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COMMON IDEALS SHARED BY EASTERN ORTHODOXY AND
ERICH FROMM'S HUMANISM

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Abstract: There are shared humanistic tendencies in Erich Fromm's views and the ideas of Eastern Orthodoxy. The comparative method of this paper focuses on similarities between Fromm's humanistic psychoanalysis and Orthodox Christianity, while noting differences between them. In his works Fromm mentioned religious approaches, but he mostly referred to Protestantism (as a development from teachings of Martin Luther and John Calvin) and more rarely to Catholicism. Both streams have differences with Eastern Orthodoxy which is traditional for Russia. The individualism common to the western protestant model is contrasted with the community spirit, which is common to Russian culture and to the view of life of Russian Orthodoxy in particular. First, Fromm wrote about overcoming negative modes of life (such as estrangement or alienation) inherent to the first model, through adopting the second model. Second, humanistic views should be marked in ideas of Erich Fromm and Eastern Orthodoxy. The ideas of Erich Fromm and Eastern Orthodoxy are both based on a perception of a human being as a distinct whole personality, who should perceive as basic the values of self-development, love, creative self-realization, freedom, and responsibility. Also, free and whole personality cannot be formed without being a part of community of other persons, which is a very important point for both.

Key words: Erich Fromm, Eastern Orthodoxy, Humanism, Alienation, Estrangement, Personalism.

1. Introduction

This essay discusses some viewpoints in common found in Eastern Orthodoxy and Erich Fromm, a representative of the Frankfurt School. Most of Fromm's works are dedicated to the person, and his writings discuss the life of a human being in modern society and the mechanisms causing a person's alienation from society and from oneself. As he considered different aspects of these problems, Fromm often discussed religious viewpoints on them, while addressing the topic of religion itself (for example, Fromm 1950; 2004; 1966). He sometimes used theological terms to describe features of social alienation (Durkin 2014, 52, 57, 178). Concerning that religious perspective and religion's influence, Fromm mostly spoke about denominations of Christianity that were familiar and common for him – Catholicism, and more frequently, Protestantism.

Both Protestantism and Catholicism differ from Orthodox Christianity, which is the most common religion in Russia. My studies have revealed intersections between what Fromm said about freedom, gaining true freedom, and how a person discovers oneself, with similar ideas that are central in the Russian Orthodox tradition. Fromm considered himself as an agnostic about God, but he had deep respect for humanistic religions and explored an existentialist humanism (Fromm 1966, 18, 46-48, 180; Grosvenor 2012; Contina 2015). Both Fromm and Russian Orthodoxy are based on a perception of the human being as a distinct whole personality, grounded in the values of self-development, love, creative self-realization, freedom and responsibility. In addition, they both focus on the true being of a human, and not on what human beings can hold in possession, including what can be held onto as faith, which lacks ready answers and solutions, but instead offers the human way to discover oneself and search for the true moral Ideal.

2. Religion and Individualism

Fromm defines religion broadly as “any system of thought and action shared by a group which gives the individual a frame of orientation and an object of devotion” (Fromm 1950, 21). He distinguishes two types of religions – authoritarian and humanistic. Here is one of his statements about this difference: „The question is not religion or not but which kind of religion, whether it is one furthering man's development, the unfolding of his specifically human powers, or one paralyzing them.” (Fromm 1950, 26).

According to Fromm, both Judaism and Christianity have principles of humanistic and authoritarian religions (Fromm 1950, 45). Humanistic

character of Christianity is expressed in the virtue of humility, and the love for neighbors as well as enemies, replaces the suppression by authority. (This replacement is heard in the teachings of Jesus recorded in the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Luke). One of the key points is the presence of loving bonds that allow people to feel unity with each other. This is a creative unity based on noble feelings, and not on a fear of authority, and the desire for repression and/or submission.

The Holy Scriptures and Holy Tradition of the Church provide the foundation for Orthodox Christianity. The influence of Church itself, and of the Fathers of the Church, is quite strong and the role of traditions and sacraments is extremely important. Orthodox Christianity does not tolerate half-measures and reformations. It requires strict adherence to its letter and spirit, and this strictness is also reflected in its name, Orthodoxy. In addition, interpretations of the Holy Scripture by saints and Fathers of the Church are central to Orthodoxy. These are not only religious writings, because they also offer life and philosophical guidance. Philosophy in Russia existed only within the framework of religion for a long time, in fact, until the eighteenth century (Lossky 1951; Zenkovsky 1953).

While in Europe the Renaissance era blossomed, Russia was in a period of feudalism – on both the social and mental levels. Orthodoxy was a stronghold of traditionalism, and supported the whole Russian system to make it inviolable and immutable. In Europe, Protestantism became the basis for individualism and subsequently of capitalism. Fromm writes that Luther and Calvin gave people freedom and independence from the Church and its Canons, and left the goal of salvation to each individual: "... his [Luther's] concept of faith and salvation is one of subjective individual experience, in which all responsibility is with the individual and none with an authority which could give him what he cannot obtain himself." (Fromm 1965, 93).

So, the basis of Protestantism is the spirit of reform, the revision of the old canons and the cutting off of features of Catholicism that seemed obsolete in the opinion of the reformers. It was a protest against the unlimited power of the Pope, against corruption within the Roman Catholic Church, against discrepancies between proclaimed truths and the actual behavior of priests, and against an artificially complicated church system.

On the one hand, Protestant reforms give more freedoms to people. They were able to understanding themselves as individuals, and the growing formation of individualism came from Protestantism and humanistic worldview of the Renaissance, represented by the reforms of Luther and Calvin. But on the other hand, it also led to the weakening of interpersonal relationships and connections, and to the estrangement of people from each other. For example, the concept of a "private space" now

belongs to the Western world, and this explains a certain comfort zone belonging to person, including a personal moral sphere.

A person, moving away from church canons and “conventions,” nevertheless had to admit one’s insignificance in front of God. According to the Reformation doctrine, a person will only be exalted by first deprecating oneself. A person cannot be considered as a master of one’s own fate, because, according to Calvinist doctrine, all events in the world are predetermined. Even if a person has found salvation (meaning that he or she is a Protestant), that person is saved only if that salvation is willed by God. About this Protestant view of salvation and God, Fromm wrote, that Calvinism at the same time two feelings – feeling of freedom, but also insignificance and powerlessness of the individual. That conception meant that new feelings of freedom and confidence might be learned by complete submission and self-humiliation (Fromm 1965, 106-107).

This Calvinist psychology was comprehended in Kierkegaard’s philosophy, when he discusses what he views as the paradox of faith. What would be considered as absurd and abnormal for a typical person, for the religious person that paradoxical faith is the only possible way of being, and that is the manifestation of humility, one of the most important virtues in Christianity. Thus, according to Kierkegaard, the Truth is not something that should be understood by reason and no amount of intelligence should try to realize it. The Truth is something that is sent down to a person “from above” and is experienced by him or her personally. This kind of religious experience does not imply that the Truth is subjective. On the contrary, the Truth is objective and it involves God, but the path of faith and the experience of it for each person is always deeply individual. (Kierkegaard 2009, 168-175, 199-204; Westphal 2014, 165-171)

Fromm followed Kierkegaard’s ideas in the context of existential estrangement (Fromm 1965, 154). He also considered the phenomenon of Freedom in its negative connotation, by interpreting the Biblical myth of the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise. According to this myth, after the Fall, human beings possess a freedom from God, heaven, nature, and from other human beings. A person obtains the kind of freedom that one desires, and can escape away from the prohibitions and authorities who do not allow one to do what one wants. In addition, as Fromm points out, each person also may become estranged from themselves, which may manifest in personal insecurity, melancholy, anxiety, and loneliness. While freeing oneself on the one hand, a person can easily become enslaved on the other. In this condition, it turns out that a person is left in a “one-on-one” situation with others and the world. Having this freedom of choice, he or she is entirely responsible for oneself and for all of one’s actions (Fromm 1965, 49-50).

