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The Problem of Self-Realization in Maimonides, Spinoza, and Fromm

William J. Leffler II

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for Ordination.

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio

1959

Referee, Professor Mihaly

Digest of Contents

This paper deals with the general problem of man's self-realization as propounded by three Jews - Maimonides, Spinoza, and Fromm. Each lived at a different time in history and held different views on the subject. Yet underlying the differences is a common core, a core dependent on man's utilization of his rational powers, and through this means means realization of his self - his highest potential. To Maimonides this meant the imitation of God; to Spinoza, intellectual love of God; to Fromm, living productively. We shall deal with each of their views separately, criticizing only Fromm's, since far less has been written concerning his shortcomings than the others'. The conclusion of this paper will attempt to correlate the basic similarities and differences of these three men and then to relate their views to modern life.

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Introduction

The problem of self-realization is a complex one. It has puzzled thinkers for centuries and many men have attempted to provide answers to it. Today, more than ever, is it prominent, because the individual is becoming more and more submerged in our massive social structure and in so many ways becoming a mere automaton, a number in reams of statistics, a small cog in the mammoth machinery of modern culture. The individual has become lost in the bigness of business, of labor, of government - of every facet of life. And with this loss has arisen the problem of the individual self. How can man assert his own individuality in a world which seems to constantly negate that very individuality? But what is this self which needs to be asserted, and how do we come to know it? What can we do to keep if from being drowned in the sea of bigness? In modern language these are but a few of the questions which self-realization attempts to answer. It resolves itself into the question of how a person should live so that he may obtain the most out of the one life which God has granted him. The 'most' is the goal of self-realization.

Ethics considers the rightness and wrongness of principles, the goodness and evilness of habits and deeds. Into this realm we can place the problem of self-realization since it is concerned with man's conduct of his own life and the manner in which he deals with himself as the object of his own actions.

MacKenzie called Ethics a "normative science," one which "teaches us how to know,"[1] and termed it "the science of the ultimate end of life," or "the science of conduct,"[2] for "conduct is the whole of life."[3] It is only upon conduct that we can pass moral judgments;[4] there is no other criterion available to us. Martineau wrote about our moral judgments that they "constitute a body of ethical facts; and it is the aim of ethical science to strip from them their accidental, impulsive, unreflecting character.... To interpret, to vindicate, and to systematize the moral sentiments, constitutes the business of this department."[5]

Many theories of self-realization have been propounded. Aristotle said that it is achieved through the establishment of good habits.[6] "The most important element ... of well-being or good life for ordinary men Aristotle holds to consist in well-doing," and part of this way of life was the "happy mean" in one's actions.[7] Maimonides incorporated this latter view in part, as we shall see. Various forms of Hedonism have regarded "happiness or pleasure as the supreme end of life."[8] Among these have been Psychological Hedonism which "affirms the

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1. John S. MacKenzie, A Manual of Ethics, 2d Ed., University Correspondence College Press, 1894, p. 8.
2. Ibid., p. 1.
3. Ibid., p. 21.
4. Ibid., p. 32.
5. James Martineau, Types of Ethical Theory, 2d Ed. Rev., Vol 1, MacMillan & Co, 1886, p. 1.
6. Op. cit., MacKenzie, pp. 84-85.
7. Henry Sidgwick, Outlines of the History of Ethics for English Readers, 3d Ed., MacMillan & Co., 1892, pp. 58ff.
8. Op. cit., Martineau, p. 89.

seeking of pleasure as a psychological fact;"[9] Ethical Hedonism which affirms "that man ought always to seek pleasure;"[10] Egoistic Hedonism which holds "that what man seeks, or ought to seek is his own pleasure;"[11] and Universalistic Hedonism or Utilitarianism which holds "that what each seeks or ought to seek, is the greatest pleasure of all human beings, or even of all sentient creatures."[12] And one other group of philosophers which is concerned with self-realization is the Humanists who declare that "the good" is "the affirmation of life, the unfolding of man's powers."[13] These are all theories which revolve about man in his striving to realize himself. Each one emphasizes a different aspect of the problem. But each attempts to answer man's dilemma about himself in terms of an understanding and a knowledge of the self and consequently, each works with the self as its basis for realization. Thus we see that there are different approaches to the matter of man's "perfection" and the methods he ought to use in striving for its realization.

This paper will deal with the attempts of three Jews - Maimonides, Spinoza, and Fromm, to deal with the problem of self-realization. Each one has attempted to answer the problem in the language and to the understanding of his day. Thus there will be aspects of their presentation which will be temporal, but there will also be aspects which will transcend time-place,

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9. Op. cit., Matineau, pp. 89-90.
10. Ibid., pp. 89, 97ff.
11. Ibid., pp. 89, 100ff.
12. Ibid., pp. 89, 103ff.
13. Erich Fromm, Man for Himself, Rinehart & Co., 1947, p. 18.

and will speak to us out of the freshness of the moment. It is from the latter that we shall attempt to draw a message for modern man, however this can only be done after a thorough investigation of their presentations.

These three men were chosen because it was felt that each had an important message to bring concerning this subject, and, in addition, each was an important intellectual leader in his own world:- the Middle Ages, the Enlightenment, and the Modern World. Each of these men was, in varying degrees, influenced by Jewish tradition. Maimonides was deeply immersed in Judaism and was the leading Halachist of his day. His Mishneh Torah and Commentaries are still in esteem in Jewish circles. Spinoza was at one time one of Rabbi Monteira's most promising Talmud pupils, and "in the advanced classes of the Amsterdam school he had the opportunity of mastering the philosophical writings of the golden age of modern Jewish learning, the commentaries of Maimonides and Ibn Ezra."[14] Fromm is from an old German-Jewish family and makes numerous references to Judaism and Jewish sources in his writings. In addition, I have received it from a reliable source that he has on occasion participated in seminars on the Talmud at the Jewish Theological Seminary. However, no attempt will be made in this paper to correlate the writings of these men with their Jewish backgrounds.

In preparing this paper, one work of each of these men was of prime importance - Maimonides' Guide for the Perplexed,

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14. Frederick Pollock, Spinoza: His Life and Philosophy, Duckworth & Co, 1912, p. 10.

Spinoza's Ethics, and Fromm's Man for Himself. Other writings of these men were also utilized, as shall be seen, however the majority of their views on this subject are contained within the pages of these three most stimulating works. In addition to the primary sources, secondary material was also utilized to obtain other views concerning the ideas which these men set forth, and to aid in clarifying problems within their positions.

It is hoped that this paper will prove as interesting and thought provoking to the reader as it did to the author.

Maimonides

For centuries Maimonides nas been a controversial figure in Judaism. There have been those who viewed him as one of the greatest of Jews, "from Moses to Moses, there was none like Moses;" while others have been willing to excommunicate Jews who followed the teaching of Maimonides. His works were praised and condemned as the views of later generations coincided with his. Julius Guttmann has stated, "All changes in the intellectual and religious life of Jewry are reflected in the changes of attitude with regard to Maimonides."[1] This variety of attitudes is still found in today's literature on Maimonides.

This chapter will attempt to describe and investigate his views on the self-realization of man. It will not attempt to defend or refute him. As we shall see, some of his views are obscure, these we shall endeavor to clarify. Others will need little elucidation. We shall not argue with him, but try to understand what he has to tell us about this important subject.

Before beginning our investigation of his position, let us turn briefly to the introduction to his Guide for the Perplexed, the Moreh Nebuchim, his work which will be of the most aid to us in our search. In this introduction, he tells us that this, his magnum opus, was not the product of hasty thought and composition; on the contrary, he stated, "For what I have written in this work

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1. Maimonides: The Guide of the Perplexed, ed. Julius Guttmann, East and West Library, 1952, p. 7.

was not the suggestion of the moment; it is the result of deep study and great application."[2] Not only did he spend a great deal of effort in preparing this book, but he seems to have known in advance that it would be misunderstood by his readers - "It is very possible that he (the reader) may misunderstand my words to mean the exact opposite of what I intended to say."[3] Thus his style and presentation was not intended to be clear and concise, and so we ought not to be surprised at the differences of opinion concerning what he intended to have accepted as his beliefs on this matter.

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From this brief introduction to Maimonides, we turn our attention to the matter at hand. In this chapter we shall deal with four major categories - the Mean, Knowledge of God, the Prophet, and the Perfection of Man. These categories have an important bearing upon Maimonides' view of self-realization, although not all in the same manner, as we shall indicate. Nevertheless, they are all facets of the problem and need to be seen in their proper relationships in order to gain an understanding of Maimonides' attempt to describe "true human perfection."[4]

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The concept of the mean is Aristotelian. To Aristotle

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2. Maimonides, The Guide for the Perplexed, translated by M. Friedlander, George Routledge & Sons, Ltd, 1919, Introduction, p. 8.
3. Ibid., p. 9.
4. Ibid., Part III, Chapt 54, p. 395.

"the virtuous man, without internal conflict, wills actions that hit the happy mean in their effects."[5] Maimonides incorporated this concept into his philosophy in a number of instances. He stated that "whoever observes in his dispositions the mean is termed wise," and he defined the mean as "that disposition which is equally distant from the two extremes in its class, not being nearer to the one than the other."[6] In addition he described the use of the means in doing one's duties as a method of sanctifying God.[7] Perhaps for this reason, he was able to urge that "in every class of disposition, a man should choose the mean so that all one's dispositions shall occupy the exact middle between the extremes."[8] Thus, if a person be an extremist, Maimonides urged him to practice the opposite extremes until he was able to regain the right path.[9] He felt free to condemn the Nazirite as sinful for his ascetic excesses,[10] for as he stated elsewhere, "the really praiseworthy is the median course of action to which every one should strive to adhere, always weighing his conduct carefully, so that he may attain the proper mean."[11] He even went so far as to state that "the perfect Law ... aims at man's following the path of moderation, in accordance with the dictates of nature, eating drinking, enjoying

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5. Henry Sidgwick, Outlines of the History of Ethics for English Readers, MacMillan & Co., 1892, p. 59.
6. Maimonides, The Mishneh Torah, ed. Moses Hyamson, Bloch Publishing Co., 1937, Hilchos Dayos 1:4.
7. Ibid., Sefer HaMadah 5:11.
8. Ibid., Hilchos Dayos 2:7.
9. Ibid., 2:2.
10. Ibid., 1:3.
11. Maimonides, The Eight Chapters of Maimonides on Ethics, ed. Joseph I. Gorfinkle, Columbia University Press, 1912, Chapt 4, pp. 57-58.

legitimate sexual intercourse, all in moderation and living among people in honesty and uprightness, and not dwelling in the wilderness or in the mountains, or clothing oneself in garments of hair and wool, or afflicting the body."[12]

Maimonides' concern for the mean in life is a concern for the moral perfection of man, which is the third of his four perfections, and "the highest degree of excellency in man's character."[13] This perfection is concerned with man's ability to live in harmony with his neighbor, "for all moral principles concern the relation of man to his neighbor."[14] "These principles are only necessary and useful when man comes in contact with others."[15] This is because extremes of conduct pose difficulties for society, causing the confusion of extreme actions. Therefore, man ought to seek the mean "for the benefit of mankind," ... because when a person is alone, "all his good moral principles are at rest, they are not required, and give no perfection whatever."[16]

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We now turn our attention to the Knowledge of God.

In his Hilchos Dayos we find that Maimonides urged, "A man should direct all his thoughts and activities to the knowledge

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12. Op. cit., The Eight Chapters, Chapt. 4, p. 63.
13. Op. cit., Guide for the Perplexed, Part III, Chapt 54, p. 395.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.

of God, alone."[17] Elsewhere he stated that the highest degree of perfection is achieved by the "one who exerts all the faculties of his soul, and directs them towards the sole idea of comprehending God."[18] And he concluded the Moreh with the statement that "the perfection, in which man can truly glory, is attained by him when he has acquired - as far as this is possible for man - the knowledge of God ... Having acquired this knowledge he will then be determined always ... to imitate the ways of God."[19] From these scattered references, we see that the knowledge of God was of prime importance to man's attaining self-realization.

But how was this knowledge of God to be gained? To Maimonides, God "is simple essence, without any additional element whatever; He created the universe and knows it, but not by any extraneous force."[20] He devoted a number of chapters to proving that "all the actions of God emanate from His essence, not from any extraneous thing super-added to His essence.."[21] He further stated that "all we understand is the fact that He exists, that He is a Being to whom none of His creatures is similar, who has nothing in common with them, who does not include plurality, who is never too feeble to produce other beings, and whose relation to the universe is that of a steersman to a boat; and even this is not a real relation, a real simile, but serves only to convey

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17. Op. cit., Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Dayos 3:2.
18. Op. Cit., Eight Chapters, Chapt 5, p. 73.
19. Op. Cit., Guide for the Perplexed, Part III, Chapt 54, p. 397.
20. Ibid., Part I, Chapt 53, p. 74.
21. Ibid., Part I, Chapt 52, p. 72.

to us the idea that God rules the universe; that is that He gives it duration, and preserves its necessary arrangement ... In the comtemplation of His essence, our comprehension and knowledge prove insufficient; in the examination of His workd, how they necessarily result from His will, our knowledge proves to be ignorance, and in the endeavor to extol Him in words, all our efforts in speech are mere weakness and failure."[22] Thus in presenting this concept of the essence of God, Maimonides indicated that "we cannot describe the Creator by any means except by negative attributes."[23] Consequently, "we comprehend only the fact that He exists, not His essence."[24]

Nevertheless, there remain positive attributes which may be ascribed to God, however they "are attributes of His acts, and do not imply that God has qualities."[25] It is only through these attributes of action, according to Maimonides, that man is able to gain knowledge of God. "We learn (from the fact that Moses was 'shown the way of God') that God is known by His attributes," and that the knowledge of the works of God is the knowledge of His attributes, by which He can be known."[26] These attributes to which he refers "are the actions emanating from God. Our Sages call them middot (qualities), and speak of the thirteen middot of God."[27] In another instance, he mentions

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22. Op. cit., Guide for the Perplexed, Part I, Chapt 58, p. 83.
23. Ibid., p. 81.
24. Ibid., p. 82.
25. Ibid., Chapt 54, p. 78.
26. Ibid., p. 75.
27. Ibid., pp. 75-76.

"those attributes of God which occur in the Pentateuch, or in the books of the Prophets" and stated that "we must assume that they are exclusively employed ... to convey to us the notion of the perfection of the Creator, or to express qualities of actions emanating from Him."[28] This is the category of knowledge of God which Maimonides indicated was open to man so that he could "imitate the ways of God" and"seek loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness."[29]

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Our next area in the process of self-realization of man as discussed by Maimonides is the "Class of Prophets," which is the highest degree of excellency a man can achieve. He viewed the prophets as "those who have succeeded in finding a proof for everything that can be proved, who have attained a true knowledge of God, so far as a true knowledge can be attained, and are near the truth, whenever an approach to the truth is possible."[30] But "prophecy is impossible without study and training,"[31] nor is it possible without the influence of Divine Providence because "knowledge and Providence are connected with each other,"[32] and the Active Intellect because prophecy reaches man through this medium.[33] The latter two are entwined, as

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28. Op. cit., Guide for the Perplexed, Part I, Chapt 60, p. 89.
29. Ibid., Part III, Chapt 54, p. 397.
30. Ibid., Chapt 51, p. 385.
31. Ibid., Part II, Chapt 32, P. 220.
32. Ibid., Part III, Chapt 14, p. 282.
33. Ibid., Part II, Chapt 36, p. 225.

Maimonides held "that Divine Providence is related and closely connected with the intellect, because Providence can only proceed from and intelligent Being, from a being that is itself the most perfect Intellect."[34]

Divine Intellect affects only man, for "of all living beings mankind alone is directly under the control of Divine Providence."[35] But Divine Providence "is not the same for all individuals," as Husik stated, "but varies with the person's character and achievements."[36] "The greater the human perfection a person has attained, the greater the benefit he derives from Divine Providence," "for the action of Divine Providence is proportional to the endowment of the intellect."[37] "Providence watches over every rational being according to the amount of intellect that being possesses."[38]

Those people under the control of Divine Providence are also under the control of the Divine Intellect. They benefit by its influence "so as to become intellectual, and to comprehend things comprehensible to rational beings."[39] Maimonides stated that "by the influence of the intellect which emanates from God we become wise, by it we are guided and enabled to comprehend the Active Intellect,"[40] "which is neither a corporeal object

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34. Op. cit., Guide for the Perplexed, Part II, Chapt 17, p. 288.
35. Ibid., Chapt 18, p. 289.
36. Isaac Husik, A History of Medieval Jewish Philosophy, The Jewish Publication Society of America, p. 292.
37. Op.cit., Guide for the Perplexed, Part II, Chapt 18, p. 289.
38. Ibid., Part III, Chapt 51, p. 385.
39. Ibid., Part II, Chapt 17, p. 287.
40. Ibid., Chapt 12, p. 171.

nor a force residing in a body."[41] "Its task (is) to bring the human faculty of thought into actuality."[42] Through it "all human individuals receive their insight from a common source containing within itself all knowledge."[43] "All rational knowledge is based on the contact of the human mind with the super human Active Intellect, a contact which becomes closer to the extent that knowledge increases in a man. Since this Active Intellect in its turn is in contact with God, it becomes a medium through which contact between man and God is established."[44]

An understanding of Divine Providence and of the Active Intellect now permits us to deal with the "Class of Prophets."

As we stated above, "prophecy is impossible without study and training,"[45] because it requires a person to be "perfect in his intellectual and moral faculties, and also perfect, as far and possible, in his imaginative faculty."[46] "It is the highest degree and greatest perfection man can attain."[47] But there are difficulties in man's achieving the state of a prophet. "Prophecy is a faculty that cannot in any way be found in a person, or acquired by man, through a culture of mental and moral faculties; for even if these latter were as good and perfect as possible, they would be of no avail, unless they were combined with the highest excellence of the imaginative faculty."[48] This

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41. Op. cit., Guide for the Perplexed, Part I, Chapt 18, p. 182.
42. Op. cit., Guide of the Perplexed, p. 23.
43. Ibid., p. 23.
44. Ibid., p. 31.
45. Op. cit., Guide for the Perplexed, Part II, Chapt 18, p. 289.
46. Ibid., Chapt 32, p. 220.
47. A. Cohen, The Teachings of Maimonides, George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., 1927, p. 242.
48. Op. cit., Guide for the Perplexed, Part II, Chapt 36, p. 225.

imaginative faculty is "that Faculty which retains impressions of things perceptible to the mind, after they have ceased to affect directly the senses which conceived them."[49] In addition to a person's needing the right combination of ingredients in order to become a prophet, he needs also to be a recipient of the Active Intellect. Maimonides stated it as follows: "Prophecy is, in truth and reality, an emanation sent forth by the Divine Being through the medium of the Active Intellect, in the first instance to man's rational faculty, and then to his imaginative faculty."[50]

There are three views of prophecy which Maimonides described. The first one, held by "some ignorant people" "even among our coreligionists" holds that "God selects any person He pleases, inspires him with the spirit of Prophecy, and entrusts him with a mission. It makes no difference whether that person be wise or stupid, old or young; provided he be, to some extent, morally good."[51] The second view, held by "the philosophers," posits that "if a person, perfect in his intellectual and moral faculties, and also perfect, as far as possible, in his imaginative faculty, prepares himself ... he must become a prophet; for prophecy is a natural capacity of man. It is impossible that a man who has the capacity for prophecy should prepare himself for it without attaining it."[52] The third view, "which is taught in Scripture,

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49. Op. cit., A. Cohen, p. 242.
50. Op. cit., Guide for the Perplexed, Part II, Chapt 36, p. 225.
51. Ibid., Chapt 32, p. 219.
52. Ibid., p. 220.

and which forms one of the principles of our religion," "coincides with the opinion of the philosophers in all points except one. For we believe that, even if one has the capacity for prophecy, and has duly prepared himself, it may yet happen that he does not actually prophecy. It is in that case the will of God (that withholds from him the use of the faculty)." "It depends on the will of God whether the possibility is to be turned into reality."[53] "That those who have prepared themselves may still be prevented from being prophets, may be inferred from the history of Baruch, the son of Nerijah,"[54] the scribe of Jeremiah. Furthermore, prophecy may cease from a prophet for natural reasons - "Our sages say, Inspiration does not come upon a prophet when he is sad or languid."[55] But prophecy never ceases for supernatural reasons, for this would be "as exceptional as any other miracle," and so would not occur.[56]

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The fourth and last major category which we need to understand in order to arrive at Maimonides' view of the self-realization of man is the Perfection of Man. In the final chapter of his Guide he listed four kinds of perfection in man, as based on Jeremiah 9:22-23. They are the acquisition of wealth, physical perfection, moral perfection, and intellectual perfection.

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53. Op. cit., Guide for the Perplexed, Part II, Chapt 32, p. 220.
54. Ibid.,
55. Ibid., Chapt 36, p. 227.
56. Ibid., Chapt 32, p. 220.

The acquisition of wealth he considered the "lowest" of the four; it is a "relation entirely independent of the possessor."[57] The second, physical perfection, is more closely related to "man's body than the first," however "because it is a perfection of the body, man does not possess it as man, but as a living being."[58] The third, moral perfection, "is more closely connected with man himself, ... and is the highest degree of excellency in man's character." However, moral principles "are only necessary and useful when man comes in contact with others," "for all moral principles concern the relation of man to his neighbor."[59] The Mean is this kind of perfection. "The fourth kind of perfection is the true perfection of man; the possession of the highest intellectual faculties; the possession of such notions which lead to true metaphysical opinions as regards God. With this perfection man has obtained his final object; it gives him immortality, and on its account he is called man."[60] These perfections, while seemingly straightforward enough, cause a problem.

The difficulty is found in the closing sentences of the book, where Maimonides appeared to combine the third and fourth perfections when he stated concerning the fourth perfection, "Having acquired this knowledge (of God, man) will then be

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57. Op. cit., Guide for the Perplexed, Part III, Chapt 54, p. 395.
58. Ibid.
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid.

determined always to seek loving-kindness, judgment and righteousness, and thus to imitate the ways of God."[61] This statement epitomizes Maimonides view of the self-realization of man, for he had earlier urged man, "Your aim must therefore be to attain the (fourth) perfection that is exclusively yours, and (you) ought not to continue to work and weary yourself for that which belongs to others," namely the three other perfections.[62] This problem has been called both "a vacillation of terminology,"[63] and "the combination of the intellectual and the ethical."[64] It is the problem we shall attempt to resolve.

Let us first look more closely at the third perfection, moral perfection. Its purpose is **societal**, because when man is alone "all his good moral principles are at rest, they are not required, and give man no perfection whatever."[65] However, in the Eight Chapters, his introduction to his commentary of Pirke Avos, he urged man to "busy himself in acquiring the moral and mental virtues," which he termed "the real duty of man."[66] And in the Mishneh Torah he delineated eleven laws of ethical behavior. Of these ten were concerned with man's relation to his fellowman.[67] Thus Maimonides evidenced a concern

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61. Op. cit., Guide for the Perplexed, Part III, Chapt 54, p. 397.
62. Ibid., p. 395.
63. Op. cit., Guide of the Perplexed, p. 32.
64. Eugene Mihaly, Reform Judaism and Halacha, off-print, Central Conference of American Rabbis Yearbook, Vol 64, 1954, pp. 10-11.
65. Op. cit., Guide for the Perplexed, Part III, Chapt 54, p. 395.
66. Op. cit., Eight Chapters, Chapt 5, p. 71.
67. Op. cit., Mishneh Torah, Sefer HaMadah 20a.

for the third perfection, however, as we shall see, it was of far less importance to him than the fourth perfection.

Maimonides great concern was with the fourth perfection, the "true perfection." But was this perfection merely "theoretical knowledge,"[68] or did it involve "another higher value to which intellectual perfection must lead?"[69] As we look further into Maimonides' discussion of the matter, I believe that we shall find that the latter understanding of the fourth perfection is the one he intended his reader to accept as the ultimate goal of man's self-realization.

In the Mishneh Torah, Maimonides urged man to "direct all his thoughts and activities to the knowledge of God, alone."[70] And in the Eight Chapters he stated that the highest degree of perfection is achieved by the "one who exerts all the facilities of his soul, and directs them towards the sole idea of comprehending God."[71]

But this knowledge was not purposeless, rather was there a relationship between it and proper actions. Maimonides stated, "If men possessed wisdom, which stands in the same relation to the form of man as the sight to the eye, they would not cause any injury to themselves or to others; for the knowledge of truth removes hatred and quarrels and prevents mutual injuries."[72]

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68. Op. cit., Guide of the Perplexed, p. 30.
69. Samuel Atlas, The Contemporary Relevance of the Philosophy of Maimonides, Central Conference of American Rabbis Yearbook, Vol 64, 1954, p. 203.
70. Op. cit., Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Dayos 3:2.
71. Op. cit., Eight Chapters, Chapt 5, p. 73.
72. Op. cit., Guide for the Perplexed, Part III, Chapt 11, p. 267.

This statement is one of the first which the reader comes upon in his study of the Guide which seems to indicate that knowledge is more than merely theoretical, but that it has a purpose. Maimonides later added that "when you have arrived by way of intellectual research at a knowledge of God and His works, then commence to devote yourselves to Him." "Thus the Law distinctly states that the highest kind of worship ... is only possible after the acquisition of the knowledge of God."[73] In these statements he seems to have been hinting at a purpose for the knowledge of God.

This purpose, at which he was hinting, is a synthesis, a union of the third perfection with the fourth - the knowledge of God with moral actions. Dr. Guttmann summarizes it as follows: "Maimonides evidently distinguishes between a form of morality which rests merely on the exercise of practical insight and one which stems from the knowledge of God. The former serves only the welfare of society and does not form part of the true essence of man; the latter is rooted in the highest stage of human knowledge and is the expression of man's communion with God."[74] Samual Atlas, in confirming this view, adds that "Maimonides does not consider the intellectual comprehension of the essence of God as the last and ultimate value. There is still another higher value to which intellectual perfection

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73. Op. cit., Guide for the Perplexed, Part III, Chapt 51, p. 385.
74. Op. cit., Guide of the Perplexed, p. 35.

must lead, namely the striving for the realization of righteousness and justice."[75]

But by what means can man arrive at this synthesis within life? It is brought about through the "intellect which emanates from God," but man can only make this synthesis when he "employes (his intellect) in the love of God, and seeks that love."[76] This "love is the result of the truths taught in the Law, including the true knowledge of the Existence of God."[77] It requires man to comprehend the middot of God, the attributes of action, so that he may "imitate the ways of God."[78] But this "is only possible when we comprehend the real nature of things, and understand the divine wisdom displayed therein."[79]

Only now can we fully grasp the significance of the closing sentences of the Guide in which Maimonides stated that "the perfection, in which man can truly glory, is attained by him when he has acquired - as far as this is possible for man - the knowledge of God, the knowledge of His Providence, and of the manner in which it influences His creatures in their production and continued existence. Having acquired this knowledge he will then be determined always to seek loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, and thus to imitate the ways of God."[80] We

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75. Op. cit., Samuel Atlas, p. 203.
76. Op. cit., Guide for the Perplexed, Part III, Chapt 51, p. 386.
77. Ibid., Chapt 52, p. 392.
78. Ibid., Chapt 54, p. 395.
79. Ibid., Chapt 28, p. 314.
80. Ibid., Chapt 54, p. 395.

can also understand why it is that "the prophet does not content himself with explaining that the knowledge of God is the highest perfection, ... (but) that the Divine acts ... ought to be known and ought to serve as a guide for our actions."[81]

Thus we see, as Dr. Atlas states it, that Maimonides' concept of the self realization of man "consists in imitatio dei, i.e., in human striving for the realization of the ethical ideal,"[82] and this ideal "is bound up with the concept of man as a being having the capacity to transcend himself and to transform the world." This involves an "ultimate ethical value" and "evolves an infinite ideal"[83] towards which man ought to strive in the process of his self-realization.

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81. Op. cit., Guide for the Perplexed, Part III, Chapt 54, p. 395.
82. Op. cit., Samuel Atlas, p. 202.
83. Ibid,, p. 205.

Spinoza

A philosopher who publishes his views on life and on the world in which man lives does so for a number of reasons, no one of which is foremost at all times. Different motives may dominate various portions of his presentation. However, in Spinoza's works we find that one motive appears to be dominant. John Wild tells us that "the real motivation back of his (Spinoza's) philosophy is the practical interest as to how to live well."[1] We shall attempt to view only one aspect of this motivation, his guide to man's self-realization.

Robert Duff calls Spinoza a Utilitarian, although neither in the Hedonistic sense that pleasure based on one's own experience, the experience of others, or the recorded experience of the race is the ultimate end of human life, nor in the Spencerian sense that, based on the laws of Evolution, specific conduct must cause pleasure.[2] Rather was Spinoza a Utilitarian in that he employed "Utility in the general sense of human welfare,"[3] yet acknowledging that man seeks this universal welfare in the particular problems which confront him. Man is continually "seeking his own welfare as it presents itself to him."[4] This concept is important, as we shall indicate later, in that man's

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1. Spinoza - Selections, ed. John Wild, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1930, p. xxxix.
2. Hastings Rashdall, The Theory of Good and Evil, vol 2, 2nd Ed. Oxford University Press, 1924, pp. 377-379.
3. Robert A. Duff, Spinoza's Political and Ethical Philosophy, James MacLehose and Sons, 1903, p. 83.
4. Ibid., p. 82.

self-realization is not only a personal matter in Spinoza, but is concerned with man as "a part of the whole of nature, whose order we follow."[5]

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This chapter will consist of four sections, each one dealing with a major aspect of our problem. These divisions are Nature and Freedom of Will, Affects, Virtue, and God and the Knowledge of Him. In each section we shall attempt to clarify what Spinoza meant when he used these terms and what were some of the problems which these terms evoked. It is hoped that through this method we can arrive at a clear picture of Spinoza's idea of the self-realization of man.

* * *

Nature and Freedom of the Will are, in one aspect, closely related in Spinoza. "Nothing happens in nature which can be attributed to any vice of nature, for she is always the same and everywhere one."[6] This is because "nature is a systematic whole, concatenated in all its parts. Nature, however, is not for him the physical world, but the whole of reality ... including all existence, the conscious and self-conscious, as well as the mechanical and the organic." Of this nature "man is and must be a part. His relation to this system is intrinsic, essential, permanent. Whatever qualities, endowments, attributes, he may have, cannot conflict with this necessary dependence."[7]

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5. Ethics, Part 4, Appendix xxxii.
6. Ibid., Part 3, Introduction.
7. Op. cit., Duff, p. 37.

This view of nature sets the stage for Spinoza's concept of freedom of the will for man, for "freedom of will as commonly conceived is ... inconsistent with a necessary order (of nature) governed by universal laws. For such freedom is supposed to mean the power of acting without motive, or contrary to the strongest motive, the power of obeying or of disobeying Reason."[8]

Spinoza defined Freedom as follows: "That thing is called free which exists from necessity of its own nature alone, and is determined to action by itself.alone."[9] He further proposed that "the will cannot be called a free cause, but can only be called necessary." "In whatever way, therefore, the will be conceived, whether as finite or infinite, it requires a cause by which it may be determined to existence and action, and therefore it cannot be called a free cause but only necessary or compelled."[10] Under such a system, the only 'free cause' is the whole of reality, that is God, or Nature. Man can make no such claim for this will. "The force by which he perseveres in his existence is limited, and is infinitely exceeded by the power of outward cause."[11]

With such a concept of nature, freedom of will for man can only mean an understanding of one's position in the whole of reality, the acceptance of this position and the living rationally within this context. Spinoza stated that "the more

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8. Op. cit., Duff, p. 38.
9. Ethics, Part 1, Definition 7.
10. Ibid., Part 1, Prop 32, Demonst.
11. Op. cit., Duff, pp. 40-41.

free then we consider a man to be, the less we say of him, that he is able not to make use of Reason, and to choose evil rather than good."[12] Duff tells us that "freedom means not only the liberty to be, and to realize oneself, but the power to do so.... Freedom in fact is self-determination, or determination from the necessity of one's own nature alone,as distinguished from determination from without, which reveals the power of things, but our own subordination and weakness."[13] This weakness Spinoza called bondage, as he wrote, "The impotence of man to govern or restrain the affects I call bondage, for a man who is under their control is not his own master, but is mastered by fortune, in whose power he is."[14] Thus we find the free man's meditation is "upon life"[15] and how he can best live it in accordance with his own reason and nature.

This concept of freedom of will is difficult for men to comprehend, because they often "believe themselves to be free simply because they are conscious of their own actions, (but) know nothing of the causes by which they are determined."[16] In fact, "in the mind there is no absolute or free will, but the mind is determined to this or that volition by a cause, which is determined by another cause, and this again by another ad infinitum."[17] Therefore, Spinoza urged that "it is necessary

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12. Op. cit., Duff, p. 110, quoting Tract Pol, Ch 2, Sect 7.
13. Ibid., p. 110.
14. Ethics, Part 4, Preface.
15. Op. cit., Wild, p. lx.
16. Op. cit., Duff, p. 38.
    Also, Ethics, Part 1, Appendix; Part 3, Prop 2, Schol; Part 4, Preface.
17. Ibid., Part 2, Prop 48; also Part 1, Prop 32.

for us to know both the strength and weakness of our nature, so that we may determine what reason can do and what it cannot do in governing the affects."[18] Only through the use of his ability to think and use his powers of reason can man approach true freedom,[19] and the knowledge of the union exisiting between himself and the whole of nature.[20] Thus it is that freedom, in Spinoza's view, is "action from self-determination," "from the necessity of the agent's own nature."[21]

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Spinoza declared that "man has no knowledge of himself except through the affections of his body and their ideas."[22] These affects play an important role in our understanding of man's process of self-realization.

Spinoza defined Affect as follows: "By affect I understand the affectations of the body by which the power of acting of the body is increased, diminished, helped or hindered, together with the ideas of these affectations. If, therefore, we can be the adequate cause of any of these affectations, I understand the affect to be an action, otherwise it is a passion."[23] Furthermore, "the actions of the mind arise from adequate ideas alone, but the passions depend upon those alone which are inadequate.

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18. Ethics, Part 4, Prop 17, Schol.
19. Op. cit., Duff, pp. 68-69.
20. On the Improvement of Understanding.
21. Op. cit., Duff, pp. 68-69.
22. Ethics, Part 3, Prop 53, Demonst; also Part 2, Prop 19 & 23.
23. Ibid., Part 3, Definition 3.
24. Ibid., Part 3, Prop 3.

The affects of man's actions upon his life are not a simple mechanical process. Rather is it a complex matter and Spinoza did not hesitate to clearly indicate the intricacy. There are numerous factors which interfere with man's control of his affects. He stated that "human power is very limited, and is infinitely surpassed by the power of external causes," so that man does notpossess absolute ability to adapt to his service things which are external to him. He added that man "is a part of the whole of nature," and that this very fact limits his actions. Nevertheless, Spinoza declared that man can bear with equinimity those things which happen to him which are contrary to his self-interest, if he is conscious that he has acted rationally and that his power could not reach as far as to enable him to avoid those things, since he, as part of nature, must follow its order.[25]

As we saw in our definition, not all affects are caused by adequate causes. Those which are not, Spinoza termed passions. An adequate cause is one "whose effect can be clearly and distinctly perceived by means of the cause." An inadequate or partial cause is one "whose effect cannot be understood by means of the cause alone."[26] Thus we find that "the actions of the mind arise from adequate ideas alone, but the passions depend upon those alone which are inadequate."[27] These passions

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25. Ethics, Part 4, Appendix xxxii.
26. Ibid., Part 3, Definition 1.
27. Ibid., Part 3, Prop 3.

are an important factor in man's inability to achieve self-perfection, for they are the passive aspect of life - man is affected by passions. Spinoza stated that "in so far as men are subjected to passions, they cannot be said to agree in nature,"[28] and added that "in so far as men are aggitated by affects that are passions can they be contrary to one another."[29] These passions lead to inconsistency in man and arbitrary changeableness,[30] causing him to make faulty judgments concerning what is good both for himself and for his fellowman.[31] However, "an affect which is a passion ceases to be a passion as soon as we form a clear and distinct idea of it."[32] For this reason it is understandable that Spinoza admonished the 'free man' to understand his passions so that he might be master over them.[33]

There are three basic affects in Spinoza - conatus, joy and sorrow. All the remainder are derived from these three.[34] Spinoza defined them as follows:

"The conatus by which each thing endeavors to persevere in its own being is nothing but the actual essence of the thing itself."[35]

"Joy is man's passage from a less to a greater perfection."[36]

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28. Ethics, Part 4, Prop 32.
29. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 34.
30. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 33.
31. Op. cit., Duff, p. 98.
32. Ethics, Part 5, Prop 3.
33. Frederick Pollack, Spinoza: His Life and Philosophy, Duckworth & Co., 1912, p. 264.
34. Ethics, Part 3, Prop 59.
35. Ibid., Part 3, Prop 7. The Affects, Definition 1.
36. Ibid., Part 3, Prop 59, The Affects, Definition 2.

"Sorrow is man's passage from a greater to a less perfection."[37] Of these three, only conatus and joy are related to man's actions; sorrow lessens man's power of thinking and thus his actions, and is an affect causing passions.[38] But joy also is a passion. For both "joy and sorrow, and consequently the affects which are compounded of these or derived from them are passions."[39] Wonder, Contempt, Love, Hope, Fear, Security, Remorse, Pity, Gratitude, Envy, Humility and many others Spinoza includes as passions "in so far as the Mind itself is not their adequate or sufficient cause; or, to put it otherwise, they are Passions in so far as the Mind has only inadequate ideas of them."[40] However, "joy is not directly evil, but good; sorrow, on the other hand, is directly evil."[41]

As we have just seen, sorrow has many aspects, which Spinoza described at length. One of the more prominent of these is fear, which he defined as "a sorrow not constant, arising from the idea of something future or past, about the issue of which we sometimes doubt."[42] Fear can cause a person to live according to the judgment of a benefactor rather than his own, deceiving his mind and his judgment.[43] However, fear is able to prevent strife, but it does not promote mutual confidence as it depends on the"impotence of the Spirit" in the fearer and weakens the

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37. Ethics, Part 3, Prop 59, The Affects, Definition 3.
38. Ibid., Part 3, Prop 59; also Prop 11.
39. Ibid., Part 3, Prop 56, Demonst; also Prop 11, Schol.
40. Op. cit., Duff, p. 117.
41. Ethics, Part 4, Prop 41.
42. Ibid., Part 3, Prop 59, The Affects, Definition 13.
43. Op. cit., Duff, p. 111.

the society to which he belongs.[44] Spinoza also denounced fear as a contributing factor to superstition.[45]

There are other affects which are concomitants of sorrow, such as hatred, despair, and indignation which Spinoza discussed at length and which adversely affect man's ability to pass to greater perfection.[46] In Spinoza's view these are all influences of the conatus, which he understood as "all the efforts, impulses, appetites, and volitions of a man which vary according to his changing disposition." He added that not infrequently they "are so opposed to one another that (man) is drawn hither and thither, and knows not whither he ought to turn."[47] Nevertheless, they are "the effort by which man strives to persevere in his being."[48] He stated that the conatus "by which we are chiefly moved (has) regard to the present and not to the future,"[49] yet some, such as confidence and despair,[50] have the future enmeshed within them.

Not all affects are derived from sorrow. The other side of the coin is those affects derived from joy, the passage to greater perfection, but "not perfection itself."[51] Spinoza viewed joy as a stronger source of the conatus than sorrow, other things being equal; yet because the conatus is the essence of man and is often in conflict with him, man is often

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44. Op. cit., Duff, pp. 138-139.
45. Ethics, Part 3, Prop 50, Schol; also Part 4, Prop 43, Schol.
46. Ibid., Part 3, Prop 59, The Affects, Definitions 7, 15, 20.
47. Ibid., Part 3, Prop 59, The Affects, Definition 1, Explan.
48. Ibid., Part 3, Prop 8.
49. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 60. Schol.
50. Ibid., Part 3, Prop 59, The Affects, Definitions 14, 15.
51. Ibid., Part 3, Prop 59, The Affects, Definition 3, Explan.

led to impotence and instability.[52] Nevertheless, man attempts to remove or destroy everything which he views opposed to joy and conducive to sorrow. This is what he seeks and aims at in life.[53] Spinoza later connected the striving for joy with the essence of man when he stated that "no one can desire to be happy, to act well and to live well, who does not at the same time desire to be, to act and to live, that is to say, actually to exist."[54] However, inadequate ideas causing passions can interfere with this goal. Despite these obstacles, Spinoza proposed that "there is no affection of the body of which we cannot form some clear and distinct conception. In the scholium to this proposition he stated, "It is a necessary consequence that every one has the power, partly as least, if not absolutely, of understanding clearly and distinctly himself and his affects, and consequently of bringing it to pass that he suffers less from them."[55]

Furthermore, joy and sorrow are closely linked in their affections. This is clearly seen in Spinoza's discussion of hope and fear, non-constant aspects of joy and sorrow. Spinoza stated, "There is no hope without fear nor fear without hope, for the person who wavers in hope and doubts concerning the issue of anything is supposed to imagine something which may exclude its existence, and so far, therefore, to be sad, and

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52. Ethics, Part 4, Prop 18.
53. Ibid., Part 3, Prop 28, Demonst.
54. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 21.
55. Ibid., Part 5, Prop 4.

consequently while he wavers in hope, to fear lest his wishes should not be accomplished." Similar conditions hold for fear.[56]

Good and evil were also allied to joy and sorrow. Spinoza wrote, "Knowledge of good and evil is nothing but an affect of joy and sorrow in so far as we are conscious of it."[57] In his view, "we do not desire anything because we adjudge it to be good, but on the contrary, we call it good because we desire it, and consequently everything to which we are adverse we call evil." He understood good as "every kind of joy and everything that conduces to it; chiefly however, anything that satisfies longing, whatever that may be. By evil (he understood) every kind of sorrow, and chiefly whatever thwarts longing."[58] He further stated that "a thing is called by us good or evil as it increases or diminishes, helps or restrains, our powers of action."[59] Good and evil are also related to man's reasoning powers for he later stated that "we do not know that anything is certainly good or evil excepting that which actually conduces to (our) understanding, or which can prevent us from understanding."[60] But "according to the guidance of reason, of two things which are good, we shall follow the greater good, and of two evils, we shall follow the less."[61] In addition, he viewed good as necessarily agreeing with man's nature and evil

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56. Ethics, Part 3, Prop 59, The Affects, Definitions 12, 13 & Explan.
57. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 8.
58. Ibid., Part 3, Prop 39, Schol.
    Also, James Martineau, Types of Ethical Theory, 2nd ed, rev. Vol 1, MacMillam & Co, 1886, p. 348.
59. Ethics, Part 4, Prop 8, Demonst.
60. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 27.
61. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 64.

as contrary to it, and that both qualities must possess "something in common with ourselves."[62] With these views of good and evil, and his opinion that ideally man is able to know all his affects, Spinoza was able to posit that "if the mind had none but adequate ideas, it would form no notion of evil."[63]

From these views we may assume that to Spinoza good and evil were qualities which were intimately connected with the individual man and his attempts to live in such a manner as to suffer a minimum from his affects. Each man in striving for the good attempts to fulfill his "longing" and to increase his "power of action" and his "understanding." Duff states that Spinoza maintained "both that all good is relative to and conditional to the individual and his desires, and yet that for each individual there is an absolute and supreme good, which he ought to seek, or a law to which as a moral being he is obliged to have regard."[64] Further, he adds that "the good of each man is necessarily the objective good. It is his good only as he can best realize himself in, and through the objects and persons without him; and this he cannot do save as he knows them adequately."[65] This adequate knowledge can only be gained through control of his affects, which leads to his actions and not passions, for man can only realize himself through actions. Thus Spinoza linked affects to man's freedom in that only the

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62. Ethics, Part 4, Prop 29, 30, 31.
63. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 64.
64. Op. cit., Duff, pp. 94-95.
65. Ibid., p. 124.

free man has complete control over his affects.[66]

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To Spinoza, virtue and power were synonyms. He stated, "By virtue and power I understand the same thing, that is to say virtue, in so far as it is related to man, is the essence itself or nature of the man in so far as it has the powerower of affecting certain things which can be understood through the laws of its nature alone."[67] In this view, "the foundation of virtue is that endeavor itself to preserve our own being, ... and happiness consists in this - that a man can preserve his own being." Furthermore, Spinoza posited that the person who sought virtue for an ulterior motive was not as virtuous as he who sought virtue for its own sake,[68] even though in seeking it for its own sake, there is implied a reward for whomever gains it. There is no virtue which can be conceived prior to self-preservation, an effort which is nothing else than the person being what he is.[69] "The more each person strives and is able to seek his own profit, that is to say, to preserve his being, the more virtue does he possess; on the other hand, in so far as each person neglects his own profit, that is to say, neglects to preserve his own being, is he impotent."[70] Thus we find that virtue is also freedom, in Spinoza's understanding of the word. "It is activity, energy, self-expression, not

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66. Op. cit., Duff, p. 110.
67. Ethics, Part 4, Definition 8; also, Part 3, Prop 7.
68. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 18, Schol.
69. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 22; also Op. cit., Pollock, p. 201.
70. Ethics, Part 4, Prop 20, 24.

subjection to outward cause," and "the only reward open to the virtuous man is virtue itself."[71]

Man's ability to act inconformity with virtue is closely linked to his comprehension of his affects. Spinoza stated that "a man cannot be absolutely said to act in conformity with virtue, in so far as he is determined to any action because he has inadequate ideas, but only in so far as he is determined because he understands."[72] Furthermore, since to act in conformity with virtue means to live, act and preserve our being,[73] "no one endeavors to preserve his own being for the sake of another object."[74] This too requires adequate understanding of one's affects.

The difficulties in attaining virtue are also increased by forces outside of man. Spinoza acknowledged this when he stated, "no one, therefore, unless defeated by external causes and those which are contrary to nature, neglects to seek his own profit or preserve his own being."[75] Thus to achieve one's own virtue required a thorough understanding of oneself, both of one's internal desires and of one's external pressures and a mastery of both of them.[76] However the attainment of virtue for man was not self-centered. He stated that "men can desire ... nothing more excellent for the preservation of their being than that all should so agree at every point that the minds of all

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71. Op. cit., Duff, p. 86.
72. Ethics, Part 4, Prop 23.
73. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 24.
74. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 25.
75. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 20, Schol.
76. Op. cit., Duff, p. 109.

should form, as it were, one mind and one body; that all should together endeavor as much as possible to preserve their being, and that all should together seek the common good of all, ... (desiring) nothing for themselves which they do not desire for other men,"[77] "so that all may equally enjoy it."[78] Thus it is only through seeking the common good that man can seek his own advantage,[79] and live and act in conformity with virtue.

The goal of living in accordance with virtue is accomplished only under the guidance of reason, for "to act in conformity with virtue is to act according to the guidance of reason, and every effort which we make through reason is an effort to understand."[80] Reason also leads man to be honorable,[81] and since virtue involves one's fellowman, "the good which everyone who follows after virtue seeks for himself he will desire for other men."[82] Thus "it follows that men, only in so far as they live according to the guidance of reason, necessarily do those things which are good to human nature, and consequently to each man."[83]

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With our understanding of freedom of will, affects and virtue in Spinoza, we can now turn our attention to the capstone of his view of self-realization, and to all of his philosophy for that matter - God. Professor Ratner wrote that God was

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77. Ethics, Part 4, Prop 18, Schol.
78. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 36.
79. Op. cit., Duff, p. 84, quoted from A Short Treatise on God, Man, and His Well-Being, Part 2, Chapt 26.
80. Ethics, Part 4, Prop 36, Demonst.
81. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 37, Schol.
82. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 37.
83. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 35, Demonst.

"the veritable beginning and end of all his thought."[84] However, before we can continue, we need to define a few more terms which Spinoza used.

"By God, I understand Being absolutely infinite, that is to say, substance consisting of infinite attributes, each one of which expresses eternal and infinite essence.... I say absolutely infinite but not infinite in its own kind; for of whatever is infinite only in its own kind, we can deny infinite attributes; but to the essence of that which is absolutely infinite pertains whatever expresses essence and involves no negation."[85]

"By substance, I understand that which is in itself and is conceived through itself; in other words, that the conception of which does not need the conception of another thing from which it must be formed."[86]

"By attribute, I understand that which the intellect perceives of substance, as if containing its essence."[87]

"By mode, I understand the affections of substance, or that which is in another thing through wich also it is conceived."[88]

Basing himself of these definitions, Spinoza built his

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84. The Philosophy of Spinoza, ed. John Ratner, Modern Library, 1927, p. lxi.
85. Ethics, Part 1, Definition 6.
86. Ibid., Part 1, Definition 3.
87. Ibid., Part 1, Definition 4.
88. Ibid., Part 1, Definition 5.

view of God and of man's relationship to Him. He posited that "God, or substance consisting of infinite attributes, each one of which expresses eternal and infinite essence, necessarily exists," for "inability to exist is impotence, and,on the hand, ability to exist is power, as is self-evident."[89]

Other terms and concepts need also to be clarified. Spinoza stated as axiomatic that "man thinks,"[90] and "modes of thought, such as love, desire, or the affections of the mind (the formal Being of ideas),[91] by whatever names they may be called, do not exist, unless in the same individual the idea exists of a thing loved, desired, etc."[92] He defined body as "a mode which expresses in a certain determinate manner the essence of God in so far as He is considered as the thing extended."[93] Based upon this it was axiomatic that "no individual things are felt or perceived by us excepting bodies or modes of thought."[94] He defined an idea as "a conception of the mind which the mind forms because it is a thinking thing,"[95] and an adequate idea as "an idea which, in so far as it is considered in itself, without reference to the object, has all the properties or internal signs of a true idea."[96]

From these definitions and axioms we can proceed to consider

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89. Ethics, Part 1, Prop 11.
90. Ibid., Part 2, Axiom 2.
91. Ibid., Part 2, Prop 5.
92. Ibid., Part 2, Axiom 3.
93. Ibid., Part 2, Definition 1.
94. Ibid., Part 2, Axiom 5.
95. Ibid., Part 2, Definition 3.
96. Ibid., Part 2, Definition 4.

Spinoza's view of God and its relation to the problem of man's self-realization.

Spinoza posited that "the mind does not know itself except in so far as it perceives the ideas of the affection of the body."[97] In order to perceive these ideas, man comes in contact with God because "there exists in God the idea or knowledge of the human mind which follows in Him, and is related to Him in the same way as the idea or the knowledge of the human body."[98] This occurs because "thought is an attribute of God, or God is a thinking thing." He demostrated this proposition by stating that "individual thoughts, or this and that thought, are modes which express the nature of God in a certain and determinate manner."[99] From this we find that "the ideas both of God's attributes and of individual things do not recognize as their efficient cause the objects of the ideas or the things which are perceived, but God Himself in so far as He is a thinking thing."[100] Thus "the idea of an individual thing actually existing has God for a cause, not in so far as He is infinite, but in so far as He is considered to be affected by another idea of an individual thing actually existing, of which idea also He is the cause in so far as He is affected by a third and so far ad infinitum."[101] We find then that God is the cause

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97. Ethics, Part 2, Prop 23.
98. Ibid., Part 2, Prop 20.
99. Ibid., Part 2, Prop 1 and Demonst.
100. Ibid., Part 2, Prop 5.
101. Ibid., Part 2, Prop 9.

for all ideas and in this way man's mind is related to God as its efficient cause, making God and immanent cause of all things.[102] As a result of this view, Spinoza was able to state that "the human mind is a part of the infinite intellect of God, and therefore, when we say that the human mind perceives this or that thing, we say nothing else than God has this or that idea; not indeed in so far as He is infinite, but in so far as He is manifested through the nature of the human mind, or in so far as He forms the essence of the human mind."[103]

Furthermore, we find that "every idea which in us is absolute, that is to say, adequate and perfect, is true,"[104] and "a true idea in us is that which in God is adequate, in so far as He is manifested by the nature of the human mind."[105] This occurs because perfect ideas have God as their efficient cause, and "all ideas, in so far as they are related to God, are true."[106] Nevertheless, "whatever is, is in God, and nothing can either be or be conceived without God,"[107] so that the more we understand individual ideas and objects the more we understand God."[108] In this way man achieves adequate ideas.

The ideas which man perceives "are modes by which the attributes of God are expressed in a certain and determinate

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102. Ethics, Part 1, Prop 18.
103. Ibid., Part 2, Prop 11, Corol.
104. Ibid., Part 2, Prop 34.
105. Ibid., Part 2, Prop 43.
106. Ibid., Part 2, Prop 32.
107. Ibid., Part 1, Prop 15.
108. Ibid., Part 5, Prop 24.

manner,"[109] for the "modes of any attribute have God for a cause."[110] However, God is a cause "only in so far as He is considered under that attribute of which they are modes, and not in so far as He is considered under any other attribute."[111] Thus man perceives his ideas from the modes of God.

Spinoza also considered God to be eternal, and therefore "all His attributes are eternal."[112] From this eternality of God and His attributes and modes, and from the fact that "God is absolutely the first cause,"[113] Spinoza was able to posit that "every idea of any body or actually existing thing necessarily involves the eternal and infinite essence of God;"[114] that "the knowledge of the eternal and infinite essence of God which each idea involves is adequate and perfect;"[115] and that "the human idea possesses an adequate knowledge of the eternal and infinite essence of God."[116] Through these propositions Spinoza related the infinite modes of God to man's ability to think and to perceive ideas,[117] and to his ability to know God.

After these preliminary, but important, clarifications concerning Spinoza's view of God and His relation to man, we can now turn our attention to the process of realizing the self as put forth by Spinoza.

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109. Ethics, Part 3, Prop 6, Demonst.
110. Ibid., Part 2, Prop 6.
111. Ibid., Part 1, Prop 18.
112. Ibid., Part 1, Prop 16, Corol 3.
113. Ibid., Part 2, Prop 45.
114. Ibid., Part 2, Prop 46.
115. Ibid., Part 2, Prop 47.
116. Ibid., Part 1, Prop 21 & 23.
117. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 28.

Knowledge of God is "the highest good of the mind" and to know God "the highest virtue of the mind."[118] This knowledge is "good for its own sake and not merely as a means,[119] and the greater a person's knowledge of God becomes, the greater does he desire the good both for himself and for other men, because this knowledge makes men agree in nature.[120] It is brought about through man's reason and the understanding of the affections upon his being.

However, reason and knowledge alone are not sufficient. These constitute "the second kind of knowledge," which,although it permits man "to distinguish the true from the false,"[121] which is "privation of knowledge,"[122] does not provide man with "the highest peace of mind."[123] This latter is obtained from "the third kind of knowledge" - "intuitive science," which "advances from an adequate idea of the formal essence of certain attributes of God to the adequate knowledge of the essence of things."[124] It "begets the highest degree of contentment attainable to human nature,"[125] and "depends upon the mind as its formal cause, in so far as the mind itself is eternal."[126] Furthermore, "the better the mind is adapted to understand things by the third

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118. Ethics, Part 4, Prop 28.
119. Op. cit., Pollock, p. 241.
120. Ethics, Part 4, Prop 37 & 35.
121. Ibid., Part 2, Prop 42, 41; Part 5, Prop 28.
122. Ibid., Part 2, Prop 35.
123. Ibid., Part 5, Prop 27.
124. Ibid., Part 2, Prop 40, Schol 2.
125. Op. cit., Pollock, pp 280-281.
126. Ethics, Part 5, Prop 5.

kind of knowledge, the more it desires to understand them by this kind of knowledge."[127] It is this kind of knowledge which causes man to delight and this "delight is accompanied with the idea of God as its cause."[128] The final result is a "knowledge of God which is the highest,"[129] and "as a person ... becomes stronger in this kind of knowledge, the more is he conscious of God."[130] Therefore the perfection of the third kind of knowledge provides man with the clearest concept of God.

As this third kind of knowldge is intuitive, it implies an intuitive understanding of totality, an understanding which needs be supra-rational. Thus it appears that inspite of Spinoza's emphasis on reason, he posited a supra-rationality to be necessary for man to gain the most perfect knowledge of God. For this, ordinary rationality was not sufficient.

As a result of this third kind of knowledge, man can come to love god, the central thesis in Spinoza's concept of self-realization. He posited, "He who clearly and distinctly understands himself and his affects loves God, and loves Him better the better he understands himself and his affects."[131] This proposition is demonstrated in that "he who clearly and distinctly understands himself and his affects rejoices, and his joy is attended with the idea of God, therefore he loves God...."[131]

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127. Ethics, Part 5, Prop 26.
128. Ibid., Part 5, Prop 32.
129. Ibid., Part 4, Prop 25ff.
130. Ibid., Part 5, Prop 5.
131. Ibid., Part 5, Prop 15.

It is "this love of God, above everything else, (which) ought to occupy the mind."[132] Furthermore, it "cannot be defiled either by the affect of envy or jealousy, but is the more strengthened the more people we imagine to be connected with God by the same bond of love."[133] However, one should not expect God to return this love, for "He neither loves nor hates," because He "is free from passions," and neither "is He affected with any affect of joy or sorrow."[134] Spinoza defined love as "joy accomanied with the idea of an external cause."[135]

This type of love, of which Spinoza spoke, he termed "the intellectual love of God." It necessarily springs "from the third kind of knowledge," "for from this kind of knowledge arises joy attended with the idea of God as its cause, that is to say, the love of God, not in so far as we imagine Him as present, but in so far as we understand that He is eternal."[136] And because God is eternal, so too is this love of Him.[137] Furthermore, this "intellectual love of the mind towards God is part of the infinite love with which God loves Himself,"[138] so that "there is nothing in nature which is contrary to this intellectual love, or which can negate it."[139] Therefore, Spinoza was able to write "that God, in so far as He loves Himself, loves men, and consequently that the love of God

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132. Ethics, Part 5, Prop 16.
133. Ibid., Part 5, Prop 20.
134. Ibid., Part 5, Prop 17, 18, & 19.
Also, Op. cit., Wild, p. xliv-xlv.
135. Ethics, Part 3, Prop 13.
136. Ibid., Part 5, Prop 32.
137. Ibid., Part 5, Prop 33.
138. Ibid., Part 5, Prop 36.
139. Ibid., Part 5, Prop 37.

toward men and the love of the mind towards God are one and the same thing."[140]

Through this intellectual love of God man arrives at a union with God, and "only in this union ... does our blessedness consist."[141] This "blessedness is not the reward of virtue, but is virtue itself,"[142] and signifies man's full utilization of his power, since power and virtue mean the same thing.[143] Spinoza was able to conclude, "Hence we clearly understand that our salvation, or blessedness, or liberty consists in a constant and eternal love towards God, or in the love of God toward men."[144]

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We now are able to draw the threads together and obtain a clear picture of Spinoza's view of the self-realization of man. It requires man to exercise control over his affects, so that they lead him to action. He does this through a knowledge of these affects and their effect upon him. Through this knowledge he is able to exercise his power and thus to live according to virtue, which is his true freedom. The climax of the process is the third kind of knowledge which develops within men the intellectual love of God, through which he can realize himself. This realization makes man truly one with God, and as Dr. Wild writes, "in so far as we are truly at one with God (do) we become most truly ourselves."[145] The establishment of this unity is the "greatest happiness of man in this life;"[146] it is his

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140. Ethics, Part 5, Prop 36, Corol.
141. Short Treatise, Part 2, Chapt 22.
142. Ethics, Part 5, Prop 42.
143. Ibid., Part 4, Definition 8.
144. Ibid., Part 5, Prop 36, Schol.
145. Op. cit., Wild, p. liii.
146. Op. cit., Pollock, p. 262.

self-realization.

Fromm

"Man has lost the vision of the end" of his existence, "man himself,"[1] states Erich Fromm. "Modern man is starved for life,"[2] and "is ignorant with regard to the most important and fundamental questions of human existence: what man is, how he ought to live, and how the tremendous energies within man can be realized and used productively."[3] Fromm confronts his readers with the problems of the morality of modern life and calls it the "contemporary human crisis."[4]

This is the aspect of self-realization which Fromm probes and which he attempts to solve in Twentieth Century terms. He writes in the realm of ethics, however he attempts to relate to it the knowledge gained from psychoanalysis, because "the understanding of unconscious motivation opens up a new dimension for ethical inquiry."[5] In this application of psychoanalytic knowledge he views himself as a pioneer. He writes, "Few attempts have been made either from the philosophical or from the psychological side to apply the findings of psychoanalysis to the development of ethical theory, a fact that is all the more surprising since psychoanalytic theory has made contributions

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1. Erich Fromm, Man for Himself, Rinehart & Co., 1947, p. 4.
2. Erich Fromm, Escape from Freedom, Rinehart & Co., 1941, p. 255.
3. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 4.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., p. 33.

which are particularly relevant to the theory of ethics."[6] "Freud and his school have not made the most productive use of their method for inquiry into ethical problems; in fact they did a great deal to confuse the ethical issues."[7] Nevertheless, "although Freud did not refer to ethical values explicitly, there is an implicit connection: the pregenital orientations, characteristic of the dependent,greedy, and stingy attitudes, are ethically inferior to the genital, that is, productive, mature character. Freud's characterology thus implies that virtue is the natural aim of man's development."[8] In order to illustrate his view of the self-realization of man, Fromm presents "a detailed analysis of the genital character, the 'productive orientation,'"[9] in the framework of an ethical problem.

This chapter will deal with the three aspects of Fromm's presentation of the self-realization of man - ethics, existential dichotomies and orientations. Man's misunderstanding of these facets of life have led him to "a state of moral confusion."[10] It is this confusion upon which Fromm attempts to shed light and to which he wishes to give new insights and new answers.

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6. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 31.
7. Ibid., pp. 34-34.
8. Ibid., p. 36.
9. Ibid., p. 37.
10. Ibid., p. 5.

Fromm introduces us to the problem of self-realization as a question of ethics, as "the search for objectivly valid norms of conduct"[11] needed to ameliorate man's present "state of moral confusion."[12] In this search man is led to a number of positions which Fromm discusses and then dismisses as unsuitable.

The first position is that of authoritarian ethics in which "an authority states what is good for man and lays down the laws and norms of conduct."[13] His use of the word 'authoritarian' is "synonomous with totalitarian and antidemocratic."[14] "Formally" such a system "denies man's capacity to know what is good or bad; the norm giver is always an authority transcending the individual.... (It) is based not on reason and knowledge but on awe of the authority and on the subject's feeling of weakness and dependence; the surrender of decision making to the authority results from the latter's magic power; its decisions can not and must not be questioned. Materially, or according to content, authoritarian ethics answers the question of what is good or bad primarily in terms of the interests of the authority, not in the interests of the subject; it is exploitative, although the subject may derive considerable benefits, psychic or material, from it."[15] He describes this as the

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11. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 8.
12. Ibid., p. 5.
13. Ibid., p. 8.
14. Ibid., p. 10.
15. Ibid.

the type of relationship existing between an adult and a child, or between a dog and its owner. Under such a system, where the interests of the authority are at stake, we find "obedience to be the main virtue and disobedience to be the main sin."[16]

The authoritarian ethic leads man to develop an "authoritarian conscience," which "is the voice of an internalized external authority, the parents, the state, or whoever the authorities in a culture happen to be."[17] Since this type of conscience is an outgrowth of the authoritarian ethic, we naturally find that "good conscience is consciousness of pleasing the (external and internalized) authority; guilty conscience is the consciousness of displeasing it."[18] With such a system, "the prescriptions of authoritarian conscience are not determined by one's own value judgments but exclusively by the fact that its commands and tabus are pronounced by authorities."[19] Therefore we find that "the good (authoritarian) conscience produces a feeling of well-being and security, for it implies approval by, and the greatest closeness to, the authority; guilty conscience produces fear and insecurity, because acting against the will of the authority implies the danger of being punished and - what is worse - of being deserted by the authority,"[20] so that "often an experience which people take to be a feeling

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16. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 12.
17. Ibid., pp. 143-144.
18. Ibid., p. 146.
19. Ibid., pp. 144-145.
20. Ibid., p. 146.

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."[21] Again, as in the case of the authoritarian ethic, so here too "the prime offense ... is rebellion against the authority's rule."[22] This leads to the tabu "against feeling oneself to be, or ever able to become, like the authority, for this would contradict the latter's unqualified superiority and uniqueness."[23] The outcome of this system is that "man curbs his own powers by feeling guilt, rooted in the authoritarian conviction that the exercise of his own will and creative power is rebellion against the authority's prerogatives to be the sole creator and that the subject's duty is to be his 'thing' This feeling of guilt, in turn weakens man, reduces his power, and increases his submission in order to atone for his attempt to be his 'own creator and builder.'"[24] "The paradoxical result is that the (authoritarian) guilty conscience becomes the basis for a 'good' conscience, while the good conscience, if one should have it, ought to create the feeling of guilt."[25]

The authoritarian conscience also can be internalized. This occurs when a person "takes over the role of the authority by treating himself with the same strictness and cruelty." He "becomes not only the obedient slave but also the strict

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21. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 144.
22. Ibid., p. 148.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., p. 150.
25. Ibid.

taskmaster who treats himself as his own slave."[26] Fromm describes this kind of conscience as one of the causes of middle class neuroses and parent-child conflict.[27]

The second ethical position which Fromm attacks is relativism. However, his attack of this position is nowhere as lengthy nor as vehement. He attributes relativism to "the growing doubt of human autonomy and reason (which has) created a state of moral confusion where man is left without the guidance of either revelation or reason. The result is the acceptance of a relativistic position which proposes that value judgments and ethical norms are exclusively matters of taste and arbitrary preference and that no objectively valid statement can be made in this realm."[28] He accuses Freud of having aided the growth of this position because of his "relativistic position, which assumes that psychology can help us to understand the motivation of value judgments but can not help in establishing the validity of value judgments themselves."[29] However, he claims that Freud was not consistent in his relativistic views, and this has continued our confusion.[30]

This"state of moral confusion" has made out of "skepticism and rationalism," which once "were progressive forces for the development of thought," the "rationalizations for relativism

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26. Op. cit., Man for Himself, pp. 150-151.
27. Ibid., pp. 152 ff.
28. Ibid., p. 5.
29. Ibid., p. 34.
30. Ibid., p. 30.

and uncertainty."[31] Thus "the form of contemporary doubt ... (is) an attitude of indifference in which everything is possible, nothing is certain."[32]

An aspect of relativistic ethics which Fromm discusses and then dismisses as inadequate is subjectivistic ethics. Under such a system, "value judgments have no objective validity and are nothing but arbitrary preferences or dislikes of an individual." "Value ... is defined as any 'desired'good' and desire is the test of value, not values the test of desire."[33] Ethical hedonism is the primary offender in the realm of subjectivity. Its fallacies are "in assuming that pleasure is good for man and that pain is bad," and that "only those desires whose fulfillment causes pleasure are valuable."[34] Fromm refutes these views when he states that "there are people who enjoy submission and not freedom, who derive pleasure from hate and not love, from exploitation and not from productive work."[35] Nevertheless, he ascribes "one great merit" to hedonism. "By making man's own experience of pleasure and happiness the sole criterion of value it shuts the door to all attempts to have an authority determine 'what is best for man' without so much as giving man a chance to consider what he feels about that which is said to be best for him."[36]

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31. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 198.
32. Ibid., p. 200.
33. Ibid., p. 14.
34. Ibid., p. 15.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid., pp. 15-16.

The third aspect of ethics which Fromm discusses and which he accepts and then uses as the foundation for his approach to the problem of self-realization is humanistic ethics. He defines humanistic ethics as "the applied science of the 'art of living' based on the theoretical 'science of man;'"[37] and he later adds that under such an ethics "the aim of man's life ... is to be understood as the unfolding of his powers according to the laws of his nature."[38] The value system of humanistic ethics makes "good ... 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 toward himself."[39]

This concept of humanistic ethics necessitates a view of man as part of society. He cannot be considered in a vacuum - as unrelated to his fellow human beings, for "it is one of the characteristics of human nature that man finds his fulfillment and happiness only in relatedness to and solidarity with his fellowman." Through such an ethic man "relates himself to the world and makes it truly his."[40]

To attain a humanistic ethic one needs to understand "the science of man" which rests "upon the premise that its object, man, exists and that there is a human nature characteristic of the human species."[41] Fromm posits that man is neither unchangeable

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37. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 18.
38. Ibid., p. 20.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid., p. 14.
41. Ibid., p. 20.

nor infinitely malleable. Rather, "human evolution is rooted in man's adaptability and in certain indestructible qualities of his nature which compel him never to cease his search for conditions better adjusted to his intrinsic needs"[42] This permits the "science of man" to construct "a model of human nature" which functions in a way "no different from other sciences which operate with concepts of entities based on, or controlled by, inference from observed data and not directly observable themselves."[43]

Using his "scientific method," Fromm attempts to solve many of man's ethical problems concerning his own self. He discusses such topics as "selfishness, self-love, and self-interest,"[44] "conscience,"[45] "pleasure and happiness,"[46] and faith.[47] These are among the problems of man for which humanistic ethics can provide answers. However, we shall return to his discussion of this material after our discussion of orientations, at which time we will be better able to understand the full import of what he has to tell us.

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We now turn our attention to Fromm's discussion of the dichotomies which confront man in life. "Man is the only animal

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42. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 23.
43. Ibid., p. 24.
44. Ibid., p. 119 ff.
45. Ibid., p. 141 ff.
46. Ibid., p. 172 ff.
47. Ibid., p. 197 ff.

for whom his own existence is a problem which he has to solve and from which he cannot escape." "Man is the only animal that can be bored, that can be discontented." "Man's life cannot 'be lived' by repeating the pattern of his species; he must live."[48] This need to live presents man with dichotomies of two types. The first, over which he has no immediate control, is "the many historical contradictions in individual and social life which are not a necessary part of human existence but are man made and soluble, soluble either at the time they occur or at a later period in human history."[49]

The second class of dichotomies, the existential dichotomies, are of major concern to Fromm. He does not use the term "existential" in the manner in which Sartre does, "that it is impossible for man to transcend human subjectivity,"[50] but rather in referring to dichotomies which are rooted "in the very existence of man; they are contradictions which man cannot annul but to which he can react in various ways, relative to his character and culture."[51] Man attempts to solve these contradictions through the use of his reason, but their existence "forces him to strive everlastingly for new solutions."[52] Every new stage in his development leaves him discontented and perplexed, and "this very perplexity

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48. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 40.
49. Ibid., p. 43.
50. Jean Paul Sartre, Existentialism, Philosophical Library, New York, 1947, p. 20.
51. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 41.
52. Ibid., pp. 40-41.

urges him to move toward new solutions."[53]

Fromm lists three major existential dichotomies. The first and primary one is between "life and death" - "as far as our (individual) life is concerned," death is "defeat."[54] Man has attempted to negated this dichotomy by ideologies, however, ideologies deny "the tragic fact that man's life ends in death."[55] This leads Fromm to the second dichotomy, which is the lack of opportunity for man to fully develop all his "human potentialities." The short span of man's life does not permit the full realization of his potentialities, even under the most favorable of circumstances.[56] Man always dies before he is fully born and "here too, ideologies tend to reconcile or deny the contradiction by assuming that the fulfillment of life takes place after death, or that one's own historical period is the final and crowning achievement of mankind."[57] And the third existential dichotomy is that "man is alone and related at the same time. He is alone inasmuch as he is a unique entity, not identical with anyone else, and aware of his self as a separate entity. He must be alone when he has to judge or to make decisions solely by the power of his reason. And yet he cannot bear to be alone, to be unrelated to his fellow men. His happiness depends on the solidarity he feels with his fellow men, with past and future generations."[58]

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53. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 41.
54. Ibid., p. 42.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid.
58. Ibid., p. 43.

This third aspect of man's existential dichotomies is very much a product of the social structure in which man lives. From the moment of the birth of the child, societal forces, first represented by the parents, later by teachers and peers, begin to "break down his will, his spontaneity, and independence," all of which lead to man's self-alienation. But "the child, not being born to be broken, fights back against the authority represented by the parents."[59] This process of 'education' continues throughout life,[60] with the individual fighting for the freedom to be himself and yet at the same time realizing that he cannot live without the co-operation of other people. Elsewhere Fromm states that this "basic dichotomy" is"dissolved on a higher plane by man's spontaneous actions," actions which are "inherent in freedom."[61]

This existential dichotomy of man's relatedness to the world and his aloneness as a human being brings about a great deal of ambivalence in the individual. While his desire for productiveness and spontaneity may urge him to react to a situation in one way, his desire to be accepted by his fellowmen urges him to react in an entirely different manner. At the same time that he wishes to submerge himself in the mass of mankind, he also wishes to assert his own individuality - all leading to an ambivalence in whatever action he takes and thus heightening

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59. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 157.
60. Erich Fromm, "Individual and Social Origins of Neurosis," Personality, ed. Kluckhorn and Murray, Alfred A. Knopf, 1950, p. 440.
61. Op. cit., Escape from Freedom, p. 261, also p. 29.

the confusion caused by the dichotomies.

From these existential dichotomies man cannot escape, although "he can react to them in different ways."[62] He may attempt to appease his mind by soothing ideologies, or flee into ceaseless activity in business or pleasure, or submerge himself in a power outside of himself. However, "he remains dissatisfied, anxious and restless. There is only one solution to his problem: to face the truth, to acknowledge his fundamental aloneness and solitude in a universe indifferent to his fate, to recognize that there is no power transcending him which can solve his problem for him."[63] In short, Fromm states that man must realize "that there is no meaning to life except the meaning man gives his life by the unfolding of his powers, by living productively."[64]

An understanding of the existential dichotomies and man's attempts to solve the dilemma which they present to him are of utmost importance in comprehending Fromm's view of the self-realization of man. For "man has no other way to be one with the world and at the same time to feel one with himself, to be related to others and to retain his integrity as a unique entity, but by making productive use of his powers,"[65] that is by reacting productively to these dichotomies - by living.

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The third aspect of Fromm's presentation which is relevant

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62. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 55.
63. Ibid., pp. 44-45.
64. Ibid., p. 45.
65. Ibid., p. 220.

to an understanding of his views on the self-realization of man is his concept of orientation of character, the manner in which a person conceives of life and the way in which he ought to live.

In order for man to react to the existential dichotomies, he needs a system of orientation to the world. This system must contain "not only intellectual elements but elements of feeling and sense, to be realized in all fields of endeavor."[66] Fromm calls such systems "frames of orientation and devotion."[67] They may be secular, religious or philosophical. But Fromm points out that many of the so-called secular systems are of such intensity that they merely "differ in content (from religion) but not in the basic need to which they attempt to offer answers,"[68] and thus they become "religious" in nature. It is these systems which man uses in his attempts to solve his existential dichotomies, and for this reason they are of such driving intensity. "Indeed, there is no other more powerful source of energy for man."[69]

A person's orientation depends upon his personality, which is "the totality of inherited and acquired psychic qualities which are characteristic of one individual and which make the individual unique."[70] Personality is composed of both temperament and character. "Temperament refers to the mode of reaction and is constitutional and not changeable; character is essentially

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66. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 47.
67. Ibid., p. 48.
68. Ibid.
69. Ibid., p. 49
70. Ibid., p. 50.

formed by a person's experiences, especially of those in early life, and changeable, to some extent, by insights and new kinds of experiences."[71] Only one of these aspects of personality is pertinent to the discussion of ethics and that is character, "which is both the subject matter of ethical judgment and the object of man's ethical development."[72]

Fromm defines character "as the (relatively permanent) form in which human energy is canalized in the process of assimilation and socialization."[73] "The fundamental basis of character is seen ... in specific kinds of a person's relatedness to the world, ... (1) by acquiring and assimilating things, and (2) by relating himself to people (and himself)." The former Fromm calls "the process of assimilation; the latter, that of socialization."[74] This character system which he discusses "can be considered the human substitute for the instinctive apparatus of the animal."[75] However, the relatedness of character is "'open' and not, as with the animal, instinctively determined,"[76] for "character is formed by social and cultural patterns."[77]

With this understanding of human character which so concerns Fromm, we can now begin our investigation of the orientations of character. There are two basic types of orientation, the nonproductive and the productive. But "these concepts are 'ideal-types,' not descriptions of the character of a given

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71. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 52.
72. Ibid., p. 54.
73. Ibid., p. 59.
74. Ibid., p. 58.
75. Ibid., p. 59
76. Ibid., p. 58.
77. Ibid., p. 60.

person." And he adds that "the character of any given person is usually a blend of all or some of these orientations in which one, however, is dominant."[78]

Fromm lists four types of nonproductive character orientations. The first of these is the receptive orientation in which the "scource of all good" is outside the person.[79] These people look for the "magic helper" in religion and are "dependent" upon others in their interpersonal relations. The second type is the exploitative orientation in which one "does not expect to receive things from others as gifts, buttto take them away from others by force or cunning."[80] This type also believes "that the source of all good is outside," and"that whatever one wants to get must be sought there and that one cannot produce anything himself."[81] The third orientation is the hoarding orientation which is "based upon hoarding and saving, while spending is felt as a threat."[82] These people "have little faith in anything new they might get from the outside world."[83]

The fourth type of nonproductive orientation with which Fromm is concerned is the marketing orientation, which has developed as the dominant one in our modern world.[84] In this orientation the person is "rooted in the experience of (himself)

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78. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 61.
79. Ibid., p. 62.
80. Ibid., p. 64.
81. Ibid., p. 64.
82. Ibid., p. 65.
83. Ibid.
84. Ibid., p. 67.

as a commodity and of (his) value as exchange value."[85] "Success depends largely on how one sells one's personality," if one is sufficiently "attractive" and "in fashion on the personality market."[86] The degree of insecurity which "results from this orientation can hardly be overestimated."[87] The individual's main concern becomes "one's identity with oneself,"[88] for "both his powers and what they create become estranged, something different from himself, something for others to judge and to use; thus his feeling of identity becomes as shaky as his self-esteem; it is constituted by the sum total of the roles one can play: 'I am as you desire me.'"[89] And not only does the person of this orientation view himself as a commodity, but he also experiences others as commodities, "they too do not present themselves but their salable part."[90] It is an orientation which tests a person's adaptability - "his ability to look the part" that is expected of him.

However the picture is not all black as it appears. No one orientation is clearly differentiated from the next; in life we "always deal with blends, for a character never represents one of the nonproductive orientations or the productive orientation exclusively."[91] However, within this blend, one of the orientations will be dominate at any given time, so that

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85. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 68.
86. Ibid., pp. 70-71
87. Ibid., p. 72
88. Ibid.
89. Ibid., p. 73.
90. Ibid., p. 73.
91. Ibid., p. 112.

"if one wants to characterize a person, one will usually have to do so in terms of his dominant orientation."[92] In conclusion, Fromm states, "In considering only the basic orientations we see the staggering amount of variability in each person brought about by the fact that (1) the nonproductive orientations are blended in different ways with regard to the respective weight of each of them; (2) each changes quality according to the amount of productiveness present; (3) the different orientations may operate in different strength in the material, emotional, or intellectual spheres of activity, respectively."[93]

In sharp contrast to the nonproductive orientations is the productive orientation. For Fromm, "productiveness is an attitude which every human being is capable of, unless he is mentally and emotionally crippled;"[94] it is "man's realization of the potentialities characteristic of him, of the use of his powers;"[95] it means that man "feels himself at one with his powers and at the same time that they are not masked or alienated from him."[96] "By far the most important object of productiveness is man himself,"[97] therefore man "must be productive to live."[98] Thus it is that "there is only one meaning of life: the act of living itself,"[99] and the "outcome of unlived life (is)destructiveness."[100]

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92. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 113.
93. Ibid., pp. 116-117.
94. Ibid., p. 85.
95. Ibid., p. 87.
96. Ibid., p. 84.
97. Ibid., p. 91.
98. Ibid., p. 8.
99. Op. cit., Escape from Freedom, p. 263.
100. Ibid., p. 184, also p. 216.

Productiveness is the opposite of both "realism" and insanity. The "realist" is the person "who sees all there is to be seen of the surface features of phenomena but who is quite incapable of penetrating below the surface to the essential, and of visualizing what is not yet apparent."[101] "The person who has lost the capacity to perceive actuality is insane."[102] On the other hand, the productive person "is capable of relating himself to the world simultaneously by perceiving it as it is and by conceiving it enlivened and enriched by his own powers."[103] He has "the ability to make productive use of his powers," which is "his potency."[104]

However, many men seem to be able to live without showing any excessive amount of concern for a lack of productiveness. Fromm states that this occurs because of socially patterned defects - cultural patterns which compensate for society's prevention of individual productiveness. Thus we find that what the individual "may have lost in richness and in a genuine feeling of happiness is made up by the security he feels of fitting in with the rest of mankind - as he knows it."[105] In such a society a person suffers from a lack of spontaneity, yet he is no different from millions of other people. This gives him strength and prevents any excessive concern for his self. Socially patterned defects prevent an "outbreak of neurosis"

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101. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 89.
102. Ibid., p. 89.
103. Ibid., p. 90.
104. Ibid., p. 86.
105. Ibid., p. 221.

within society despite the lack of productiveness.[106]

But we need to know how man achieves a productive orientation for himself. To this question, Fromm replies that "man must accept the responsibility for himself and the fact that only by using his own powers can he give meaning to his life, ... that there is no meaning to life except the meaning man gives his life by the unfolding of his powers, by living productively."[107] This path does not lead to certainty in life, but to uncertainty, which becomes "the very condition to impel man to unfold his powers,"[108] to live productively.

An integral part of man's productivity is his spontaneity, which is the "free activity of the self and implies ... the quality of creative activity."[109] Fromm assumes that this free activity of the self and man's concomitant spontaneity "are the objective goals to be attained by every human being."[110] This is because man's spontaneous action "affirms the individuality of the self and at the same time it unites the self with man and nature,"[111] eventually leading to man's positive freedom which "consists in the spontaneous activity of the total, integrated personality."[112] The automaton lacks this spontaneity, the productive man has it.

We need now to see what productive living does for man's

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106. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 223.
107. Ibid., p. 45.
108. Ibid.
109. Op. cit., Escape from Freedom, p. 258.
110. Op. cit., Individual and Social Origins of Neurosis, p. 411.
111. Op. cit., Escape from Freedom, p. 261.
112. Ibid., p. 258.
also, Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 221.

life, and how it aids him in the unfolding of his powers.

Productive love and thinking are the first two results of the productive orientation. Fromm states that "man comprehends the world, mentally and emotionally, through love and reason."[113]

Productive love he terms "genuine love," and has four basic elements to it. They are "care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge,"[114] "Care and responsibility denote that love is an activity and not a passion by which one is overcome, nor an affect which one is "affected by."[115] On the other hand, "without respect for and knowledge of the beloved person, love deteriorates into domination and possessiveness."[116] Thus "to love one person productively means to be related to his human core, to him as representing mankind."[117]

Productive thinking requires "depth," so as "to know, to understand, to grasp, to relate oneself to things by comprehending them."[118] "In productive thinking the subject is not indifferent to his object but is affected by and concerned with it."[119] This type of thinking requires objectivity which "does not mean detachment," but rather "respect."[120] It "requires not only seeing the object as it is, but also seeing oneself as one is."[121]

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113. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 97.
114. Ibid., p. 98.
115. Ibid.
116. Ibid., p. 101.
117. Ibid.
118. Ibid., p. 102.
119. Ibid., p. 103.
120. Ibid., p. 105.
121. Ibid.

There is more to the productive orientation than merely productive love and productive thinking. There is also "productive work."[122] This productive work is required "to give life to the emotional and intellectual potentialities of man," in order that man may "give birth to his self,"[123] for him to become a creator in the real meaning of the word - to live as a totally productive human being.

With an understanding of Fromm's views of the orientations, we can now turn to his attempt to unify man's knowledge of psychoanalysis with ethics. He discusses a number of problems of humanistic ethics from the vantage point of the productive orientation.

The first of these ethical problems revolves about the problem of the self and man's realization of his self. He begins by quoting the Biblical commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and contrasts it with the other views current in the modern world which disparage a regard for one's self. He states that the Biblical expression "implies that respect for one's own integrity and uniqueness, love and understanding for one's own self, can not be separated from respect for and love and understanding of another individual."[124] Thus "love, in principle, is indivisible as far as the connection between 'objects' and one's own self is concerned."[125] He

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122. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 45.
123. Ibid., p. 91.
124. Ibid., p. 129.
125. Ibid.

reintroduces the factors of "care,responsibility, respect and knowledge,"[126] by stating that "the affirmation of one's own life, happiness, growth, freedom is rooted in one's capacity to love,"[127] which is based on these four factors. And he concludes that "if an individual is able to love productively, he loves himself too; if he can love only others, he can not love at all."[128] In this manner the productive orientation of the psychologist becomes a factor in ethics.

Utilizing this concept of productive love, Fromm is able to state that "selfish persons are incapable of loving others, but they are not capable of loving themselves either."[129] This is because the selfish person "hates himself," and we see this selfishness as "only one expression of his lack of productiveness," which "leaves him empty and frustrated."[130] This insight he applies to one of modern man's moral dilemmas, that he "lives according to the principles of self-denial and thinks in terms of self-interest. He belives that he is acting in behalf of his interest when actually his paramount concern is money and success; he deceives himself about the fact that his most important potentialities remain unfulfilled and that he loses himself in the process of seeking what is supposed to be best for him."[131]

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126. See note 114.
127. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 136.
128. Ibid., p. 130.
129. Ibid., p. 131.
130. Ibid.
131. Ibid., p. 135.

Fromm sums up the ethical problem of the self with the statement that it is not that "people are too much concerned with their self-interst, but that they are not concerned enough with the interest of their real self; not in the fact that they are too selfish, but that they do not love themselves."[132]

The second problem in which psychoanalysis can assist ethics is the matter of conscience. We have already discussed Fromm's view of the authoritarian conscience. Productiveness is not related to this conscience, rather is it related to the "humanistic conscience," which "is the reaction of our total personality to its proper functioning and dysfunctioning,"[133] "a reaction of ourselves to ourselves,""the voice of our loving care for ourselves."[134] Humanistic conscience contains "the essence of our moral experiences in life, ... those principles through which we have discovered ourselves as well as those we have learned from others and which we have found to be true."[135] "The goal of humanistic conscience is productiveness and, therefore, happiness, since happiness is the necessary concomitant of productive living."[136]

This conscience requires man to listen to himself, an ability which has become very rare in modern man. This may be difficult because the voice of this conscience is weak, or because we assume it to be an anxiety, such as fear of death,

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132. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 139.
133. Ibid., p. 158.
134. Ibid., p. 159.
135. Ibid.
136. Ibid., p. 160.

physical decay or disapproval rather than conscience.[137] However, "one has to learn how to listen and to understand its communications in order to act accordingly."[138]

The humanistic conscience is dependent upon reason. Man is the only creature endowed with both conscience and reason,[139] and his conscience springs from the use of this reason. They are closely linked with his ability to live productively and to act virtuously, for only the person who trusts his reason and acts accordingly is capable of listening to his conscience, the voice which calls himself back to himself. This is the only path which leads to virtue, "the responsibility toward (one's) own existence,"[140] for the "genuine conscience forms a part of integrated personality and the following of its demands," which are based on one's own reason, "is an affirmation of the whole self."[141] Thus the humanistic conscience, as part of the productive orientation "is the basis for freedom, virtue and happiness."[142]

Fromm freely admits that the humanistic and authoritarian consciences are not mutually exclusive, but that "actually everybody has both 'consciences.' The problem is to distinguish their respective strength and their interrelation."[143] There is a dynamic relationship between them, but a person can only be truly productive when the humanistic conscience is stronger.

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137. Op. cit., Man for Himself, pp. 162 ff.
138. Ibid., p. 161.
139. Ibid., p. 233.
140. Ibid., p. 20.
141. Op. cit., Escape from Freedom, p. 97.
142. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 229.
143. Ibid., p. 165.

In terms of man's self-realization, the humanistic conscience is a means for the individual to react to himself as a human being. It is a force which urges man to make his moral decisions in the light of "one's responsibility to oneself,"[144] for a person cannot realize himself when his conscience is "not determined by one's own value judgment but exclusively by the fact that its commands and tabus are pronounced by authorities" transcending him.[145]

A third realm in which humanistic ethics can utilize the knowledge of psychoanalysis is in the area of pleasure and happiness. Fromm attempts "to show that an empirical analysis of the nature of pleasure, satisfaction, happiness, and joy reveals that they are different and partly contradictory phenomena."[146] He dismisses hedonism because it combines "the subjective experience of pleasure with the objective criterion of 'right' and 'wrong.'"[147] What is needed, he states, are objective conditions and these conditions are "productiveness."[148] In this matter, Fromm places himself in the tradition of Plato, Aristotle, Spinoza, and Spencer who all asserted "that an objective criterion for the evaluation of pleasure can be found,"[149] although their views as to what the criterion is differed.

Fromm brings in psychoanalytic assistance in seeking the

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144. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 167.
145. Ibid., p. 145.
146. Ibid., p. 173.
147. Ibid., p. 175.
148. Ibid., p. 173.
149. Ibid., p. 178.

the objective criterion. He states that "happiness as well as unhappiness is more than a state of mind. In fact, happiness and unhappiness are expressions of the state of the entire organism, of the total personality. Happiness is conjunctive with an increase in vitality, intensity of feeling and thinking, and productiveness; unhappiness is conjunctive with the decrease of these capacities and functions."[150] With this view of happiness, he is then able to define true happiness as "the criterion of excellence in the art of living, of virtue in the meaning it has in humanistic ethics,"[151] the development of the person's "unique individuality."[152] Thus, to Fromm, "happiness is man's greatest achievement; it is the response of his total personality to a productive orientation toward himself and the world outside."[153] Yet it is "the most difficult task of man."[154]

In order for man to achieve this happiness, he needs a "rational faith" which is "a firm conviction based on productive intellectual and emotional activity."[155] It is "rooted in one's own experience, in the confidence in one's own power of thought, observation, and judgment, ... (and) in an independent conviction based upon one's own productive observing and thinking."[156] The basis of this faith is "productiveness; to live by our faith

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150. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 181.
151. Ibid., p. 189.
152. Ibid., p. 13.
153. Ibid., p. 191.
154. Ibid.
155. Ibid., p. 204.
156. Ibid., p. 205.
Also, Erich Fromm, The Art of Loving, Harper & Brothers, 1956, p. 122.

means to live productively and to have the only certainty which exists: the certainty growing from productive activity and from the experience that each one of us is the active subject of whom these activities are predicated."[157] It also requires courage, "the ability to take a risk, the readiness even to accept pain and disappointment."[158]

Fromm concludes that "man cannot live without faith. The crucial question for our generation and the next ones is whether this faith will be an irrational faith in leaders, machines, success, or the rational faith in man based on the experience of our own productive activity."[159]

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We are now able to obtain a clear view of Fromm's answer to the problem of the self-realization of man. He postulates that to realize himself, man must affirm "his truly human self."[160] This can only be done through the medium of humanistic ethics in which "virtue is responsibility toward (one's) own existence."[161] It makes "man ... the only purpose and end" of his life, "and not a means for anybody or anything except himself."[162]

With this view of himself and his life, man will then struggle to make his life productive. This means that he will attempt "to become what he potentially is," "to give birth to

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157. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 208.
Also, Op. cit., The Art of Loving, p. 125.
158. Ibid., p. 126.
159. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 210.
160. Ibid., p. 7.
161. Ibid., p. 20.
162. Ibid., p. 229.

himself."[163] It is only in this manner that he can begin to solve the existential dichotomies of life - to begin "the unfolding of his powers."[164]

Thus the self-realization of man is achieved when he realizes that there is no meaning in life except the meaning he gives it and then attempts to bring to fruition on the potentialities within him which will enable him to realize his life. In doing this, he lives "productively."

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Fromm's presentation of the self-realization of man and his confrontation with the problem of the immorality of modern life and its crisis offers valid and incisive insights. One of the finest points to which he draws attention is his view of the auhtoritarianism in modern life. Certainly his point that man, in his search for security in our insecure world, has returned to a submission to authority is most valid. Man's "feeling of weakness and dependence" in the modern world,[165] where external forces continually seem to overwhelm the individual, have led to this phenomenom. As he so cogently points out in Escape from Freedom, the rise of Hitler can, in a large measure, be attributed to this factor. And perhaps the Post World War II upsurge in organized religion in the United States can also be attributed to this flight of man - his 'escape from freedom,' the unwillingness of modern 'man' to be 'for himself.'

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163. Op. cit., Man for himself, p. 137.
164. Ibid., p. 45.
165. Ibid., p. 16.

There are, however, two major questions which Fromm's presentation is unable to answer satisfactorily.

The first of these is the matter of objectivity. Fromm states that his humanistic ethics is based on the "science of man" and that as a result of the study of this science one can achieve and objective standard using man and his nature as the criteria.[166] This kind of objectivity appears to break down though when it is removed from the realm of the universal to the realm of the particular. As a matter of fact, it breaks down in two ways, either into a subjectivism or into an authoritarianism. Let us look at each separately.

First the break down into subjectivism. Fromm asserts that "the subject of the science of man is human nature,"[167] while the aim of this science is to obtain a "satisfactory definition of its subject matter."[168] It aims to do this through the observation of human nature in "its specific manifestations in specific situations."[169] With these tools each scientist will work toward achieving his goal. Fromm asserts that the work toward this goal is already underway and cites as an example that psychoanalytic insight has "confirmed the view ... that the subjective experience of satisfaction is in itself deceptive and not a valid criterion of value."[170] But this objective

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166. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 20.
167. Ibid., p. 23.
168. Ibid., p. 23.
169. Ibid., p. 24.
170. Ibid., p. 179.

view of man runs into difficulty when the individual attempts to apply these criteria to his own life and to the ethical situations in which he finds himself. At this point that which appeared objective in the universal becomes subjective in the particular - when the individual has to make a moral choice between two acts, both of which may affirm life and retain the person's integrity and productiveness. Fromm states that his ethics "takes the point of view that if man is alive he knows what is allowed," and that he will use his powers "to make sense of (his) existence, to be human."[171] Yet how can an individual know what he is allowed and how to use his powers unless he is able to take the objective criterion and supply a subjective answer at each turning? This is a question which Fromm does not face.

The other breakdown of Fromm's objectivity is into an authoritarianism, an 'ism' to which Fromm is vehemently opposed. Yet one can ask again, when this ethic is reduced to the individual situation, by what means does the individual accept Fromm's humanistic ethics as the objective good for which he should strive? If the person is not versed in "the science of man," there is no other way of his accepting this ethics than on an authoritarian basis. The scientists who have mastered this science proclaim what is 'good' and 'productive' for man and then the non-scientist tries to follow this ethic. But is this not just another kind of authoritarianism, albeit not as exploitative or suppressive as the others we have known, but an

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171. Op cit., Man for Himself, pp. 248-249.

authoritarianism nonetheless? Again Fromm does not face this problem and it is an important one which he has overlooked, for a person who does not live productively can have a guilty humanistic conscience, not only because of his own inadequacy, but also from an idea that the scientists of man will disapprove of him. One cannot propose an ethic of this sort, hope for its acceptance and then not expect the accepter to feel a reliance upon the proposers of the ethic. Fromm overlooks this problem in his desire for objectivity.

The second major problem which Fromm's ethics presents is related to his concept of "good" which "in humanistic ethics is the affirmation of life."[172] This view of good cannot account for many deeds which appear to be altruistic or for a higher good rather than just for the affirmation of the individual's life. Such a view cannot account for people who lay down their lives for a just or humanitarian cause. It cannot account for any form of self-sacrfice which is surely a part of life and not an unusual occurrence. To Fromm such an act would be bad because it negates life. He would have to deny goodness in the action of a parent laying down his life to save his child, or of a fireman loosing his life while rescuing a fire victim, or of a prisoner dying as a result of a medical test to perfect a vaccine. These, and other examples of self-sacrifice Fromm would have to consider as ethically bad because in each one the individual negates his own life and his own productiveness.

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172. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 20.

Fromm's concept of goodness does not permit more than one way for the individual to affirm life and that it to seek his own profit.[173] As we have pointed out above, there are many instances in life where one's own profit is not considered the good, but there is a good which is higher and which people oftimes do seek. Such situations Fromm would have to deny.

These are two of the more obvious problems in Fromm's presentation of the problem of the self-realization of man. There are many more which would not stand the test of close scrutiny. Among these are Fromm's great unclarity between acculturation and submissiveness in the individual, and the uncertain dividing line between spontaneity and capriciousness. However this paper does not pretend to go into an exhaustive criticism of Fromm's views of self-realization, but merely to present his approach to this problem.

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173. Op. cit., Man for Himself, p. 133.

Conclusion

Now that we have studied in detail the presentations of Maimonides, Spinoza and Fromm on the subject of self-realization we are able to see the points which they stress in common despite their vast cultural and time differences, and also their salient differences in presenting the problem. In addition we shall attempt to criticize some of their views and then look for the universals in their messages which we can apply to our modern day life.

The primary similarity which we find is their great emphasis on reason. Maimonides made intellectual perfection, his fourth perfection, the highest attainment of man. It was only through the use of his reason, which was "the possession of the highest intellectual faculties,"[1] that man could "comprehend the real nature of things."[2] Spinoza emphasized knowledge as a prerequisite to self-realization, however, as we saw, it was a supra-rational knowledge which was the goal. Nevertheless, reason was most important because only through the use of man's ability to think and use his powers of reason could he gain control over his affects.[3] Spinoza's supra-rationality had its basis in reason, which was a step in the process of achieving it. Fromm also placed an emphasis upon man's use of his reasoning

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1. Guide for the Perplexed, Part III, Chapt 54.
2. Ibid., Chapt 28.
3. Op. cit., Duff, pp. 68-69.

powers. Reason is one of the two major ways in which man can comprehend the world, the other being love. In Fromm's terminology, thinking must be productive so that man can relate himself to things "by comprehending them."[4] Even man's faith must be rational. Thus we find in all three presentations that reason, the rational use of man's mental abilities, is of prime importance in the process of realization.

Out of rationality grows knowledge, but knowledge at different levels and for different purposes - for man or for God, for activity or for tranquility.

Maimonides' fourth perfection, intellectual perfection, was the perfection by which man truly reaches "his final object,... on its account he is called man."[5] However this knowledge of which Maimonides spoke was not merely for man's own end, rather did it permit him to "comprehend the real nature of things and understand the divine wisdom displayed therein."[6] Through this comprehension man could imitate the middot of God in his dealings with his fellowmen. Thus man's knowledge enabled him to transcend himself and to strive "for the realization of the ethical ideal" in life.[7] Man's self-realization was God centered but had a specific end within history.

Spinoza, on the other hand, viewed knowledge as permitting man to control his affects, thus leading to man's freedom and

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4. Man for Himself, p. 102.
5. Guide for the Perplexed, