speaking of the matriarchal-patriarchal complex, he says:

¹⁰³ Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 121-122.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 231-264.

We see it in the matriarchal religions in which the Great Mother and goddesses of fertility and of the soil are worshiped. There seems to be an attempt to overcome these primary ties to mother and earth in the patriarchal religions, in which the great father, the god, king, tribal chief, law, or state are objects of worship. But although this step from the matriarchal to the patriarchal cult in society is a progressive one, the two forms have in common the fact that man finds his emotional ties to a superior authority, which he blindly obeys. By remaining bound to nature, to mother or father, man indeed succeeds in feeling at home in the world, but he pays a tremendous price for this security, that of submission, dependence, and a blockage to the full development of his reason and of his capacity to love. He remains a child when he should become an adult.¹⁰⁵

(ii) Sin as disobedience. In any authoritarian form of religion, the notion of sin is identified primarily with disobedience for, as we have seen, submission is the primary virtue. One reacts to sin in an authoritarian setting with fear, and disgust for self. Ritualistic atonement is masochistic, but once the orgy of self-flagellation is over, one is again prone to sin. Some relief is found in the forgiveness; but the forgiving authority, once absent, leaves man weak and powerless.¹⁰⁶

(b) Man in Authoritarian Religion.- Authoritarian religion views man as evil and powerless. He needs the help of the authority or he can do nothing but wrong. Fromm cites Luther's theology of submission to God as an example

¹⁰⁵ Fromm, The Revolution of Hope, p. 68-69.

¹⁰⁶ -----, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 85-86.

of this. Luther himself is seen as an authoritarian personality.¹⁰⁷

(c) Life in Authoritarian Religion.- The attitude towards life, specifically human life, in authoritarian religion is one of impoverishment and lessening of man's powers, the mainsprings of his life. Speaking in a theistic framework, Fromm has this to say on the subject:

[...] in authoritarian religion God becomes the sole possessor of what was originally man's: of his reason and his love. The more perfect God becomes, the more imperfect becomes man. He projects the best he has onto God and thus impoverishes himself. Now God has all love, all wisdom, all justice--and man is deprived of these qualities, he is empty and poor. He had begun with the feeling of smallness, but he now has become completely powerless and without strength; all his powers have been projected onto God. This mechanism of projection is the very same which can be observed in interpersonal relationships of a masochistic, submissive character, where one person is awed by another and attributes his own powers and aspirations to the other person. It is the same mechanism that makes people endow the leaders of even the most inhuman systems with qualities of superwisdom and kindness.¹⁰⁸

In another context, Fromm sees as authoritarian the religion that looks to the future. A humanistic religion is concerned with reform of life here and now. The terms he uses are biblical. He opposes messianic (humanistic) to apocalyptic (authoritarian) hope. The Messianism of the

¹⁰⁷ Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 81-122.

¹⁰⁸ ----- Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 48-49.

prophets, says Fromm, is concerned with man's making choices for life now, not with the predictions for better days in the distant future. He summarizes this position as follows:

The shortest formulation of prophetic alternativism is the verse in Deuteronomy: "I put before you today life and death, and you chose life!" 109

(d) The Dynamics of Authoritarian Religion.- Erich Fromm does not simply content himself with generalizations in treating religious structure. He concerns himself with specific phenomena. We have chosen to select from these specifics his comments analyzing (i) modern forms of authoritarian religion, (ii) experiential authoritarian aspects, (iii) scientific-magical aspects, (iv) authoritarian ritual aspects, and (v) semantic aspects. All of these criteria concern the actual working out of authoritarian attitudes in action and expression within the institutional religious framework. Hence we call these phenomena dynamics. Their treatment immediately follows this paragraph.

(i) Modern forms of authoritarian religion.

What is the religious situation in contemporary Western society? It resembles in curious fashion the picture which the anthropologist gets in studying the religion of the North American Indians. They have been converted to the Christian religion but their old pre-Christian religions have by no means been uprooted. Christianity is a veneer laid over this old religion and blended with it in many ways. In our own culture monotheistic religion and also atheistic and agnostic

109 Fromm, The Revolution of Hope, p. 18.

philosophies are a thin veneer built upon religions which are in many ways far more "primitive" than the Indian religions and, being sheer idolatry, are also more incompatible with the essential teachings of monotheism. As a collective and potent form of modern idolatry we find the worship of power, of success and of the authority of the market; but aside from these collective forms we find something else. If we scratch the surface of modern man we discover any number of individualized primitive forms of religion. Many of these are called neuroses, but one might just as well call them by their respective religious names: ancestor worship, totemism, fetishism, ritualism, the cult of cleanliness, and so on.¹¹⁰

Among the many negative aspects of modern religious forms, it is possible to find three that are especially notable.

Illusory forms of freedom and democracy. Modern democracies are often nesting grounds for worship of the market, of production, of the machine. Man, though he thinks he is free, becomes the homo consumens, the automaton man, unaware that he has become a tool instead of an end.¹¹¹

The worship of power. Nazism is an example of a religion of power of the recent past.¹¹²

Modern Christianity and the worship of success. Fromm sees the writings of Norman Vincent Peal as making a

110 Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 28-29.

111 -----, Escape from Freedom, p. 265-303.

112 Ibid., p. 231-264.

God of success and using monotheism as a tool in this idolatry:

Religion allies itself with auto-suggestion and psychotherapy to help man in his business activities. In the twenties one had not yet called upon God for purposes of "improving one's personality." The best-seller in the year 1938, Dale Carnegie's How to Win Friends and Influence People, remained on a strictly secular level. What was the function of Carnegie's book at that time is the function of our greatest best-seller today, The Power of Positive Thinking by the Reverend N.V. Peale. In this religious book it is not even questioned whether our dominant concern with success is in itself in accordance with the spirit of monotheistic religion. On the contrary, this supreme aim is never doubted, but belief in God and prayer is recommended as a means to increase one's ability to be successful. Just as modern psychiatrists recommend happiness of the employee, in order to be more appealing to the customers, some ministers recommend love of God in order to be more successful.¹¹³

(ii) Experiential aspect: religious feeling and devotion. Psychoanalysis should bring an increased awareness here. It is useful in showing, for example, that religion is often a requirement for the marketing orientation, man's dressing himself as an attractive package on the market. Such an attitude is destructive to man's attitude to his real self.¹¹⁴

(iii) Scientific-magical aspect. Early man had little understanding of natural forces. He turned to God to satisfy his lack of knowledge and control. Theistic religion is less needed now as a scientific explanation or as a

113 Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 88-89.

114 -----, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 96-100.

magical device for controlling nature. Western religion has often opposed scientific progress, has held onto this magical attitude. In the west there has been much religious opposition to men of science.¹¹⁵

(iv) Ritualistic aspect. Rituals are important to all religions. Psychoanalysis has studied ritual:

Psychoanalytic investigation can show that compulsive, ritualistic behavior is the outcome of intense affects which in themselves are not evident to the patient and with which he copes behind his own back, as it were, in the form of the ritual.¹¹⁶

Ritual can protect the patient from unbearable feelings of guilt, but it tends to perpetuate those impulses because it deals with them only indirectly. However, not all rituals are irrational.

Rational and irrational rituals differ in their functions. One expresses valuable strivings and the other wards off repressed impulses. The key: one can distinguish by the fear produced by the violation of the ritual in any manner. Good rituals are symbolic expressions of thoughts and feelings by actions. Psychoanalysis can be useful in shedding light on good and bad ritual. As has been noted before in the section on authoritarian versus humanistic structures, authoritarian leaders know and use ritual:

115 Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 100-103.

116 Ibid., p. 103.

The need for common rituals is thoroughly appreciated by the leaders of authoritarian political systems. They offer new forms of politically colored ceremonies which satisfy this need and bind the average citizen to the new political creed by means of it.¹¹⁷

(v) The semantic aspect. Fromm sees religious language as differing from that of ordinary life in that it is highly symbolic. We use this language in sleep; it is a language common to all men, but it is rarely understood by modern man, according to Fromm. Freud pioneered in making this forgotten language available to us. The language of religious myth is not different from that of dreams. Our author sees it as a meaningful expression of significant experiences. Understanding this forgotten language leads to a new appreciation of the wisdom expressed by religion in symbolic language.¹¹⁸ His underlying theme in this discussion:

[...] the conviction that the problem of religion is not the problem of God but the problem of man; religious formulations and religious symbols are attempts to give expression to certain kinds of human experience.¹¹⁹

Psychoanalysis sheds light on the nature of these experiences. It shows that many "religious" people are in actuality idol worshippers of one kind or another. Fromm

117 Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 107.

118 Ibid., p. 108-109.

119 Ibid., p. 109.

gives as an example the inaccessibility of God. He notes that from the time of Moses on, God has defied formulation. We can say what He is not, but it is impossible to say exactly what He is. With this in mind one can see the intolerance of man in the west toward other men's notions of God with the result that faith and love suffer. There is the possibility of a new kind of idolatry, not the god of wood and stone, but the god of words. The formulations become more holy than the god who escapes all formulation. Correct thought becomes the way to know God, rather than experience of God. Thinking tends to eclipse loving and becomes separate from it.¹²⁰

We shall turn now in our treatment of religious structures to the other side of the coin. We move from an analysis of authoritarian religious structures to what Fromm refers to as humanistic. We shall concern ourselves chiefly with theistic religion, although not exclusively so, simply because this chapter is written to lay the basis of a critique of the Roman Catholicism of Vatican Council II. It goes without saying that Catholicism, being a form of Christianity, is a theistic religious structure. In our treatment of humanistic religion we will follow closely the same headings and divisions used in the section on authoritarian religion.

¹²⁰ Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 11-115; The Art of Loving, p. 64-69.

B. Humanistic Religion (Non-idolatrous)

(a) Its Attitude towards God.-

(i) Humanistic religions see God as a symbol of man's power, to quote the author:

Inasmuch as humanistic religions are theistic, God is a symbol of man's own powers which he tries to realize in his life, and is not a symbol of force and domination, having power over man.¹²¹

God stands for the highest value, the ultimate good. Fromm sees man's relationship with God as changing when man casts off his primary bonds. Man progresses in history from a matriarchal God to a patriarchal God. Biblical religion is seen as beginning with a patriarchal God who emphasizes obedience and yet develops into a symbol of justice, truth, and love. He ceases to be a person, a man, a father, and becomes an inexpressible stammer.¹²² Speaking about the biblical idea of God, Fromm summarizes his thought as follows:

[...] the idea of the One God expresses a new answer for the solution of the dichotomies of human existence; man can find oneness with the world, not by regressing to the prehuman state, but by the full development of his specifically human qualities: love and reason. The worship of God is first of all the negation of idolatry. The concept of God is at first formed according to the political and social concepts of a tribal chief or king. The image is then developed of a constitutional monarch who is obligated to man to abide by his own principles: love

¹²¹ Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 37.

¹²² -----, The Art of Loving, p. 53-59.

and justice. He becomes the nameless God, the God about whom no attribute of essence can be predicated. This God without attributes, who is worshipped "in silence," has ceased to be an authoritarian God; man must become fully independent, and that means independent even from God. In "negative theology," as well as in mysticism, we find the same revolutionary spirit of freedom which characterized the God of the revolution against Egypt.¹²³

(ii) Sin. If sin in authoritarian religion is primarily disobedience, if conscience is the internalized voice of external authority, in humanistic religion conscience is man's true self speaking to him. Sin is to violate that.¹²⁴ In short, sin is letting human potential go to waste. The notion of repentance does not emphasize self-hatred but turning to better things, concern with a man's going back to his strength, his likeness to God, the experience of joy. The process of turning to one's best self is seen as painful and requiring reason.

In another context, speaking of the religion of the Old Testament as basically humanistic, Fromm notes that the chief sin of the Old Testament is idolatry.¹²⁵ Repentance, in the same context, is return:

There is no need for contrition or self-accusation; there is little of a sadistic superego or of a masochistic ego in the Jewish concept of sin and repentance.

123 Fromm, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 61-62.

124 -----, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 85-90.

125 -----, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 163.

This phenomenon can hardly be understood without reference to a thought which we have already mentioned: man is free and independent. He is even independent from God. Hence his sin is his sin, his return is his return, and there is no reason for self-accusatory submission. Ezekiel has expressed the principle beautifully: "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? says the Lord God, and not rather that he should return from his ways and live?" (18:23)¹²⁶

We should note too that, in Fromm's view of biblical and later Jewish thought, virtue, the opposite of sin, is not so much knowledge about God as imitation of God, walking the right way of life.¹²⁷

In yet another context, a discussion of loving, Fromm states that loving God is often confused with knowledge of God. Rather it is the act of experiencing oneness with God. This, he feels, leads to an emphasis on action, right action taking precedence over correct concepts. Such an attitude leads to a tolerance of other men's understanding of God.¹²⁸

In the dominant Western religious system, the love of God is essentially the same as the belief in God, in God's existence, God's justice, God's love. The love of God is essentially a thought experience. In the Eastern religions and in mysticism, the love of God is an intense feeling experience of oneness, inseparably linked with the expression of this love in every act of living.¹²⁹

126 Fromm, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 169-170.

127 Ibid., p. 179.

128 Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 53-69.

129 Ibid., p. 67-68.

(b) Man in Humanistic Religion.- Humanistic religion as defined by Fromm is centered around man and his strength, his powers. A man's reason is important, for man needs to understand both his potentiality and his limitations. Religious experience is always connected with the world. Virtue is man's realization of himself. Faith is built on man's experience and feeling. God is the symbol of man's powers.

Humanistic religion, on the contrary, is centered around man and his strength. Man must develop his power of reason in order to understand himself, his relationship to his fellow men and his position in the universe. He must recognize the truth, both with regard to his limitations and his potentialities. He must develop his powers of love for others as well as for himself and experience the solidarity of all living beings. He must have principles and norms to guide him in this aim. Religious experience in this kind of religion is the experience of oneness with the All, based on one's relatedness to the world as it is grasped with thought and with love. Man's aim in humanistic religion is to achieve the greatest strength, not the greatest powerlessness; virtue is self-realization, not obedience. Faith is certainty of conviction based on one's experience of thought and feeling, not assent to propositions on credit of the proposer. The prevailing mood is that of joy, while the prevailing mood in authoritarian religion is that of sorrow and of guilt.¹³⁰

In short, loving and reasoning are at the bottom of Fromm's concept of the religious man and the religious system. Humanistic religion takes a positive look at man with full realization that there are alternatives for good and evil open to him in the development of his search for true liberty.

¹³⁰ Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 36-37.

(c) Life and Humanistic Religion.- Fromm sees reverence for life as at the root of all great humanist religions.¹³¹ In them:

Valuable or good is all that which contributes to the greater unfolding of man's specific faculties and furthers life. Negative or bad is everything that strangles life and paralyzes man's activeness.¹³²

We may summarize our treatment with a quotation on the core ideas of all humanistic religions:

Without attempting to arrive at a complete and precise formulation, the following is an approximate description of this common core: man must strive to recognize the truth and can be fully human only to the extent to which he succeeds in this task. He must be independent and free, an end in himself and not the means for any other person's purposes. He must relate himself to his fellow men lovingly. If he has no love, he is an empty shell even if his were all power, wealth, and intelligence. Man must know the difference between good and evil, he must learn to listen to the voice of his conscience and to be able to follow it.¹³³

(d) The Dynamics of Humanistic Religion.-

(i) Modern forms. Fromm sees little humanistic theistic religion in the contemporary world. The automaton man, so typical of western society, is incapable of love. He is a man who cannot love man, cannot love God.¹³⁴ Dr. Fromm's

131 Fromm, The Revolution of Hope, p. 92-93.

132 Ibid., p. 92.

133 Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 74.

134 -----, The Art of Loving, p. 87-89.

two most recent books, however, point to a revival of humanistic values in western religion.¹³⁵

The central issue today is [...] to strive for conditions which will help to bring man to life again. These conditions lie in the realm of fundamental changes in the socioeconomic structure of industrialized society (both of capitalist and socialist societies) and of a renaissance of humanism that focuses on the reality of experienced values rather than on the reality of concepts and words. In the West, this renaissance of humanism is occurring today among adherents of Catholicism, Protestantism, and Judaism, as well as Marxist Socialism. It is a reaction to the two-toed threat which mankind faces today: that of nuclear extinction and that of the transformation of men into appendices of machines.¹³⁶

(ii) The experiential aspects. An awareness of true religious experience reveals that it is something other than pseudo-feeling and manipulated devotion. Such experience has several aspects. It includes a marveling at life, one's self, and the problem of living in the world. It includes, too, an ultimate concern for the meaning of that life, for the realization of one's self, and for the completion of one's task in the world. And, finally, religious experience is an attitude of oneness with all that is. Thus, for the humanistically religious man, there is no differentiation between what is sacred and what is profane.¹³⁷

¹³⁵ Fromm, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 229; The Revolution of Hope, p. 18-20.

¹³⁶ -----, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 229.

¹³⁷ -----, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 90-95.

(iii) Ritualistic aspects. Fromm sees good ritual as a rational expression of one's beliefs and values. Man needs such expression, and this need is part of his need for relatedness.

We not only have the need for a frame of orientation which makes some sense of our existence and which we can share with our fellow men; we also have the need to express our devotion to dominant values by actions shared with other men. A ritual, broadly speaking, is shared action expressive of common strivings rooted in common values.¹³⁸

Hence good ritual is part of the dynamic of a humanistic religion.¹³⁹

(iv) Semantic aspects. The language of religion is a symbolic language and expresses the inner experience of man. A humanistic religion recognizes that words are not to be confused with that experience. They are not idols, but stammering attempts to express something that goes beyond logic. A humanistic religion keeps a balance between the formulation of concepts and right living.¹⁴⁰

(v) Theistic and non-theistic humanists need not fight. This latter proposition is by way of an appendix to the section on religious dynamics. Fromm is concerned that humanists of both theistic and non-theistic systems of

¹³⁸ Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 105.

¹³⁹ Ibid., p. 103-108.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 108-115.

thought have much in common, can work together, since all are concerned with man, whatever their differences concerning God may be.¹⁴¹

Having spoken of the love of God, I want to make it clear that I myself do not think in terms of a theistic concept, and that to me the concept of God is only a historically conditioned one, in which man has expressed his experience of his higher powers, his longing for truth and for unity at a given historical period. But I believe also that the consequences of strict monotheism and a non-theistic ultimate concern with spiritual reality are two views which, though different, need not fight each other.¹⁴²

And in a slightly different context:

Whatever new psychospiritual systems may arise, they will not be "fighting" religion, although they will be a challenge to those in the various religions who have made an ideology of religious teaching and an idol of God. Those who worship the "living God" will have no difficulty in sensing that they have more in common with the "unbelievers" than they have in what separates them; they will have a deep sense of solidarity with those who do not worship idols and who try to do what the believer's call "God's will."¹⁴³

This completes our treatment of humanistic versus authoritarian religion according to the mind of Erich Fromm. We shall proceed directly to an application of these criteria to the writings of Vatican II. Our question shall be simply: Is the Catholic religion, as described in the writings of Vatican Council II, humanistic or authoritarian?

¹⁴¹ Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 60-61; You Shall Be As Gods, p. 7; The Revolution of Hope, p. 146.

¹⁴² -----, The Art of Loving, p. 60-61.

¹⁴³ -----, The Revolution of Hope, p. 146.

CHAPTER II

ATTITUDES TOWARD GOD AND SIN IN VATICAN COUNCIL II

Our treatment of the sixteen documents of Vatican Council II begins with an examination of the Council's attitude towards God. Our question, in Frommian terms, is this: "Is the attitude of the official documents of the Council towards God humanistic or authoritarian?"

1. Humanistic Attitudes Toward God.

We have seen in Chapter One that there are attitudes basic to a humanistic understanding of God. (a) God is seen as a symbol of man's powers rather than a symbol of force and domination. (b) It follows from this that God is not elitist in His love, for to be so is necessarily to be a God of force. Does God predestine some men to salvation regardless of their own efforts? (c) This God is the ultimate good. He is a symbol of justice, truth, and love. (c) God is an inexpressible stammer as far as man's knowledge of Him is concerned. The Divinity remains a mystery, never wholly penetrable by man. We shall try now to find these attitudes in the documents of Vatican II.

1 Cf. Chapter I, Section 4B(a).

A. God the Symbol of Man's Powers

Certain conciliar themes give evidence that the Council has such an attitude toward God. Among these is the theme of the Church as the People of God.

(a) The Church as God's People.- The title of the second chapter of the "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church" is evidence of the prominence of this theme.² The very fact that the Church is described as a people throughout Chapter Two is an indicator that God is not a robber of man's power. He is, rather, symbolic of that power. The Church is a people. Each of her members is called and graced by God with a vital function to play.³ We note especially the close connection the document makes between God's Spirit and the dignity of each of the members of the Church:

Allotting His gifts "to everyone according as he will" (1Cor. 12:11), He distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts He makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks or offices advantageous for the renewal and upbuilding of the Church, [...].⁴

2 "The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church," in The Documents of Vatican II, edited by Walter M. Abbot, S.J., Joseph Gallagher, translation editor, New York, American Press, 1966, p. 24.

3 LG 9-17, p. 24-37.

4 LG 12, p. 30; cf. also, LG 13, p. 30-32.

Heinz Schürmann underlines the centrality of this theme in the conciliar writings, noting especially that God is the author of man's gifts in the Church.⁵

The importance of the members of the Church can be seen in the Council's declaration that the heart of the Church's life with God, her public worship, is shared by the whole people. The people share this worship because they share the priesthood of Jesus Christ. Likewise, development and change in this worship come from the people as a result of the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit among them.⁷

The theme of God as a symbol of man's power is also evident in the Council's treatment of the structure of the Church. Church structure is treated designedly in "Lumen Gentium" only after the Church is first described as a people. Karl Rahner notes that the Church is first and foremost a people, each with a part to play. It is secondarily an organization with a hierarchical organization.⁸

⁵ Heinz Schürmann, "Les charismes spirituels," in Vatican II, textes et commentaires des decrets conciliaires, L'Eglise de Vatican II, Tome II, Commentaires, edited by Yves M.-J. Congar, Paris, Cerf, 1966, p. 547-552.

⁶ LG 10-11, p. 26-29.

⁷ SL 43, p. 153.

⁸ Karl Rahner, "The Hierarchical Structure of the Church, with Special Reference to the Episcopate," in Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, Vol. I, edited by Herbert Vorgrimler, New York, Herder and Herder, 1967, p. 186.

The treatment of bishops, as Rahner notes, is one of the central themes of the whole Council.⁹ With him we see in this treatment a broadening of the governing power of the bishops of the Church. By placing emphasis on the bishops' role as spokesmen for God, the Council has moved somewhat from the centralist government of the Church of previous times, especially of the immediate past.¹⁰ In this move the authority of God is, as it were, spread out among men, with the college of bishops having supreme authority in the Church, together with the bishop of Rome. God's voice is put on a wider plane among men. Since God works among these men, they must use their own powers in the divine-human relationship. Thus the reality behind the college of bishops is not one of force and domination, but one which requires a people to act responsibly as a whole in response to the divine Word.¹¹

The Council's treatment of the ordained priesthood is further evidence that the Church is truly seen as a people, and that each of these people has a part to play in the life of the Church. The Council fathers speak of priests as having a God-given dignity that is peculiarly their own. They are co-workers

9 Ibid., p. 195.

10 Ibid., p. 187.

11 LG 18-27, p. 37-52, especially 22, p. 42-44; CPE 4-7, p. 398-401.

with the bishops.¹² They are priestly men with a special function among a priestly people.¹³ In the document dealing with the training of priests, strong emphasis is placed on human development. It is of special importance to note that this human development is seen as a part of the divine call.¹⁴ God calls priests to use their human powers.

As with bishops and priests, we find that the Council's treatment of laymen strongly emphasizes the dignity of the unordained minister.¹⁵ Ferdinand Klostermann comments on this dignity in his introductory notes to "Lumen Gentium's" chapter on the laity. He says:

No longer will it be a temptation to talk of obedience and subordination only in connection with the laity, as if they were some kind of inferior race; not only because every office-bearer in the Church, even the highest, remains a believer who must obey God and the truth, [...] but because office itself, under the New Testament, is essentially service, [...] a following of him who "became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil. 2:8) and because to be a subject in the sense that this world understands is incompatible with the dignity of a member of that People which revelation teaches us is a People of kings and priests (1Pet. 2:9; Apoc. 1:16; 5:10).¹⁶

12 LG 28, p. 52-55.

13 MVP 2-3, p. 533-538.

14 FP 4, p. 442; 16, p. 451-453.

15 LG 30-38, p. 56-65, especially 32, p. 58.

16 Ferdinand Klostermann, "The Laity," in Commentary, Vol. I, p. 234.

In an ancillary decree to "Lumen Gentium," which treats the apostolate of the laity, the Council reaffirms this description of the layman as a brother of Christ and a brother to sacred ministers. Again the Church is seen as a people.¹⁷ Again these people are all seen as sharing the office of Christ.¹⁸ The Church, then, as the People of God, is an image which seems to us to imply a God who calls man to use his powers, a God who is Himself a living symbol of the powers of man.

(b) The Church as Eschatological Pilgrim.¹⁹ One might expect the Council's vision of the Church as orientated to the next life, to be deemphasis of life here on earth. This is far from being the case. The Council sees the end times as having already begun. The life in the world to be is seen as presaged by the present life:

Therefore, the promised restoration which we are awaiting has already begun in Christ, is carried forward in the mission of the Holy Spirit, and through Him continues in the Church. There we learn through faith the meaning, too, of our temporal life, as we perform, with hope of good things to come, the task committed to us in this world by the Father, and work out our salvation (cf. Phil. 2:12).²⁰

17 AL 1, p. 489.

18 AL 2, p. 491-492.

19 LG 48-51, p. 78-85; RD 20, p. 124-125; GS 21, p. 218; GS 40, p. 239; DOE 3, p. 346.

20 LG 48, p. 79.

The eschatology here presented is that of a God demanding of man a response to His Word here and now, a response of commitment to this world, a commitment that demands of man the development of his own God-given powers.²¹

(c) A Humanism Tied to God.- When the Church looks beyond the confines of her own people one finds as a major theme the notion that man's encounter with God is an experience that makes man more human, more himself. This theme is especially apparent in "Gaudium et Spes."²² Joseph Ratzinger notes that the problem of God is approached in the mirror of human development.²³ The theme of God as a mirror in which man sees himself more clearly fits our Frommian notion of God as an image of man's powers very closely.²⁴

(d) Man as the Image of God.- "Gaudium et Spes" sees the fact that man is created in God's image as the cornerstone of human dignity.²⁵ Put in another way, man's power is charged with God's power.²⁶ The Constitution's ringing affirmation

21 Gustave Martelet, "L'Eglise et le temporel, vers une nouvelle conception," in Unam Sanctam, 51b, p. 518-525.

22 GS 4-10, p. 201-209.

23 Joseph Ratzinger, "The Dignity of the Human Person," in Commentary, Vol. V, p. 118.

24 Charles Moeller, "Preface and Introductory Statement," in Commentary, Vol. V, p. 114.

25 GS 12, p. 210-211.

26 Jean Mouroux, "Sur la dignité de la personne humaine," in Unam Sanctam, 65b, p. 234.

of the power of man's mind to seek and find truth is based on this image.²⁷ His right to freedom in matters religious is also anchored here,²⁸ as Pietro Pavan notes.²⁹ Man's own creative activity is seen by the Constitution not as rivalling God, but as in God's image.³⁰ The Council fathers were not afraid that their affirmation of the dignity of man as created in God's image would detract from God.³¹ We feel that this confidence speaks to Erich Fromm's humanistic God as a symbol of man's powers rather than a symbol of force and domination.

(e) Christ as Man's Dignifier.- Christ is singled out as an ennobler of human values in four key passages of "Gaudium et Spes." God's Son is seen, first of all, as one who reinforces the idea of man as made in God's image, for he himself is the perfect man.³² Secondly, he is an image of God's love of man and of man's necessity to love his fellow men.³³ He is the loving man par excellence. As such he underlines the solidarity

27 GS 15, p. 212-213.

28 GS 16, p. 213-214; LR 11-12, p. 690-693.

29 Pietro Pavan, "Declaration on Religious Freedom," in Commentary, Vol. V, p. 188.

30 GS 34, p. 232-233.

31 Alfons Auer, "Man's Activity throughout the World," in Commentary, Vol. IV, p. 188.

32 GS 22, p. 220-222.

33 GS 32, p. 230-231.

of the human race and gives it a special dignity.³⁴ Thirdly, Christ, risen and glorious, lives in the world of today in his Spirit, penetrating and ennobling human activity.³⁵ This presence underlines the dignity of man's power.³⁶ Finally, the Constitution presents Christ as summing up in himself all things human.³⁷ Yves Congar comments on the deeper meaning Christ has given the Church and man:

[...] Christ is the principal centre and goal of the universe and of human history. He was sent into the midst of this history as a new ontological principle, by which the creation can achieve its ultimate meaning and so attain fulfilment.³⁸

We feel, in conclusion, that the conciliar documents forcefully present a God calling man to use his power. Man's powers are imaged in God. They are not lessened. Rather man is challenged to use them in God's name.

B. A Non-elitist God: the Problem of Predestination

We feel that one cannot accuse the God of the conciliar documents of closing the door of his love on any man on earth.

³⁴ Pierre Hautmann, "La communauté humaine," in Unam Sanctam, 65b, p. 277.

³⁵ GS 38, p. 236.

³⁶ Gustave Thils, "L'activité humaine dans l'univers," in Unam Sanctam, 65b, p. 297-298.

³⁷ GS 45, p. 247.

³⁸ Yves Congar, "The Role of the Church in the Modern World," in Commentary, Vol. V, p. 221.

Edward Schillebeeckx sums up the Council's position under several categories.³⁹

(a) An earlier tendency to identify the Church too readily with the kingdom of God has been left behind in the Conciliar documents.⁴⁰ Rather the idea of the Church as the people of God that is still on the way is more strongly emphasized.⁴¹

(b) An earlier and crude interpretation given in the past to the idea of "outside the Church there is no salvation" has been superseded.⁴² It is thus becoming increasingly clear that salvation is not the exclusive possession of the Church.

(c) The Roman Catholic Church recognizes the ecclesial character of non-Catholic Christian communities. She recognizes that they can truly be called Churches.⁴³

(d) She also recognizes the authentically religious aspects of non-Christian religions⁴⁴ and even the presence of the Christian "new man," and thus of Christianity itself, in all men of good will.⁴⁵

³⁹ Edward Schillebeeckx, God the Future of Man, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1968, p. 121-139.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 139, note 3, for documentation.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 139, note 4.

⁴² Ibid., p. 139, note 5.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 139, note 6.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 139, note 7.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 139, note 8.

(e) God's saving will is also more clearly recognized outside both Israel and Christianity,⁴⁶ with the result that it cannot strictly be denied that there are elements of revelation outside Israel and Christianity.

(f) Emphasis is laid on the Church as the people of God before any distinction is made among the various offices in the Church, and specifically before the distinction is made between clergy and laity.⁴⁷ It is the whole Church as God's people which has received the anointing of the Spirit and, in its general priesthood,⁴⁸ is itself the active bearer of the unique Good News and of Christian tradition.⁴⁹

(g) Finally, the Council has affirmed the saving presence of God in the secular, political, social and economic evolution of men.⁵⁰

We conclude that God does not reserve his love, and hence His salvation to any single man or group of men, either within the Catholic Church or outside her. He is not an elitist God.

46 Ibid., p. 139, note 9.

47 Ibid., p. 139, note 10.

48 Ibid., p. 139, note 11.

49 Ibid., p. 139, note 12.

50 Ibid., p. 139, note 13.

C. God the Ultimate Good: Symbol of Truth,
Justice and Love

(a) God the Ultimate Good.- We feel that the conciliar theme of eschaton most aptly expresses the general idea of God as the Ultimate Good. Of all the conciliar references, Chapter Six of "Lumen Gentium" speaks most at length and most explicitly of this matter.⁵¹

The Church, to which we are all called in Christ Jesus, and in which we acquire sanctity through the grace of God, will attain her full perfection only in the glory of heaven. Then will come the time of the restoration of all things (Acts 3:21). Then the human race as well as the entire world, which is intimately related to man and achieves its purpose through him, will be perfectly re-established in Christ [...].⁵²

One may say that the theme of eschaton reveals the Church and the world around her as having a purpose and finality in God. It is in union with God that man's fulfillment and restoration is found.⁵³ God, in short, is man's ultimate good. A more complete listing of the eschatological references will be found in the conciliar documents indicates that this theme is not an isolated one. It runs the gamut of the documents.⁵⁴

⁵¹ LG 48-51, p. 78-85.

⁵² LG 48, p. 78-79.

⁵³ Paolo Molinari, "Caractère eschatologique de l'Eglise pèlerinante et ses rapports avec l'Eglise céleste," in Unam Sanctam, 51c, p. 1193.

⁵⁴ Concile Oecuménique Vatican II, Paris, Centurion, 1967, reference "Eschatologie," p. 812-813.

(b) God, Symbol of Truth.- As we particularize God as man's ultimate good, in this case as truth, we find especially noteworthy what "Gaudium et Spes" has to say concerning the dignity of the human mind. Man is seen as sharing the light of the divine mind:

Man judges rightly that by his intellect he surpasses the material universe, for he shares in the light of the divine mind.⁵⁵

Albert Dondeyne finds in the Constitution's essay on human culture⁵⁶ an assertion of culture as an expression of a partnership between God and man. God's truth finds expression in the cultures of men. God, the author of truth, has need of the searchings of men's minds in order to find expression.

(c) God, Symbol of Justice.-⁵⁷ Speaking in the context of the communitarian nature of man, "Gaudium et Spes" underlines the conciliar theme of justice:

God, who has fatherly concern for everyone, has willed that all men should constitute one family and treat one another in a spirit of brotherhood. For having been created in the image of God, who "from one man has created the whole human race and made them live all over the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26), all men are called to one and the same goal, namely, God Himself.⁵⁸

55 GS 15, p. 212.

56 GS 53-62, p. 259-270.

57 Albert Dondeyne, "L'essor de la culture," in Unam Sanctam, 65b, p. 458-459.

58 GS 24, p. 223.

Justice among men is thus tied to God Himself. This link is furthered strengthened by the event of the incarnation of God's Son. Jesus shared and dignified human fellowship.⁵⁹ One can indeed comment, with Pierre Hauptmann, that in the Constitution's treatment of the communitarian nature of man is the proposition that this nature finds its origin in God Himself.⁶⁰

(d) God, Symbol of Love.- We shall not here enter the classical discussion as to the difference between justice and love. Such has not been the intention of the source of our critique, Dr. Fromm. We shall content ourselves with quoting the key text on love from "Lumen Gentium" while noting the text from "Gaudium et Spes" quoted immediately above. The language of "Lumen Gentium" is unequivocal:

"God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him" (1Jn. 4:16). God pours out His love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us (cf. Rom. 5:5). Thus the first and most necessary gift is that charity by which we love God above all things and our neighbor because of God.⁶¹

The Council's theme of God as a living symbol of love is underlined by both major commentaries.⁶²

59 GS 32, p. 230-231.

60 Hauptmann, op. cit., p. 262-263

61 LG 42, p. 70.

62 Otto Semmelroth, "The Community of Mankind," in Commentary, Vol. V, p. 166-167; Richard Völk, "Excursus on 'The Church of Love'," in Commentary, Vol. V, p. 384-396; Hauptmann, op. cit., p. 266.

D. God, the Inexpressible Stammer

We have chosen three areas in which the transcendence of God seems most apparent in the conciliar writings. First, we shall look at the Council's treatment of the theological traditions of the Eastern Churches presently separated from Rome. Secondly, we shall examine the conciliar treatment of saints. Finally, we shall discuss the document on divine revelation. In each of these we look for an admission that man's understanding of God is very limited, admitting of various formulations.

(a) Eastern Theology.- We find a clear conciliar statement that Rome accepts and respects the religious traditions of the various Eastern Christians:

[...] this sacred Synod declares that this entire heritage of spirituality and liturgy, of discipline and theology, in their various traditions, belongs to the full catholic and apostolic character of the Church.⁶³

What is implied in this statement? Simply that revelation, with which the study of theology is concerned, is no mere compendium of statements about God. It is a matter of the mystery of God, as Johannes Feiner notes.⁶⁴ This mystery is revealed in historical events, but remains always unfathomable to the human

63 DOE 17, p. 360.

64 Johannes Feiner, "Commentary on the Decree," in Commentary, Vol. II, p. 139.

mind. Thus a variety of theologies of different Christian traditions can be seen as admissible in man's feeble grappling with the mystery of God.

(b) The Saints.- The constitution on the Church situates the holy people of the Church in a definite context. They are seen as people who manifest the presence of God by their union with Christ in a given time and place.⁶⁵ It is this aspect of the hidden God, as made more comprehensible to men of a given time in history by the lives of other men, that concerns us. If God needs men in history whereby He shows Himself to the contemporaries of those men, He must be a God of many aspects. One or other of these may shine forth in a given man. God himself remains a mystery, partially penetrated by men of certain epochs and cultures. This hidden aspect of God, partially revealed in His saints, is underlined by both major commentaries.⁶⁶

(c) Revelation.- The constitution on divine revelation presents Sacred Scripture as a mirror in which one can see the hidden face of God.⁶⁷ Joseph Ratzinger comments on this image:

65 LG 50, p. 82.

66 Molinari, op. cit., p. 1206; Otto Semmelroth, "The Eschatological Nature of the Pilgrim Church and Her Union with the Heavenly Church," in Commentary, Vol. I, p. 283-284.

67 RD 7, p. 115.

All knowledge in the time of the Church remains knowledge seen in a mirror--and hence fragmentary. The direct relation to reality, to the face of God itself, is kept for the eschaton (cf. 1Cor 13:12) [...] for when everything is seen and read only in a mirror, one must expect distortions and shifts in emphasis. In any case, this is theologia negativa, which necessarily involves the setting of a certain limit to both kerygmatic and ecclesial positivity, [...] ⁶⁸

The same document speaks of a growing understanding of sacred reality in the course of time. ⁶⁹ It speaks further of God as adapting His language to men in recognition of the limitations of human understanding. ⁷⁰ Ratzinger explicitates the fact that man's knowledge of God will only be complete at the end of time. He thus emphasizes man's fragmentary knowledge of God in this life. ⁷¹ Pierre Grelot draws the comparison between scriptural language as an adaptation to man's limitations and the event of God's revelation of Himself through His Son. The continued presence of the Son in the World through the Spirit shows how the process of God's revelation of Himself is an ongoing process, and hence, necessarily, incomplete. ⁷²

⁶⁸ Joseph Ratzinger, "The Transmission of Divine Revelation," in Commentary, Vol. III, p. 183.

⁶⁹ RD 8, p. 116.

⁷⁰ RD 13, p. 121.

⁷¹ Ratzinger, "The Transmission of Divine Revelation," p. 186.

⁷² Pierre Grelot, "Commentaire du chapitre III," in Unam Sanctam, 70b, p. 379-380.

We feel, in conclusion that the Council's admission of the legitimacy of varying Christian theologies, the tenor of her treatment of the saints and, most important, her treatment of revelation itself lead us to affirm that she believes man's knowledge of God to be fragmentary. Erich Fromm's category of God's being an inexpressible stammer from man's point of view is closely paralleled in our documents.

2. Authoritarian Attitudes Toward God.

To begin our discussion of the authoritarian aspects of God as found in the Council documents, we note that we have found much less evidence for an authoritarian God than for a humanistic deity. Many of the documents give us no direct evidence for an authoritarian God at all, and thus will not be treated. In Chapter One of this essay we were concerned with the attitude of authoritarian religions towards God.⁷³ We shall here briefly summarize that treatment.

The God of an authoritarian religion is a symbol of force and authority. This can either be the force of the smothering mother, causing an incestuous relationship with her offspring, or that of a father who demands unquestioning irrational obedience. In either case salvation for man with regard to such a God is achieved by submission. Under such a

73 Cf. Chapter I, Section 4A(a)(i).

God, man remains a child. He is regarded as both helpless and evil in himself. Such a God stands in contrast to a God who is a symbol of man's powers, who is the ultimate good, who is a symbol of justice, truth and love.

Since we have found such strong evidence for a humanistic God in Vatican II, it is not surprising that it is difficult to discover a clearly opposite picture of Him in the documents of the Council. Still, we shall look for traces of an authoritarian God.

A. Prenote on Apparent Humanistic Attitude

We do note that from the beginning of "Lumen Gentium" the Church as People of God is seen as part of the plan of the Father for the salvation of men:

By an utterly free and mysterious decree of His own wisdom and goodness, the eternal Father, created the whole world. His plan was to dignify men with a participation in His own divine life. [...] All the elect before time began, the Father "foreknew and predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that he should be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29).⁷⁴

Similarly, the Church is seen by the Council as coming forth from the side of the crucified Christ, essentially dependent on him for her existence and her mission of salvation.⁷⁵ So too, the role of the Spirit in the salvation of men is

⁷⁴ LG 2, p. 15.

⁷⁵ LG 3, p. 16.

primary; the sanctification of man is not seen as brought about except in the Spirit:

When the work which the Father had given the Son to do on earth (cf. Jn. 17:4) was accomplished, the Holy Spirit was sent on the day of Pentecost in order that He might forever sanctify the Church, and thus all believers would have access to the Father through Christ in the one Spirit (cf. Eph. 2:18). He is the Spirit of life, a fountain of water springing up to life eternal (cf. Jn. 4:14; 7:38-39). Through Him the Father gives life to men who are dead from sin, till at last He revives in Christ even their mortal bodies (cf. Rom. 8:10-11).⁷⁶

Here, then, in the very beginning of one of the key documents of the Council is an unequivocal picture of the dependency of man's salvation on God--Father, Son and Spirit. The theme of God as author of salvation runs through the entire gamut of "Lumen Gentium." It is present as well in other texts. One need only glance at an analytic table of references to Council themes to confirm this.⁷⁷

Must we say then that the humanistic qualities of God which we found earlier are only apparent, that in truth all power is His? The real question here, however, is not whether or not God is the author of salvation, but rather what this authorship does to man. We have seen in the first section of this chapter that this view of man's salvation does not prevent the Council fathers from insisting on the dignity and freedom

⁷⁶ LG 5, p. 16-17.

⁷⁷ Concile Oecuménique Vatican II, reference, "Salut," p. 934-935.

of man, his duty to love, and his need to use his God-given reason. Because God is the author of these qualities in man does not mean that man is robbed by the Divine Author of the responsible use of his power.

Seemingly, then, we have a clear case for an humanistic God in the documents of the Council. The flaw in such an image of God according to Frommian criteria is not in the Council statements directly concerned with God. It is found primarily in what the Council says about the Church and, in particular, what is said of Church leadership in ministerial office. Chapter Three of "Lumen Gentium" is the primary location of the Council's teaching on her official leaders. This is indicated in the chapter's title, "The Hierarchical Structure of the Church, with Special Reference to the Episcopate."⁷⁸ It is here that we will see the power structure of the Church and the implications of that structure for her vision of God.

We must note before analyzing this chapter that it follows two chapters which address themselves to the essence of the Church. It is well to note with Karl Rahner that there is a certain priority here. The Church as a people take priority in essence to the Church as a structure.

78 LG 18-29, p. 37-56.

This order is deliberate, since in the order of the history of salvation and objectively the nature of the Church is prior to its hierarchical organization, though it never existed in fact without this constitution.⁷⁹

B. God and the Church's Teaching Structure

Our chapter states clearly and unequivocally that the chief ordained officer of the Church, the bishop of Rome, is, under certain circumstances, unable to make an error in propounding religious truth.

In order that the episcopate itself might be one and undivided, He placed blessed Peter over the other apostles, and instituted in him a permanent and visible source and foundation of unity of faith and fellowship. And all this teaching about the institution, the perpetuity, the force and reason for the sacred primacy of the Roman Pontiff and of his infallible teaching authority, this sacred Synod again proposes to be firmly believed by all the faithful.⁸⁰

If we are to understand this passage concerning infallibility in the teaching office of the Pope, it will be necessary to situate briefly the passage. We shall attempt to put it into context. First of all, freedom from error in the essentials of Church doctrine, although mentioned specifically above with reference to the Pope, is seen as the prerogative of the Church taken as a people at large:

79 Rahner, op. cit., p. 186

80 LG 18, p. 38.

The holy People of God shares also in Christ's prophetic office. It spreads abroad a living witness to Him, especially by means of a life of faith and charity and by offering to God a sacrifice of praise, the tribute of lips which give honor to His name (cf. Heb. 13:15). The body of the faithful as a whole, anointed as they are by the Holy One (cf. Jn. 2:20, 27), cannot err in matters of belief. Thanks to a supernatural sense of faith which characterizes the People as a whole, it manifests this unerring quality when, "from the bishops down to the last members of the laity," it shows universal agreement in matters of faith and morals.⁸¹

Although the prerogative of infallibility seems to be given a broad base in referring it to the Church as a whole, it is true that this prerogative has special significance when it is expressed by the bishops in union with the Pope. We see that base being narrowed even further in the statement that the college of bishops can speak infallibly only in an ecumenical council, and in the fact that such a council is itself controlled by papal authority:

The supreme authority with which this college is empowered over the whole Church is exercised in a solemn way through an ecumenical council. A council is never ecumenical unless it is confirmed or at least accepted as such by the successor of Peter. It is the prerogative of the Roman Pontiff to convoke these councils, to preside over them, and to confirm them.⁸²

In speaking of the limits of papal teaching authority and the role of the college of bishops, Rahner says:

⁸¹ LG 12, p. 29.

⁸² LG 22, p. 44.

[...] nothing is said here about what the college of bishops (or some other competent authority in the Church, such as the college of cardinals) can do in the event of the Pope's death--which can be physical or moral. He could, for instance, fall mentally ill, or become heretical or schismatic.⁸³

Thus there is no machinery for handling such a contingency.

The Pope stands untouchable above his peers. Similarly, although the bishops of the world are seen as sharing his teaching office and the infallibility of the Church, the actuality is somewhat different. In practice the collegial power of the bishops could be reduced to a fiction if the Pope is always free to suppress or manage their activities.⁸⁴

But whether there is infallibility in one man or in many there is a threat to true humanism. The problem, in Frommian terms, could be expressed this way. Protection from error in any area of teaching religious truth, claimed by a certain group, must necessarily mean authoritarianism. Any one man who claims such protection, even in union with the chief officers of his Church, any group of co-religionists indeed who claim such a prerogative, however expressed, must necessarily be guided by a power other than their own, to the detriment of their own power. We note here that the teaching infallibility here claimed is not based on human intellect or moral rectitude, but upon the power of God.

⁸³ Rahner, op. cit., p. 200-201.

⁸⁴ Charles Davis, A Question of Conscience, New York, Harper and Row, 1967, p. 69-77, esp. 69.

Guidance of a people by God is not of itself outside the Frommian description of a humanistic religion. God could, for example, as Creator and sustainer of the world of men, have made man in such a way that man naturally evolved into a more human form of life, given the pitfalls of individual and group error along the way. This, however, is not the case presented for the infallibility of fundamental Catholic dogma as developed in Vatican Council II. An absolute claim is made here that fundamental Catholic dogma is and always has been free from error because of the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

We must note for the sake of preciseness that the authority of dogmatic pronouncements of the Pope with or without the bishops in Council is limited:

He is "bound" to "conform" to the doctrine handed down by the legitimate line of bishops (Article 25), and hence he is bound to make use of the proper means of ascertaining this doctrine. And though there is no legal authority to see that these ethical norms are observed, and to question the validity of the Pope's decisions if they are not, the charismatic and prophetic quality of the Church still makes "open opposition" (Gal. 2:11) possible. Hence the Theological Commission of the Council rejected the Pope's proposal to insert the words that the Pope is "answerable to the Lord alone" in his action.⁸⁵

Summing up the teaching power of the Pope and bishops in union with him, the Council concludes:

⁸⁵ Rahner, op. cit., p. 202.

Under the guiding light of the Spirit of truth, revelation is thus religiously preserved and faithfully expounded in the Church. The Roman Pontiff and the bishops, in view of their office and of the importance of the matter, strive painstakingly and by appropriate means to inquire properly into that revelation and to give apt expression to its contents. But they do not allow that there could be any new public revelation pertaining to that divine deposit of faith.⁸⁶

The underlined words in this passage give purchase to the idea of a development of fundamental tenets of belief or, as they are also called, "dogma." Thus the words of Karl Rahner:

The words "to be faithfully expounded" indicate that there is a historical development of dogma itself, and not merely of theology.⁸⁷

And Heinrich Ott notes that such a development can be hoped for concerning the notion of infallibility itself.⁸⁸

In conclusion, we have seen that papal teaching authority is shared with the bishops. We have seen that freedom from error is rooted in the whole Church. We have seen a theological, if not recognized, opening for action at the event of the death of the Pope, and a theologically expressed possibility of a development of existing dogma. We have seen the possibility of open opposition on the part of legitimate authority to a Pope or council of bishops which does not make use of legitimate

⁸⁶ LG 25, p. 49-50; emphasis mine.

⁸⁷ Rahner, op. cit., p. 212.

⁸⁸ Heinrich Ott, "Réflexions d'un théologien réformé sur la constitution dogmatique 'Lumen Gentium'," in Unam Sanctam, 51c, p. 1338.

means by which to conform to the doctrine handed down. Still, we are left with a picture of a Church in which absolute teaching authority does, in effect, remain vested ultimately in the hands of one man, a man who is helped and advised by a small group of other men. The rectitude of their most solemn teachings is given a flat guarantee of truthfulness in the name of the guiding Spirit of God. And this, as we have seen, is basically authoritarian.

To test the extent of such authoritarianism, we look to the explicit statements regarding the teaching authority of bishops in their own dioceses or regions.

In matters of faith and morals, the bishops speak in the name of Christ and the faithful are to accept their teaching and adhere to it with a religious assent of soul.⁸⁹

And again:

The individual bishops, to each of whom the care of a particular church has been entrusted, are, under the authority of the Supreme Pontiff, the proper, ordinary and immediate pastors of these churches. They feed their sheep in the name of the Lord, and exercise in their regard the office of teaching, sanctifying, and governing [...]

In exercising their duty of teaching, they should announce the gospel of Christ to men, a task which is eminent among the chief duties of bishops.⁹⁰

One notices that the teaching of the bishop is always subject to the authority of the Supreme Pontiff. It is worth

89 LG 25, p. 48.

90 CPE 11-12, p. 403-404.

noting also that nowhere in the Council documents are there limitations to the bishop's teaching power from below.⁹¹ It is true that a bishop is admonished to be advised by his curia and by a senate of priests. Provision is also made for establishing an advisory council of priests, religious, and laymen.⁹² The important point for our study is that these bodies are advisory only. Thus teaching authority is upward moving in Church structure. It is pyramidal. Disputes in the teaching area are always subject, in the last analysis, to one man speaking for the guiding Spirit of the Church. To put it another way, Church teaching depends, in theory, on the penetration of the whole people of God by the Holy Spirit. In practice, the ultimate responsibility lies with one man. This teaching is represented as the Word of God and ruled by the Word of God, as we have seen. In the area of religious teaching then, God chooses to speak ultimately through one man rather than through many. If the Pope of Rome speaks God's Word for and to the Church, not only is the Pope a figure of power and domination, but the God whose word he speaks is such a figure also. Man's

⁹¹ One notes that there is no mention of academic freedom of religious enquiry in the Church's document on Christian education, cf. EC, p. 637-651. Nor is there any mention of such freedom in either of the documents devoted to priests, cf. MVP 19, p. 571-572 and FP 13-18, p. 449-453. There is likewise no provision for freedom of religious choice for Catholics in the declaration concerning religious liberty, cf. LR 14, p. 694-695.

⁹² CPE 27, p. 416; MCS 21, p. 329-330.

own power to decide for himself ceases to operate within this system when the Pope speaks as teacher in the most solemn way. In such a structure the power of God, through the Pope, would be seen by Erich Fromm as robbing man of his own power, in certain cases, to reason and make decisions for himself.

C. God and the Church's Governing Structure

If we turn to the governing power of the Church we have a picture similar to the one above. The bishops are seen, first of all, as serving their people as successors of the Apostles.⁹³ Likewise:

Bishops govern the particular churches entrusted to them as the vicars and ambassadors of Christ. This they do by their counsel, exhortations, and example, as well, indeed, as by their authority and sacred power. This power they use only for the edification of their flock in truth and holiness, remembering that he who is greater should become as the lesser and he who is the more distinguished, as the servant (cf. Lk. 22:26-27).⁹⁴

We see, too, that in the government of his individual diocese, the bishop is invited, commanded even, to listen to his subjects.⁹⁵

Although the bishops are proclaimed the governors of their dioceses, the Council states that the power

93 LG 24, p. 46-47.

94 LG 27, p. 51.

95 LG 27, p. 52.

[...] which they personally exercise in Christ's name, is proper, ordinary, and immediate, although its exercise is ultimately regulated by the supreme authority of the Church, [...]96

Then, in a seeming effort to lighten the force of this statement, there is the proclamation that:

The pastoral office or the habitual and daily care of their sheep is entrusted to them completely. Nor are they to be regarded as vicars of the Roman Pontiff, for they exercise an authority which is proper to them, and are quite correctly called "prelates," heads of the people whom they govern. Their power, therefore, is not destroyed by the supreme and universal power.97

We find the contradictions compounded by the Council's constant reiteration of the full and universal governing power of the Pope. One need only to turn to an index of conciliar themes to see the extent of this repetition.⁹⁸ The weakness of the actual expression of the bishops' collegial power which this repetition causes is underlined by the Lutheran commentator, Peter Meinhold.⁹⁹

Thus we have a paradox in the position of the bishop. We have seen that he is the chief governor of the section of the Church allotted to him; his government is to be characterized

96 LG 27, p. 51.

97 LG 27, p. 52

98 Concile Oecuménique Vatican II, reference, "Pape, primauté," p. 882.

99 Peter Meinhold, "La constitution 'Lumen Gentium' du point de vue Luthérien," in Unam Sanctam, 51c, p. 1311-1312.

by humble service in the spirit of the gospel. He is commanded to listen to his people. We may well ask, however, what is to be done if he does not listen, if he is high-handed in his government? The senate of priests, his curia, his pastoral council are all advisory bodies. On the other hand, what real power does he have in his own diocese if the Pope has universal jurisdiction of governance over the whole Church? In short, the individual bishop is subject to correction or recall only from the Pope or those delegated by the Pope; his government in his own diocese is always and at all times subject to that primacy of the Roman Pontiff. It is true that the bishops of the world are forcefully commended to form governing bodies in their own nations and territories, but although these decisions may, according to the wish of the national conference, be binding on each individual bishop in the conference, all such governance is subject to review from Rome. If the Pope does not approve of the legislation of a conference of bishops, he can render it null.¹⁰⁰

We are forced to see that the bishop of Rome has the final say in all areas of Church government. At the same time those of the Church under the bishop have no machinery other than that of an advisory character to govern with the bishop the local area of the Church. The universal power of the Pope is

100 CPE 36-38, p. 424-426.

seen as coming from God, as is that of the bishop in his own diocese. Again, God is seen as a figure of authority. In the last analysis, the government of His people, outlined in chapter three of "Lumen Gentium" and the ancillary document on the bishops' pastoral office, devolves upon one spokesman, one governor with power limited only by his duty to adhere to the Word of God. This is not in keeping with the theology of the Church as a People as outlined in the first part of this chapter. By the same token the God glimpsed behind the treatment of the Church as a People is quite different from the God behind the structure outlined immediately above. The God of the people of God distributes His Spirit among the whole People. The God behind the Church structure keeps the wielding of power in the hands of very few. Briefly, we do not have an outline of machinery for government commensurate with the image of God behind the Church as described as a people, all of whom are penetrated by the Spirit of God.

We shall turn now to a concept closely allied with the religious attitude towards God, the notion of sin. In Erich Fromm's thought the two are inevitably intertwined, as we have attempted to show earlier in this essay.¹⁰¹ We shall begin with humanistic religious attitudes toward sin.

101 Cf. Chapter I, Section 4A(a), and Section 4B(a).

3. Humanistic Religious Attitudes Toward Sin.

Fromm includes four key notions as being essential to a humanistic attitude toward sin.¹⁰² (1) Man's conscience is seen as his true self speaking to him. (2) Sin is a failure to hear or follow that true voice. It is letting human potential go to waste. (3) The opposite of sin, virtue, is seen as imitation of God. Virtue derives from experiential encounter with God rather than a conceptual understanding of God. This experience of the All is seen as leading to right conduct, primarily to union with God and man in the practice of love. (4) Repentance or sorrow for sin is primarily a matter of turning to God, to one's true self, to one's neighbor. We turn now to the documents of Vatican II, endeavoring to find these four attitudes.

A. Conscience

(a) Hearing the Word of God.- The Council's document on divine revelation does not treat directly the area of sin, but it does see virtue as tied to obedience to God's Word.¹⁰³ For our purposes it is interesting that the constitution does not clearly define exactly how the process of hearing God's Word

102 Ibid., Section 4A(a)(ii).

103 RD 5, p. 113-114.

takes place. Granted that the Scriptures and living Church tradition are given pride of place in hearing God's Word.¹⁰⁴ Still, both these are seen as serving God's Word. They are not above it.

Hence there exist a close connection and communication between sacred tradition and sacred Scripture. For both of them, flowing from the same divine well-spring, in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end.¹⁰⁵

Scripture and tradition are seen by the Council not as sources of God's Word, but rather as the mirror in which the believing Church beholds God revealing himself,¹⁰⁶ as noted by Gabriel Moran.¹⁰⁷

We see nothing in the document to indicate that virtue implies in its obedience to God's Word any waste of human faculties. We see nothing against Erich Fromm's idea that sin consists in letting human potential go to waste. We feel with Moran that the implication is quite the contrary.¹⁰⁸ Man must use his full potential to hear God's Word mediated by man's own inner voice, his conscience.

104 RD 8, p. 115-117.

105 RD 9, p. 117.

106 RD 7, p. 115.

107 Gabriel Moran, The Theology of Revelation, New York, Herder and Herder, 1966, p. 110.

108 Ibid., p. 164-165.

(b) Conscience is Supreme.- It is noteworthy in the light of what has been said by way of connecting God's Word with conscience that "Gaudium et Spes" treats the primacy of the individual conscience explicitly:

In the depths of his conscience, man detects a law which he does not impose upon himself, but which holds him to obedience. Always summoning him to love good and avoid evil, the voice of conscience can when necessary speak to his heart more specifically: do this, shun that. For man has in his heart a law written by God. To obey it is the very dignity of man; according to it he will be judged.¹⁰⁹

Joseph Ratzinger explicitates the above passage when he notes:

Over the pope as the expression of the binding claim of ecclesiastical authority there still stands one's own conscience, which must be obeyed before all else, if necessary even against the requirement of ecclesiastical authority.¹¹⁰

Jean Mouroux comments on the same passage positing human conscience as at once the supreme location in man for hearing God's Word as well as the primary locus of human liberty.¹¹¹

(c) Applications.- We find added credibility in the matter of the supremacy of man's conscience in the Council's positioning the acceptance of religious truth solidly on the conscience of man.¹¹² Man's obligation to develop his powers

109 GS 16, p. 213.

110 Ratzinger, "The Dignity of the Human Person," p. 134.

111 Mouroux, op. cit., p. 243-244.

112 LR 1, p. 677.

in the broad area of culture is situated in man's conscience and linked with God's plan for men.¹¹³ This has several applications. According to the Council, both socio-economic life and the life of the political community have their roots in man's conscience, which requires him to develop himself and the world around him.¹¹⁴ The Council's treatment of marriage is situated around the notion that the family unit is a community of love.¹¹⁵ To break the marriage bond is to violate man's inner call to love, rooted in his conscience, as Bernard Haring notes.¹¹⁶ The Council's treatment of peace among nations provides a summation of the above examples. Speaking of the nature of peace, the Council says:

Peace is not merely the absence of war. Nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of a balance of power between enemies. Nor is it brought about by dictatorship. Instead, it is rightly and appropriately called "an enterprise of justice" (Is. 32:7). Peace results from that harmony built into human society by its divine Founder, and actualized by men as they thirst after ever greater justice.¹¹⁷

113 GS 57, p. 262.

114 Gs 57, p. 262; GS 64, p. 272-273; GS 67, p. 275; GS 74, p. 283-285; GS 75, p. 285.

115 GS 48, p. 250-251.

116 Bernard Haring, "Fostering the Nobility of Marriage and the Family," in Commentary, Vol. V, p. 232-234.

117 GS 78, p. 290.

René Coste underlines the idea that man's inner voice of reason and will is at the bottom of such a conception of peace. It calls him to brotherly love.¹¹⁸

B. Sin

For a view of sin as a wastage of human potential, we cite immediately the Council's most explicit treatment of sin:

Often refusing to acknowledge God as his beginning, man has disrupted also his proper relationship to his own ultimate goal. At the same time he became out of harmony with himself, with others, and with all created things. [...] For sin has diminished man, blocking his path to fulfillment.¹¹⁹

We note with Jean Mouroux that sin is treated in the context here of man as created in God's image. Sin is a retreat from that image. It is a failure to acknowledge man's dignity and God as the author of that dignity. Sin is man's diminishment within himself, with regard to other men, and with regard to the world around him.¹²⁰

It is here that the Council's warnings that modern man is guilty of letting his new-found power be used to his own detriment finds its context.¹²¹ Here also the Council's

118 René Coste, "The Fostering of Peace and the Promotion of a Community of Nations," in Commentary, Vol. V, p. 348-349.

119 GS 13, p. 211.

120 Mouroux, op. cit., p. 237-238.

121 GS 4, p. 202-203.

warning that practicality and efficiency in the modern industrial world can preempt the deeper callings of man's conscience.¹²² Here, finally, the warning that human self-centredness is capable of shattering the brotherhood of man in today's world.¹²³

We do not think it necessary to comment further on the Council's applications of her doctrine on sin. We refer the reader to the section on conscience, immediately preceding this treatment. Since the Church has outlined the various loci where man's conscience is called into play, we are left with the conclusion that to violate that conscience is to sin.

C. Virtue

Erich Fromm's notion of virtue as imitation of God, derived from experiential encounter with the Deity and leading to right conduct on the part of man, rests on his description of the humanistic God. Our treatment earlier in this chapter of God as the symbol of man's powers,¹²⁴ as well as our treatment of God the ultimate Good,¹²⁵ provide the textual basis for the conclusions we wish to draw here. We draw also on our

122 GS 8, p. 206.

123 GS 37, p. 234-235.

124 Cf. Section 1A.

125 Cf. Section 1C.

texts supporting a non-elitist God,¹²⁶ and the Council's treatment of the dignity of conscience.¹²⁷

(a) Virtue as Imitation of God.- The whole notion of God as the Creator is germane to this issue. Man is made in God's image. He must then seek in his pilgrimage on earth to become like the God who is the symbol of ultimate Good--the God of truth, justice, and love.

(b) Virtue as Achieved Primarily by Experiential Encounter.- The whole notion that God is love implies that man must get to know his God by encountering Him. The Church's admission that other men are saved by God and have elements of holiness in them is indicative of this stance. The location of man's conscience as prime in following God's Word, even for one who does not believe in God, underlines an attitude that God is not primarily known by concepts and systems of ideas. God speaks to man. Man encounters God in the depths of his conscience.

(c) This encounter with God, this experience leads to right conduct, primarily to union with God and man in the practice of love. Again, the Council's insistence on tying love of God to love of neighbor is indicative to us that her stance is basically humanistic here. The primacy of love in

126 Cf. Section 1B.

127 Cf. Section 3A.

its twofold direction toward both God and man as the hallmark of virtue is underlined by Ignatius Iparraguirre's commentary on "Lumen Gentium's" treatment of holiness.¹²⁸

D. Repentance

(a) The Council's Meaning.- We find in "Lumen Gentium's" treatment of Christian sacraments an unmistakable identification of repentance with turning to God and neighbor.¹²⁹ Commenting on the constitution's treatment of Baptism in the above passage, Aloys Grillmeier notes:

Thus it is a protestation of a change of heart (metanoia, repentance), aversion and conversion from the life of sin and the world, the outward attestation of inner faith in Christ such as it is preached in the Church: [...]¹³⁰

It is the Biblical word, metanoia, which here concerns us. The word signifies a certain turning, a change in direction, a movement toward someone.¹³¹

(b) Repentance and Renewal.- We find that the Church herself admits that she is sinful. Yves Congar sums up the

¹²⁸ Ignace Iparraguirre, "Nature de la sainteté et moyens pour l'obtenir," in Unam Sanctam, 51c, p. 1131-1132.

¹²⁹ LG 11, p. 28.

¹³⁰ Aloys Grillmeier, "The People of God," in Commentary, Vol. I, p. 159-160.

¹³¹ Carroll Stuhlmueller, "The Gospel According to Luke," in The Jerome Biblical Commentary, Vol. II, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, 1968, p. 127.

conciliar stance on the sinful Church in his comments on Article forty-three of "Gaudium et Spes":¹³²

The last paragraph contains an admission of the faults and weaknesses of the members of the People of God. Gaudium et Spes had already referred to certain cases of historical errors (art. 36, with footnote 7 (Abbott, note 100), in reference to the condemnation of Galileo). The Constitution on the Church had provided the doctrinal foundation for this, not only in the passage from Article 15 quoted here, but also in Articles 8 and 9; The Decree on Ecumenism (arts. 3 and 7) and the Declaration on Religious Freedom (art. 12) likewise contain discreet but clear admissions of our historical mistakes and omissions.¹³³

What is of special interest to us is that in all the passages listed by Congar, the Church's admission of her sinfulness is always within the context of renewal. They are specific calls for the men of the Church to return to true love of God and man. They are calls for the men of the Church to be true to themselves. We conclude that the Frommian notion of sorrow for sin as primarily a matter of turning to God, self, and neighbor is defined in principle and repeated in concrete instances of Church life in today's world. The following passage from the Council writings illustrates our contention:

Although by the power of the Holy Spirit the Church has remained the faithful spouse of her Lord and has never ceased to be the sign of salvation on earth, still she is very well aware that among her members, both clerical and lay, some have been unfaithful to the Spirit of God during the course of many centuries. In the present age, too, it does not escape the

132 GS 43, p. 243-245.

133 Congar, op. cit., p. 219.

Church how great a distance lies between the message she offers and the human failings of those to whom the gospel is entrusted.

Whatever be the judgment of history of these defects, we ought to be conscious of them, and struggle against them energetically, lest they inflict harm on the spread of the gospel. The Church also realizes that in working out her relationship with the world she always has great need of the ripening which comes with the experience of the centuries. Led by the Holy Spirit, Mother Church unceasingly exhorts her sons "to purify and renew themselves so that the sign of Christ can shine more brightly on the face of the Church."¹³⁴

4. Authoritarian Attitudes Toward Sin.

We must now ask ourselves to examine these documents for traces of authoritarian attitudes toward sin. We have delineated these attitudes in our Frommian outline of authoritarian religion.¹³⁵ Briefly, we recapitulate them here. In the authoritarian context, conscience is merely the internalizing of an external authority. Sin itself is primarily a matter of disobedience rather than a matter of ethical misconduct. Virtue is a synonym for submission to external authority. Repentance is characterized by fear of punishment and self-disgust. It is basically masochistic and characterized in ritual by an orgy of submission to authority. Once this forgiving authority is absent man is left powerless and without inner strength. Let us now turn to the documents themselves.

¹³⁴ GS 43, p. 245.

¹³⁵ Cf. Chapter I, Section 4A(a)(ii).

As in our treatment of authoritarian aspects of God we shall be quite selective in our choice of conciliar documents. The Council's discussion of sin as such we have seen to be humanistic. Again, the flaw, as we see it through the eyes of Erich Fromm, lies in the structure of the Church rather than in a theology of sin which might prove detrimental to man. Again, we shall concentrate our efforts on Chapter Three of "Lumen Gentium," since it deals primarily with the Church's hierarchical structure. The Decree on the Bishop's Pastoral Office in the Church and the two decrees concerning the life and training of priests are also points of reference. We are likewise aware of the stance toward freedom of religious choice in the Church's document concerning religious liberty.

A. Sin and the Church's Teaching Structure

We have seen¹³⁶ that the Pope is represented as having infallible teaching authority when he pronounces on matters of faith and morals in his official capacity as chief officer of the Church to the entire Church. As before, we do not intend to enter into controversy as to just which papal pronouncements are infallible. Nor do we wish to ignore the fact that the Pope is bound in his pronouncements to be true to Divine Revelation and to the living faith of the entire Church. We

136 Cf. Chapter II, Section 2A.

do not pass over the fact that the teaching authority of the Church is shared with the Catholic bishops of the world. We wish merely to repeat what we have said before of the implications of the claim to infallibility.

The problem, in Frommian terms could be expressed this way. Protection from error in any area of teaching religious truth, claimed by a certain group, must necessarily mean authoritarianism. Any one man who claims such protection, even in union with the chief officers of his Church, any group of co-religionists indeed who claim such a prerogative, however expressed, must necessarily be guided by a power other than their own, to the detriment of their own power. We note here that the teaching infallibility here claimed is not based on human intellect or moral rectitude, but upon the power of God.¹³⁷

We have noted that the guidance of a people by God is not of itself outside a Frommian description of religion. For God to be involved in the evolution of the world and man need not be to the detriment of man's powers and could admit of human error along its path.

Following from this, is our major concern here, that a single man can bind the consciences of his people in dogmatic and moral matters without any machinery for the checking of his power. Since the various synodal machineries of the Church are all advisory, their power according to law remains without an effective system of checks and balances as regards the Pope. The same thing is true for the teaching authority of the bishop in his own diocese. His synods and advisory bodies of clerics

137 Ibid.

and laymen are advisory. He is subject to correction only by law from above. The machinery for keeping the Christian message alive simply rests ultimately on the shoulders of one man. To question the truth of what that one man says in certain instances is to go against the will of God and hence to sin. It is our belief that this does not fit the Council's lofty statements on the primacy of the human conscience nor a theology which defines sin as letting human potential go to waste. Virtue, in Church structure, is inevitably identified with obedience rather than with the individual's contact with God. Repentance is submission.¹³⁸

B. Sin and the Church's Governing Structure

We have already seen that the Pope has final and ultimate jurisdiction over the Catholic Church. Such sweeping power, if taken literally, must include the selection of those who are chosen to be ordained as priests and bishops. The bishop, too, is seen as having governing power in his own diocese, and the synods of bishops for different regions may have the power of law over bishops in their regions. All this is subject to approval from the Pope. This power is solemnly proclaimed as divine in origin. We note that although it is shared by the people in theory, the machinery for effective

¹³⁸ Davis, op. cit., p. 69-71.

sharing is not there. One cannot dissent through representatives endowed with real governmental power, for there are none. John L. McKenzie, speaking within the broad outlines of Church structure as outlined in the conciliar documents, sums the matter up thus:

In the contemporary forms of Church authority there are effectively no channels through which the authority which resides in the whole Church can normally affect the authority which resides in the officers of the Church. The freedom of the members of the Church is power, but the power has no outlet. The authoritarian structure of the forms of government, however intelligently and justly it may be administered, reflects the concentration of authority and power in the officers. As such, the structure is a practical denial of the authority and power of the faithful. When this concentrated authority is handled with less than perfect prudence and fairness, the consequences can be unfortunate. Structurally, there is no way to correct abuses of authority except rebellion, and no one thinks rebellion is a good way to do things.¹³⁹

In the last analysis, then, to oppose the power which the Pope and bishops possess, since there is no legitimate means to represent dissent, is to disobey a divinely appointed representative and thus to disobey God. We note that this does not follow from the Council's theology of sin. It is its machinery of government which is at fault here.

¹³⁹ John L. McKenzie, Authority in the Church, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1966, p. 169.

C. Conclusions

We have not attempted to quote the Council documents in this section, since they have been quoted adequately in the section of this essay on an authoritarian God. Using the same evidence, we content ourselves with drawing conclusions concerning the effect of present Church structures. Basically, with the structure as it is outlined by the Council, sin becomes disobedience. Virtue becomes obedience. Repentance becomes heavily submissive and dependent on the forgiving authority. Conscience, in this framework, becomes a matter of the internalized voice of an external human authority rather than the true voice of man in union with God and his religious confreres.

Hence we see a polarity in the writings of Vatican II as they concern God and sin. We are reminded that the voice of the Council is the voice of a Pilgrim People on the march. It should come as no surprise that in a time of rapid change such conflicting notions of God and sin should appear so prominently in the writings of the Council. The words of the Council are not final. They come from the body of a people in movement. As for the final direction of that movement, it is not the purpose of this essay to suggest what it will be.

CHAPTER III

ATTITUDES TOWARD MAN IN VATICAN COUNCIL II

We turn now in our essay to inspect the attitudes of the Council documents on man. It is true that we have been drawn inescapably to comment on man in our treatment of God and sin in the previous chapter. Here, however, we wish to treat man directly. The chapter is divided into two parts, treating first, humanistic religious attitudes toward man, secondly authoritarian attitudes. Our work is based on what we have already seen of Erich Fromm's vision of man,¹ man's basic needs,² Frommian character analysis,³ and the influence of social structures on the character of man.⁴ On this basis we shall apply the criteria proposed in Chapter One for humanistic and authoritarian religious attitudes toward man⁵ to the conciliar documents.

It seems to us that a Frommian critique of religion with reference to man reduces itself to the fulfillment or lack thereof of the five basic needs of man referred to above. Religion can be termed humanistic if it recognizes and seeks

1 Cf. Chapter I, Section 1A.

2 Cf. Chapter I, Section 1B.

3 Cf. Chapter I, Section 2.

4 Cf. Chapter I, Section 3.

5 Cf. Chapter I, Section 4B(b) and (c); Section 4A(b) and (c).

effectively to satisfy these needs. Religion is authoritarian if it does not recognize these needs or does not effectively satisfy them. The first part of the chapter, then, will seek evidence in the documents supporting man's basic needs. The second part will search for trends which counter or thwart these needs.

1. Humanistic Religious Attitudes Toward Man.

A. Relatedness versus Narcissism

(a) The Church Looks at Herself as a Totality.- We are looking for signs that the Church regards herself as essentially related to the world around her. We are also looking for evidence that the men within the Church are aware of each other, truly related to each other. The opposite of a related Church is a narcissistic Church. Such a Church would be an inward looking organization, knowing little about the world outside her confines. Such a Church could also be characterized by a self-centered lack of awareness of her own members and classes within herself. We here choose to look for signs of awareness in the Church taken in globo. Our vantage point is that of one looking down on the whole organization. Later we shall single out different classes of men within the organization.

(i) The mystery of the Church. The initial chapter of "Lumen Gentium" gives us such an overview.⁶ Here the men

⁶ LG 1-8, p. 14-24.

of the Church are regarded as possessing great dignity. This dignity is characterized by fellowship and service:

The Spirit guides the Church into the fullness of truth (cf. Jn. 16:13) and gives her a unity of fellowship and service.⁷

The men of the Church are not called to fellowship among themselves alone, however, for the Church is situated solidly in the midst of the world.⁸ Thus, when the Church refers to God's kingdom, she does not identify herself with it. Rather she sees herself as reaching for its attainment.⁹ It is noteworthy, too, that she sees the Father, Son, and Spirit at work among all men. We can conclude then that, although the men of the Church have a special role, they are not deified. This is not a narcissistic group of men. It is also noteworthy that in the treatment of the kingdom, all the men of the Church are referred to rather than a small clerical party within the larger group. The kingdom image, occurring as it does early in the document, is key to the Church's vision of man. We quote a sampling:

The Church, consequently, equipped with the gifts of her Founder and faithfully guarding His precepts of charity, humility, and self-sacrifice, receives the mission to proclaim and to establish among all peoples the kingdom of Christ and of God. She becomes on earth the initial budding forth of that kingdom. While

7 LG 4, p. 17.

8 LG 2-4, p. 15-17; cf. Aloys Grillmeier, "The Mystery of the Church," in Commentary, Vol. I, p. 141.

9 Lucien Cerfaux, "Les images symboliques de l'Eglise dans le Nouveau Testament," in Unam Sanctam, 51b, p. 257.

she slowly grows, the Church strains toward the consummation of the kingdom, and, with all her strength, hopes and desires to be united in glory with her King.¹⁰

(ii) The Church as eschatological pilgrim. When the Church refers to herself as a pilgrim people,¹¹ she is again speaking of the totality of her membership. In this image both words, eschatological and pilgrim, point to the Church's relatedness to the world. This is true because this eschatology is not one which looks forward to the next world to the neglect of this one. Rather it signifies a work already begun.

Therefore, the promised restoration which we are awaiting has already begun in Christ, is carried forward in the mission of the Holy Spirit, and through Him continues in the Church. There we learn through faith the meaning, too, of our temporal life, as we perform, with hope of good things to come, the task committed to us in this world by the Father, and work out our salvation (cf. Phil. 2:12).¹²

Paolo Molinari explains how the eschatological nature of the Church demands relatedness with other men.¹³ He further provides complete references to this theme of eschatological pilgrim throughout the whole of "Lumen Gentium," revealing this theme as central to the whole document.¹⁴ Similarly, the term

¹⁰ LG 5, p. 18.

¹¹ LG 48-51, p. 78-85.

¹² LG 48, p. 79.

¹³ Paolo Molinari, "Caractère eschatologique de l'Eglise pèlerinante et ses rapports avec l'Eglise céleste," in Unam Sanctam, 51c, p. 1202.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 1209-1215.

pilgrim points to relatedness because it implies that the Church is part of history, developing within it.

For even now on this earth the Church is marked with a genuine though imperfect holiness. However, until there is a new heaven and a new earth where justice dwells (cf. 2Pet. 3:13), the pilgrim Church in her sacraments and institutions, which pertain to this present time, takes on the appearance of this passing world. She herself dwells among creatures who groan and travail in pain until now and await the revelation of the sons of God (cf. Rom. 8:19-22).¹⁵

We can see, then, that, in the Church's definition of herself, she considers herself as truly related to the world.¹⁶

We now turn our attention from the Church taken at large to the conciliar descriptions of individual classes of men within the Church.

(b) The Specific Members of the Church.-

(i) Bishops. Are the bishops of the Church seen as truly related to the Pope, to each other, and to their people? As an answer to this question we find in the ancillary decree on the bishops' pastoral office a call for an episcopal synod to assist the Holy See in the direction of the Church.¹⁷ The purpose of the synod underlines, as Klaus Mörsdorf notes,¹⁸

¹⁵ LG 48, p. 79.

¹⁶ Otto Semmelroth, "The Eschatological Nature of the Pilgrim Church and Her Union with the Heavenly Church," in Commentary, Vol. I, p. 281.

¹⁷ CPE 5, p. 399-400.

¹⁸ Klaus Mörsdorf, "Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church," in Commentary, Vol. II, p. 203.

the co-responsibility of the bishops in Church direction. That they share in this responsibility is also clear from the emphasis that is given to the authority of each bishop in his own diocese,¹⁹ and to the mutual help of bishops who are to work toward the proper direction of the Church in their own regions.²⁰ Likewise, there is an admonition for the internalization of the body of men who assist the Pope in his office of supreme officer of the Church. This is done with an eye to making the Pope's advisors more representational of the universal Church.²¹

This effort at relatedness between the bishop and his people is enhanced by his being requested to listen to his people,²² whose servant he is.²³ For this purpose he is recommended to make use of a senate of priests and a pastoral council of priests, religious, and laymen. These groups are to investigate, weigh, and advise the bishop as regards the pastoral needs of his diocese and the Church.²⁴

It is our contention that these particularizations concerning the relatedness of the bishops of the Church with

19 CPE 8, p. 401; cf. LG 25, p. 48.

20 LG 23, p. 44-46; CPE 36-41, p. 424-427.

21 CPE 9-10, p. 401-403.

22 LG 27, p. 52.

23 Karl Rahner, "The Hierarchical Structure of the Church with Special Reference to the Episcopate," in Commentary, Vol. I, p. 217-218.

24 CPE 27, p. 415-416.

their fellow Church members lend credibility to an ideal of relatedness on the part of the bishops as outlined in Chapter Three of "Lumen Gentium."

(ii) Eastern Christians in union with Rome. We find "Lumen Gentium" emphasizing the universality of the Church in broad terms:

Moreover, within the Church particular Churches hold a rightful place. These Churches retain their own traditions without in any way lessening the primacy of the Chair of Peter. This Chair presides over the whole assembly of charity and protects legitimate differences, while at the same time it sees that such differences do not hinder unity but rather contribute toward it.²⁵

It is in this context that we examine the relationship of the Latin Church with the Eastern Churches in union with her. That there is a special decree²⁶ devoted to this is our first evidence that the Latin Church is aware of her Eastern brethren. Recognition of different traditions and rites, taken in the broad sense, under the umbrella of a single Church gives purchase to this awareness.²⁷ Concern for the ancient Eastern tradition of the patriarchate,²⁸ for the ancient Eastern sacramental practice,²⁹ are also evidence that the Church of

25 LG 13, p. 32.

26 EO, p. 373-386.

27 EO 1, p. 373; 2-4, p. 374.

28 EO 7-11, p. 377-378.

29 EO 12, p. 379.

Rome is aware of her plurality. The vision of the special role of the Catholic Eastern Churches in seeking union with the separated Eastern Churches,³⁰ as well as a cautious advance toward common worship with these separated Churches as a beginning of Church reunification again finds the Church of the West looking outward toward the East.³¹ Finally, that the principles for relations governing the Latin Church and her Eastern brethren in union with her are regarded as temporary and looking forward to the eventual union of all the Churches of East and West is hardly evidence for a narcissistic Western Church concerned only with making the Christian world over in her image.³²

(iii) Priests. What are we to say of the quality of relatedness of the ordinary ordained minister of the Church? Aloys Grillmeier notes a deliberate parallelism between the description of priest and bishop in "Lumen Gentium."³³ "Lumen Gentium" speaks of priests as sharing the dignity of the ordained priesthood with the bishop, hence a certain equality

30 EO 24, p. 383.

31 EO 26, p. 383-384.

32 EO 30, p. 385.

33 Aloys Grillmeier, "The Hierarchical Structure of the Church with Special Reference to the Episcopate," in Commentary, Vol I, p. 221.

of dignity.³⁴ The decree on the life of priests provides structure for this equality by calling for a senate of priests to represent them to the bishop and help him.³⁵ They are described as bound to their people by baptism, sharing the basic priesthood of all Christians.³⁶ As is true of bishops, they are described basically as servants, guides, and brothers to their people, hence related to them. They are further seen in a broader context as related to all their fellow men:

By friendly and fraternal dealings among themselves and with other men, priests can learn to cultivate human values and to esteem created goods as gifts of God.³⁷

This theme of relatedness is underlined in the Council's treatment of the training of priests.³⁸ Perhaps key to the Council's teaching on the relatedness of the priest both to his bishop and to his people is the call for him to be trained in his home country with an eye toward his own contemporary culture.³⁹ His training thus becomes less Roman and more rooted in his own people, more under the direction of his own bishop,

34 LG 28, p. 53; MVP 2, p. 533-534.

35 MVP 7, p. 548-549.

36 LG 28, p. 53-54; MVP 2, p. 533-534.

37 MVP 17, p. 567.

38 FP 12, p. 448-449; FP 19, p. 454-455; FP 21, p. 455

39 FP 7, p. 444.

as Joseph Neuner notes:

The innovation in the Council's ordinance is that these inter-diocesan seminaries no longer come directly under papal authority as before (cf. CIC, can. 1357, #4). They are to be governed according to statutes drawn up by the particular bishops and to be approved by Rome.⁴⁰

We do not see, then, a man intended to be cut from the world around him by a priestly caste. A priest is to be a man related to other men.⁴¹

(iv) Laymen. There is no doubt but that the layman, described as fully a member of the Church neither in holy orders nor a member of a duly authorized religious congregation,⁴² is fully a member of the Church with a special function:

Everything which has been said so far concerning the People of God applies equally to the laity, religious, and clergy. But there are certain things which pertain in a particular way to the laity, both men and women, by reason of their situation and mission.⁴³

There is a twofold apostolate of the laymen in their sharing of the priestly, prophetic and royal function of Christ with all the members of the People of God. They are linked solidly by the Council, as is noted by Constantino Koser, both to the

⁴⁰ Joseph Neuner, "Decree on Priestly Formation," in Commentary, Vol. II, p. 386.

⁴¹ Michael Schmaus, "Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests," in Commentary, Vol. IV, p. 288-289.

⁴² LG 31, p. 57.

⁴³ LG 30, p. 56; cf. also, LG 32, p. 58; AL 2-3, p. 491-493.

Church and to the world at large.⁴⁴ This theme of relatedness with the world is linked inseparably with the world's salvation and the calling of the layman:

Christ's redemptive work, while of itself directed toward the salvation of men, involves also the renewal of the whole temporal order. Hence the mission of the Church is not only to bring to men the message and grace of Christ, but also to penetrate and perfect the temporal sphere with the spirit of the gospel. In fulfilling this mission of the Church, the laity, therefore, exercise their apostolate both in the Church and in the world, in both the spiritual and the temporal orders.⁴⁵

The layman, then, by definition is seen as related to priest and bishop and to the larger world of men around him. He, above all men in the Church, is called to abandon any churchly narcissism as regards the world and any isolation from the hierarchy.

(v) Religious. We feel that the Council's teaching on members of religious congregations calls them to be linked both to the men of the Church and to the men of the world at large. We note an ecclesial rather than an inward looking description of religious life:

Thus it has come about that various forms of solitary and community life, as well as different religious families have grown up. Advancing the progress of their members and the welfare of the whole

⁴⁴ Constantino Koser, "La coopération des laïcs avec la hiérarchie sur le plan de l'apostolat," in Unam Sanctam, 51c, p. 1061.

⁴⁵ AL 5, p. 495.

body of Christ, these groups have been like branches sprouting out wondrously and abundantly from a tree growing in the field of the Lord from a seed divinely planted.⁴⁶

Similarly, Friedrich Wulf notes that religious vows are seen by the Council as primarily meant to serve the Church rather than to isolate the individual in a state of seeming holiness.⁴⁷ And the Council is quite explicit in her directives that religious should not be estranged from the world around them:

Let no one think that by their consecration religious have become strangers to their fellow men or useless citizens of this earthly city.⁴⁸

We have, then, a twofold relatedness demanded of religious--to the Church and to the broader confines of the men of the society in which they live. One might say that the Council describes religious life as a series of institutionalized life styles whereby one seeks to be related intimately to the Church and the world. Individual and collective narcissism are not a part of this ideal.

(c) The Church's Relationship to Other Christians, Other Religions, and Her Missionary Stance.-

(i) Other Christians and non-Christian religions. One is immediately struck by the fact that the Church's stance

⁴⁶ LG 43, p. 73; cf. also, VR 14, p. 476-477; VR 20-25, p. 479-482; VR 1, p. 467; VR 2(2)(c), p. 468.

⁴⁷ Friedrich Wulf, "Religious," in Commentary, Vol. I, p. 274.

⁴⁸ LG 46, p. 77; cf. LG 44, p. 75; VR 2(2)d, p. 468-469; VR 3, p. 469; Wulf, op. cit., p. 279.

towards both these groups of men is marked by a statement of what binds them together, the things they have in common.

Speaking of other Christians, "Lumen Gentium" states:

The Church recognizes that in many ways she is linked with those who, being baptized, are honored with the name of Christian, though they do not profess the faith in its entirety or do not preserve unity of communion with the successor of Peter.⁴⁹

We feel an awareness on the part of the Church of the gifts of other Christians as well as the necessity for the Church to seek inner renewal herself in her search for union with them.⁵⁰

Her use of the terms Churches and ecclesial communities for these groups,⁵¹ her reference to them as brothers,⁵² and her call for dialogue with them,⁵³ are all evidences of an effort to be related to these other Christian bodies of men.

We find a similar emphasis in the discussion of the Church's relationship with non-Christian religions. Again, the emphasis is upon the links between the Church and these others:

Finally, those who have not yet received the gospel are related in various ways to the People of God.⁵⁴

⁴⁹ LG 15, p. 33-34; cf. also, OEC 3, p. 345-346; Aloys Grillmeier, "The People of God," in Commentary, Vol. I, p. 178.

⁵⁰ LG 15, p. 34; OEC 7, p. 351.

⁵¹ LG 15, p. 34, OEC 4, p. 347.

⁵² OEC 1, p. 342; OEC 3-4, p. 345-349.

⁵³ OEC 9, p. 353.

⁵⁴ LG 16, p. 34.

There is an awareness of authentically religious aspects of these religions.⁵⁵ We see a call for true relatedness,⁵⁶ a recognition of the profound questions they ask coupled with a call to dialogue.⁵⁷ Finally, there is the familiar theme of penance and renewal on the part of the Church in the interest of closer understanding and relatedness.⁵⁸

(ii) The Church's missionary stance. The Church has shown her ideal of her missionary activity to be one of awareness of the already existing goodness of the people whom she wishes to evangelize:

Through her work, whatever good is in the minds and hearts of men, whatever good lies latent in the religious practices and cultures of diverse peoples, is not only saved from destruction but is also healed, ennobled, and perfected unto the glory of God, the confusion of the devil, and the happiness of man.⁵⁹

Thus her aim is a truly native Church, built upon the existing culture of its people,⁶⁰ and we find adequate and detailed instructions for the founding of such indigenous Churches.⁶¹ The Council herself summarizes this attitude of awareness:

55 RNC 1, p. 661.

56 RNC 2, p. 662-663.

57 RNC 3, p. 663; cf. AM 1, p. 584-585.

58 RNC 3-4, p. 663-667.

59 LG 17, p. 36. Cf. also, AM 10, p. 597; AM 1, p. 584-585.

60 AM 6, p. 591.

61 AM 16-22, p. 603-613.

Thus, in imitation of the plan of the Incarnation, the young Churches, rooted in Christ and built up on the foundation of the apostles, take to themselves in a wonderful exchange all the riches of the nations which were given to Christ as an inheritance (cf. Ps. 2:8). From the customs and traditions of their people, from their wisdom and their learning, from their arts and sciences, these Churches borrow all those things which can contribute to the glory of their Creator, [...]⁶²

Vatican II has, in the words of Suso Brechter, "recognized the legitimacy of pluralism in the Church and made adaptation a programme."⁶³ We note finally an awareness in the Church's missionary activity, of the freedom of choice of those being evangelized.⁶⁴

We submit, then, that there is a strong trend against a certain Latin or overly Catholic attitude in the Church's attitude toward the separated brethren, other religions, and even in her missionary endeavor. She does not seek to make all men over into the image of Rome. She is more concerned that each group in its own way freely serve Christ in communion with the Christians of Rome. That there are obstacles is obvious.

⁶² AM 22, p. 612.

⁶³ Suso Brechter, "Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity," in Commentary, Vol. IV, p. 150.

⁶⁴ AM 13, p. 600. Cf. also, LR 3, p. 680-681; LR 11, p. 690. Note Pietro Pavan's comment that man's God-created dignity demands freedom from social religious pressure. Pietro Pavan, "Declaration on Religious Freedom," in Commentary, Vol. IV, p. 67.

Our concern here, however, is to show that there is indeed awareness of these peoples on the part of the Church.

(d) The Church and the Human Community at Large.-

(i) The Church and the world around her. It is our contention here that the Church regards herself as undeniably and unavoidably related to the world. She rejects, first of all, any dichotomy between a man's religious and secular activities:

Therefore, let there be no false opposition between professional and social activities on the one part, and religious life on the other. The Christian who neglects his temporal duties neglects his duties toward his neighbor and even God, and jeopardizes his eternal salvation. Christians should rather rejoice that they can follow the example of Christ, who worked as an artisan. In the exercise of all their earthly activities, they can thereby gather their human, domestic, professional, social, and technical enterprises into one vital synthesis with religious values, under whose supreme direction all things are harmonized unto God's glory.⁶⁵

She further admits frankly to having wrongly interfered in the freedom of men in legitimate temporal affairs,⁶⁶ and calls for help from the world around her, seeing herself inserted in the midst of mankind's history and as in a position to profit from worldly wisdom.⁶⁷

65 GS 43, p. 243.

66 GS 43, p. 245.

67 GS 44, p. 245-247.

We feel further that the Church calls all the men of the world to an attitude of relatedness and awareness toward one another. We find a call for relatedness among men in a world dominated by technology.⁶⁸ The possibility of unbridled individualism in the technocrat is condemned.⁶⁹ An ethic is called for that is concerned with social justice,⁷⁰ mutual awareness, and reverence for the individual person.⁷¹ Awareness of other men is singled out in the area of civil government also.⁷² The solidarity of all men is seen as basic to human life and to the Christian message.⁷³ Human social structures are to support this solidarity, this awareness of men for each other.⁷⁴ There is, in fact, no way except for us to see the Church calling the men of the world to greater relatedness. She does not see man as Narcissus, finding his fulfillment by looking at his own individual image and taken up wholly with his individual self.

(ii) Specific human problems. Since the Council concerns itself with several specific human problems, we feel it

68 GS 23, p. 222-223.

69 GS 23, p. 222.

70 GS 29, p. 227-228.

71 GS 27-28, p. 226-227.

72 GS 31, p. 229-230.

73 GS 32, p. 230-231.

74 GS 24-26, p. 223-226.

necessary to determine whether or not the Church sees these problems as the concern of all men, including her members. We must seek to determine if there is here a Church addressing herself to the problems of the world in magnificent isolation from the world. Does she perhaps overlook, in her vision of man, a call for man himself to be related to other men as he addresses himself to contemporary human difficulties?

The Council's treatment of marriage shows that she is aware of many of the difficulties of the married state in today's world. She sees reasons for limitation of the size of the family.⁷⁵ She is aware of problems in harmonizing love between wife and husband with the advent of children into the family.⁷⁶ She recognizes contemporary social and cultural pressures on the family unit itself.⁷⁷ Then, significantly, she ties these problems to herself by recognizing that they must be seen in the light of man's unfolding history, and that the law of nature, governing man's life in the married state, must be taken into account in the Church's teaching.⁷⁸ Bernard Haring comments on this stance:

75 GS 50, p. 254.

76 GS 51, p. 255-256.

77 GS 47, p. 249.

78 GS 51, p. 256.

The magisterium is viewed as functioning within the history of redemption. This also points to an understanding of natural law which more consciously takes into account the temporal, historical character of man than was done by the purely static doctrine of natural law which prevailed with the advent of rationalism.⁷⁹

We find no evidence in the document, furthermore, that the married state is one of an égoïsme à deux. Quite the contrary. Marriage is spoken of as a community of love.⁸⁰

Speaking of the love between man and wife, the Council says:

Such love, merging the human with the divine, leads the spouses to a free and mutual gift of themselves, a gift proving itself by gentle affection and by deed. Such love pervades the whole of their lives. Indeed by its generous activity it grows better and grows greater. Therefore it far excels mere erotic inclination, which, selfishly pursued, soon enough fades wretchedly away.⁸¹

Since other areas of difficulty in today's world are treated in a different context later in this essay, we shall only draw here certain conclusions from those treatments as regards our present theme of relatedness.

In speaking of man's socio-economic and political life, the Church underlines the danger of men becoming isolated from

⁷⁹ Bernard Haring, "Fostering the Nobility of Marriage and the Family," in Commentary, Vol. V, p. 244. Cf. also, p. 226.

⁸⁰ GS 48-49, p. 250-253. Bernard Haring emphasizes the theme of the community of love as the salient point of the conciliar teaching on marriage partnership. Cf. Haring, op. cit., p. 232.

⁸¹ GS 49, p. 253.

each other, unaware of each other in a narcissistic pursuit of economic expansion or political power.⁸² War is seen by the Council as epitomizing selfishness and egoism on the part of individual men and national blocs.⁸³ We note, too, that the Council's treatment of atheism is concerned with seeking bonds between herself and atheists. She searches for understanding, invites dialogue, admits her debt to atheistic humanism, and is aware of her own part in causing it.⁸⁴

We conclude our treatment on relatedness with the conviction that this is an important aspect of the life of the Church. We feel we have shown strong indications of relatedness among the men of the Church, both taken as a group and in the classes of men that make up her structure. We feel there is evidence of relatedness, too, in her attitude toward the various groups of men who stand outside that structure, both in her awareness of their positions and in her need to work with them for the benefit of all. Having presented the evidence for this, we proceed now to treat man's need for rootedness, a need closely allied to that of relatedness.

82 Cf. Chapter IV, Section 1A(a).

83 Cf. Chapter IV, Section 1A(b).

84 Cf. Chapter IV, Section 5A.

B. Rootedness--Brotherliness versus Incest

Our chief concern here is the quality of the relations between men. Thus we ask the following questions. Is the relationship of the men of the Church one to another one of incest? Is any group so closely tied to another as to be smothered? Such a relationship would be indicative of a lack of real brotherly equality. We are looking for this loving equality, for a relationship between men that is supportive but not domineering.

(a) The Church Looks at Herself as a Totality.- It is our conviction that there is an egalitarian as well as loving tone to the Council's description of the Church as a people.⁸⁵ Salvation does not hinge on certain individuals but on a community of people who share the priestly, kingly, and prophetic office of Jesus Christ.⁸⁶ When each of the people is seen as sharing the office of Christ, including the power to rule, there is a basic note of equality for all the people.

Otto Semmelroth notes:

There are two distinguishing marks that stand out in the Church's title of The People of God. First, there is a unity in the Church. There is a bond

⁸⁵ LG 9-17, p. 24-37.

⁸⁶ Grillmeier, "The People of God," p. 154; cf. p. 156 for his comments on the significance of the idea of sharing.

shared by all the people. There is an essential equality in her members, a unity rooted in the heart of this hierarchical organization.⁸⁷

Our concern here is not to prove that love is an ideal within the Church, but to show that this love is not an incestuous one. The theme of the Church as a people supports this brotherly stance. Let us turn then to the individual classes of men within the Church to see if this stance is consistently maintained.

(b) The Specific Members of the Church.-

(i) Bishops and priests. We note primarily a certain decentralizing tone in the chapter of "Lumen Gentium" which treats of the hierarchy.⁸⁸ Speaking of the Council's affirmation of the collegial or co-governing aspect of the office of bishop, Karl Rahner notes:

But the fact that the affirmation was expressly made is now the consequence (and in future no doubt will be the cause) of a changed mentality which takes a critical attitude towards a certain type of Roman centralization and curial administration earlier in vogue, which are by no means identical with the primacy and its exercise.⁸⁹

This theme of decentralization is elaborated and given structure in a separate decree by the establishment of an episcopal synod

⁸⁷ Otto Semmelroth, "L'Eglise, nouveau Peuple de Dieu," in Unam Sanctam, 51b, p. 403. (Translation of this and other passages taken from the Unam Sanctam collection are made by the writer of this study.)

⁸⁸ LG 18-29, p. 37-56.

⁸⁹ Rahner, op. cit., p. 187.

to aid the Holy See in the direction of the Church.⁹⁰ Likewise, the relationship of the sacred minister to his people is seen as that of brother and servant:

For the nurturing and constant growth of the People of God, Christ the Lord instituted in His Church a variety of ministries, which work for the good of the whole body. For those ministers who are endowed with sacred power are servants of their brethren, so that all who are of the People of God, and therefore enjoy a true Christian dignity, can work toward a common goal freely and in an orderly way, and arrive at salvation.⁹¹

The treatment of priests deliberately parallels that of bishops.⁹² There is structural reinforcement for the ideal of brotherhood between priest and bishop in the Council's ancillary decree on the life of priests.⁹³ One notes, even in the training of the future priest, a movement toward a sharing of power within the framework of the seminary life of the student.⁹⁴ We are struck, therefore, by a note of a loving fraternity between the ordained officers of the Church of the West. Will we find a similar non-incestuous attitude toward non-Latin Churches in union with Rome?

(ii) Eastern Christians in union with Rome. We find the Council's attitude summed up neatly here:

90 *Ibid.*, p. 187.

91 LG 18, p. 37.

92 Grillmeier, "The Hierarchical Structure of the Church with Special Reference to the Episcopate," p. 221.

93 MVP 7, p. 548-549; MVP 8, p. 551.

94 FP 11, p. 447-448.

The Catholic Church holds in high esteem the institutions of the Eastern Churches, their liturgical rites, ecclesiastical traditions, and Christian way of life. For, distinguished as they are by their venerable antiquity, they are bright with that tradition which was handed down from the apostles through the Fathers, and which forms part of the divinely revealed and undivided heritage of the universal Church.⁹⁵

This respect is given reinforcement by the Council's specific desire to preserve the rites of the East and the right of the Eastern Churches to self rule.⁹⁶

(iii) The laity. Perhaps the Council's attitude toward the ordinary baptized Church member is most crucial in a search for an attitude of love within the Church that is untainted with authoritarianism. The Council underlines the basic equality in baptism of the people of God, a sharing of the offices of Christ with the ordained members of the Church.⁹⁷ Ferdinand Klostermann underlines this egalitarian tone in both "Lumen Gentium" and the special decree concerning the laity.⁹⁸ We feel we may assume that the different members of the Church differ from one another basically by a difference of functions. There is a common call, a common equality, but different roles

95 EO 1, p. 373.

96 EO 2-6, p. 374-377.

97 LG 30-38, p. 56-65; AL 2-3, p. 491-493.

98 Ferdinand Klostermann, "The Laity," in Commentary, Vol. I, p. 238-239; "Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity," in Commentary, Vol. III, p. 310.

and individual talents. Within this conception, the laity are not puppets dangling from hierarchical cords of power. They, too, have a special place.

(iv) Religious. What concerns us most here is the obligation to obedience undertaken in one form or another by members of religious congregations. We note in this regard that religious obedience, as one of the counsels, is seen in the perspective of service to the Church:

By the charity to which they lead, the evangelical counsels join their followers to the Church and her mystery in a special way. Since this is so, the spiritual life of these followers should be devoted to the welfare of the whole Church.⁹⁹

Obedience, then, is a tool for service of the People of God. We note further that this obedience must be responsible. Individual members of religious groups must help shoulder the burden of government and direction of the group, underlining the necessity of a democratic element in religious communities.¹⁰⁰ This twofold element of service to the people and shared responsibility by the members of the group as a whole indicate an obedience that is functional, brotherly, and adult. We do not have incest here, but responsible love.

⁹⁹ LG 44, p. 74-75. Friedrich Wulf notes that the decree concerning religious life strongly underlines the ecclesial character of religious communities as groups. Cf. "Religious," p. 277.

¹⁰⁰ VR 4, p. 469-470; cf. Friedrich Wulf, "Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of the Religious Life," in Commentary, Vol. II, p. 342.

(vi) The saints and the Virgin Mary. We include a discussion of the departed members of the Church here, because of the danger that they will be seen by the Church as keeping her living members as children, dependent upon the saints in an incestuous way for solving problems that they should meet themselves. The saints can, in short, become idols.

We note that the saints are regarded as brothers to the People of God on earth. As such they have as their chief function to reveal God to men here below and to share the worship of the earthly Church.¹⁰¹ Their existence, as Otto Semmelroth says, "means commitment in our earthly life."¹⁰² The Church's relationship with the Blessed Virgin Mary is placed firmly on the same plane as that of the saints.¹⁰³ She is no idol, but remains the member of the Church par excellence.¹⁰⁴

(c) The Church's Attitude Toward Other Christians, Other Religions and Her Missionary Stance.- We find that the Church's awareness of these peoples is so closely allied with an attitude of brotherliness that we need only refer our reader

101 LG 50-51, p. 81-85.

102 Otto Semmelroth, "The Eschatological Nature of the Pilgrim Church and Her Union with the Heavenly Church," in Commentary, Vol. I, p. 283.

103 LG 66-67, p. 94-95.

104 Otto Semmelroth, "The Role of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, in the Mystery of Christ and the Church," in Commentary, Vol. I, p. 295.

to the texts discussed above and draw certain conclusions therefrom.¹⁰⁵ The Council's references to other Christians as brothers, her awareness of the real religious values in other religions, her call of both these groups to dialogue, her own admission of guilt regarding the division between herself and other religious men--all these strike us as evidence of an attitude that is brotherly rather than domineering.

As regards her missionary stance, her concern for the already existing cultures of those to be evangelized, her desire for truly indigenous Churches with their own government and traditions, her expressed disavowal of using pressure to make converts, her call for religious freedom for all men--these strike us as a stance of brotherliness and respect. Suso Brechter sums up the Church's missionary stance in words which seem clearly to indicate a non-incestuous attitude. He says:

The Council plainly rejected the unfair principle that "error has no rights. Consequently the missionary will not only respect the religious convictions of non-Christians but will also recognize on principle that they too will wish to propagate their doctrines and views, that they too are engaged in a "mission". The right to missionary activity has a firm Christian basis in the doctrine of religious freedom. Anyone who claims this freedom for himself must also be ready to grant and allow it to the non-Christian. In the past and in practice it was unfortunately often the case that people claimed missionary activity for themselves but refused it to those of other faiths, or at least made it as difficult as possible by legal enactments and social pressure.¹⁰⁶

105 Cf. Chapter III, Section 1A(c).

106 Brechter, op. cit., p. 131.

We turn now to search for brotherliness in the attitude of the Church toward the whole human community, toward the secular world which surrounds and penetrates her.

(d) The Church and the Human Community.- Does the Church call all men to be brothers? If she does, is her own call one of reason and persuasion or one of force? This two-fold problem is what here concerns us.

(i) General attitudes. We feel that our case for brotherliness has been made clear in an earlier treatment of God as a symbol of justice and love.¹⁰⁷ We have further elaborated on the theme of brotherhood in our treatment of virtue,¹⁰⁸ and in our treatment on relatedness in this chapter.¹⁰⁹ In these we truly find a call on the part of the Church, addressed to all men, to live in equality and brotherhood. Further, there is no hint that the Church seeks to use any force, other than the living message of the gospel, in calling men to live in a brotherly way.

(ii) Specific issues. We shall concern ourselves with three concrete issues to which the Council addresses herself-- socio-economic life, political life, and the issue of peace.

107 Cf. Chapter II, Section 1A(c) and (d).

108 Cf. Chapter II, Section 3C.

109 Cf. Chapter III, Section 1A(d)(i).

In the socio-economic sphere, the idea of brotherliness is closely allied to that of relatedness. In his socio-economic life man must not only be aware of other men than himself. The Council states that he must also have a brotherly attitude.¹¹⁰ Absolute control in the long run cannot be brotherly. Nor can there be a brotherly relationship between men when there are huge economic or social differences between them. Thus the Council says:

Economic development must be kept under the control of mankind. It must not be left to the sole judgment of a few men or groups possessing excessive economic power, or of the political community alone, or of certain especially powerful nations. It is proper, on the contrary, that at every level the largest possible number of people have an active share in directing that development.¹¹¹

And again:

If the demands of justice and equity are to be satisfied, vigorous efforts must be made, without violence to the rights of persons or to the natural characteristics of each country, to remove as quickly as possible the immense economic inequalities which now exist. In many cases, these are worsening and are connected with individual and group discrimination.¹¹²

If there is no broad participation in economic affairs, there follows an incestuous relationship rather than a brotherly one between those involved.¹¹³

110 GS 63-64, p. 271-273. Cf. Chapter IV, Section 1A(a).

111 GS 65, p. 273.

112 GS 66, p. 274.

113 GS 68, p. 276-277.

The political sphere finds brotherliness accented by the Council. The task of political management is seen as that of the whole community of a given country.¹¹⁴ Nor is any one political unit viewed as separate from others. The common good sought by a political state is the common good of the men of the world.¹¹⁵ As in her stance concerning socio-economic life,¹¹⁶ the Church does not see herself as possessing special privileges or power.¹¹⁷ She demands only the right to free exercise of her own life.¹¹⁸

The issue of peace is firmly hinged to the achievement of brotherhood rather than power and force. Since we will treat the threat of nuclear war in the following chapter,¹¹⁹ we shall content ourselves with this short quotation:

This peace cannot be obtained on earth unless personal values are safeguarded and men freely and trustingly share with one another the riches of their inner spirits and their talents. A firm determination to respect other men and peoples and their dignity, as well as the studied practice of brotherhood, are absolutely necessary for the establishment of peace.¹²⁰

114 GS 75, p. 285-287.

115 GS 73-74, p. 282-284.

116 GS 63, p. 271.

117 GS 76, p. 288.

118 GS 76, p. 288-289.

119 Cf. Chapter IV, Section 1A(b).

120 GS 78, p. 290. René Coste underlines the brotherhood-versus-power syndrome in the Council's teaching. Cf. René Coste, "The Fostering of Peace and the Promotion of a Community of Nations," in Commentary, Vol. V, p. 348.

With the issue of peace we have fittingly come to an end of our discussion of rootedness as a need for man. We do indeed feel that the Council calls the men of the Church to peace among themselves. We feel she calls all men to a brotherly peace in the spirit of the gospel's proclamation, "'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!'"¹²¹

C. Transcendence--Creativeness versus
Destructiveness

It is long since the Church advocated the actual physical destruction of those whose moral or dogmatic beliefs differed from hers. The days of the Inquisition and the burning of heretics are over. So are the so-called "holy wars," epitomized by the Crusades. We address ourselves then to the positive side of men's need for transcendence, his need for creativity. We observe further that one can almost say that a climate of awareness coupled with brotherliness amounts to a climate of creativity. Our treatment of creativity will, for these reasons, be brief.

(a) The Church Looks at Herself as a Totality.- We find two themes, analyzed above, germane to our theme--the

¹²¹ The Gospel According to Luke, Chapter 2, verse 14; Revised Standard Version.

Church as a people¹²² and the Church as pilgrim.¹²³ The people idea shows that each member of the Church has a part to play in the Church's life. The diversity of active roles within the Church bespeaks creativity. The pilgrim theme shows the Church engrafted into history, creatively searching for new answers in living the life of her divine-human calling. Avery Dulles encapsulates this pilgrim theme when he notes:

Many Catholics seem to forget that the Church really has a history. They think of it statically as if it were immune from change and incapable of progress. But if we look at the Church concretely and historically, rather than as an abstract essence, we shall see that it has a dramatic life story through the centuries. The picture of the Church as a pilgrim making its way through history is beautifully painted for us by Vatican II . [...]124

(b) The Specific Members of the Church.- If the bishops do indeed share with the Holy See the supreme direction of the Church, if they cooperate in their own regions in regional direction, if they share their office with the lower clergy, if the laity and religious congregations do indeed share with the clergy the priestly, prophetic and governmental power of Jesus Christ in a brotherly and related manner, we can expect that

122 Cf. Chapter II, Section 1A(a) and Section 1B(f); Chapter III, Section 1B(a).

123 Cf. Chapter II, Section 1A(b); Chapter III, Section 1A(a)(ii).

124 Avery Dulles, The Dimensions of the Church, Westminster, Newman Press, 1967, p. 17.

the Church will require creativity of Catholic men of both Eastern and Western traditions. That this should be so is clear. However, Grillmeier's comment on the tension between priest and bishop points out that the series of conditions outlined above will not be easy to maintain and develop on their several levels:

The relationship thus established by rank and office should be accompanied by an inward attitude of confidence, courage, respect and obedience, such as is given to a father. The bishop on his part should try to make this confidence and obedience easy, regarding his fellow-workers in the priestly ministry as sons and friends and no longer as servants, as the Lord said to his apostles (Jn. 15:15). The demands made upon both sides are high, but they are the claims of the humaneness which the Pastoral Constitution on the world of today calls for, where religious authority is to be exercised at several levels.¹²⁵

(c) The Church's Attitude Towards Other Christians, Other Religions, and Her Missionary Stance.- We feel that these three attitudes have much in common. A truly brotherly attitude toward other Christians and other religions, and a real awareness of them will give rise to a positive and creative relationship with them. Such an attitude cannot help but influence missionary activity. What is most striking from the point of view of man's need for creativity is the Church's own diffidence. She sees all three relationships as essentially unsolved, in need of study, dialogue, and a loving attitude as both sides

¹²⁵ Grillmeier, "The Hierarchical Structure of the Church, with Special Reference to the Episcopate," p. 224.

grope for a solution in their relationships one to another. Such an open-ended stance seems to us to demand creativity on the part of Church members and those to whom she addresses herself. The difficulties are manifold. Speaking in terms of the Church's missionary stance, Suso Brechter notes the failures of the past efforts on the part of the Latin Church to respect the peoples she has evangelized:

It is a depressing historical fact that, except in Western Europe and in the New World, the Church has not been able to incorporate and transform any alien culture. It has not become entirely native anywhere, but has everywhere remained Western.¹²⁶

(d) The Church and the Human Community.- Does the Council call the whole of mankind to transcend lower life? Does she call men to create, to build the earth and not to destroy it? We must first recall to the reader our earlier view of God calling man to create.¹²⁷ We recall also the creative aspects of hearing God's Word and the primacy of the human conscience.¹²⁸

(i) Man as creator. The Council teaches us that man is made in the image of the Creator God. He must use his potential to continue to develop the earth:

126 Brechter, op. cit., p. 150.

127 Cf. Chapter II, Section 1C(b), (c), (d).

128 Cf. Chapter II, Section 3A.

For sacred Scripture teaches that man was created "to the image of God," is capable of knowing and loving his Creator, and was appointed by Him as master of all earthly creatures that he might subdue them and use them to God's glory.¹²⁹

Man's ongoing mission of creation involves both his bodily and spiritual attributes.¹³⁰ By his intellect he is seen as transcending the universe and needing to continually employ his talents throughout his life, indeed throughout his whole history, in order to humanize the world.¹³¹

(ii) Man's activity in the world. The Council sees contemporary problems as challenges to man's creativity:

In the face of these immense efforts which already preoccupy the whole human race, men raise numerous questions among themselves. What is the meaning and value of this feverish activity? How should all these things be used? To the achievement of what goal are the strivings of individuals and societies heading?¹³²

Alfons Auer notes that the Church also recognizes socialization in today's world and the rise of the man of scientific thought and technical skill as forces which move men to a new creative interaction with the world.¹³³ Man's creativity in the world,

129 GS 12, p. 210.

130 GS 14, p. 212.

131 GS 15, p. 212-213.

132 GS 33, p. 231-232.

133 Alfons Auer, "Man's Activity Throughout the World," in Commentary, Vol. V, p. 185.

then, is an ongoing thing, contingent with the development of the world and his own advancement. Human activity has value because it is linked to God's ongoing creation.¹³⁴ Indeed, His plan unfolds by human participation.¹³⁵ Directly following from this broad view of man's activity as part of the divine plan is the rightful independence of earthly affairs. Religious faith and science are not in conflict, because we have a world in which the divine and the human interpenetrate one another.¹³⁶ The mystery of the death and resurrection of Christ calls man to life, to creation.¹³⁷ The next world begins now with the building of this one.¹³⁸

(iii) Particular instances. In Erich Fromm's vision of man destructiveness is equated with a climate prejudicial to man's creativity. It is not surprising that he sees the automaton man of contemporary society as the partner of nuclear destruction. We will show later the Church's awareness of this twin threat to mankind.¹³⁹ We have seen earlier that war can be the result of narcissistic men and groups of men and a lack of

134 GS 34, p. 232-233.

135 GS 35, p. 233.

136 GS 36, p. 233-234.

137 GS 38, p. 235-237.

138 GS 39, p. 237-238.

139 Cf. Chapter IV, Section 1A(a) and (b).

brotherhood.¹⁴⁰ War and destruction, however, come primarily under the frustration of man's need to be creative. The Council has this to say on the causes of war and destruction:

If peace is to be established, the primary requisite is to eradicate the causes of dissension between men. Wars thrive on these, especially on injustice. Many of these causes stem from excessive economic inequalities and from excessive slowness in applying the needed remedies. Other causes spring from a quest for power and from contempt for personal rights. If we are looking for deeper explanations, we can find them in human jealousy, distrust, pride, and other egotistic passions.¹⁴¹

She sees clearly that social inequality and the frustration of economic need can lead to destruction and war. She sees that a lack of educational and cultural opportunity leads to violence, as does a lack of true political creativity.¹⁴² It is significant that the Council links social, economic, and political suffocation with violence and war. For her, peace depends on the eradication of these evils. We do indeed think that she allies creativity with peace, and the frustration of man's creative impulses with violence and war. Creativity, along with awareness and brotherliness, is a keystone in the Council's vision of peace on earth.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Chapter III, Section 1A(d)(ii) and Section 1B(d)(ii).

¹⁴¹ GS 83, p. 297-298.

¹⁴² GS 84-85, p. 298-299.

D. Sense of Identity--Individuality versus
Herd Conformity

Though modern man is no longer tied to a particular social class or occupation in a static society, he still finds it difficult to say that precious and personal word, "I." We have seen that many factors in today's world combine to make him want to conform to a mass model. He wants to be a presentable package in the world where the market rules supreme. Therefore, although we have seen that physical destruction is no longer a serious problem in intra-mural Church affairs, we must ask several questions. Does the man of the Church try to conform to a model not in keeping with what he truly is? Or, is the Church's structure and self-image such as to encourage her men to be truly themselves? Does the Church encourage her people individually and collectively to say "I" or "we"? After answering these questions we will look beyond the confines of the Church to see if she encourages other men to be individuals or to conform.

(a) The Church Looks at Herself as a Totality.-

(i) The Church as mystery.¹⁴³ We find the Church described by the Council in a whole series of metaphors, the last of which is the Pauline image of the Body of Christ.¹⁴⁴ The

¹⁴³ Cf. Chapter III, Section 1A(a)(i); Chapter IV, Section 2A(a)(i).

¹⁴⁴ LG 6-7, p. 18-22.

important thing about these images is that, although they describe the Church as a whole, they emphasize the individual dignity of each member:

As all the members of the human body, though they are many, form one body, so also are the faithful in Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 12:12). Also, in the building up of Christ's body there is a flourishing variety of members and functions. There is only one Spirit who, according to His own richness and the needs of the ministries, distributes His different gifts for the welfare of the Church (cf. 1 Cor. 12:1-11).¹⁴⁵

Lucien Cerfaux has underlined the fact that the images of the Church show her profound engagement with an ever-changing world, and the continued diversity in her individual members.¹⁴⁶

(ii) The Church as a people.¹⁴⁷ We have previously seen the Church's respect for the traditions and forms of local Church government. Under this image the Chair of Peter is presented as a protector of such local differences.¹⁴⁸ Here also is the prime locus of each man's unique charismatic gift in the life of the Church.¹⁴⁹ Elias Zoghby underlines this catholicity of the Church in his scathing condemnation of the different means whereby the true catholicity or individuality

¹⁴⁵ LG 7, p. 20-21.

¹⁴⁶ Cerfaux, op. cit., p. 256-257.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Chapter II, Section 1A(a); Chapter III, Sections 1B(a), 1C(a) and 1E(a)(i); Chapter IV, Section 2A(a)(ii).

¹⁴⁸ LG 13, p. 32.

¹⁴⁹ LG 12, p. 30.

of the Church has sometimes been stifled.¹⁵⁰ He attacks those who have sometimes tried to stifle the diverse unity by juridicism, paternalism or a particular formula.

(iii) The pilgrim Church.¹⁵¹ This familiar conciliar theme sees the Church as growing in history enmeshed in human evolution and thus giving rise to diversity and change. It points to an ambience conducive to individuality among her several peoples.

(b) The Specific Members of the Church.-

(i) Bishops, priests and Eastern Uniates. We feel that true individuality, as creativity, depends on true relatedness and brotherhood. However, while physical destruction is obviated by the absence of physical force, that lack does not rule out the very real danger of herd conformity. This may well be met, however, by the means, such as synods of bishops and senates of priests, which allow the clergy to stand and speak for themselves.

We may add that the minority Churches within the Catholic Church will truly be able to say "I" in a related and fraternal atmosphere. If they are to perish, it will not be by

¹⁵⁰ Elias Zoghby, "Unité et diversité de l'Eglise," in Unam Sanctam, 51b, p. 503-508.

¹⁵¹ Cf. Chapter II, Section 1A(b); Chapter III, Sections 1A(a)(ii), 1C(a) and 1E(a)(i); Chapter IV, Section 2A(a)(iv).

the sword, but rather by losing their identity, their individuality to the great Church of the West, as Suso Brechter has noted in a different context earlier in this essay.¹⁵²

(ii) The laity. The Church of recent times has rarely destroyed her laymen. One can ask, however, whether or not she gives them a true identity. We feel the Council does call for a diverse and active laity. The laity are expressly included among those members of the Church having unique and God-given gifts. These gifts are to be respected.¹⁵³ Such individuality for the layman seems shored up and guaranteed in the structuralization of his position in the Church.¹⁵⁴ It goes without saying that the layman's individuality depends upon a fraternal and aware atmosphere in his regard on the part of the ordained officers of the Church.

(iii) Religious. We feel that what has been said about the clergy, the Churches of the East, and the laity concerning individuality applies equally to members of religious congregations. Very briefly, we believe that where love prevails there will be individuality. Our case rests, therefore, on the case for brotherhood and awareness.

152 Cf. Chapter III, note 126.

153 LG 30-37, p. 56-65; AL 2-3, p. 491-493.

154 AL 26, p. 515.

(c) The Church's Attitude toward Other Christians, Other Religions, and her Missionary Stance.-

(i) Other Christians. We have seen that the Church does not wish to destroy other Christians. We must now ask if she wishes them all to be reduced to a rigid conformity with Rome. It is our contention that a truly brotherly attitude will let these Churches continue in what makes them unique and individual. We find a valuable commentary on two articles of the Council's decree concerning ecumenism¹⁵⁵ by Johannes Feiner. He notes that union with the separated Churches is indeed one of the chief aims of the Council, an aim which it has not frustrated by claims unacceptable to others:

Thus the text does not state here what is not conceded by all Christians, that only the Catholic Church represents the true heritage of Jesus Christ, while the other Christian communities have been unfaithful to this heritage. It simply affirms the fact, acknowledged by all Christians, of the separation of the disciples of Jesus, which ought not to exist.¹⁵⁶

Feiner also notes that the formation of a "super-church" is not part of this desire for union.¹⁵⁷ Put positively, the Council's desire is for unity amid multiplicity, with the expressed hope that such diversity will continue to enrich the Church of Rome.¹⁵⁸

155 OEC 1, p. 341-342; OEC 4, p. 347-350.

156 Johannes Feiner, "Decree on Ecumenism," in Commentary, Vol. II, p. 59.

157 Ibid., p. 60-61.

158 Ibid., p. 90-92.

(ii) Other religions and missionary stance. We have seen that the Church is aware of the profound questioning of these other religions, and of elements of holiness within them, but does she want them to become Christians? If so, is this conformity? It is quite obvious from our discussion of the Church's missionary stance earlier in this chapter that the Church does indeed want to bring the message of Christ to those who have not heard it. How is she to do this while preserving her respect for their holiness and deep questioning? How are they to preserve their individuality? No final answer is given. We can only repeat that she is groping for understanding and love for these peoples within the limitations of her own professed privileged position as bearer of the Christ event. It is obvious that she does not want little Roman Churches among the newly evangelized: her desire is for indigenous Churches with their own individuality. There is emphasis, too, on different functions accorded to different classes of people within the newly indigenous Churches.¹⁵⁹ The missionary himself, in the context of individuality, is to be respected with regard to his own individual gifts.¹⁶⁰ We need not refer to the Council's doctrine on religious freedom, except to say that it buttresses the right of a man to choose to be a Christian or not, according

159 AM 15-22, p. 601-613.

160 AM 35-41, p. 623-629.

to his own individual conscience in an atmosphere of freedom.

(d) The Church and the Human Community.- Let us note that the danger of men becoming appendages of machines and the Church's awareness of this danger is treated in Chapter IV of this essay.¹⁶¹ Our position there is that the Church is well aware that contemporary men are indeed in danger of becoming machine-like automatons. In short, she is aware of the danger that modern man may be losing his individuality in his desire to fit into the modern, machine-dominated world. She is well aware that man himself must come first in all his activities, cultural, socio-economic, political, or familial. These areas of life are to serve man. They are not idols in the service of which he should submerge his own individuality.

Having found evidence that the Church would foster creativity and individuality, we seek now for evidence that she would help man to satisfy his need to have a rational frame of orientation and devotion.

E. The Need for a Frame of Orientation and Devotion--
Reason versus Irrationality

Erich Fromm's stance that man needs a framework of reason around which to build his life poses certain questions

¹⁶¹ Cf. Chapter IV, Section 1A(a).

for us. Does the Church herself place human reason as paramount in her own self-concept? Does she call all men to listen to the voice of reason?

(a) The Church Looks at Herself as a Totality.-

(i) The pilgrim people. Our concern with this familiar conciliar theme is confined to man's rational powers. It is our contention that the evolutionary term of pilgrim, the vision of a people moving toward the last days, carries with it the implication that reason itself develops. It implies that the Christian message itself will continue to develop and grow in accordance with man's own intellectual development. The developmental aspect of the Church has been seen as having its primary locus in "Lumen Gentium," but it has certainly found expression in a directly intellectual framework elsewhere under the heading of doctrinal development. Thus the Council fathers speak concerning religious liberty:

Over and above all this, in taking up the matter of religious freedom this sacred Synod intends to develop the doctrine of recent Popes on the inviolable rights of the human person and on the constitutional order of society.¹⁶²

This notion of intellectual development has not been lost on the most distinguished English-speaking commentator on the Council's doctrine of religious liberty, John Courtney Murray.¹⁶³

¹⁶² LR 1, p. 677. Cf. also, LG 25, p. 49-50.

¹⁶³ John Courtney Murray, "The Declaration on Religious Freedom," footnote 4, in The Documents of Vatican II, p. 677.

(ii) The Church's attitude toward culture. The Church's attitude toward culture must be seen as addressing all men, including the men of the Church, by definition. That her attitude toward culture shows respect for man's faculty to reason is evident in the Council's definition of culture as tied to human knowledge and being in the service of man.¹⁶⁴

Similarly, it is quite clear that the Council does not find matters of faith opposed to things cultural. Religion does not oppose man's attempt to develop himself and his world, but acts as a spur.¹⁶⁵ Further, we find a consistency between the Council's stand on the legitimacy and necessity of the preservation of the differing cultures of the world,¹⁶⁶ and her belief that the Christian message is helped by and must be adapted to the different cultures in which the Christian message is lived.¹⁶⁷

The Council unequivocally states that, if indeed culture is to serve man, it must of necessity have freedom to develop.

¹⁶⁴ GS 53, p. 259. Cf. also, GS 55, p. 260-261 and GS 56, p. 261.

¹⁶⁵ GS 57, p. 262.

¹⁶⁶ GS 56, p. 261.

¹⁶⁷ GS 58, p. 264-265. This stance is underlined by Roberto Tucci as significant for the Church's respect for reason. Roberto Tucci, "The Proper Development of Culture," in Commentary, Vol. V, p. 266, footnote 15.

Because it flows immediately from man's spiritual and social nature, culture has constant need of a just freedom if it is to develop. It also needs the legitimate possibility of exercising its independence according to its own principles.¹⁶⁸

Christians are singled out as having the duty to recognize and contribute to the development of culture and to recognize that the social structures and conditions of man can thwart the development of culture.¹⁶⁹ Freedom of theological enquiry within the Church herself is clearly called for.¹⁷⁰

The conciliar stand of openness toward the truth in whatever cultural way it is expressed and her call for freedom of research and thought for all her own members even in theological areas is considered significant by Albert Dondeyne.¹⁷¹

(iii) Revelation and reason. We have noted above¹⁷² that God's speaking to man is not described as diminishing the role of man's reason. Hearing God's Word, in fact, is seen as a call to the fullest use of reason by man. Our contention, then, is clear. The Council challenges all men to struggle for the truth in freedom. This challenge includes the men of the Church.

168 GS 59, p. 265.

169 GS 60, p. 266-267.

170 GS 62, p. 270.

171 Albert Dondeyne, "L'essor de la culture," in Unam Sanctam, 65b, p. 480-481.

172 Cf. Chapter II, Section 3A.

(b) The Specific Members of the Church.-

(i) Pope, bishops, priests. We have seen in Chapter Two that all the ordained clergy are seen by the Council as servants of the Word of God.¹⁷³ There is room for open opposition to papal teaching if it does not conform to the Word of God. If this is true of the Supreme Pontiff's teaching, it is also true for bishops and priests. The Council's treatment of papal teaching leaves the way open for doctrinal development. That conformity to God's Word does not imply a lessening of man's intellectual involvement has been explained.

Further, we note a firm admonition on the part of the Council for the continuing education of priests,¹⁷⁴ and for intellectual development on the part of those in training for the priesthood.¹⁷⁵ If we have noted that the machinery for debate within the ordained class of Church members is lacking and that there is no statement concerning intellectual freedom in theological teaching anywhere in the treatment of the clergy as such, these are negative factors that will be treated later. That there is a broad ideal that all the Catholic clergy, from Pope to curate, seek the truth, and a theoretical opening for controversy and development of doctrine is clear.

173 Cf. Chapter II, Sections 1A(a) and 2B.

174 MVP 19, p. 571-572.

175 FP 11, p. 447-448.

(ii) Laity and religious. Both the layman and the religious are seen as full members of the Church and hence as sharing the prophetic or teaching office of the Church.¹⁷⁶ The layman's secular area of knowledge is to be respected.¹⁷⁷ Religious are urged to a deeper understanding of their origins as well as to understand and adapt to the times they live in.¹⁷⁸ Religious are further urged to deepen their broad intellectual training.¹⁷⁹

(c) The Church's Attitude toward Other Christians, Other Religions, and Her Missionary Stance.- We believe that what has been said above under this heading with regard to relatedness and brotherliness implies a fundamental stance on the Church's part supportive of the primacy of human reason.¹⁸⁰ The Church is seen as respecting the intellectual traditions of other Christians and of other religions. She wishes to dialogue with both.

A missionary stance that seeks truly to be aware of the peoples being evangelized and truly to be loving is well on its way to being rational. A stance that sees proclamation of the

176 LG 35, p. 61-62; AL 2, p. 491-492; LG 43, p. 73-74.

177 AL 24, p. 513-514.

178 VR 2-3, p. 468-469.

179 VR 18, p. 478-479.

180 Cf. Chapter III, Sections 1A(c) and 1B(c).

Christian message as its only tool in evangelization¹⁸¹ and which is included under a call for all men to seek and respect religious truth freely¹⁸² cannot be called an anti-intellectual approach to man's frame of orientation and devotion.

(d) The Church and the Human Community.- The Church's stance with regard to man's reason as a bulwark of the dignity of all men is clear:

Man judges rightly that by his intellect he surpasses the material universe, for he shares the light of the divine mind [...] The intellectual nature of the human person is perfected by wisdom and needs to be. For wisdom gently attracts the mind of man to a quest and a love for what is true and good [...]

Our era needs such wisdom more than bygone ages if the discoveries made by man are to be further humanized.¹⁸³

We have seen earlier in this essay that conscience, informed by reason, is the ultimate authority for every man born.¹⁸⁴ We have further seen that culture as a vehicle of reason commands the Church's respect, both within her own confines and outside them.¹⁸⁵ We cannot but conclude a humanistic attitude on the Church's part with regard to man's power of reason in building for himself a frame in which he orients himself in the world.

181 AM 13-14, p. 599-601.

182 LR 1, p. 677.

183 GS 15, p. 212-213.

184 Cf. Chapter II, Section 3A(b).

185 Cf. Chapter III, Section 1E(a)(ii).

We have attempted to show that there is evidence that the Church's attitude toward man is a humanistic one, that is, that she provides for and calls man to those conditions that satisfy his basic needs. We turn now to search for any indications of an opposite attitude in the documents of Vatican II.

2. Authoritarian Religious Attitudes Toward Man.

We will base this discussion on our Frommian description of authoritarian religions, authoritarian structures, and the nature of man and his needs.¹⁸⁶ Our order of presentation will differ somewhat from the first part of this chapter. We shall not give a separate treatment of each of man's basic needs. Rather, we will divide all the conciliar documents into three groups: "Lumen Gentium" with its ancillary decrees and declarations, "Dei Verbum," and finally "Gaudium et Spes" with its ancillary conciliar documents. Our purpose in this change in presentation lies in the fact that there is a certain fundamental contrast between the "Lumen Gentium" constellation of documents and the "Gaudium et Spes" group. We have found a more authoritarian bias in the "Lumen Gentium" documents as a whole, and find that treating them separately will highlight this contrast with the "Gaudium et Spes" group. "Dei Verbum"

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Chapter I, Sections 4A, 3A, 1A, and 1B.

lies somewhere in between the other two groups of documents and will thus be treated separately.

We turn then to the documents themselves.

A. The "Lumen Gentium" Documents

(a) The Church Looks at Herself as a Totality.- We shall treat the first two chapters of "Lumen Gentium" as a single unit. Our primary concern here is with narcissism. We note initially that there is no doubt that the Catholic Church claims a primacy over other Christian Churches and other religions:

This is the unique Church of Christ which in the Creed we avow as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. [...] This Church, constituted and organized in the world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in union with that successor, although many elements of sanctification and of truth can be found outside her visible structure. These elements, however, as gifts properly belonging to the Church of Christ, possess an inner dynamism toward Catholic unity.¹⁸⁷

Grillmeier sees some hope, however, when he notes that the word "subsists" leaves open the question of the relation of the one Church to the many other Churches.¹⁸⁸ Closely connected with this claim is that of infallibility in matters of belief.¹⁸⁹

187 LG 8, p. 22-23.

188 Grillmeier, "The Mystery of the Church," p. 149-151.

189 LG 12, p. 29.

The ancillary documents on ecumenism, non-Christian religions, and the Church's missionary activity do not retrench from this fundamental position of the primacy of the Church of Rome and her irrefutable hold on the truth when all her members agree, a fact that is not lost on non-Catholic commentators.¹⁹⁰ Thus, although she speaks with respect of other Christian Churches¹⁹¹ and of non-Christian religions,¹⁹² recognizing their peculiar gifts, she never changes her missionary view toward them.¹⁹³

It is not the purpose of this critique to examine the truth of the claims of Roman Catholicism. Rather it is to point out the difficulties, as regards man, for a group of men who feel that they are the prime possessors of truth and morality. There is a danger of inwardness, of looking in the mirror as they view other men. There is further a danger that they will not see others as true equals, as brothers. There is also the danger that such a view will stifle the creativity of men of other religions. Finally, there is the danger that those within the organization, since they have been guaranteed the truth of what they hold, will no longer continue to seek truth.

190 Werner Koppers, "La doctrine de l'Eglise au deuxième concile du Vatican; le point de vue Vieux-Catholique," in Unam Sanctam, 51c, p. 1358-1359.

191 OEC 3, p. 345.

192 RNC 1-5, p. 660-668.

193 AM 2, p. 585; LG 17, p. 35-36.

(b) The Specific Members of the Church.- We turn our attention now to the internal organization of the Church, treated most specifically as regards her officers in Chapter Three of "Lumen Gentium."

(i) The Pope and the bishops. We begin with the chief officers of the Church, seeking to understand how their governmental power is used. Is it a power with limitations? Is it effectively shared with the people? Does it measure up to the vision of a Church whose members are regarded as sharing the office of Jesus Christ? This office is seen to be one of teaching, ruling, and sanctifying.¹⁹⁴ Does the basic equality of the men of the Church appear, although with different functions accorded each, in the delineation of her structure? Or do we find a structure which effectively denies these three roles to the men of the Church taken at large?

Let us begin with the chief officer of the Church, the bishop of Rome, the Supreme Pontiff, the Pope. Of his general authority the document says:

[...] in virtue of his office, that is, as Vicar of Christ and pastor of the whole Church, the Roman Pontiff has full, supreme, and universal power over the Church. And he can always exercise this power freely.¹⁹⁵

194 LG 1-17, p. 14-37.

195 LG 22, p. 43.

As regards the particularization of this power in the context of the teaching office of the bishops as a body, the Council notes the particular submission of mind and will that Church members ought to make to the Roman Pontiff.¹⁹⁶ The Council also emphasizes the prerogative of infallibility which he, in virtue of his office alone, possesses.¹⁹⁷ Characteristically, then, it is he, in fulfillment of his sanctifying function, who in the last analysis is responsible for the regulation of the Church's public prayer, the sacred liturgy.¹⁹⁸ Likewise, as governor of the Church, his authority ultimately controls and regulates that of the individual bishops, who are seen as having true authority in their own dioceses.¹⁹⁹ We note, further, that as regards the canonical mission of a bishop, by which he is assigned to a particular diocese or task, the ultimate exercise of such an assignment rests on recognition by the Holy See.²⁰⁰

There is no question here of the whole Church's sharing the teaching, sanctifying, and governing office of Christ. Nor is there question of the bishops of the Church having a special

196 LG 25, p. 48.

197 LG 25, p. 48-49.

198 SL 22, p. 146.

199 LG 27, p. 51-52.

200 LG 24, p. 47.

function as leaders in the Church in this threefold function. The question is simply whether or not the power of the Pope, described so universally as regulator of this broad function, infringes upon the office of his bishops and his people. Does the Pontiff of Rome in fact possess power that is, in effect, unlimited?

We note that the universal jurisdiction and immediate authority of the Holy See is reiterated in the decree concerning the pastoral office of bishops in the Church.²⁰¹ We note also that, even in their most solemn and authoritative meetings, where the sharing of the priestly, prophetic and governing power of God's people is most officially manifest, whatever such Councils may say, takes validity only when approved by the Supreme Pontiff. It is also his right to convoke and call such Councils and to preside over them.²⁰²

We feel that the decree on the bishops' pastoral office in the Church does little to reduce the dominant figure of the Church of Rome. In commenting on the position of the Pope as set forth in the decree, Klaus Mörnsdorf corroborates our view:

Article 2 contrasts the mission and power of the Roman Pontiff as Peter's successor with that of the bishops as successors of the apostles in the traditional manner without so much as hinting at the

201 CPE 2, p. 397.

202 LG 22, p. 44.

doctrine of the episcopal college, which is among the Council's major pronouncements on the Church.²⁰³

We feel that the treatment of a synod of bishops to help the Supreme Pontiff in his direction of the Church and composed of bishops from various parts of the world does not infringe upon the power of the Pope nor necessarily add to the co-responsibility of the bishops. Its description is very vague. Whether or not it will be given substantial power and adequate representation of the bishops of the world is not clear.²⁰⁴

In concluding our discussion of the power of the Pope of Rome, we note that his position of supreme power of jurisdiction in governance, his position as supreme teacher, and his ultimate authority over Church worship put him in a position where relatedness to the rest of the men of the Church is jeopardized. He is ordered to speak for the Church, but there is no machinery demanding that he do so, nor any effective measures mentioned by way of handling situations where he does not. He is in danger of becoming isolated from the Church, in our language, in danger of narcissism. He is in danger also of stifling the creativeness of his Church, such is his power. He is called upon to be a brother to his fellow Christians, but we find no structure to handle a situation in which an

²⁰³ Klaus Mörsdorf, "The Relationship of Bishops to the Universal Church," in Commentary, Vol. II, p. 199.

²⁰⁴ CPE 5, p. 399-400.

individual Pope's relationship with his people should become autocratic, in our terms, incestuous. We find, too, a danger that the rest of the Church, because of the position of power that the See of Rome occupies, is in danger of losing a sense of individuality, both as regards the local Churches and the individual men within them. Finally, we find that man's need for a reasonable frame of orientation and devotion is endangered where one man has the power to teach with infallible power.

There is a danger that such an office will be the sort of position that will attract men of authoritarian characters--men who are primarily interested in power. We feel that a humanist, such as Erich Fromm, would find little fault with the theology of the Church as she has described herself, but that he would fear for a structure that does not adequately support the earlier description of the People of God. He would, in short, find the highest office of this Church a nesting place for the authoritarian character. Such a character in such a position would be disastrous to the living out of the ideal of a Church composed of men of basically equal dignity though of different functions.

We turn now to authoritarian aspects of the bishops of the Church, from the point of view of man. The reader will note that we have sketched the role of the bishop, in its authoritarian aspects, in the treatment of bishops as regards

authoritarian aspects of God and sin.²⁰⁵ It is our task here to draw Frommian conclusions from this structure as regards the bishops themselves as men and for those men who work with them.

Although subject to approval from Rome, the bishop, in dealing with his subjects, is in a position similar to that of the Pope. The bishop is supreme teacher, priest, and ruler in his own diocese. His diocesan senates and councils are described as advisory. According to law, then, he can only be corrected from above, from Rome. The exception to this is the regional councils of bishops themselves, which are free to legislate for all the dioceses of their own region; this, however, is subject to the approval of Rome.

What conclusions are we to draw about the basic needs of man within such a framework? Although the bishop is indeed strongly urged to listen both to the Holy See, to his brother bishops, to his priests and to his people, as well as to be aware of the needs of the world of men both within and outside the Church, we find a lack of machinery to help him do this. In such a situation a narcissistic man would flourish. Likewise, there is an extreme danger of a collective narcissism on the part of the bishops of the world together with the Pope.

205 Cf. Chapter II, Sections 2B, 2C, 4A and 4B.

There are two reasons why they are put in this danger. Firstly, because the power of priests and people is only consultative, there is no means for correcting a bishop who is not related to his people, short of an appeal to the collective body of bishops or to the Holy See. The second reason is that the bishop carries the burden of teacher, governor, and sanctifier. He is responsible not only for the regulation of his own diocese, but for the larger regional direction of his Church as well as the governance of the Church at large. Such an overarching and interlocking series of responsibilities in so many areas renders humanly impossible a real relatedness with the worlds of theology, of government, and of worship.

Karl Rahner, in commenting on only one aspect of this conglomeration of duties, that of governance, confirms our observation:

One has only to ask oneself why the ruler of a local Church, which in certain respects is, after all, an administrative region of the whole Church and is so treated, is also a member of the supreme governing body of the Church, contrary to the practice of civil government. Has he the first function because he has the second, or has he the second because he accepts the first? Or are both of these approaches wrong?206

Our contention is that any man who attempts such a conglomeration of tasks will inevitably become isolated from the rest of the Church. He cannot be competent in all these areas.

206 Rahner, op. cit., p. 206.

The task, or rather the need of man to have a brotherly attitude towards his fellow men has need of relatedness as a condition. One cannot love him whom one does not know. To expect a brotherly concern for the Church at large from this body of men for whom there is no machinery for real contact is to demand too much.

As for creativeness, it is hard to see a great deal of room for creativeness in a body of men, all of whose decisions can be rendered null by the Holy See. That they would be real leaders of their dioceses, truly reflecting the genius of their people, seems unlikely. Likewise we wonder if they can attain individuality under such domination. If the bishops are required, in the last analysis, to have all their functions subject to review from one central authority in Rome we can at best expect times of relative freedom under a benevolent despot, at worst either complete dependence on that authority or revolt if that authority becomes too oppressive.

Finally, we find it difficult to see how a bishop can arrive at a truly reasonable frame of orientation and devotion for himself and his people. A bishop is expected to be the chief teacher in his diocese, while fulfilling his other tasks. It seems incredible that the bishop himself could be a competent theologian. Should he succeed in doing so, inevitably to the retrenchment of his other duties, he is then subject to review in all his thoughts from Rome.

It needs to be said that we do not deny that any individual bishop could be theologically competent or a good governor either in his own diocese or in a larger Church capacity. What we do deny is that he could perform all these actions simultaneously. We affirm also that in a Frommian view of structure, the structure has much to do with the formation of human character. In the ordinary run of events this structure will attract and form the character which Erich Fromm calls authoritarian.²⁰⁷

(ii) Priests. Our attention now takes us to the office of priest in the Church. Briefly, the treatment of the priest in "Lumen Gentium" parallels that of the bishop. The priest shares with the bishop the threefold office of Christ: priest, prophet, and servant.²⁰⁸ This parallel treatment of the priest gives rise to parallel difficulties from the point of view of man. Although the priest is seen as sharer of the office of Christ, he is dependent for the exercise of his powers both on his local bishop and the bishop's conference, as well as the Pope.

On account of this sharing in his priesthood and mission, let priests sincerely look upon the bishop as their father, and reverently obey him.²⁰⁹

207 Cf. Chapter I, Section 2A.

208 Grillmeier, "The Hierarchical Structure of the Church with Special Reference to the Episcopate," p. 221-226.

209 LG 28, p. 54; cf., MVP 7, p. 549.

We have noted that a priestly senate as well as fraternal organizations are to be formed to help the bishop in his work and for mutual self-help. But the senate is to have an advisory position only,²¹⁰ and the associations of priests, in their formation and laws, are subject to review from above.²¹¹ We note further, that upon the whole order of priests of the Latin rite is the obligation of living a single life.²¹²

As for the priest's relationship with his people, we find of special note that the priest is to test the spiritual gifts of the layman; in this context he is referred to as father.²¹³ Although it is true that the layman is to be listened to by his priest and to have freedom in secular affairs, we do not find in this section any means whereby the voice of the layman can be heard in an organized manner.

What conclusions can we draw? We feel that the priest is not guaranteed real relatedness with either his bishop or his people. The ideal is there, but the teeth of effective machinery whereby to establish this ideal are very vague or totally absent. Likewise, the obligation of celibacy on the

210 CPE 27, p. 415-416.

211 MVP 8, p. 551.

212 MVP 16, p. 566.

213 MVP 9, p. 553-554.

priesthood as a whole in the Latin Church can be seen as leading to a lack of relatedness with the vast majority of adult Christians.²¹⁴ What we see is a situation which leads to isolation on the part of the priest.

As for creativeness, the relations of the priest with his superiors are not provided with a machinery which guarantees that he will be able to exercise his talents. He can represent to his bishop that he wishes such and such an opportunity to exercise his creativity, but there is no guarantee that the bishop must listen.

What can be said of brotherliness parallels what we have said on relatedness. It is undoubtedly part of the ideal in the priest's dealings with his bishop and the laity, but it lacks the support of law. Similarly, we can parallel a sense of identity to what has been said of creativeness. We see no guarantee against herd-conformity here. In the last analysis, the priest must do the job the bishop gives him whether or not it suits his individual character and whether or not such a task is reasonable. Finally, we find no mention in either "Lumen Gentium" or the document on priests indicating freedom of theological investigation or the primacy of the human conscience. They are simply not mentioned; one cannot but wonder why.

²¹⁴ Robert Adolfs, The Grave of God, New York, Harper and Row, 1967, p. 68.

We feel that this description leaves the priest, like his bishop, vulnerable to the danger of becoming an authoritarian character--a man who needs to command totally and who at the same time is in need of being ruled absolutely. We point out that this need not absolutely follow from this structure, but that in likelihood there will be many men of such a character attracted to it and many whose character will be formed by it.

We have noted in our treatment of the humanistic aspects of the Church toward man that the ideas on the formation of priests can be seen as truly humanistic. Still, we find some authoritarian overtones. The existence of minor seminaries, where young men of secondary school age begin priestly studies, is evidence of narcissism.²¹⁵ The statement on grouping major seminaries for specialized study is vague as to whether or not those making their professional studies live apart from their fellow men.²¹⁶ We feel that a life apart again brings the danger of narcissism. The theme of celibacy for all in the Western Church is reiterated.²¹⁷ Finally, intellectual training, though given strong encouragement, gives no hint of intellectual freedom. To the contrary, the guiding

215 FP 3, p. 441.

216 FP 7, p. 444.

217 FP 10, p. 446-447.

norm is the Church's teaching authority.²¹⁸

(iii) Eastern Uniate Christians. We shall note briefly here that clerical narcissism, about which we have expressed concern above, is given unmistakable expression in the document treating the Eastern Catholic Churches. They are given self-rule, but are subject to Rome.²¹⁹ They are urged to daily celebration of the Eucharist, never a common Eastern practice.²²⁰ Perhaps most important, the description of the role of the office of Patriarch in the Eastern Church is Western in orientation and betrays a lack of awareness of the structures of Eastern Churches.²²¹ Commenting on the decree, Alexander Schmemmann notes:

The decree solemnly proclaims the equality of the Eastern tradition yet, at the same time, formulates and regulates it in terms of a Western and even juridical ecclesiology hardly adequate to its spirit and orientations. To a great degree it remains thus a Latin text about the Eastern tradition. The institution of Patriarchates, for example, is not only given an importance it does not have, in fact, in the Eastern Church, but is also defined as a personal jurisdiction of the Patriarch over other bishops, which is alien to the Eastern canonical tradition, where the Patriarch or any other Primate is always a primus inter pares.²²²

218 FP 16, p. 451-453.

219 EO 5-7, p. 376-377.

220 EO 15, p. 380.

221 EO 7-11, p. 377-378.

222 Alexander Schmemmann, "A Response," in The Documents of Vatican II, p. 387-388.

(iv) Laymen. In turning our attention from the hierarchy to the layman, again we find the issue to be one of obedience hinged to structure rather than to theology.²²³ Admittedly this obedience is restricted to the sacred realm, but we find no adequate representational machinery for the sacred teaching, sanctifying, and ruling functions of the layman. His role in the structure is usually vague; where specific it is advisory.²²⁴ We find no mention, for example, of machinery in which the layman has a deliberative vote in choosing his pastor, regulating his worship, or stating his theological views. If he is a member of the People of God, sharing the office of Christ, it follows that he should have representation in the working out of this office. Indeed, he should have some voice in the testing of the charism of the order of priests and bishops as well as having his own gift tested.²²⁵ What, one wonders, is the role of the lay theologian? Is he to be tested only by clerics? We find the body of secular knowledge left to him, it is true, but what of sacred knowledge? What channels does the "sense of the faithful" have to express itself?

223 LG 37, p. 64-65.

224 LG 37, p. 64; CPE 27, p. 416.

225 A1 3, p. 493.

We see a real problem for the ordinary Church member, then, when it comes to real relatedness with the clergy. We find his creativeness restricted to the secular area. We do not find a real brotherliness between layman and clergyman except in ideal. In sacred things, he becomes a part of the herd. He must conform, for he has no adequate machinery to give purchase to his views. In the area of reason, we see no emphasis on his intellectual freedom. Lest misunderstanding occur, we would note here that Fromm would not do away with authority in an organization. He is concerned instead with means which keep that authority honest and responsible, with machinery for choosing authority by the people, machinery for criticizing it, and machinery for removing it when it becomes incompetent. There is a basis for such machinery in the theology which proclaims that the office of Christ is shared by all, but it is not found in present structures.

With the absence of such machinery, it is possible that the layman may become an authoritarian character. But it is also possible, since the Church lacks the power of physical coercion, that he will drift from the authority of his Church, gradually becoming less and less a part of it, identifying with its theology, but dissociating himself from its structure. The seeds of fragmentation from within seem inevitable to us in an organization in which such opposing forces run side by side.

(v) Religious. Passing on to the Council's treatment of those men who live in religious congregations, we are struck by a familiar note. Friedrich Wulf comments that there are overtones that people living the common life of the vows are somehow, by their state of life, superior to others in the Church:

Thus the communities are considered here primarily as aids to the perfection of the individual, not from the point of view of the theology of the Church as one would expect from the way the chapter begins. Not enough is made of the vocation to the religious life as a gift of God in the Church.²²⁶

One can well ask one's self why it is that singleness of life is given such emphasis in the document. There is little emphasis on religious communities of married people. Indeed, the statements regarding the comparative worth of states in the Church are very ambiguous.²²⁷

Besides this, we note that the theme of a single overarching authority in the regulation of religious life is strangely coupled with a call for religious to govern themselves.²²⁸

In the Church's treatment of religious life, then, we see two related authoritarian tendencies, first a suspicion

²²⁶ Wulf, "Religious," p. 275.

²²⁷ Ibid., p. 276. Cf. his further comments in "Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of the Religious Life," in Commentary, Vol. II, p. 354-358.

²²⁸ LG 45, p. 75-77; VR 4, p. 469-470.

of the world outside religious life, and second that the ultimate governing body of all religious congregations is the bishop, subject to the Holy See. Relatedness is the issue. Religious should be seen as part of the Church. They should also be related to all things human and not be apart from them. They should further be related to those in authority over them. If there is no self-government there is as much danger as there is if one is fundamentally suspicious of the world of men.

Put another way, there is great danger of collective narcissism among religious if they follow the directives and tones above underlined. They will be inward looking. Their profession of liberty and charity will be hollow, for they will not know their fellow man whom it is their express profession to love in a special way. Such a lack of brotherliness leads to an incestuous relationship with other men, a manipulative relationship. By the same token, they themselves, if they have no real representation on the highest level of their own governance will be prone to be manipulated. The freedom to be creative as a group will suffer. There will be a lack of individuality and of reason itself. Again, then, for religious, we find strands of legislation, apart from the ideal of love and service which lead one to believe that in religious life there is adequate place for the authoritarian character, despite the noble calling of service and freedom to serve other men and God.

We here conclude our treatment of the authoritarian aspects of the particular classes of Church members as found in the "Lumen Gentium" documents. We turn now to a study of "Dei Verbum" and the "Gaudium et Spes" documents.

B. "Dei Verbum"

Our discussion of the humanistic elements of the Church's constitution on divine revelation left open the problem of man's point of view. Is man free competently to study and theologize about the Scriptures? Although Joseph Ratzinger is at pains to show that the document puts the study of scripture, exegetical work, within the ecclesial perspective of the Church's faith,²²⁹ still we do not see clearly a statement here of academic freedom for the scripture scholar.²³⁰ What is at stake here is man's need to be creative and his need to have a frame of orientation that is reasonable. We note Frederick Grant's comment on the document. He speaks from the point of view of a Protestant scripture scholar and observer at the Council:

Finally, how can such study continue without freedom for research? The Appendix to Cardinal Bea's The Study of the Synoptic Gospels (Harper, 1965) warns Ordinaries (bishops and superiors) to "keep watch with great care over popular writings [...] on biblical

229 Joseph Ratzinger, "Sacred Scripture in the Life of the Church," in Commentary, Vol. III, p. 266-268.

230 RD 23-24, p. 126-127.

subjects." This is clearly censorship, and suffocating. The Constitution does not go that far, but it could-- and should, I think--have said something about the scholar's liberty of conscience, and his duty to follow truth wherever it leads, for "Truth is mighty, and prevails" (1 Esd. 4:38), as all modern efforts at suppression and dictation of religious convictions and of scientific research are making dreadfully clear! For the sake of safeguarding the ancient common faith of all Christians, the Church's scholars must be free and unfettered in pursuing their tasks. Of course they must be responsible. But to whom? To God, not merely the ecclesiastical authorities with their traditional interpretations.²³¹

C. The "Gaudium et Spes" Documents

(a) Religious Liberty for Catholics.- The first part of "Gaudium et Spes" itself contains little that could be called authoritarian from man's point of view. We find it interesting, however, that an important ancillary document dealing with religious liberty and based on the principles set forth in Chapter One of the document,²³² concerning the dignity of the human person, should remain silent on the religious liberty of Catholics themselves as regards their own relationship to the Church. John Courtney Murray, one of the architects of the document, takes note of this:

It might be noted here that the Council intended to make a clear distinction between religious freedom as a principle in the civil order and the Christian freedom which obtains even inside the Church. These

²³¹ Frederick Grant, "A Response," in The Documents of Vatican II, p. 131-132.

²³² GS 12-22, p. 210-222.

two freedoms are distinct in kind; and it would be perilous to confuse them. Nowhere does the Declaration touch the issue of freedom within the Church. Undoubtedly, however, it will be a stimulus for the articulation of a full theology of Christian freedom in its relation to the doctrinal and disciplinary authority of the Church.²³³

In a passage paralleling in stance what we have commented on above, we notice that in Chapter Four of the first part of the document "Gaudium et Spes," dealing with the role of the Church in the modern world, there is no retrenchment from "Lumen Gentium's" doctrine of the Church as sacrament of salvation; there is no doubt that she regards herself as unique and in a position of prime importance among the religions of the world. She regards herself as the "universal sacrament of salvation."²³⁴

Her silence on the freedom of men within the Church in a document concerning religious liberty as well as her continued claim to uniqueness undoubtedly give rise to a danger of narcissism. Whether or not the Church is the universal sacrament of salvation is not the point. It is very much to the point that, if she is, she will be tempted to be unaware of the workings of God outside herself. She has accorded, for example, freedom to other men to seek freely their own religious faith, but remains silent on the rights of her own sons to seek a

²³³ John Courtney Murray, "The Declaration on Religious Freedom," in The Documents of Vatican II, note 58, p. 694-695.

²³⁴ GS 45, p. 247.

religious faith other than the one which they originally embraced.

(b) Marriage.- As regards the second part of the constitution, which concerns itself with problems in the world of special urgency, we shall first discuss the chapter on marriage.

We have noted the humanist tone of the document. However two issues concern us here, both, perhaps, being connected with the one salient factor of the authorship of the chapter. As we noted earlier, the vast majority of the men who composed the document were single men. All those empowered to vote on its acceptance were such.²³⁵ From them we have, in an otherwise human document, a flat refusal to regard marriage as anything but indissoluble:

As a mutual gift of two persons, this intimate union, as well as the good of the children, imposes total fidelity on the spouses and argues for an unbreakable oneness between them.²³⁶

Likewise, the Council's teaching on the responsible control of the birth of children is noteworthy because it does not take a stand on means of birth control. She says merely that:

235 Cf. Chapter III, note 226.

236 GS 48, p. 250-251; cf., Haring, op. cit., p. 234. He comments that this indissolubility is founded in the nature of love.

[...] sons of the Church may not undertake methods of regulating procreation which are found blameworthy by the teaching authority of the Church in its unfolding of the divine law.²³⁷

To be sure, an opening is given to further development of Church teaching. Yet the Church's highest governing body does not take a stand on this pressing moral problem. Neither is there an indication that a decision on the legitimacy of certain means for controlling birth will be made in collegial action.

It appears to us that this insistence on the indissolubility of the marriage bond results from a lack of awareness of the pressures bearing on modern marriage. The statement is thus narcissistic. Similarly, the refusal to face up to the already admitted problem of overpopulation²³⁸ may be seen as a lack of real relations between the Council fathers and the majority of the men and women of the Church.

(c) Christian Education and Communications Media.- The Council's essay on the development of culture has been seen, in Frommian terms, to be humanistic. It must be added, however, that the two ancillary documents dealing with Christian education and the communications media are of quite a different stamp.

237 GS 51, p. 256.

238 GS 87, p. 301-302.

Let us address ourselves to the latter first.²³⁹ In fairness to the broad themes of the Council we must note with Karlheinz Schmithus that the decree was approved very early in the Council's own history. Its approval and content do not reflect the mature teaching of the Council. Still, it is a conciliar document, bears the seal of the fathers, and must be regarded as a part of a strain of the thought of the Council:

Thus the whole career of our Decree shows that it was treated as a stop-gap between deliberations which seemed a good deal more vital to the Fathers. It represents a compromise between irreconcilable attitudes: one which would have little time wasted over this matter, and another which would not neglect a subject of such importance from the pastoral point of view. Small wonder if the result was hardly worthy of that pastoral importance and really left everyone dissatisfied.²⁴⁰

From our point of view, two negative things stand out in this document. There are, first of all, heavy overtones commending censorship of the means of communication on the part of those controlling the media,²⁴¹ including state authority.²⁴² We note also that the entire second part of the document is devoted exclusively to Catholic concerns and puts heavy emphasis on clerical control of the media, a media described in

²³⁹ MCS 1-24, p. 319-331.

²⁴⁰ Karlheinz Schmithus, "Decree on the Instruments of Social Communication," in Commentary, Vol. I, p. 94-95.

²⁴¹ MCS 11, p. 324.

²⁴² MCS 12, p. 324-326.

terms that can only be termed isolationist.²⁴³ We conclude that we find here evidence of narcissism. The document is clericalist, and does not look outwards to the world surrounding the Church in a positive manner. Neither is it aware of intellectual trends in communication, and of the theology of the basic equality of the People of God, nor is it optimistic about the world outside the confines of the Church.

The document on Christian education is more noteworthy for what it does not say than for what it does say.²⁴⁴ It says nothing about Catholics who want their children educated outside the framework of the formally Catholic school. It says nothing, or little, of the fact that education on a higher level often takes place outside the school altogether. Finally, it says nothing about academic freedom in the sacred sciences. It is, in short, a school-centered document, concerned primarily with Catholic schools. We feel that it is primarily an inward-looking document with the shadow of a magisterium not representative of the whole Church, in the background. In Frommian terms it can be characterized as narcissistic, as lacking creativity, and lastly as being dangerous to the freedom of reason. It is not innovative and could be repressive.

²⁴³ MCS 13-24, p. 326-331.

²⁴⁴ EC, p. 637-651.

(d) Political Life.- The remaining chapters of "Gaudium et Spes," dealing with political life, cultural development, the socio-economic community, and world peace can be termed, in the main, humanistic, although it is noteworthy that the chapter on political life is seen by one commentator as totally unaware of Germanic juridical thought:

The authors of the text quite obviously live and move consciously or unconsciously in the atmosphere of Roman jurisprudence. The text is quite untouched by Germanic juridical thought, which, after all, is not entirely alien to canon law. [...] And the text is very far indeed from English and American ideas of law, to which the jus publicum--jus privatum anti-thesis is quite foreign.²⁴⁵

The same commentator strikes another note, indicating a narcissistic trend in the document. Regarding the place of women in the political community he notes:

[...] It is strange that neither here nor in later passages which speak of the participation of all in political life (Article 75 in particular) is any mention made of women.²⁴⁶

(e) Peace.- Lastly, we wish to point to a certain unconscious narcissism in the chapter on the fostering of peace and the community of nations. Robert McAfee Brown, commenting on the means the Council seeks in search of world peace, notes a certain leaning away from ecumenical effort in this regard:

²⁴⁵ Oswald von Nell-Breuning, "The Life of the Political Community," in Commentary, Vol. V, p. 316.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 317.

After urging Catholics to cooperate with all men, the document then suggests "that some agency of the universal Church be set up for the world-wide promotion of justice for the poor and of Christ's kind of love for them. The role of such an organization will be to stimulate the Catholic community to foster progress in needy regions, and social justice on the international scene" (Art. 90). Although it is hard to know toward what this broad description points, the non-Catholic will hope that; after so many statements about working with the separated brethren and all men of good will, the Catholic Church will not begin (as the quotation suggests) to set up new structures, parallel to and competing with those already existing. The quotation seems out of harmony with the rest of the document, and one hopes that the spirit of cooperation, stressed elsewhere, will prevail over it.²⁴⁷

3. Conclusions.

We here wish, by way of concluding our chapter on man, to attempt a distillation of its work. We will place side by side the humanistic and authoritarian tendencies of the Council's teaching on man. Our intention is clarity, contrast, summation.

In the "Lumen Gentium" documents we find the Church described as a people sharing the office of Christ and differing according to function and gift, a position of brotherliness between the people of the Church, and of relatedness. At the same time this Church is described as holding primacy of place among all religions, with a unique grasp on

²⁴⁷ Robert McAfee Brown, "A Response," in The Documents of Vatican II, p. 316.

truth, holiness, and love. There is here a real danger of collective narcissism on the part of this people, regardless of the truth or falsity of her claims.

Within this structure of a people we find an interlocking organization that puts the balance of power in the threefold office of Christ at the top, with the papacy. The bishops, although described as cogovernors of the Church, are seen as very dependent on the papacy for the exercise of their office. At the same time they are very little dependent upon either their clergy or their people in this exercise. The lower clergy are in a position of subjection to the bishop in the exercise of their office. Religious are either subject to the bishop, or to the Holy See, or both. The layman, although granted independence in secular affairs, has little official voice in the theological realm or in the public prayer of the Church. None of the men of the Church seem to us to have adequate representation and guaranteed voice in the exercise of their fundamental office, granted to them by baptism, in the actual functioning of their Church, the Pope alone excepted.

The Council describes the service rendered by all of the people of the Church as one of service and love, but there is little structure for one in a position of power for criticism or removal should he not fulfill this function.

The Church is described as a pilgrim people, embedded in history and in the mystery of God's plan, hence as a

growing and evolutionary body. At the same time she is seen as endowed with infallibility, freedom from error in matters of faith and morals, when these are embraced by all her members. We see a juxtaposition of evolutionary terms and static terms as regards truth in the same document.

The individual Christian is seen as a man with charism, a gift of the spirit, which he is to develop creatively. Yet these charisms are subject to judgment by clerical officers who are not of his choice. Nor are the charisms of Church officers subject to criticism from below.

The Church calls for reason on the part of her members, yet nowhere indicates for them an intellectual freedom in matters religious, thus exposing herself to the danger of irrationality in her frame of orientation and devotion. Creativeness, though called for, is not guaranteed in her structure, and hence there is a grave danger of outbreaks of destructiveness among her members.

Similarly, the Church's document on divine revelation calls for a continual and on-going understanding of God's word, yet strangely says nothing of academic freedom for theologians in this quest.

The "Gaudium et Spes" documents do indeed embed the Church in the world, and speak unequivocally of the interpenetration of things secular and divine. They speak of the essential brotherhood of all men. They are aware of the

structures of government, culture, and socio-economic life as deeply affecting the individual man and call for all men to be involved in these structures. The Council is here aware of man's dignity of intellect and the primacy of his conscience, and yet she is silent on the freedom of conscience of men within her own ranks in the document treating of religious freedom. Despite her calls for recognition of the dignity of all men, she has little to say of the position of women in any of the great structures which regulate either man's secular or religious activity. She indeed calls for the cooperation of all men and all governments, and yet hints that Catholic agencies should be set up to help mankind, agencies which could well compete with other agencies. Both the ancillary documents on communications media and education contain overtones of censorship unworthy of the central document and sometimes in flat contradiction to it. Education, under the title of Christian, is synonymous with Catholic and shows little awareness of present educational problems and challenges and nothing of an awareness of academic freedom, something guaranteed in "Gaudium et Spes" itself.

The "Gaudium et Spes" documents present a view of man that is generally humane. They are undercut for the most part only by documents of lesser importance which treat the same matter. As a group they offer a challenge to the deficiencies of both "Lumen Gentium" and "Dei Verbum." They cause

one to ask, for example, if participation on all levels is demanded in the structuralization of political, cultural, and socio-economic life, should not the same be true for the life of the Church herself? Likewise, their statements on the primacy of the human conscience and of academic freedom are a challenge to the structural rigidity of the hierarchy as traced in "Lumen Gentium."

In conclusion, we have a set of documents which call men at one time to be related to other men, to be creative, to be brotherly, to have a sense of identity, a reasonable frame of orientation and devotion. At the same time we have narcissism, the seeds of destructiveness, incest, conformity and downright irrationality called for. We can expect from this dichotomy to find within the same organization men of opposite character structures. It is to be noted, however, that in the thinking of Erich Fromm, the actual structure of the Church will be inhabited by men of largely authoritarian character. To put these men in a position where they will have to listen to their people will be no easy task. The appearance and functioning of the revolutionary man within the structure of the Church will certainly be met by determined opposition from those within the structure. If Erich Fromm is right, Church reform along structural lines will be a slow and arduous reform, for those within the structure have been formed by the structure itself for the most part. They will not easily accept,

in the practical order, a humanistic structural expression of the universal office of Jesus Christ which the official Church proclaims is possessed by all her members.

As for the threat of the primacy of the Church among all religions, it seems to us, that in Frommian terms, there is no final answer to this problem. The problem of narcissism will always affect such a people. It will be a problem that admits of no final solution; one can only be aware of it as an inevitable temptation for the Christian believer, the man who believes in the Lordship of Jesus.

And so we complete our treatment on man in Frommian terms as he is described in the documents of Vatican Council II. Our next chapter will concern certain aspects or dynamics of authoritarian and humanistic institutions which, we hope, will shed further light on the trends of humanistic and authoritarian views in the Council documents under review.

CHAPTER IV

THE DYNAMICS OF RELIGION IN VATICAN COUNCIL II

In this chapter we shall treat of the dynamics of humanistic and authoritarian religion. We are concerned with the working out of the life and expression of a given frame of orientation and devotion. We examine not so much the theories involved, but the living out of the theories. We are concerned with their expression in the marketplace of the world. We shall take a look at certain concrete phenomena in the life of the religion under question. We remind the reader of Erich Fromm's thought on the effect of structures on man's experience, thought, and expression of those thoughts.¹ In brief, since man, according to Erich Fromm, is social in all his activities, the structures in which he inevitably lives affect everything he does for good or evil. Our treatment, as in the previous two chapters, will begin with humanistic aspects of the thought of Vatican Council II. It will be followed by authoritarian aspects. It will finish with a distillation and conclusion of our findings.

¹ Cf. Chapter I, Section 3.

1. Modern Forms of Religion.

A. Modern Forms of Humanistic Religion

Erich Fromm sees the revival of humanistic Christianity as a reaction to the threat of nuclear extinction and the threat of a transformation of men into appendices of machines.² We must ask ourselves now whether there is evidence of this causality in the writings of Vatican Council II. Is there indeed, even an awareness of these two problems?

Our treatment will concentrate itself on the documents of the Council which look out to the world, the "Gaudium et Spes" documents, since both of the forces mentioned by Fromm come from outside the framework of the Church herself. We shall look briefly for echoes of this threat in other Church documents, but only insofar as they relate to the evidence of an awareness of the threats named above.

(a) The Threat of Making Men into Appendices of Machines.- We shall not labor the point that the Council is aware that man is affected by the social structures around him in all the workings of his life. This is quite clear in conciliar teaching on modern man.³ As regards the particular pressures of the machine age, we find mention of this primarily

2 Cf. Chapter I, Section 4B(d)(i).

3 GS 25, p. 224-225.

in the introductory statement to "Gaudium et Spes," entitled "The Situation of Men in the Modern World,"⁴ and secondly in the special chapter assigned to man's socio-economic life.⁵

Speaking of the great technological advances made in the contemporary world, the Council notes that these advances do not always serve man:

As happens in any crisis of growth, this transformation has brought serious difficulties in its wake. Thus while man extends his power in every direction, he does not always succeed in subjecting it to his own welfare.⁶

Similar concerns for the welfare of man are express in a treatment of the various contemporary migrations of men. Such migrations bring the danger of loss of truly personal life.⁷ The Council also notes a certain tension between technological efficiency and the true needs of the person.⁸ Donald Campion has observed that one of the overriding concerns of the Council is that men may become mere automata as a result of the presence of large and complex structures.⁹

It is our desire, however, to go beyond such general statements and to discover the Council's reaction to the impact

4 GS 4-10, p. 201-209.

5 GS 63-72, p. 271-282.

6 GS 4, p. 202.

7 GS 6, p. 204.

8 GS 8, p. 206.

9 Donald R. Campion, "The Church Today," in The Documents of Vatican II, p. 187. Cf. Charles Moeller, "Preface and Introductory Statement," in Commentary, Vol. V, p. 108.

of the machine itself. We believe that Erich Fromm's fear that men become appendages to machines, the ever-increasing tool of man's production, is well summed up in the Council's initial statement on the dangers of modern economic life:

Reasons for anxiety, however, are not lacking. Many people, especially in economically advanced areas, seem to be hypnotized, as it were, by economics, so that almost their entire personal and social life is permeated with a certain economic outlook [...]. While the few enjoy very great freedom of choice, the many are deprived of almost all possibility of acting on their own initiative and responsibility, and often subsist in living and working conditions unworthy of human beings.¹⁰

Putting the same thought in a more positive vein, the Council makes it clear that production is for man and not vice versa.¹¹ Later, the Council becomes more explicit regarding men's needs and puts emphasis on the dignity of labor, the need of a real participatory voice of labor in the direction of industry, and the necessity of leisure.¹² The recognition that economic production can be a threat to man, particularly in economically advanced areas, is clear in the conciliar writings. That the means of production serve all men and not just a select few is equally clear, as is noted by von Nell-Breuning.¹³

10 GS 63, p. 271-272.

11 GS 64, p. 273.

12 GS 67-71, p. 275-282.

13 Oswald von Nell-Breuning, "Socio-Economic Life," in Commentary, Vol. V, p. 295.

(b) The Threat of Nuclear Extinction.- We find our most explicit references to the Council's awareness of this threat in the introductory statement to "Gaudium et Spes"¹⁴ and in that same document's chapter on peace and the promoting of a community of nations.¹⁵ Dealing with the situation of men in the modern world, the Council fathers recognize the sources of conflict in the global village:

Although the world of today has a very vivid sense of its unity and of how one man depends on another in needful solidarity, it is most grievously torn into opposing camps by conflicting forces. For political, social, economic, racial, and ideological disputes still continue bitterly, and with them the peril of a war which would reduce everything to ashes.¹⁶

The chapter on peace is more explicit still in this matter, referring to wars and the threat of wars as bringing the whole human family of today to "an hour of supreme crisis in its advance to maturity."¹⁷ There is no doubt that the Council is aware of the particular dangers of modern warfare¹⁸ and even of the threat of mutual annihilation in the event of war between the great powers.¹⁹

14 GS 4-10, p. 201-209.

15 GS 77-93, p. 289-308.

16 GS 4, p. 202-203.

17 GS 77, p. 289.

18 GS 79, p. 291.

19 GS 80, p. 293.

For our purposes it is interesting to recall that the Council anchors the obligation of all men, including men of the Church, to heed these warnings not only in the events themselves but also in a theological framework. The document on divine revelation notes that the teaching office of the Church serves the word of God²⁰ and asserts that God's word finds expression in historical, human events.²¹ It is in this context, as Houtart notes,²² that the Council admonishes all men to be heedful of the signs of the times:

The People of God believes that it is led by the Spirit of the Lord, who fills the earth. Motivated by this faith, it labors to decipher authentic signs of God's presence and purpose in the happenings, needs, and desires in which this People has a part along with other men of our age.²³

We feel no doubt that the Council fathers regarded the threat of men becoming the appendages of machines as well as the threat of nuclear extinction as signs of the times. On the other hand, to assign to this twofold threat all the humanistic aspects of the writings of Vatican II would be impossible to do from the writings themselves. We can state unequivocally, however, that these factors are certainly regarded by the

20 RD 10, p.118.

21 RD 2, p. 112.

22 François Houtart, "Les aspects sociologiques des 'signes du temps'," in Unam Sanctam, 65b, p. 171-172.

23 GS 11, p. 209; cf. GS 4, p. 201-202.

Council as signs of man's need to live the basic love message of the gospel. To this extent, at least, the Council's work accords with Fromm's analysis of the contemporary situation.

B. Modern Forms of Authoritarian Religion

For a discussion of our criteria, we refer the reader to Chapter One of this essay.²⁴

(a) Illusory Forms of Freedom and Democracy.- Seeing secular democracies as frames of orientation and devotion, Fromm analyzes most contemporary democracies as democratic only in name.²⁵ It is our opinion that the Church structure, as described in Chapter Three of "Lumen Gentium" and in the decree on bishops, is likewise not truly democratic. Rather it is more akin to the nineteenth century capitalistic structures described in Frommian terms earlier.²⁶ We have said as much.²⁷ Unlike modern democracies, therefore, we have here a leadership of great power that is highly visible and aggressive. It is hardly the anonymous authority that Fromm has described as typical of the contemporary false democracies. We do not

²⁴ Cf. Chapter I, Section 4A(d)(1).

²⁵ Ibid., Section 3A.

²⁶ Ibid., Section 3A(c).

²⁷ Cf. Chapter III, Section 2A(1); Chapter II, Sections 2C and 4B.

intend to deny by this description the decentralizing movement of Church power which we found earlier in "Lumen Gentium" and its related documents.²⁸ Taken as it stands, however, one would have to say that the Church structure outlined by Vatican II is basically monarchical and authoritarian.

We have also seen that the theology of the Church as a people is given strong emphasis.²⁹ If someday this egalitarian theology finds expression in a truly democratic structure, Erich Fromm would, we feel, still find fault. For even if the priestly, prophetic, and kingly office of the people were to find truly representative voice, there is no guarantee that the structure would be free from manipulation. For example, the theology of the people's infallibility in matters of faith and morals,³⁰ is naive from a Frommian perspective. Modern democratic forms of government have found means to manipulate whole masses of people. To expect the institutional Church to be immune to similar behavior would be to expect a great deal from the guiding hand of the Spirit of God, on which the theology of infallibility is built. We have shown that the

²⁸ Cf. Chapter III, Section 1A(b)(i) and 1B(b)(i); Chapter II, Section 1A(a).

²⁹ Cf. Chapter III, Sections 1B(a), 1C(a), 1D(a)(ii) and 1E(a)(i); Chapter II, Section 1A(a).

³⁰ LG 12, p. 29.

Church herself is fully aware of the dangers of mass manipulation in the socio-economic, political, and cultural sphere.³¹ That she should show little evidence of such a danger within her own structure strikes us as naive. We find this especially noteworthy since she explicitly admits that her own structure has been, in the past, affected by secular structures around her.³² This fact is underlined by Yves Congar:

We know that before the epoch of modern historians, the Fathers recognized that the unity of the Roman Empire favored the growth of Christianity. By the same token, ecclesiastical organization has often paralleled its civil counterpart. Today we understand better the importance of factors other than those of the body politic, which draw men into association. We know, for example, how important natural associative elements among men are in developing a pastoral apostolate.³³

The obvious conclusion one must draw is that, if throughout her history the Church has been affected by civil organization, such will be the case in the future. Erich Fromm would warn the future Church against the dangers of illusory forms of democracy as, little by little, her structure is turned to fit her theology of herself.

(b) The Worship of Power.- We have commented sufficiently on the worship of power within the Church herself earlier

³¹ Cf. Chapter III, Section 1A(d)(ii), 1B(d)(ii), 1C(d)(iii), 1D(d), 1E(d).

³² GS 44, p. 245-247.

³³ Yves Congar, "le role de l'Eglise dans le monde de ce Temps," in Unam Sanctam, 65b, p. 325.

in this essay.³⁴ Concerning ourselves with a threat peculiar to our own times with relation to religion, we say merely this: the worship of power can be masked under a democratic framework or an overtly authoritarian one. The Church has called for her people to renounce privileges granted by the state where such privileges would damage her credibility; she does not place her hope in such privileges.³⁵ Still, we must note that the power of privilege is easier to give up in theory than in practice. Similarly, the Church has commented on the abuses of large rural estates, admonishing owners to place their land at the disposal of the people, who have a right to cultivate the soil.³⁶ Oswald von Nell-Breuning feels that both these positions are key challenges to the misuse of Church power:

The Council proclaims that the Church does not put its trust in privileges granted by the State; on the contrary, to the extent that it enjoys such privileges, it intends to examine them, and if it must admit that the acceptance of such privileges detracts from its credibility, it will renounce them and endeavour to reach a settlement of its relations with the State more appropriate to present circumstances. This is a declaration of intent which with full justification can be ranked with the Council's pronouncement on the latifundia question (art. 71), which has rightly been praised as the culmination of the chapter on economic life (see above). If that pronouncement is a challenge

³⁴ Cf. Chapter II, Sections 2C and 4B; Chapter III, Section 2A(b)(i) and (ii).

³⁵ GS 76, p. 288.

³⁶ GS 71, p. 281.

to the powerful and rich upper class of Catholic countries, this declaration is a challenge to the Church itself.³⁷

We conclude that the Council has challenged her people not to make use of coercion in seeking her ends. She demands only the freedom to proclaim her message and to pass moral judgment on the activity of men, including those of the social and political orders. That the contemporary Church, especially in the Western world, possesses immense wealth in her schools, churches, properties, and investments is beyond dispute. It is interesting to us that the wealth of the institutional Church is not singled out specifically by the Council fathers. Were we to criticize the document here, we would criticize it for this omission.

(c) Modern Christianity and the Worship of Success.-³⁸

Erich Fromm has accused the religious revival of modern times of using God as a tool for success in the world of the competitive market. We find nothing overt in the Council documents smacking of this Dale Carnegie-Norman Vincent Peale approach to God. In our treatment of modern forms of humanistic religion we have found strong statements against making production a god.³⁹ It follows from these principles that the

³⁷ Oswald von Nell-Breuning, "The Life of the Political Community," in Commentary, Vol. V, p. 326.

³⁸ Cf. Chapter I, Section 4A(d)(i).

³⁹ Cf. Chapter IV, Section 1A(a).

Council does not place God on the level of a tool serving the almighty god of production.

We feel that the Council's silence on the threat of such a tool-god is what would worry Dr. Fromm. The threat is simply not recognized. It remains condemned only implicitly in the Council's insistence that production, politics, and culture must serve man. Erich Fromm would have hoped for an admission that men who call themselves religious often use God as a tool in the competitive struggle. Such a statement would have given a prophetic note to the Church's stand, for it would have advised religious men to set their houses in order in these matters, thus lending credibility to what she has to say to the world at large.

2. Experiential Aspects.

A. Humanistic Experiential Aspects

We refer the reader to the criteria for judging religious experience in Chapter One of this essay.⁴⁰ Briefly, we see that humanistic religious experience leads to three attitudes or abilities on the part of man: (1) an attitude of marveling at life and life's experiences, coupled with an awareness of life and one's relatedness to the world. Such an ability to marvel leads to an attitude on the part of man

⁴⁰ Cf. Chapter I, Section 4B(d)(ii).

which sees the existence of man as an ongoing problem. (2) Religious experience should lead to an ultimate concern for life's meaning, for man's self-realization, and for the fulfillment of life's task. (3) It should lead, finally, to an attitude of oneness with one's self, with other men, and with the whole universe.⁴¹

In Chapter Three we discussed the Church's attitude toward man's self-realization and unity, and her recognition of the need for awareness.⁴² Likewise, the ability to marvel at life and to see life as an ongoing problem are part of man's need for creativeness and reason, also treated in Chapter Three.⁴³ We feel, however, that the attitude of wonder itself has not been treated directly by this critique. Thus we single it out here. For this discussion we have found "Lumen Gentium" and "Gaudium et Spes" most pertinent. From them we realize that the attitude of wonder is nearly always allied with a vision of life as a problematique. For this reason, we shall treat these two aspects of religious experience simultaneously. As we do so, we shall also keep in mind that the Council fathers

⁴¹ Erich Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, New York, Bantam, 1950, p. 90-100.

⁴² Cf. Chapter III, Section 1A.

⁴³ Cf. Chapter III, Sections 1C and 1E.

regarded virtue as an encounter with God,⁴⁴ and God Himself is an inexpressible stammer.⁴⁵

(a) A Sense of Wonder toward the Church.- Within "Lumen Gentium" we find four categories in which a marveling-problematique attitude toward the Church is most evident: mystery, the People of God, holiness, and pilgrim.

(i) The mystery of the Church. Although the Council fathers repeatedly use the word mystery, it is never defined in conciliar documents.⁴⁶ We can, however, recognize it as a Pauline term,⁴⁷ and commentators are agreed that the use of the word indicates developing Church and world, which is part of God's plan as historically revealed,⁴⁸ and as simultaneously hidden.⁴⁹ As Avery Dulles comments:

The term "mystery" indicates that the Church, as a divine reality inserted into history, cannot be fully captured by human thought or language.⁵⁰

⁴⁴ Cf. Chapter II, Section 3C(b).

⁴⁵ Cf. Chapter II, Section 1D.

⁴⁶ Aloys Grillmeier, "The Mystery of the Church," in Commentary, Vol. I, p. 139.

⁴⁷ Joseph Fitzmyer, "Pauline Theology," in The Jerome Biblical Commentary, Vol. II, edited by Raymond Brown, Joseph Fitzmyer, and Roland Murphy, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, 1968, p. 807.

⁴⁸ LG 2-4, p. 15-17.

⁴⁹ Beda Rigaux, "Le mystère de l'Eglise à la lumière de la Bible," in Unam Sanctam, 51b, p. 227. Avery Dulles, The Dimensions of the Church, Westminster, Newman Press, 1967, p. 6.

⁵⁰ Avery Dulles, note 1 on LG 1, p. 14.

The idea of development which mystery includes is found particularly in the Church's description of herself as reaching for the kingdom of God.⁵¹ This rule of God over the earth is both present and yet not complete. Thus the Church places herself, as her commentators recognize, firmly in history⁵² and moving, like it, toward fulfillment.⁵³ Similarly, that mystery means an inadequacy of understanding is evident by the Council's repeated use of images in order to express what she knows of herself.⁵⁴ One of these, the Pauline metaphor of the Church as the Body of Christ, is an image redolent of growth, development, and, hence, continuing problems.⁵⁵

(ii) The People of God. Another metaphor used to describe the Church is that of the People of God.⁵⁶ It is the historical and developmental character of this description that calls the metaphor to our attention. This people is seen as developing, tied to an experience of her Lord, but, embedded as she is in the history of man, always in a process of growth.

51 LG 5, p. 18.

52 Grillmeier, op. cit., p. 142-143.

53 Rigaux, op. cit., p. 242.

54 LG 6-7, p. 18-22.

55 Lucien Cerfaux, "Les images symboliques de l'Eglise dans le Nouveau Testament," in Unam Sanctam, 51b, p. 256, comments on this growth-problematic syndrome.

56 LG 8-17, p. 24-37.

Growth implies that men must face ever new problems. To quote the Council itself:

Israel according to the flesh, which wandered as an exile in the desert, was already called the Church of God (2 Esd. 13:1; cf. Num. 20:4; Dt. 23:1 ff). Likewise the new Israel which, while going forward in this present world, goes in search of a future and abiding city (cf. Mt. 16:18) [...] Moving forward through trial and tribulation, the Church is strengthened by the power of God's grace [...]⁵⁷

In the Church's description of herself as a people, we also find her marveling at the variety of gifts, or charisms, of the people, gifts which Church authority should take care not to extinguish, since they are fruits of the religious experience with God's Spirit.⁵⁸ Grillmeier notes that the charismatic Church, in which each one has his peculiar God-given gift, goes beyond the structure of government. These charisms challenge the Church to develop and find new forms of life.⁵⁹ Heinz Schurmann, in a lengthy analysis of the use of the Pauline word "charism,"⁶⁰ comments on the sense of wonder for life that the word implies and gives special emphasis to the great diversity of the gifts.⁶¹

⁵⁷ LG 9, p. 26. Cf. Aloys Grillmeier, "The People of God," in Commentary, Vol. I, p. 156, for his comments on the attitude of problematique implied here.

⁵⁸ LG 12, p. 30.

⁵⁹ Grillmeier, "The People of God," p. 165-166.

⁶⁰ Heinz Schurmann, "Les charismes spirituels," in Unam Sanctam, 51b, p. 541-573.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 553-554.

(iii) Holiness. We find the same theme of marveling and ongoing problem in the Council's discussion of holiness.⁶² The point of the amazing variety of paths to holiness is made well:

[...] Every person should walk unhesitatingly according to his own personal gifts and duties in the path of a living faith which arouses hopes and works through charity.⁶³

Michel Labourdette underlines this diversity and the Council's wonder at man's holiness in his comments.⁶⁴ That this holiness itself is an ongoing process fraught with difficulty and challenges is quite clear in "Lumen Gentium,"⁶⁵ and again Labourdette explicitates its theme when he says:

This perfection can only be seen as the result of battle. It is a conquest. Such conquest is certainly not gained by man's effort alone. Human striving is in no way proportionate to the results achieved. It is the result of a will which does not remove itself from grace. It allows itself to be more and more deeply impregnated by Love. At the same time, it spares no effort to master those things which are dependent on its own efforts [...] Christian perfection demands primarily an effort in the ambience of Christ. This is because it is essentially a gift. It is the completeness of love. The totality of such perfection demands much of the Christian. It demands that he root out from himself all obstacles to his new life. It demands, in other words, that he remove every obstacle to Love.⁶⁶

62 LG 39-42, p. 65-72.

63 LG 41, p. 68.

64 Michel Labourdette, "La sainteté, vocation de tous les membres de l'Eglise," in Unam Sanctam, 51c, p. 1113.

65 LG 40, p. 67.

66 Labourdette, op. cit., p. 1112.

(iv) Eschatological pilgrim. We turn now to our last theme of marvel and problematique in the constitution on the Church, that of the Church as eschatological pilgrim.⁶⁷ Avery Dulles defines the term "eschatological" as here used:

[...] The term "eschatological" in the title means "pertaining to the last times" when history will draw to a close and God's final kingdom will be inaugurated.⁶⁸

In brief, the Church sees herself as on a journey toward a union with God, present, but as yet incomplete, and speaks strongly in this vein.⁶⁹ Otto Semmelroth brings out what is implied for this Church that looks to the end times:

Clearly it is the Church herself whose eschatological character we are discussing. She herself confesses that she is something provisional, destined to be done away with. "The pilgrim Church in her sacraments and institutions, which pertain to this present time, takes on the appearance of this passing world." Ultimately, the reason for the eschatological, and therefore provisional, character of the Church is that in the Church the redemptive grace of Christ has engulfed every dimension of human existence, ordering them all to heavenly glory. Individual man will not be taken out of a world that remains earthly; rather, all mankind, and the whole world along with it, will be perfectly renewed in Christ. Precisely so that not only the individuals in the Church but also the Church herself may be prepared for that renewal, it was important to envisage and present every dimension of Catholic life in the light of the Church's eschatological nature.⁷⁰

67 LG 48-51, p. 78-85.

68 Avery Dulles in note 224 on LG, Chapter VII, p. 78.

69 LG 48, p. 78-80.

70 Otto Semmelroth, "The Eschatological Nature of the Pilgrim Church and Her Union with the Heavenly Church," in Commentary, Vol. I, p. 281.

Paolo Molinari also comments on the implications of a Church journeying through history. He shows how this implies an attitude of marveling at God's world and, at the same time, poses the problem of the Church and world continuing to develop toward the final union with God. Such a Church must meet the challenges of each era of life in which she is embedded.⁷¹ More briefly, speaking of the pilgrim nature of the Church, Semmelroth notes that the Church's people:

[...] must live as pilgrims, making their existence in this world a struggle to reach the consummation, a longing for the fulfilment that is yet to come.⁷²

From our discussion of the themes of mystery, God's people, holiness, and eschatological pilgrim, it becomes clear that, when the Council speaks of the Church herself, there is definite evidence of the presence of that sense of wonder which Fromm requires of a humanistic religion. Do we find similar evidence when the Council speaks of the entirety of men. We believe that an answer based on the themes of "Lumen Gentium" must be affirmative. The first and broadest of its images, that of mystery, includes all men. But it is necessary to broaden our inquiry, to seek an answer to our question that is based on a study of "Gaudium et Spes,"

⁷¹ Paolo Molinari, "Caractère eschatologique de l'Eglise pérégrinante et ses rapports avec l'Eglise céleste," in Unam Sanctam, 51c, p. 1193-1194.

⁷² Semmelroth, op. cit., p. 282.

the document whose general perspective is the world of all men.

(b) "Gaudium et Spes".- We shall again take a theme approach in our search for an attitude of wonder. We shall look at: (1) man's situation, (2) the dignity of man, (3) man's activity, (4) Church vis-à-vis the world, and finally, (5) selected contemporary problems.

(i) Man's situation. The opening words of "Gaudium et Spes" are found to be filled with wonder at man's present situation and the problems of the present age.⁷³ We quote only the first statement:

The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these too are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts.⁷⁴

To determine that such an attitude is tied to religious experience, we need only refer to François Houtart's comment on the meaning of the phrase "signs of the times," previously referred to in this chapter.⁷⁵ Briefly, Houtart points out that this phrase refers to God's activity in the times in which we stand. To interpret these signs intelligently is to hear the Word of God accurately. This statement bluntly puts religious experience in the heart of the activity of the world of man.

73 GS 1-4, p. 199-202.

74 GS 1, p. 199-200.

75 Cf. Chapter IV, note 22.

(ii) The dignity of man. The constitution's treatment of the dignity of man hinges on three aspects of man's nature: his intellect, his conscience, his freedom.⁷⁶ We have treated intellect and freedom in our chapter on man.⁷⁷ Conscience has been treated from a humanistic point of view in the chapter on God and sin.⁷⁸ We wish to point out here that these three qualities of man are treated with a sense of wonder and marvel. They are definitely seen as qualities requiring an ongoing development of man in his pilgrimage on earth. All three are tied to experience of God. This is confirmed by Jean Mouroux in his comments on "Gaudium et Spes." Regarding the link between human intelligence and continuing divine encounter, he says:

Intelligence is an essential characteristic of God's image (GS 12 #3). It is presented as a "participation in the light of the divine intelligence." The idea of participation means both to be a part of and to be separate from something. Intelligence participates in the light and essential force of the divine intelligence.⁷⁹

He similarly links conscience and religious experience,⁸⁰ and, speaking of liberty as a key aspect of the human conscience, Mouroux comments on the constitution's insistence on experience

76 GS 15-17, p. 212-215.

77 Cf. Chapter III, Section 1E.

78 Cf. Chapter II, Section 3A.

79 Jean Mouroux, "Sur la dignité de la personne humaine," in Unam Sanctam, 65b, p. 240.

80 Ibid., p. 243.

of God as at the heart of liberty. He notes too, its insistence that liberty is, at the same time, the product of a struggle on the part of man. This struggle for freedom implies that man's life is a thing of marvel, carrying with it an ongoing problematique.⁸¹

(iii) Man's activity. Moving to our third theme, the constitution's treatment of human activity,⁸² we refer the reader to our chapter dealing with man, especially to his need to be creative and his need for individuality.⁸³ Here, as above, we are concerned with a sense of marveling at life and life's experiences coupled with a view of life as an ongoing problem. All this is seen as a product of religious experience. In this context we find the constitution's definition of the problem of human activity especially worthy of note:

In the face of these immense efforts which already preoccupy the whole human race, men raise numerous questions among themselves. What is the meaning and value of this feverish activity? How should all these things be used? To the achievement of what goal are the strivings of individuals and societies heading?⁸⁴

Thus the marveling and the recognition of challenge. Gustave Thils underlines this twofold attitude in commenting on man's call to be a creator.⁸⁵

81 Ibid., p. 245-246.

82 GS 33-39, p. 231-238.

83 Cf. Chapter III, Sections 1C and 1D.

84 GS 33, p. 231-232.

85 Gustave Thils, "L'activité humaine dans l'univers," in Unam Sanctam, 65b, p. 279.

Another telling passage on the same subject in "Gaudium et Spes," dealing with the rightful independence of earthly affairs, is filled with reverence for the dignity of human activity and calls for its rightful autonomy, the gradual discovery of its laws, a challenge to man's life:

Now, many of our contemporaries seem to fear that a closer bond between human activity and religion will work against the independence of men, of societies, or of the sciences.

If by the autonomy of earthly affairs we mean that created things and societies themselves enjoy their own laws and values which must be gradually deciphered, put to use, and regulated by men, then it is entirely right to demand that autonomy. Such is not merely required by modern man, but harmonizes also with the will of the Creator.⁸⁶

This underlines this emphasis on the encouragement to, even the necessity of man's continued intellectual probing into the problems of the universe, a labor which can only be prompted by a sense of the marvel of life and life's experiences.⁸⁷

That the Council ties human activity to a divine-human encounter, to religious experience of God, seems obvious to us in what "Gaudium et Spes" says of man as made in the divine image:

For man, created to God's image, received a mandate to subject to himself the earth and all that it contains, and to govern the world with justice and holiness; [...] They can justly consider that by their labor they are unfolding the Creator's work [...]⁸⁸

86 GS 36, p. 233-234.

87 Thils, op. cit., p. 292.

88 GS 34, p. 232.

That these men, the men of the world, are viewed in their activity as both creators in their own right and yet tied to experience with their God is emphasized by the comments of Thils to which we have referred above.⁸⁹ The further dimension of God's activity among men, that of the risen Christ, is also understood by the constitution as productive of the marvel of human life with its ongoing development.⁹⁰ Thils points to the bond between the activity of this Christ and human activity when he says:

It is He who charges and gives force to human creativity. He orients it toward a future which transcends human expression. He corrects or restores it in order that mankind may progress in the building of the Kingdom of God in mystery, "that time when mankind itself will become an offering pleasing to God" (GS 38).⁹¹

We see, then, that the Council does indeed view man's life and activity with respect and wonder.

(iv) Church vis-à-vis world. Our penultimate theme, that of the role of the Church in the world, is built upon what we have noted of the constitution's vision of man's situation in the world, the dignity of man, and man's activity. This vision is carried forward in the Church's statement of her own position in the world. In that spirit of wonder and

89 Thils, op. cit., p. 283-286, especially p. 283.

90 GS 38, p. 236.

91 Thils, op. cit., p. 298.

problematique it comes as no surprise to hear the constitution state:

Thus the Church, at once a visible assembly and a spiritual community, goes forward together with humanity and experiences the same earthly lot which the world does [...]

That the earthly and the heavenly city penetrate each other is a fact accessible to faith alone.⁹²

With this vision of a Church penetrated by the world, we find the constitution expressing the logical conclusion that the Church herself owes much to the world around her.⁹³ Yves Congar emphasizes the fact that this help is more than a situation that allows the Church to advance her own cause. He comments on the Church's debt:

The Council understands here much more than mere means of human expression, no small things in themselves. We see this by the fact that she invites all the faithful, especially pastors and theologians, to examine carefully and to understand the many languages of our epoch. What does this mean? It means all the expressions of research, all the discoveries past count, to which man's spirit has given birth throughout time and space.⁹⁴

The attitude of seeing the world as a challenge, as in our other passages and themes is present also in the treatment of relationships between Church and world. Again we find the Council calling for man to exercise free choice according

92 GS 40, p. 239.

93 GS 44, p. 245-247.

94 Yves Congar, "Le rôle de l'Eglise dans le monde de ce temps," in Unam Sanctam, 65b, p. 324.

to his conscience, realizing that the service of God and man are inevitably entwined.⁹⁵ Her clear admission that she has not always been faithful in her attitude toward God and man in both past and present is further evidence of her attitude toward life as an ongoing challenge, a problematique.⁹⁶

We have, then, a vision of a world, marvellous and challenging, penetrating a Church, giving her life, presenting her problems. This Church is looked on with wonder also, admitting, however, that she has not and does not always serve the world well. This is the language of problem and marvel toward life and life's experiences.

That this vision of life finds roots in man's experience of God's activity should be clear from the passages quoted. It is, however, reemphasized and given focus in the final statement on Church-world relations. Speaking of Christ as the focal point of all human history, "Gaudium et Spes" says:

The Lord is the goal of human history, the focal point of the longings of history and of civilization, the center of the human race, the joy of every heart, and the answer to all its yearnings. [...] Enlivened and united in His Spirit, we journey toward the consummation of human history, one which fully accords with the counsel of God's love: "To re-establish all things in Christ, both those in the heavens and those on the earth" (Eph. 1:10).⁹⁷

⁹⁵ GS 41, p. 240; GS 43, p. 243.

⁹⁶ GS 43, p. 245. Cf. Yves Congar, "The Role of the Church in the Modern World," in Commentary, Vol. V, p. 219; Chapter IV, Section 1B(a).

⁹⁷ GS 45, p. 247.

Again, Congar sums up for us, finding in an ongoing world, marvel and mystery, challenge and problem, all unified in man's encounter with God in Christ.⁹⁸

(v) Concretizations. In concluding our treatment of "Gaudium et Spes" we note that the whole second half of the constitution is taken up with problems peculiar to our own times, treated in a contemporary setting.⁹⁹ Marriage and the family, the development of culture, socio-economic life, the life of the political community, and lastly the problem of peace are all treated in a context that is unique to our times. They are treated as concretizations of the broad principles of the first part of the constitution. We have noted that there are strong evidences of marvel and a view of life which recognizes its ongoing problematique for man in the first part of the constitution. Bernard Lambert terms these concretizations "concrete signs and eloquent symbols"¹⁰⁰ of the general stance taken earlier in the constitution. It is our belief, that considered as a whole, they are evidence of the world taken as offering man an ongoing problematique.

⁹⁸ Congar, "Le rôle de l'Eglise dans le monde de ce temps," p. 327.

⁹⁹ GS 46-93, p. 248-308.

¹⁰⁰ Bernard Lambert, "La problématique générale," in Unam Sanctam, 65b, p. 170.

B. Authoritarian Experiential Aspects¹⁰¹

We must state frankly that we find little direct evidence to manipulation, masked by the name of "experience."

(a) Structural Aspects.- We have dealt at length with authoritarian aspects of God, sin, and man.¹⁰² The problems there were seen as largely structural.. One can indeed note that when treating of the Church's hierarchical structure the element of marvel is not to the fore; the language is more juridical and static.

It is true that one could use man's religious devotion as a tool to serve such a heavily authoritarian structure. We simply do not find such an emphasis in the three clusters of documents we have singled out to be central. What one might call the spirituality of Vatican II seems strangely apart from the static language of the descriptions of the hierarchical nature of the Church.¹⁰³ It is almost as though these structural descriptions were written by a different group of men at a different time in history. Wonder and relatedness and the view of life as a problem, all stemming from the experience of God, all but disappear when one spells out the power of priests, bishops, and Pope.

¹⁰¹ Cf. for the Frommian criteria, Chapter I, Section 4A(d)(ii).

¹⁰² Cf. Chapter II, Sections 2 and 4; Chapter III, Section 2.

¹⁰³ LG 18-29, p. 37-56; CPE 1-44, p. 396-429.

(b) What Is Not Said.- Were we to criticize the Council's documents in regard to religious experience, we would say only that very little is said anywhere in the sixteen documents about how today's man is to learn this wonder, this emphasis on relatedness, this view of life in the contemporary world as a challenge. That we see these things tied firmly to a theology of history and anchored to an encounter with the Risen Christ in the Spirit is beyond doubt. Plain talk on how to achieve such an encounter is absent, except within the framework of ritual as we shall see later. E. Harold Smith has noted this gap. He says:

The Council's participants were habituated to exercising the church's regulative functions, not to examining with scrupulous reference to the original proclamation what their limitations might be [...]. As a result there is a greater sense of freedom among the faithful, an increased awareness that the church is not so much hierarchical as communal, but little evidence of any deepening of the interior life. Encouragement has been given from the highest quarters to the practice of traditional asceticism; what has been lacking is an indication that humanity's present condition is well understood. There have been many encounters, an abundance of dialogue and much discussion but few signs of 'renewal' with regard to ways and means directed to raising the general level of mutual understanding and compassion.¹⁰⁴

A Frommian description of the acquisition of a sense of marveling, it must be noted, is equally sparse. This is

¹⁰⁴ E. Harold Smith, "The Catholic Crisis," in Commonweal, Vol. 95, No. 15, January 7, 1972, p. 321-322. (Emphasis mine.)

evident from Fromm's admitted vagueness in describing religious experience.¹⁰⁵ Fromm contents himself largely with showing the results of true religious experience and with pointing out that it can be used to manipulate man.¹⁰⁶ The experience itself he leaves nearly untouched.

It is for this reason, placing ourselves as we do, in a Frommian stance, that we also say little of religious experience itself, except as regards the attitude of life as something marvellous and problematical, an attitude of ultimate concern for life, and an attitude of interior and exterior unity on the part of one who has had real religious experience. We content ourselves with a description of results rather than the experience itself.

3. Ritualistic Aspects.

A. Rational (Humanistic) Ritual

We have seen in the first chapter of this essay that rational ritual is one of the dynamics characteristic of humanistic religion.¹⁰⁷ Rational ritual is described by Fromm

¹⁰⁵ Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 90; The Heart of Man, New York, Harper Colophon, 1964, p. 51-53.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Chapter I, Section 4D(d)(ii).

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Chapter I, Section 4B(d)(iii).

as shared symbolic action expressive of common strivings and rooted in common values. Deviation or omission on the part of those involved may involve regret on the part of the participant, but it is not accompanied by fear.¹⁰⁸ Our search for evidence of rational ritual in the writings of Vatican Council II has led us to consider two documents as key. We shall confine ourselves to a treatment of Chapter Two of "Lumen Gentium"¹⁰⁹ and "The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy."¹¹⁰

We note before beginning our discussion that ritual has always played an important role in the Catholic Church. Further, there is no doubt that one of the major concerns of the Council is the public prayer of the Church. That prominence is given the liturgy in two of the four conciliar documents labelled as constitutions is ample evidence of this. Josef Jungmann's opening remarks in his commentary on the constitution on the liturgy confirm our judgment.¹¹¹

It was in the provisions of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy more than anywhere else that the aggiornamento which John XXIII had demanded of the Council assumed visible and incisive forms.¹¹²

108 Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 65-108; The Sane Society, New York, Fawcett Premier, 1955, p. 131-132.

109 LG 9-17, p. 24-37.

110 SL 1-130, p. 137-178.

111 Josef Andreas Jungmann, "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy," in Commentary, Vol. I, p. 1-8.

112 Ibid., p. 1.

We now pass to a treatment in detail of the Frommian criteria for rational ritual.

(a) Shared Symbolic Action.- We find a basis for liturgy being shared symbolic action in "Lumen Gentium's" teaching on the common priesthood of the People of God:

The baptized, by regeneration and the anointing of the Holy Spirit are consecrated into a spiritual house and a holy priesthood [...]
For their part, the faithful join in the offering of the Eucharist by virtue of their royal priesthood. They likewise exercise that priesthood by receiving the sacraments, by prayer and thanksgiving, by the witness of a holy life, and by self-denial and active charity.¹¹³

That this teaching of the universal priesthood of all members of the Church ties the people as a whole to a share of the official rituals of the Church is underlined by several commentators.¹¹⁴ Of these, De Smedt emphasizes the complementary roles of the ordained priest and the ordinary member of the congregation during official Church ritual.¹¹⁵ Aloys Grillmeier extends his comments on this shared, or ecclesiological, aspect of ritual to include a mention of its symbolic nature, that it is sign.

113 LG 10, p. 27. Cf. LG 10, p. 27-29; SL 7, p. 141.

114 Grillmeier, "The People of God," p. 158; Emile-Joseph De Smedt, "Le sacerdoce des fidèles," in Unam Sanctam, 51b, p. 413-414; Jungmann, op. cit., p. 17.

115 De Smedt, op. cit., p. 413.

This very helpful "ecclesiological" survey of all the sacraments shows how the Church is built up on the sacraments and how the total sacrament of the Church is explicitated in the individual sacraments. This sacramental life then appears as highly personal activity, displayed nonetheless in the public life of the Church both in the reception and the constitution of the sign, and is the appropriation of the word and saving act of Christ.¹¹⁶

(b) Expressive of Common Strivings and Rooted in Common Values.- We have attempted to show in Chapter Three of this dissertation that, in the main, the Council's attitude toward man is consonant with what Erich Fromm calls "man's basic needs."¹¹⁷ It is our task here to link the man of the Church's official ritual with these needs. We find a sketch of the sacramental life of the Church in Chapter Two of "Lumen Gentium."¹¹⁸ We may briefly recapitulate that sketch in Frommian terms. Baptism and confirmation are described as sacraments of initiation, celebrating the new Christian's commitment and bringing him into encounter with Christ and his people in a special way. There is nothing here to suggest anything unreasoned in this baptism and this strengthening celebration of confirmation; both speak to man's need of a rational frame of orientation. The Eucharist is spoken of in terms of manifesting the unity of God's people--speaking to

116 Grillmeier, "The People of God," p. 159.

117 Cf. Chapter III, Section 1.

118 LG 11, p. 27-29.

two Frommian categories of man's need--relatedness and brotherliness. Penance is described as pardon from God and reconciliation. Here especially, one does not see repression. Rather a turning to one's neighbor and to God, a Frommian humanistic attitude toward repentance.¹¹⁹ Anointing of the sick is described in terms of a healing union with God and the Church, again corresponding to both relatedness and brotherliness. Orders is described in terms of a consecration celebrated for a special service of God and man in which brotherliness and liturgical leadership are primary ends. Marriage is seen in terms of union between the spouses as a type of the love between Christ and his people. We note the Council's underlining of mutual service and love on the part of the couple, both toward each other and to the community at large, obviously a celebration of relatedness and love. De Smedt's description of this passage is recommended to the reader as easily translatable into Frommian terms.¹²⁰ There is no doubt that our description of sacramental life in the Church is expressive of a Christian attitude, a Christian value. As De Smedt says:

[...] For each sacramental grace there should be a corresponding Christian attitude.¹²¹

119 Cf. Chapter II, Section 3D.

120 De Smedt, op. cit., p. 416-418.

121 Ibid., p. 417.

"The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy" leaves little doubt that the Council sees the liturgy as a celebration of common values. Speaking of the Church's heritage of celebrating Christ, her principal Value, she says:

From that time (Pentecost) onward the Church has never failed to come together to celebrate the paschal mystery: reading "in all the scriptures the things referring to himself" (Luk. 24:27), celebrating the Eucharist in which "the victory and triumph of his death are again made present, and at the same time giving thanks "to God for his unspeakable gift" (2 Cor. 9:15) in Christ Jesus, "to the praise of his glory" (Eph. 1:12), through the power of the Holy Spirit.¹²²

Passing over other passages which would be merely repetitions of the attitudes posed in "Lumen Gentium" we content ourselves with quoting but one key passage which clearly ties official Christian ritual to man's basic striving for relatedness and brotherliness, for love.

The liturgy in its turn inspires the faithful to become "of one heart in love" when they have tasted to their full of the paschal mysteries; it prays that "they may grasp by deed what they hold by creed."¹²³

In closing this section on strivings and values, it is well to note that the constitution plainly states that the Church's official ritual, to be effective, must be intelligible:

But in order that the sacred liturgy may produce its full effect, it is necessary that the faithful come to it with proper dispositions, that their thoughts match their words, and that they cooperate with divine

122 SL 6, p. 140.

123 SL 10, p. 142.

grace lest they receive it in vain (cf. 2 Cor. 6:1). Pastors of souls must therefore realize that, when the liturgy is celebrated, more is required than the mere observance of the laws governing valid and licit celebration. It is their duty also to ensure that the faithful take part knowingly, actively, and fruitfully.¹²⁴

What we are referring to is what Jungmann calls "intelligent participation."¹²⁵

This means that ornamentations, which originate from the style of royal courts and from the urge for pomp or even from the form of piety of earlier times, should disappear, and that the holy mysteries should be given a simple expression closely connected with the life and feeling of the people.¹²⁶

Our purpose in mentioning this theme of the constitution is to show that the Council's norms do indeed correspond to Erich Fromm's demand that ritual be "expressive." A symbol that does not render itself understandable to man is no symbol at all. It does not speak to man's need for a frame of orientation and devotion that is rational.

(c) Omission or Violation of Ritual May Be Accompanied by Regret, but Not Fear.- We turn first to "Lumen Gentium" with a brief note. What the document does not say is more important than what it does say. There is little emphasis in Chapter Two on anything but the positive values engendered by Church worship. Fear is not a part of this discussion.

¹²⁴ SL 11, p. 143. Cf. also, SL 33-36, p. 149-151.

¹²⁵ Jungmann, op. cit., p. 16.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 24.

"The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy" is concerned with change and adaptation of Church ritual. It emphasizes organic growth and experimentation,¹²⁷ a change to noble simplicity of rite,¹²⁸ a return from the language of Latin to vernacular languages,¹²⁹ and a desire not to impose rigid uniformity of ritual.¹³⁰ Jaroslav Pelikan sees what he calls "Liturgy as Accommodation" as one of the keys to the whole constitution.¹³¹ It is our opinion that a constitution, one of whose major themes is adaptation and change, whose approach to liturgical life is basically rational, is unlikely to be accused of compulsive ritual. Provided the Church lives up to her commitment to change in a rational and ongoing way, she will not be accused of being obsessed with preservation of rigid ritual and its attendant fear of violation or omission. The possibility of a lack of follow-up will be discussed in our discussion of authoritarian aspects of ritual in the Council's documents. We have deferred treating the centrality of scripture in the Church's ritual to our discussion of

127 SL 23, p. 146-147.

128 SL 34, p. 149.

129 SL 36, p. 150-151.

130 SL 37, p.151.

131 Jaroslav Pelikan, "A Response," in The Documents of Vatican II, p. 179-180.

semantics, to occur later in this essay. We turn, then, to a discussion of irrational ritual.

B. Irrational (Authoritarian) Ritual

Although there is no doubt that the frozen state that Catholic ritual found itself bound by in the four hundred years following the Council of Trent has been broken, as noted by Jungmann,¹³² we must mention once more¹³³ the problems which an effort at decentralization has brought.

The power to control ritual practice now rests with the bishops singly, or with their synods. These, however, are subject to control by the Roman Pontiff. We have a structural problem that is clearly defined:

#1. Regulation of the sacred liturgy depends solely on the authority of the Church, that is, on the Apostolic See and, as laws may determine, on the bishop.

#2. In virtue of power conceded by the law, the regulation of the liturgy within certain defined limits belongs also to various kinds of competent territorial bodies of bishops legitimately established.

#3. Therefore, absolutely no other person, not even a priest, may add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy on his own authority.¹³⁴

We hasten to add a precision to the word "liturgy," lest the reader should mistakenly get the impression that it

132 Jungmann, op. cit., p. 19.

133 Cf. Chapter III, Section 2A(a)(1); Chapter II, Sections 2B and 2C.

134 SL 22, p. 146.

includes all Church worship, public or private. Again we have recourse to Jungmann; he defines liturgy in the theological encyclopedia Sacramentum Mundi:

The Church is only at worship, that is, we only have liturgy, when divine service is held by a legitimately assembled group of the faithful (from parish, religious order or ecclesiastical institute), under the leadership of someone holding office in the Church.¹³⁵

It is not our purpose to essay into peripheral areas of Church public prayer. We wish only to remark here that in her public prayer, Church structure simply does not give voice, in a compelling manner, to her theology of the common priesthood of all believers. To make our case more precise, we turn now to the Frommian categories of irrational worship.¹³⁶ We summarize Fromm's definition of irrational ritual as shared symbolic action which wards off repressed impulses and is rooted in manufactured values. Omission or violation is always accompanied by fear.¹³⁷

(a) Shared Symbolic Action.- The heavy emphasis of the Council on shared symbolic action is clear from what we

¹³⁵ Josef Andreas Jungmann, "Liturgy," in Sacramentum Mundi: An Encyclopedia of Theology, Vol. 3, edited by Karl Rahner with Cornelius Ernst and Kevin Smyth, New York, Herder and Herder, 1969, p. 321.

¹³⁶ Cf. Chapter I, Section 4A(d)(iv).

¹³⁷ Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 103-108; The Sane Society, p. 131-135; Escape from Freedom, New York, Avon Discus, 1941, p. 247-248; May Man Prevail?, Garden City, Doubleday Anchor, 1961, p. 122-124.

have said above.¹³⁸ We only note, with Erich Fromm, that authoritarian groups are often keenly aware of the value of shared symbolic action.¹³⁹

(b) Warding off Repressed Impulses and Rooted-In Manufactured Values.- The basic powers of man are seen by Erich Fromm as demanding expression in ritual. However, when these rituals are controlled by men subject to no effective machinery of criticism we continually have the danger of manipulation. It is possible, for example, that these men will attempt to use ritual to instill values in men that are not natural to man and are detrimental to his power to love, to reason, and to his quest for freedom.

(c) Omission or Violation: Fear.- No matter how enlightened the reform of ritual we have indicated, it is our position that the hierarchical structure of the Church contains within it the ever-present spectre of fear. We refer the reader to remarks in this regard concerning authoritarian aspects of the Council's writings on God and sin.¹⁴⁰ Without adequate means of forceful voice, the baptized but unordained Christian must submit. If he changes the ritual, however reformed, he is disobedient. He has no real choice but to obey

138 Cf. Chapter IV, Section 3A(a).

139 Cf. Chapter I, Section 4A(d)(iv).

140 Cf. Chapter II, Sections 2B, 2C, and 4.

or disobey. To strive for a voice in reform is difficult, given Church structure as we have outlined it.

We conclude our treatment of ritualistic aspects of the conciliar writings by noting, as we have continually felt constrained to do at the conclusion of a treatment of authoritarian aspects of the Council, that Church structure is not the Church. She has had many structures. We have simply noted dangers with the present one. We note, that such a structure is difficult to change, if for no other reason than the simple fact that it was legislated by the men who do indeed govern the contemporary Church in large part.

4. Semantic Aspects.

A. Humanistic Semantic Aspects

Let the reader note that our primary concern here is with words. We have treated experiential aspects¹⁴¹ and ritualistic aspects¹⁴² earlier in this chapter. These three dynamics of religion are closely interrelated, as will be seen. We proceed directly, then, to a treatment of the first of our humanistic criteria¹⁴³ in judging the semantics of humanistic religion.

¹⁴¹ Cf. Chapter IV, Section 2.

¹⁴² Cf. Chapter IV, Section 3.

¹⁴³ Cf. Chapter I, Section 4B(d)(iv).

(a) Symbolic Language as the Expression of Inner Religious Experience.- It is our contention that the messages of both "Lumen Gentium" and "Gaudium et Spes" are anchored in religious experience and expressed in language that is basically symbolic. This is most evident in the former document's referral to the Church as mystery, as the People of God, and as a pilgrim, and in its description of holiness. In the latter document it can be found in the fact that, addressing itself to the problems of today's world, it regards the divine-human reality as an ongoing mystery, a challenge to man's intellect and ability to love which will never be encapsulated by timeless formulae.

But what of the Council's document which deals most directly with religious language, "The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation"? It seems obvious to us that this document places human language about God solidly on the basis of man's encounter with God. Speaking in terms of God's plan to reveal Himself and His plan for the world to men, the constitution says:

This plan of revelation is realized by deeds and words having an inner unity: the deeds wrought by God in the history of salvation manifest and confirm the teaching and realities signified by the words, while the words proclaim the deeds and clarify the mystery contained in them.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ RD 2, p. 112.

Commenting on the intentions of the Council fathers with regard to this passage, Joseph Ratzinger points out that:

The fathers were merely concerned with overcoming neo-scholastic intellectualism, for which revelation chiefly meant a store of mysterious supernatural teachings, which automatically reduces faith very much to an acceptance of these supernatural insights. As opposed to this, the Council desired to express again the character of revelation as a totality, in which word and event make up one whole, a true dialogue which touches man in his totality, not only challenging his reason, but, as dialogue, addressing him as a partner, indeed giving him his true nature for the first time.¹⁴⁵

The fact that the words which men of the Church use do not indeed exhaust the notion of God and his designs for men is also clear in the document, which speaks of these words as a mirror in which one may obtain a real but imperfect vision of God.¹⁴⁶ Ratzinger notes the implications of tentativity which this understanding implies.¹⁴⁷

We find a similar emphasis on the purpose of the human word and its limitations when the constitution discusses the task of interpreting her heritage for the Church. Here we find an unequivocal statement that the Word of God stands above any human expression of that word.¹⁴⁸ Here, too, the Council states

¹⁴⁵ Joseph Ratzinger, "Revelation Itself," in Commentary, Vol. III, p. 172.

¹⁴⁶ RD 7, p. 115.

¹⁴⁷ Joseph Ratzinger, "The Transmission of Divine Revelation," in Commentary, Vol. III, p. 183.

¹⁴⁸ RD 10, p. 117-118.

that Church traditions, and hence the words of the teaching Church, are tied securely to Jesus Christ.¹⁴⁹ This, says Ratzinger,

[...] means simply the many-layered yet one presence of the mystery of Christ throughout all the ages; it means the totality of the presence of Christ in this world.¹⁵⁰

If the words of scripture are tied to encounter with the historical and risen Christ, the teachings of the Church are not directly scriptural. In short, then, "The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation" speaks of the Church's statements as both incomplete and symbolic of the divine reality it attempts to penetrate. It is anchored in contact with the living God. If this falls somewhat short of Erich Fromm's contention that man's knowledge of God is expressed only in an "inexpressible stammer"; still, it is very close to such a conception.

(b) Tolerance to Other Religious Formulations.- This is a corollary to our first criterion. If religious language is symbolic expression of religious experience, it follows that there will be many ways of expressing this experience. One who recognizes this will be tolerant of formulations other than his own, or those of his religious group. We do not find anywhere in the Council's writings a statement that the Catholic

149 RD 8, p. 115-117.

150 Ratzinger, "The Transmission of Divine Revelation," p. 184.

Church gives up a certain primacy of formulation in the basics of her religious beliefs. We are, therefore, looking for movement towards tolerance. We do find admission that God speaks to all men in His plan of salvation,¹⁵¹ that even atheists have something to tell the men of the Church.¹⁵² She notes that the writings of the Eastern Churches often balance Western formulations,¹⁵³ that other religions often probe the mystery of religion deeply.¹⁵⁴ Almost despite her own claims to primacy, the Church uses terms of equality for other Christian bodies, calling them "Churches and ecclesial communities,"¹⁵⁵ and "brothers."¹⁵⁶ Freedom of conscience¹⁵⁷ and religious liberty¹⁵⁸ are concrete expressions of this attitude, as is the Church's clear statement on responsible freedom for all men in theological enquiry.¹⁵⁹ In summary, then, we do find a real, if limited tolerance given to other religious formulations.

151 LG 2, p. 15; LG 8, p. 23..

152 GS 21, p. 218-220.

153 OEC 17, p. 360.

154 RNC 2, p. 661.

155 LG 15, p. 34.

156 "Frères séparés," Concile oecuménique Vatican II, p. 830.

157 GS 16, p. 213-214.

158 LR 1-15, p. 675-696.

159 GS 62, p. 270.

(c) Balance between Formulations and Concepts and Right Living.- Noting initially that Erich Fromm does not exactly define just what this balance should be, we make the general note that his concern is that ideology should not become a tool or a god, that it not deny men the satisfaction of their basic needs. As a response to this challenge we find "Lumen Gentium's" remarkable and central description of the true disciple:

"God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God in him" (1 Jn. 4:16). God pours out His love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us (cf. Rom. 5:5). Thus the first and most necessary gift is that charity by which we love God above all things and our neighbor because of God [...] Hence it is the love of God and of neighbor which points out the true disciple of Christ.¹⁶⁰

And, as a balance to this description, there are in "Gaudium et Spes" the statements we have just referred to regarding tolerance. The demands for freedom of conscience and intellectual freedom in religious conceptual development are written to include all men, including the men of the Church. We feel, in short, that the Church's description of holiness as love and her guarantees for her own members of responsible freedom in religious matters do strike the kind of balance which Erich Fromm would term humanistic.

160 LG 42, p. 70-71.

Our intention now is to turn to authoritarian trends in conciliar teaching in the area of semantics, trends which counter those outlined above.

B. Authoritarian Semantic Aspects

We here refer the reader to our summation of Erich Fromm's thought on the formation of ideology and its use in our treatment of authoritarian structures.¹⁶¹

(a) Ideology-Dogma, Religious Language as Not Based on Religious Experience.- Erich Fromm has spoken of an original period of creativity in which a religious message or a secular idea was given birth. Often the words of this message are later transformed into ideologies which become unthinking rallying points for the people, and are used as manipulative tools by the leaders of the organization. They become mere slogans. Those who use these words are often unaware of themselves as manipulators of others. In any case the words used no longer represent the original experience nor the original thought. They become gods. Erich Fromm calls the worship of these word-gods "idolatry."

There is little doubt, as we have seen, that the great dogmatic themes of "Lumen Gentium" are couched in terms that

¹⁶¹ Cf. Chapter I, Section 3A(b).

are largely taken from the original period of the Christ experience.¹⁶² We have also seen the emphasis the Council puts on scripture in her life,¹⁶³ and that further theological development is tied to the continued presence of the Christ event in the Church and world via the Spirit.¹⁶⁴

The difficulty comes with the way these words are to be interpreted and put into action. It is here that we come up against the role of the Pope as the final spokesman, the role of the bishops, and, to a lesser extent, the role of the ordained priest. We have commented on this role at length in each of the chapters in which we have attempted to apply Fromm's criteria for an authoritarian religion.¹⁶⁵

We wish to point out here that the difficulties of the power structure of the Church in the context of ideologizing has not been lost on commentators outside the Roman Communion. André Scrima, an Orthodox scholar, notes the general danger of theological formulation becoming a god when he comments on "Lumen Gentium."¹⁶⁶ And regarding the possibility of good words

162 Cf. Chapter IV, Section 4A.

163 Ibid.

164 Ibid.

165 Cf. Chapter II, Sections 2B and 2C (God), and 4A and 4B (Sin); Chapter IV, Section 1B (Modern Forms), Section 2B (Experiential Aspects), and Section 3B (Ritualistic Aspects).

166 André Scrima, "Simples réflexions d'un Orthodoxe sur le Constitution," in Unam Sanctam, 51c, p. 1292.

becoming tools for authority, Charles Davis, a peritus at the Council, says:

As for myself, far from experiencing the papal authority as a living doctrinal center, focussing, representing and sanctioning the mind of the Church, I am compelled to the admission that the Pope is enmeshed in an antiquated court system, where the truth is handled politically, free discussion always suspect and doctrinal declarations won by manoeuvring.¹⁶⁷

He emphasizes, too, the fact that the teaching on infallibility may lead to a freezing of formulations, and hence to their being worshipped.¹⁶⁸

We feel that Erich Fromm would say that the divine-human language of the Church in which the Church refers to herself and her life--these deeply Christian themes have, or can become mere slogans, because of the power structure of the Church. For example, the expression of the People of God is denied real force since Church structure allows the layman little powerful means of expressing his priesthood, limits his prophetic voice to secular affairs, and offers him no place in Church service and government at its decision-making levels. Furthermore, women have been excluded from all hierarchical positions in the Church, as Mary Daly, Rosemary Goldie and others have noted.¹⁶⁹ We have also seen that the idea of

¹⁶⁷ Charles Davis, A Question of Conscience, New York, Harper and Row, 1967, p. 69.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 160.

¹⁶⁹ Mary Daly, "Abortion and Sexual Caste," in Commonweal, Vol. 95, No. 18, February 4, 1972, p. 415; Rosemary Goldie, "Un point de vue 'feminin'?" in Unam Sanctam, 65c, p. 99-100.

holiness is in danger of becoming a slogan for unthinking obedience.¹⁷⁰

Erich Fromm would conclude that the great humanistic themes of Vatican II are ideologies, but that, since these words do indeed give expression to the original and continuing Christ experience, there is always the hope that people will take them seriously. At such point the message will reflower and again find life. It is not our purpose here to decide whether this is taking place. We have already given indications along that line.¹⁷¹ It is only to show that the seeds, in the form of ideology, are there. Such a reflowering can take place, according to Erich Fromm, when the direction of the Church becomes freer and more activated on all levels.

(b) Intolerance of Other Religious Formulations.- We have pointed out that Vatican II in many senses is outward looking to men of other Christian persuasions, to other religious men who are not Christian, and to men who do not believe in God. We wish here only to point out that the Church reserve to herself as a people the charism of infallibility, and that this infallibility is still structurally in the hands of a very few men. The position of the magisterium of the Church as having the final judgment on all religious truth obviously

170 Cf. Chapter II, Section 4A.

171 Cf. Chapter IV, Section 1A.

poses questions for separated Christians. Heinrich Ott notes this stumbling block. His hope for realistic ecumenical dialogue rests in future change in the Church's overarching claims.¹⁷²

In short, we find a parallel danger in the area of tolerance and growth of religious formulations for those outside the Church as for those within it. Thus we find strangely familiar the outraged words of Francis Jeanson. Jeanson, an atheist editor of a scholarly review and an author, as well as a collaborator in Unam Sanctam, complains:

As an unbeliever I find myself suddenly dismissed to a sort of medical examination. There, wise doctors hold forth among themselves about the extreme seriousness of my case. They make appeal to the little common sense they grant me, only for the purpose of convincing me to accept their diagnosis. This is indeed a strange kind of "dialogue." One of the participants is admitted to it only on the condition that he first admit that he is ill. He has fallen "from his native state of nobility" by his adherence to "deadly" doctrines and nearly deprived of all human "dignity" by the "grave wound" of the absence of God! "[...] For me this is fundamental, anterior to all revelation and theology: a man without God is, from my point of view, a monstrosity. He is like a cripple or a blind man [...] Atheism affects me with such horror that I can feel it physically [...]" : this fierce condemnation of our infirmity we already owe to Father Danielou. Should we now console ourselves with the consideration that we have at least been spared by the Council a condemnation as ferocious as the one above?¹⁷³

¹⁷² Heinrich Ott, "Réflexions d'un théologien réformé," in Unam Sanctam, 51c, p. 1338.

¹⁷³ Francis Jeanson, "Un athée devant 'Gaudium et Spes'," in Unam Sanctam, 65c, p. 157-158.

The problem of the disobedient Roman Catholic and the atheist has the same source, an unassailable teaching authority in which he has little voice and which, in effect, demands his adherence.

(c) Correct Thought as the Key to Religiosity Rather Than Right Action.- We must point out at the outset that this is a very difficult criterion to apply. We shall content ourselves here with pointing out that we have treated authoritarian aspects of sin.¹⁷⁴ We there concluded that one can make a strong case at this juncture for reducing sin to disobedience of the hierarchy. The required obedience includes how one thinks and expresses one's self about religious things and just what correct action is.

5. Dialogue among Humanists and Scientifico-magical Aspects.

A. Theistic and Non-theistic Humanists Need Not Fight

We are here attempting a particularization of what we have already treated in the chapter on man.¹⁷⁵ Erich Fromm sees dialogue between theistic humanists and those humanists not believers as a goal for humanistic religion. We see this

¹⁷⁴ Cf. Chapter II, Section 4A(c).

¹⁷⁵ Cf. Chapter III, Section 1A.

as closely tied in with man's need for relatedness, for brotherliness and for a rational frame of orientation and devotion. Briefly, the criteria outlined in Chapter One of this essay are the following: (1) Humanists of whatever religious persuasion or the lack of it should not fight. (2) Non-religious humanists are often a challenge to their believing brethren. (3) Both are united by the common bond of fighting idolatry.¹⁷⁶ Our treatment of this subject will be taken from "Gaudium et Spes," where the Church's relations with non-theists vis-à-vis the problem of man are explicitly treated.

Despite Francis Jeanson's cry of rage at being labelled by "Gaudium et Spes" a sick man invited by the Church to dialogue,¹⁷⁷ we must note that call to dialogue:

While rejecting atheism, root and branch, the Church sincerely professes that all men, believers and unbelievers alike, ought to work for the rightful betterment of this world in which all alike live. Such an ideal cannot be realized, however, apart from sincere and prudent dialogue.¹⁷⁸

Jules Girardi, commenting on this passage, speaking consciously in the spirit in which the word dialogue is used, gives us this description of it:

176 Cf. Chapter I, Section 4B(d)(v).

177 Cf. Chapter IV, footnote 173.

178 GS 21, p. 219.

[...] dialogue is conversation carried on in an atmosphere of freedom and sincerity. It is conversation entered into by people having differing points of view, yet sharing certain values. It concerns itself with problems involving the subjects themselves. It is ordered to understanding, the bringing of the subjects closer together, and a mutual enriching of both ideas and mankind.¹⁷⁹

It is precisely men who differ who are in need of dialogue. They must indeed have some point of common interest. And, although the presumed disagreements may seem at first to remove common grounds, we need not despair. Indeed, a Marxist commentator on our constitution quotes the young Marx's famous position that Christianity is harmful to man, a drug, an opiate,¹⁸⁰ and then closes his comments with a ringing affirmation that he takes the Church seriously in her call for him to dialogue with her.¹⁸¹

Ratzinger feels that the document is the basis for dialogue between the believer and the unbeliever on the subject of what it is to be truly human.¹⁸²

The basis for dialogue is strengthened by "Gaudium et Spes" admission that religious values have been purified by

¹⁷⁹ Jules Girardi, "L'Eglise face à l-humanisme athée," in Unam Sanctam, 65b, p. 371.

¹⁸⁰ Gilbert Mury, "Un Marxiste devant 'Gaudium et Spes,' de la contradiction à l'espérance," in Unam Sanctam, 65c, p. 137.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., p. 154.

¹⁸² Joseph Ratzinger, "The Dignity of the Human Person," in Commentary, Vol. V, p. 118.

their very questioners. Speaking of today's rapidly changing world, the document states:

Finally, these new conditions have their impact on religion. On the one hand a more critical ability to distinguish religion from a magical view of the world and from the superstitions which still circulate purifies religion and exacts day by day a more personal and explicit adherence to faith. As a result many persons are achieving a more vivid sense of God.¹⁸³

We find here, too, a recognition of the stimulus to theological investigation which contemporary secular research provides.¹⁸⁴

It is true that these statements do not specifically concern non-believers, but questioners in general. Certainly, however, non-theists are included.

Perhaps the most explicit and pithy acknowledgment of the worth of dialogue between believers and unbelievers occurs at the end of the constitution. In her closing remarks the constitution returns to the theme of dialogue:

For our part, the desire for such dialogue, which can lead to truth through love alone, excludes no one, though an appropriate measure of prudence must undoubtedly be exercised. We include those who cultivate beautiful qualities of the human spirit, but do not yet acknowledge the Source of these qualities.

We include those who oppress the Church and harass her in manifold ways. Since God the Father is the origin and purpose of all men, we are all called to be brothers. Therefore, if we have been summoned to the same destiny, which is both human and divine, we can and we should work together without violence and deceit in order to build up the world in genuine peace.¹⁸⁵

183 GS 7, p. 205.

184 GS 62, p. 268.

185 GS 92, p. 306-307.

Commenting on this last passage, Girardi expands on the Church's awareness of the positive values of dialogue between herself and non-believers in a vein very reminiscent of Erich Fromm's remarks on the value of such a dialogue.¹⁸⁶ His remarks seem to us to speak to Fromm's hope that religious and non-religious men can unite to fight that form of idolatry which is the subservience of man to other creatures and to his own temptation not to use his powers fully.

It is important, too, to comment on the constitution's theme of penitence in connection with atheism:

Yet believers themselves frequently bear some responsibility for this situation. For, taken as a whole, atheism is not a spontaneous development but stems from a variety of causes, including a critical reaction against religious beliefs, and in some places against the Christian religion in particular. Hence believers can have more than a little to do with the birth of atheism. To the extent that they neglect their own training in the faith, or teach erroneous doctrine, or are deficient in their religious, moral, or social life, they must be said to conceal rather than reveal the authentic face of God and religion.¹⁸⁷

Ratzinger, who notes that atheism has its roots in the Christian Western world, sees such a statement as an admission of idolatry on the part of the Church.¹⁸⁸ That admission would seem to us a hinge to dialogue since it calls not only the

186 Girardi, op. cit., p. 372.

187 GS 19, p. 217.

188 Ratzinger, "The Dignity of the Human Person," p. 147.

non-believer to look again at God, and consequently at man, but also the Christian himself.

And so the constitution's call to dialogue, her admission of profit to the Church from questioning, her stance of penitence toward the atheist--these seem to us to speak directly to Erich Fromm's statement that non-theists can profitably challenge religion, that theistic and non-theistic humanists need not fight and that both can join the common cause of fighting idolatry.

B. Scientifico-magical Aspects

Erich Fromm has criticized Western religion for opposing scientific learning, as we have noted in our criteria for authoritarian religion.¹⁸⁹ Our own treatment of the Church's stance in this area has been sufficiently covered in our treatment of man under man's basic need for reason.¹⁹⁰

Thus our treatment of the humanistic and authoritarian attitudes of the writings of Vatican Council II comes to completion. It remains for us to draw certain conclusions from our findings and to summarize these findings.

189 Cf. Chapter I, Section 4A.

190 Cf. Chapter III, Section 1E.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study has been to evaluate the sixteen official pronouncements of Vatican Council II in terms of Erich Fromm's two broad characterizations of religion as either humanistic or authoritarian.

We find that the God of these documents is seen in two different lights. He is seen as calling man to development. He is the challenge to man to grow in the use of all his faculties. This God is, indeed, the basis for man's development. He is the author of man's liberty, his ability to love and to reason. To sin against this God is co-extensive with a diminishment of man's powers. To repent is to return not only to God but to a fuller use of those powers.

At the same time we find a counter-image of God. This image is found in the structure of the Church which consists of an ordained hierarchy, headed by a nearly absolutely powerful Pope. It is because these men are seen by the Council as God's spokesmen par excellence that God becomes an authority figure. This top heavy authority structure makes the Church herself heavily obediential. In such a structure, union with God, or virtue, becomes synonymous with obedience to a small group of men. Sin is disobedience. Repentance is a return to obedience to this élite group who express God's will.

Turning to a treatment of man directly, we have seen a parallel ambiguity in the conciliar documents. Within the Church we have, on the one hand, a vision of a people on the march, sharing responsibility, open to the world, yet having a special place in that world. On the other hand we have also an image of an elitist Church with the clergy in positions of power. The clergy themselves are subject to higher clergy with the Pope having universal jurisdiction over all. We see here the authoritarian or sado-masochist syndrome. We see a nesting-place for the authoritarian character, the man who wants to be controlled by others, yet wanting great power for himself.

We can expect to find the authoritarian character especially among the hierarchy, those for whom the Church is a career. They are most vulnerable to the authoritarian aspects of Church structure. They are most likely to be attracted to such a structure and to be formed by it. Those men whose life style is less tied up in Church structure have greater freedom to live their lives in the vision of the humanistic, participatory image of the Church. They are not as dependent on Church authority structure.

We find the Council's vision of the men outside the confines of the Church to be, in the main, humanistic. The Council's view of the men of the whole world is optimistic. It challenges the men of the world to activation in various

fields of human endeavor. The view of man is evolutionary, unfolding, demanding of continual development. It should be noted that this view of all men includes the men of the Church. Combined with the view of the Church as a people of basic equality it should provide a challenge to a church structure that is so out of tune with such a vision.

We note, finally, that the Church's men, regardless of the structure of the Church, find themselves by definition, in a position of privilege with regard to other men. The Church sees herself as the possessor of a unique and saving message. She is not the sole preacher of God's love for men, it is true. Nevertheless she does preach the Christ event as revelatory of God's love. Such a position will always leave her with the danger of narcissism. She will always have the shadow of the temptation to worship herself and to be unaware of elements of truth, beauty, and love outside herself. Privilege always carries the danger of narcissism, both collective and individual.

Turning to the dynamics of religion, we have noted strong strains of what Fromm calls modern forms of humanistic religion. Our documents are deeply aware of the contemporary twofold threat to mankind--that of a world dominated by the machine to the exclusion of human values as well as the threat of nuclear extinction. On the other hand, we have noted in the documents a certain worship of power in

the naked authority of the higher clergy. We have noted in contrast to this a certain naïveté with regard to the inerrancy of the people taken as a whole. Erich Fromm would say universal agreement on the part of a large group of people is no guarantee that these people are right or virtuous. Fromm's view of man's social character precisely points out how large groups of men can be manipulated into character patterns of pseudo-willing and pseudo-thinking. If the Church is a truly human group, she will not find herself immune from such manipulation.

Turning to experiential aspects of the Church's life with God we have found solid evidence of an attitude of marveling with regard to life and life's experiences. This attitude is coupled with a view of life as an ongoing problem, admitting of ever new problems and ever new development. This sense of wonder, however, has been seen as often blanketed by the Church's power structure and the strain of absolute control in the hands of a few in Church government and teaching. Setting aside the problems of Church structure, the Council has little to say on how contemporary man is to achieve and preserve such a sense of wonder.

The ritual life of the Church is, in the main, healthily rooted in the frame of celebration. Man celebrates his own life and desires. He celebrates, in official Church worship, God, who is the author of man's dignity. Here, as

elsewhere, however, the shadow of absolute control lies over this celebration. Departure from such control is disobedience and therefore sin. We find here the ever present danger of a ritual used as a manipulator of the people. Those in power could use official ritual to pervert human life rather than enhance it.

We have seen under the heading of semantic aspects a strong current in the documents that words are only symbols of man's encounter with God. Words do not exhaust religious reality. Rather they are pointers to it. Hence, as man's experience of the All deepens and grows, religious language will be open to change and development. One worships God and not religious formulation. We noted, in contrast to such a view of religious words, that Church structure is again dangerous. Words can be used as slogans to manipulate the people of the Church. Given the present governmental structure of the Church the danger of the words of religious experience becoming mere ideologies is apparent.

Concerning dialogue between theistic and non-theistic humanists, we have noted at the end of this study that there is a clear call for dialogue between these two groups, especially in matters that concern the welfare of mankind.

One might encapsulate this entire dissertation with a single question and its answer. The question: "Can a Roman Catholic be a revolutionary man and does the Church

encourage such men throughout human society?" We conclude that the Church does call for revolutionary men, both within and outside her structure. She calls for them in her vision of God, her vision of churchmen on all levels, her vision of men outside her confines, Christian and non-Christian alike. She makes it, however, most difficult for such men to exist within her own confines because few of her own people have adequate means for effective participation in the Church's universal calling to exercise the priestly, prophetic, and ruling office of Jesus Christ.

Thus we might say that the fact of the two contradictory trends in the writings of Vatican Council II might lead to two consecutive results. Nourished by the humanistic teachings of the Council documents, the man of the Church could develop a spirit of independence and freedom in his thoughts regarding himself, others, and the world around him. If, in his independence, he then approaches the problems of that world with solutions that differ from indeed conflict with, the solutions of the authority figures of his Church, he will find that he is not allowed to disobey, that the structure, as such, cannot tolerate such disobedience, and that he is left with the alternatives of submission or rebellion rather than the true disobedience of a revolutionary. In short, though trained to be a revolutionary person, he is frustrated in his attempts to be such.

This study may be concluded with suggestions for further research.

1. Clinical research could well provide evidence as to whether or not Erich Fromm's authoritarian character is a predominant type among men holding positions of power and influence in the Church. Such study would provide a valuable check on the essay here undertaken.

2. A study of the evolution of Church authoritarian and humanistic tendencies in the time elapsed since Vatican Council II could be an interesting extension of this thesis. Such a study could be made by bringing Frommian criteria to bear on the official pronouncements of the universal synods of bishops which have convened since the Council as well as the more important post-conciliar papal pronouncements.

3. A study of the use of authority as it is seen in Vatican Council II from the vantage point of another psychological theorist might well provide a balance to this study.

4. Finally, a worthwhile extension of this study could well be an investigation into the means whereby the more authoritarian or regressive aspects of Catholic Church structure could be changed in order to provide a more adequate chance for participation for all Church members in the priestly, prophetic, and, above all, ruling office of Jesus Christ.

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A useful and brief commentary on the broad themes of modern ecclesiology in the light of Vatican Council II.

Forsyth, James J., Biblical Faith and Erich Fromm's Theory of Personality, University of Ottawa, 1968, v-197 p. (unpublished Master of Arts dissertation in religious studies).

An interdisciplinary study attempting to show how Fromm's theory of faith is consistent with the faith of biblical man. Useful from the point of view of interdisciplinary methodology.

Fromm, Erich, The Art of Loving, New York, Bantam, 1956, vii-118 p. (with an Epilogue by Ruth Nanda Anshen).

An analysis of various aspects of love. It discusses various forms of religion with authoritarian religion placed in opposition to humanistic religion. Treated also are the causes of authoritarian religion. Pertinent to our treatment of religion in Vatican Council II.

Fromm, Erich, Beyond the Chains of Illusion: My Encounter with Marx and Freud, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1962, vii-182 p. (in the series Credo Perspectives planned and edited by Ruth Nanda Anshen).

Useful autobiographical information on Erich Fromm himself. His description of encounters with the two major thinkers who formed his vision of man is useful in understanding his ideas on personal freedom and its abuse.

-----, The Dogma of Christ and Other Essays on Religion, Psychology and Culture, Garden City, New York, Doubleday Anchor, 1963, v-218 p.

A collection of essays, articles and addresses given between 1930 and 1961. Many are lucid digests of ideas presented in earlier book-length works. The title essay is an early example of Fromm's concern with the interplay of religious structures on man's social character. The chapter entitled "The Revolutionary Man" contains a description of a free man which is concise and clear. This "revolutionary man" is a key concept in the subject of this dissertation.

-----, Escape from Freedom, New York, Avon Discus, 1941, Forward II, 1965, vii-333 p.

A study of the meaning of authority and freedom in western man. Historical, sociological, psychoanalytical in scope. A key to understanding all the thought of Fromm. Its thesis: modern man, freed from the bonds of pre-individualistic society, which simultaneously gave him security and limited him, has not gained freedom in the positive sense of the realization of his individual self.

-----, The Forgotten Language, New York, Grove Press Evergreen, 1951, v-263 p.

Useful for its interpretation of myths and dreams which shed light on the authoritarian conscience.

-----, The Heart of Man: Its Genius for Good and Evil, New York, Harper and Row, 1964, 156 p. (Vol. 12 in the series Religious Perspectives, planned and edited by Ruth Nanda Anshen).

Fromm's special interest here is man's capacity to destroy, his narcissism, his incestuous fixation. All these syndromes are factors limiting man's rationality and freedom, and hence relevant to our Fromm-centered commentary on the social character of man as imagined in Vatican Council II.

Fromm, Erich, Man for Himself: An Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics, New York, Fawcett Premier, 1947, x-256 p.

A discussion of the problem of ethics, norms, and values, leading to a realization of man's self and his potentialities. Important in understanding Fromm's vision of man's nature and the challenge for man to achieve freedom.

-----, May Man Prevail? An Inquiry into the Facts and Fictions of Foreign Policy, Garden City, New York, Doubleday Anchor, 1961, with a second preface, 1963, v-252 p.

Concerned with politics and the use of power in this sphere in contemporary Russia, Germany, and China. Useful comments on the use of ideology and dogma by the authoritarian institution.

-----, Psychoanalysis and Religion, New York, Bantam, 1950, 115 p.

The problem of religion with various forms of religion discussed. Authoritarian and humanistic religion placed in opposition. A key work in our critique.

-----, The Revolution of Hope: Toward a Humanized Technology, Toronto, Bantam, 1968, vii-178 p. (with an Epilogue by Ruth Nanda Anshen).

A study of the alternatives to dehumanization in contemporary American society with emphasis on the role of the social institution as former of man's social character. Pertinent here are references to modern forms of humanistic religion.

-----, The Sane Society, New York, Fawcett Premier, 1955, v-320 p.

A critique of contemporary capitalism and communism. Suggestions for a future sane society. His most complete analysis of man's basic needs.

-----, You Shall Be As Gods: A Radical Interpretation of the Old Testament and Its Tradition, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966, 240 p.

A socio-psychoanalytic analysis of Old Testament religion and the writings of Jewish origin that follow it. Useful in this work for its comments on sin.

Glen, J. Stanly, Erich Fromm: A Protestant Critique, Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1966, 224 p.

An interdisciplinary study taking issue with Fromm's interpretation of classical Reformation theology. Fromm is criticized for lacking understanding Reformation Christianity at its root. Different from this study in that its stance is basically theological and historical, a critique of Erich Fromm from this point.

Hammond, Guyton Bowers, Man in Estrangement: A Comparison of the Thought of Paul Tillich and Erich Fromm, Nashville, Tennessee, Vanderbilt University Press, 1965, xii-194 p.

This study seeks to find the underlying points of agreement and difference between the religious vision of Paul Tillich and the secular humanist, Erich Fromm.

Huxley, Aldous, Brave New World, New York, Bantam, 1932, vii-177 p.

A terrifying novel about the future, quoted often in Fromm's writings as a paradigm of the future of contemporary western democracy.

Kasemann, Ernst, Essays on New Testament Themes, trans. by W.J. Montague from selections from the German, Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen, 2nd ed., Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1960, London, SCM Press, 1964, 239 p.

Of special interest, chapter three, "Ministry and Community in the New Testament." A scholarly case for a complete lack of ecclesiastical office in the New Testament. German background reading for an understanding of Church power structure.

Küng, Hans, The Church, trans. by Ray and Rosleen Oekenden, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1967, vii-515 p.

An attempt at a contemporary Catholic ecclesiology with a discussion of Church power structure. Helpful in putting Vatican Council II in perspective.

-----, Structures of the Church, trans. by Salvator Attansio, New York, Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1964, 302 p.

A study of Church structure with emphasis on ecumenical Councils. Points out the tension between the charismatic and hierarchical elements in the Church.

Küng, Hans, Truthfulness: The Future of the Church, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1968, v-185 p.

A series of popular essays focusing on the necessity for speaking the truth in the Church. Church structure as a help and hindrance to credibility speaks to man's need for a rational frame of orientation and devotion.

Mao Tse-Tung, Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung, Peking, Foreign Language Press, 1966, 312 p.

Used in this work as an example of ideology.

McKenzie, John L., Authority in the Church, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1966, vi-184 p.

A loyal but critical study of Roman Catholic power structure and its relation to the New Testament.

Metz, Johannes, B., Theology of the World, trans. by William Glen-Doepel from Zur Theologie der Welt, Mainz, Matthias-Grünwald-Verlag, 1968, New York, Herder and Herder, 1969, 155 p.

A discussion of the role of the Church in the world, theological in scope. Chapter five concerns the Church as critic of the world, her use and misuse of power.

Moran, Gabriel, The Theology of Revelation, New York, Herder and Herder, 1966, 223 p.

Helpful in understanding man's involvement in the process of divine revelation.

Müller, Alois, Obedience in the Church, ed. and trans. by Hilda Graef from the German edition of 1964, London, Burns and Oates, 1966, 191 p. (volume twelve of Compass Book Series).

A comprehensive study of all forms of Christian obedience from its beginnings until today. Psychological and sociological factors are taken into account, but the stance on dogma is rigid.

Orwell, George, Nineteen Eighty-Four, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1949, 251 p.

A futuristic novel cited by Fromm as the logical outcome of contemporary Communism. Use of ideology is especially striking.

Riesman, David, Individualism Reconsidered, Toronto, Collier-Macmillan, 1954, 529 p.

Essays on a variety of subjects by a noted sociologist. Useful in this essay in pointing up Erich Fromm's concern for the positive aspects of religion in forming man's social character.

Riesman, David, with Nathan Glazer and Reuel Denney, The Lonely Crowd, abridged edition with 1969 preface, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1950, v-315 p.

Classic work on the American social character. Useful for situating Erich Fromm's concern with social structures as formative of a social character as well as citing scholars who share his concern.

Roth, Joseph S., Erich Fromm's Concept of "Freedom From": An Internal Critique, University of Ottawa, 1968 iv-649 p. (unpublished doctoral dissertation in philosophy).

An exhaustive critique of Erich Fromm's basic stance on man separated from nature. Author's stance is phylogenetic, cultural, historical. Contains the most complete bibliography of Fromm's works and commentators currently in print.

Sargent, S. Stansfeld and Robert C. Williamson, Social Psychology, New York, Ronald Press, 1958, iii-649 p.

An introductory textbook on the study of human relations. Useful for showing Fromm's stature in his field and for pinpointing his socio-psychoanalytic concern for man's social character.

Schaar, John H., Escape from Authority: The Perspectives of Erich Fromm, New York, Harper Torchbooks, 1961, 348 p.

A philosophical critique of Erich Fromm. While granting merit to Fromm's criticism of western social structures, the book calls him to task for seemingly simple solutions to the institutions he has criticized.

Schillebeeckx, Edward, God the Future of Man, trans. by N.D. Smith, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1968, ix-207 p.

Useful for its comments concerning dialogue between Church and world and the problem of universal salvation.

Schnackenburg, Rudolf, The Church in the New Testament, trans. by W.J. O'Hara, New York, Herder and Herder, 1965, 222 p.

A discussion of the Church of the New Testament involving hierarchical and charismatic elements. Germane to an understanding of contemporary Church authority.

Schweizer, Eduard, Church Order in the New Testament, trans. by Frank Clarke from the German, Gemeinde und Gemeindeordnung im Neuen Testament, Zurich, Zwingli-Verlag, 1959, London, SCM Press, 1961, 239 p.

A discussion supportive of Church order in New Testament writings. Supportive of a strongly functional view of Church order and the theory of a non-monarchical New Testament hierarchy. Helpful to understand early controversy over Church authority.

Simmons, Henry C., The Christian Valuation and Significance of Suffering According to Vatican Council II, and the Five Basic Psychic Needs of Man Posited by Erich Fromm: An Interdisciplinary Study, University of Ottawa, 1970, v-383 p. (unpublished doctoral dissertation in religious studies).

The only interdisciplinary study of a scholarly nature in print at this writing confronting the Frommian vision of man with the Christian vision of man as enunciated in the documents of Vatican Council II. Useful in this study primarily for its methodology.

Todd, John M. (ed.), Problems of Authority, an Anglo-French Symposium, Baltimore, Helicon, 1962, v-260 p.

A pre-Vatican II symposium on Church authority. Helpful in that some of its authors were later the architects of the conciliar documents.

Von Balthasar, Hans Urs, Church and World, trans. by A.V. Littledale with Alexander Drue, Montreal, Palm Publishers, 1967, 176 p.

A discussion of the Church with emphasis on the incarnational view that the Church by definition is penetrated by the world and vice versa.

Von Campenhausen, Hans, Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Three Centuries, trans. by J.A. Baker from the German, Kirchliches Amt Und Geistliche Vollmacht, Tübingen, J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1953, London, Adam and Charles Black, 1969, v-308 p.

Classic, comprehensive work. Scriptural, patristic, sociological perspective. Conclusions as regards the tension between the charismatic and hierarchical elements in the Church are not simplistic. Much carry over to contemporary Church authority problems.

Vorgrimler, Herbert (ed.), Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, New York, Herder and Herder, 1969, in 5 vols.

The most complete commentary on the Second Vatican Council in English. Article by article analysis of each document. Each document presented with its own history. Extensive referral to all five documents in this study.

Articles

Daly, Mary, "Abortion and Sexual Caste," in Commonweal, Vol. XCV, No. 18, February 4, 1972, p. 415-419.
Useful comments on sexual caste within the Church's power structure.

Engels, Odilio, "Council," in Sacramentum Mundi: An Encyclopedia of Theology, in six volumes, ed. by Karl Rahner with Cornelius Ernst and Kevin Smyth, New York, Herder and Herder, 1970, Vol. II, p. 9-18.

Fitzmyer, Joseph, "Pauline Theology," in The Jerome Biblical Commentary, in two volumes, ed. by Raymond Brown, Joseph Fitzmyer and Roland Murphy, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, 1968, Vol. II, p. 800-827.
Useful comments on the Pauline notion of mystery, pertinent to Fromm's evolutionary view of man and human institutions.

Jungmann, Josef A., "Liturgy," in Sacramentum Mundi, Vol. III, p. 320-331.
Careful delineation of the word liturgy as it is used in Roman Catholic parlance.

Rahner, Karl and Herbert Vorgrimler, Theological Dictionary, trans. by Richard Strachen, New York, Herder and Herder, 1965, 493 p. Cf. article "Council," p. 103-104.
Careful definition of the meaning of Ecumenical Council in Catholic usage.

Smith, E. Harold, "The Catholic Crisis," in Commonweal, Vol. XCV, No. 15, January 7, 1972, p. 320-323.
Provoking comments on what Vatican II did not say about means for encountering God today.

Stuhlmüller, Carroll, "The Gospel According to Luke," in The Jerome Biblical Commentary, Vol. II, p. 115-164.
Useful comments on the meaning of repentance in the New Testament.

APPENDIX 1

ABSTRACT OF

Erich Fromm and Vatican Council II:
Humanistic and Authoritarian Attitudes

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Erich Fromm and Vatican Council II: Humanistic and Authoritarian Attitudes

This was a study of humanistic and authoritarian attitudes as revealed in the sixteen official pronouncements of Vatican Council II. The purpose of this study was to discover, from a Frommian point of view, whether or not the men within the Roman Catholic Church would be challenged and encouraged by the beliefs, actions, and rituals of that Church to be what Erich Fromm calls humanistic or revolutionary men.

The first chapter presents a summary of Fromm's vision of man and his basic needs. It proceeds to contrast and explain Fromm's categories of man's social character as humanistic or authoritarian, and how social structures can influence the formation of that character. Lastly, religion is treated as one such social structure. Fromm's categories are taken as the criteria for evaluating the documents of Vatican Council II.

In the second, third, and fourth chapters, there is an examination of Vatican Council II's teachings on God and

1 Francis L. Gross, Jr., doctoral thesis presented to the Department of Religious Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Ottawa, Ontario, September 1972, xiii-287 p.

sin, man, and the dynamics of religion, respectively. As dynamics of religion, modern forms of religion, religious experience, ritual, semantics, and finally the extent of dialogue with non-theistic humanists are studied. In each case the Council's proclamations are seen, in great part, to challenge the men of the Church to be more human. To that extent the documents of Vatican Council II are considered humanistic.

There is found, however, in the Council's treatment of Church structure, a counter thrust. The hierarchical structure of the Church, with the Pope in his nearly unassailable position at the top, is seen as jeopardizing these humanistic tendencies. Further, the Church's claims as unique bearer of the Christian message cannot but present her with the danger of narcissism in her dealings with others.

It is concluded, then, that a strongly humanistic series of documents is blunted by a power structure which prevents adequate sharing of power by all in the Church. The Church's humanistic vision is a challenge to Church structure to change. Until that challenge is met, however, we can expect large numbers of authoritarian characters in the Church's hierarchy and a measure of indifference, rebellion, or sheep-like conformity among those denied meaningful participation in every aspect of the Church's life.