In time, individualism and Protestantism became fertile soil for the emergence and development of Capitalism. In fact, Fromm considers

Calvin and Luther's doctrines to no longer be part of a humanistic religion, but instead an authoritarian religion (Fromm 1965, 86, 93-94, 100-101). This is the case in Protestantism, because although a person obtains much freedom in questions of faith, religion and salvation, she also becomes greatly estranged from God. For Luther and Calvin, this figure of God is a supreme authority with absolute power, who needs no rationale for actions (as far as humans can see) and sometimes even contradicts the Gospel's teachings. The role of the Church as a mediator between God and person is practically eliminated in the Protestant ethics. This means, on the one side, that a human being is closer to God and he or she could address God directly, because people no longer need a mediator, any third person, anymore. But this also means, on the other side, that the Protestant God appears as a figure of a forbidding Father, who inspires awe with just that image alone: "The individualistic relationship to God was the psychological preparation for the individualistic character of man's secular activities." (Fromm 1965, 129).

3. Russian Orthodoxy and *Sobornost*

An example of a contrary position to Western individualism is the traditional Russian concept of "*Sobornost*." *Sobornost* expresses an important part of the mentality of Russia. The term was introduced by the Russian religious philosopher Aleksey Khomyakov in the eighteenth century (Horujy 2010, 45-48; Zenkovsky 1953, 204). In English, this concept means something like the word "togetherness," and it can be expressed by a longer phrase, "spiritual community of many jointly living people." The clearest example that illustrates *Sobornost* in Russian culture is the phenomenon of Russian *Obshchina*, which were peasant village communities, which existed until the beginning of the twentieth century. The origin of the word is a Russian root "общий" which means "common." The key points about the *Obshchina* is the way that people lived in the same territory, a village; they held their land in a common and shared ownership; and by making decision together they were able to resolve their questions and problems. There was no need for a special public authority; all issues were debated during common meetings of all the people living in the village.

The Orthodox Church itself, and the way everything is organized within it, represents the essence of this concept. According to Orthodoxy, the term *Sobornost* is a translation of the ancient Greek word "καθολικός" which means "universal," and it has been used in Europe as the term "catholic." The Orthodox Church has strict authority for its followers, but its Patriarch is not considered to be an authority over believers, not like the Roman Catholic Pope as the vicar of God on earth, for example. This idea of *Sobornost*, which was mostly a religious concept originally, has

become a part of modern language, and even political discourse, for describing and explaining specific aspects of Russian cultural life.

As we compare Russian ideas with European and Protestant views, we now turn to consider the concepts of “alienation” or “estrangement” in their philosophical aspects. For traditional Russian culture, such concepts are centrally connected with religion. In Orthodox teaching, Estrangement is result of a person’s falling away from God and, in consequence, a person loses the Godlike essence in oneself. The archimandrite Platon (Igumnov) wrote about this Estrangement briefly, but succinctly: “The consequence of a committed sin in every person’s life is the estrangement of a person from God and from interaction with other people. Estrangement from God is experienced as feeling a state of abandonment, an unexplainable melancholy, inner loneliness, resignation to doom, and meaningless of personal existence. To overcome this religious-moral crisis, which is brought by the consequences of estrangement, time and critical re-evaluation of one’s own spiritual condition is necessary” (Archimandrite Platon (Igumnov) 1994).

In Orthodox moral theology, the falling away from God and arriving at religious Estrangement as the result, is a natural beginning to an inner crisis for a human being, and this inner crisis would also find its external expression. And we recall that God, for Orthodoxy, is not imagined as a suppressive higher power, but a genuine ideal. From that religious perspective, Estrangement is a condition of relapsing back, and that is why a person should not try to shift into some new comfortable condition, but instead try to recognize and return to one’s lost condition. This passage quoted from Platon (Igumnov) is not speaking just about the individual knowledge of a person, but mainly about the species-essence (*Gattungswesen*), through which the intuitive existential “knowledge” about what is “primordial” and “lost” can be transmitted.

By referring to this idea of species-essence, we should recall that Russian concept of *Sobornost*, or communal togetherness. In Orthodox Christianity, a person’s “I” correlates with estrangement and loneliness. A “true person” or a “whole person” is always “we” (“sobornost”). God is understood as a Trinity: in the Tri-Personal Nature of God, it is three in one and one in three. Since a human being has been truly created in the image and likeness of God, he or she could not exist in isolation from others, and there should be love and respect among them through their interrelationship. In this true human condition, a person is a personality and has integrity: God, one, and another person.

In fairness, we should mention that the philosophical position of French Personalist Emmanuel Mounier is very close to this worldview. Ciprian Costin Apintilieseii mentions in his article three dimensions of a person, according to Mounier, – incarnation, communion and vocation, and all three have convergences with Orthodox Cristian theology. He stressed that a person has this communitarian structure in its basis, a

person becomes and shapes oneself in a community, he / she gets one's uniqueness only in a relationship to the other and to community of people in general (Apintiliesei 2019).

4. Persons and Freedom

Fromm compared the psychoanalytic process with searching for the truth about human beings. By using the word "truth" he intends to make a distinction between the true and the false within a person, so that truth points to the achievement of inner freedom, self-development, and self-revelation (Fromm 1950, 93). The primary purpose of psychoanalysis, Fromm proclaims, is the Person itself. In this psychoanalytic process, a way opens up for a person's path to oneself, into one's own hidden depths, to one's own freedom and conscious life.

This humanistic psychoanalysis exalts a person by making her responsible for one's own life. This is the purpose of Humanistic Religion as well. Religion is the path to God as the Truth, as Christ says in the Gospels: "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life". This message means that the Truth is already known, and the final endpoint of the path is indicated. It is necessary to follow this very path in order to reach the final destination – one's own liberation from the sinful essence. In a church, a priest is called to help a person with this process, as a guide who holds the sacrament of confession and gives religious instruction. As far as people still need this guidance and assistance, in Protestant culture, this role is played by the psychoanalyst, since we could say that a person wants relief from unease in his or her soul by talking with a therapist and seeks the way to oneself. In general, that sinful essence is often associated with the human body, and the liberation from it is considered as a goal by almost all religions.

The attainment of freedom, the liberation of a human being, is the goal of both Christian doctrine and psychoanalysis. The Christian understanding of freedom differs from the various secular interpretations of this concept. Freedom in Christianity is freedom from sin, from our own vices and passions. Each person is initially endowed with the freedom to choose one's own path, so he or she is responsible for that path and choices made on that path. However, in contrast to Sartre's existentialism, a person is responsible not only to oneself and society, but, most importantly, to God.

We have looked at important comparisons between Fromm's diagnosis of Protestantism and individualism with Orthodoxy's understanding of the person and the truth. Humanistic psychoanalysis approaches the views of Orthodoxy here. They both speak about gaining freedom from passions which distress a person, from things that internally grip her, and obtaining liberation from suppressive habits and

social patterns. Different people suffer from different inner complexes and fears (for example, a fear of being misunderstood and unaccepted by society, or a fear of failing to satisfy certain expectations), and at the same time, people feel various kinds of external pressures from society and social structures. In this situation, one's freedom is not about licentiousness or permissiveness, or setting loose the animal nature to a human being. According to the concept of positive freedom in Fromm, a free person is fully responsible for her own actions. A free person is a harmoniously developing personality, who follows the path of learning truths about the world and oneself. A free person is one who has been able to find a way to develop one's own personality. This realization of freedom occurs through both a rational and emotional awareness, and then a self-realization, as Fromm says: "...positive freedom consists in the spontaneous activity of the total, integrated personality." (Fromm 1965, 284).

Here, Fromm speaks of spontaneity, where the sincerity of feelings, words, and actions is an expression of the true essence of a person, and not superficial ways and clichés of society. This free activity is a manifestation of the fullness to living a "here and now" life. This kind of freedom does not exclude responsibility, and vice versa. If a person takes the responsibility to speak, act, and live freely and independently, then this person, and not someone else, will be responsible for the consequences (Fromm 1965, 196-197). One is reminded of the Biblical saying about birds that live for today and do not care about tomorrow, because God will take care of tomorrow (Matthew 6:26). They live according to the laws of nature, by their instincts and reflexes, but a person has an intelligence that (ideally) does not let one be irresponsible and uncaring. There always is an opportunity for understanding what is happening around us, as well as comprehending what is within us, by analyzing and accumulating experience. This provides more complex insights into living a conscious life and finding out what is happiness, than just getting biological pleasures from life.

In the article "The Role of Spirituality in Therapeutic Practices" authors argue, that spirituality plays very important role in therapy, because it helps person to understand, that "normality" of a person means wholeness in all dimensions – biological, social and spiritual, and the combination of these three dimensions authors call existential (Frunză et al. 2019, 71). This approach is very similar to Fromm's point of view to the person and fullness of one's life.

Therefore, it must be crucial for a person to take care of their own spiritual condition. That idea of the spontaneous conscious activity of such a person has a close resemblance to the concept of creativity, as a person is creating one's own life. Freedom is realized through this spontaneity, this way of responsibility and creativity, which then finds an outlet in love (solidarity) and work (labor).

5. Freedom in Society

Labor has to regain its inner meaning for a person, in spite of the top motivation of modern society, which is economic benefit. The main drive pushing the accumulation of wealth is the pursuit of prestige and success in the eye of public opinion, which makes too many people work only in order to become wealthier and more successful than their neighbors. Money has become the measure of life's meaning – through this accumulation, one feels confident. Individualism and the individualization of work, a source of economic progress since the Renaissance, led to the loss of social meaning of labor (alienation of labor) by dividing people apart and making them pursue only their own interests, rather than working towards common goals.

The frequent pursuit of common goals is extremely important. By fulfilling oneself in unalienated labor or work, a person also experiences self-fulfillment as the species-essence (*Gattungswesen*), where one can feel and perceive oneself in relation with a world created by him or her. Unalienated labor is not just work, and certainly it is not a mechanical work, because it involves creative human activity within the world, which is simultaneously a process of creativity and development of one's own potential. Ideally, during this process, a person creates something, and puts one's heart into it, so this is also a process of self-creation. The very need, a necessity, to work in this ideal situation is not a limitation placed on freedom. When a person fulfils themselves while undertaking a creative type of activity, and thereby reveals one's own interests and develops one's potential, a person expresses oneself and acquires true freedom. This is a process of becoming a whole person, by developing one's abilities and individuality (Prokofyeva 2015, 96).

Fromm agrees that modern mechanical society allows few opportunities for people to organize their work together so that each person can find inner meaning and pursue true freedom. And, related to that context, he makes an interesting remark – he mentions that religion, for a person in Western society, has receded into the cultural background. He points to consequences of the rapid development of the sciences since the seventeenth century and, in fact, the rationality of modern Western civilization itself (Fromm 1968, 47-48; Wilde 2004). During this modern period, a person should only believe what can be proved rationally and explained with the help of science. That standard for what should be believed is what is usually labelled as “rationalism” or just common sense, and this also became a sort of religion – “the religion of progress”. At a certain point during the twentieth century, the image of the computer as a clear, well-coordinated “model of the mind” became practically godlike to Western society. The type of truth delivered by a computer, by artificial

intelligence, does not pursue any selfish purposes, so it appears to claim to be objective. By comparison with that mechanical idea of rationality, “spirituality” and a spiritual connection between people, would fade into the background.

From my perspective on dominant features of Russian culture, rational knowledge does not entirely replace a religious approach to belief. Moreover, at the everyday level, people still need, and they still prefer, to believe rather than to know, and they hold to a type of belief quite different from the “scientific belief” of Western society. Sometimes this way of believing can look like a voluntary self-restraint to one’s freedom, or it can seem like a belief in the inevitability to the course of events, and hence the futility of any effort. Often, the concept of “humility” is applied to all areas of one’s life, when one considers oneself to be embedded in the Orthodox Christian community and obligated to obey all of its rules. Life is perceived with fatalism and humility, an attitude reflected in such Russian proverbs as “Christ endured, and ordered us,” “God gave – God took,” and so on. However, if we consider such Biblical scenes more closely, they will not seem so saturated with the inevitability of fate.

I also want to draw attention to another commonality between the Christian and psychoanalytic models, the fight against idolatry. By “idols” what is meant is anything that has been created by humans, and then raised up into a cult, for an object of worship. Idols can appear as objects of the material world (such as money, objects of art, people, buildings, and so forth), and also as things of the spiritual world (for example, fame, one’s authority, etc.). In the Christian understanding, idolatry is about a struggle with one’s passions and sins, which only lead towards a person’s degradation. One ceases to be free in terms of choices and having one’s own will, and instead there is obedience to desires or things created by our hands, by just human beings. Fromm wrote this about alienation and idolatry: “Whether or not one believes in God is a question secondary to whether or not one denies idols. The concept of alienation is the same as the Biblical concept of idolatry. It is man’s submission to the things of his creation and to the circumstances of his doing. Whatever may divide believers and nonbelievers, there is something which unites them if they are true to their common tradition, and that is the common fight against idolatry and the deep conviction that no thing and no institution must ever take the place of God or, as nonbeliever may prefer to say, of that empty place which is reserved for the No-thing.” (Fromm 1968, 136).

Asceticism of the right kind could help to overcome this situation, and Fromm wrote about the distortion of asceticism in Protestant (and later in capitalist) ethics (Fromm 1965, 132-133). Genuine asceticism, which I will associate with sacrifice, is present in Orthodoxy. At first glance, Christian asceticism may look like masochism or a wish to escape from one’s own freedom. It could encourage avoiding responsibility for

one's life by following prescribed norms and rules, and at the same time, limiting oneself physically. But, as we have seen, one of the main tenets of Christianity is freedom of choice – this means the ability of a person to choose whether to act a certain way or not. That is what a person is, someone who is responsible for one's choices and their consequences. One could raise philosophical questions about the determinism to those consequences. But what is meant here is not that we are choosing a predetermined “path,” but we are in a sense choosing the consequences from that point of view – regardless of whether they suit us or not, and whether we could we accept them or not. In any situation of making a choice, we find ourselves limited by all possible consequences of that choice. However, in any case, this choice would be made by a person independently, and it would be based on one's own wishes and possibilities.

6. Sacrifice and Love

Sacrifice is one of the primary topics in religion, and it is also most important for Fromm's concept of love. In Christianity the greatest manifestations of God's love for people are, first, Christ's coming to earth, and then his physical death to atone for the sins of all people. From this religious perspective, all living people have an opportunity for salvation. Since Christ, and Christ's sacrifice, is proclaimed as a moral ideal, then people should accept sacrifice for the sake of the Other as one of the core values guiding the way they live their lives.

Fromm wrote that a wish to give (or to share) but not to take, should be regarded as a manifestation of a healthy (sane) love. “It is hardly necessary to stress the fact that the ability to love as an act of giving depends on the character development of the person. It presupposes the attainment of a predominantly productive orientation; in this orientation the person has overcome dependency, narcissistic omnipotence, the wish to exploit others or to hoard, and has acquired faith in his own human powers, courage to rely on his powers in the attainment of his goals. To the degree that these qualities are lacking, he is afraid of giving himself – hence of loving.” (Fromm 1956, 21-22)

And this is what Fromm wrote about the maturing of love of the person, when she is growing to stage of being ready for creating and giving love, which would become more important, than narcissism. Fromm argues that it is very important for one to have another person, with whom the understanding of giving love would come and enrich person's life with true sane feelings and emotions. For Fromm it is obvious, that to love is more important for person than being loved (Fromm 1956, 34).

Here we see the principle of “when you give – you multiply” at work,

and this also applies to our own efforts, time, emotions, knowledge, and so on. If a person is focused on moral and spiritual consumerism, then this may be taken to be a symptom of neurotic feelings, which get expressed in the exploitation of another person for one's own pleasure, comfort, or benefit. The idea of moral consumerism appeals to the Marx's theory of alienation, according to which we could talk about person's objectification or reification by another person, about usage of the other and objectifying and consuming him or her as a thing. For Fromm, these behaviors are obvious signs of selfishness and a lack of independence, and, hence, they are manifestations of an individual's immaturity.

Fromm says that love is absolutely natural for human beings. Moreover, only a person who is able to love oneself could love another person. I am not referring to selfish egoistic love or "selfhood", but about understanding and accepting oneself as a whole person who is ready to develop, to be open towards the world and towards other people. Of course, all this requires an openness to a person's worldview. But Protestantism has prevented that openness. Luther and Calvin, according to Fromm, considered self-love to be a sin. For them, love for oneself and love for one's neighbor are mutually exclusive concepts, since one who loves another cannot and should not love oneself; and the one who loves oneself cannot love another. (Fromm 1965, 134) That is why the concept of "love for oneself" is viewed as egotistical, and an obsession with oneself and one's desires and passions. However, this view is contrary to the second commandment of Christ: "Love thy neighbor as thyself". Following simple logic, we could see that there is love for oneself first, and this love orients a person in his or her love towards Another. A sane self-love is also based on the self-perception as "the image and likeness of God", and if one does not experience it, then there is no possibility of loving someone else. Moreover, this kind of love is not a morbid fixation on one person, but it extends to other people. Fromm also supports this idea of universal love: "Love is not a primarily a relationship to a specific person; it is attitude, an orientation of character which determines the relatedness of a person to the world as a whole, not toward one "object" of love. If a person loves only the other person and is indifferent to the rest of his fellow men, his love is not love but a symbiotic attachment, or an enlarged egoism." (Fromm 1956, 38-39)

Fromm distinguishes types of love, such as brotherly love, motherly love, erotic love, self-love, and love of God. He recognizes at the basis of love, in all manifestations, that creativity and development for both the object and the subject of love. However, under the guise of love and devotion, there could instead be hidden masochistic tendencies (which always go along with sadistic ones), such as continual attempts to justify one's desires to suffer by loyalty, fate, or circumstances.

7. Conclusion

We have surveyed discussed several intersections and common features to the humanistic views of Erich Fromm and the religious principles of Orthodoxy. There are major humanistic tendencies emphasized by both Fromm and Orthodoxy: the orientation to self-development, love, creative self-realization, and freedom and responsibility, and the need to progress towards true being instead of possession. (Fromm 1997, 45) Of course, there are both authoritarian and humanistic interpretations and practices within Christianity, including Orthodox Christianity. The existence of a purely humanistic or authoritarian religion is impossible, and different religions display various combinations of both features.

However, if we consider life as a dynamic and dialectically evolving process, we cannot ignore the tendencies of modernity. It is impossible within the framework of a religious doctrine to isolate oneself from the outside world and ignore current events or scientific breakthroughs. That is why there are mutual influences among religions who interact in the outer world, and, from the other direction, there are influences from the world that reach religious teachings. The primary distinction between a humanistic religion and an authoritarian religion is this: the humanistic religion is oriented to the individual person, to one's harmonious development as the very "image and likeness" of God, and not to any desire to control, suppress, and rule.

In Eastern Orthodoxy we can find additional common views shared with humanistic psychoanalysis, and I conclude with three points. First, there is the difference between the individualism that is common to the Western Protestant model for life, and the community spirit which common to the model of life in the East and Russia in particular. Fromm wrote about the overcoming of the first model's negativity (such as estrangement) through the values upheld by second model. Second, there are the humanistic tendencies which we noted in the ideas of Fromm and Eastern Orthodoxy. Both of them are based on a perception of the human being as a distinct whole personality, conceived as pursuing basic values of self-development, love, creative self-realization, freedom, and responsibility. Third, this conception of Person focuses on true being, and not on possession. Matters of faith are included here, because faith should not be thought of as a map with ready answers and solutions, but as the human way to seek oneself and the true moral Ideal.

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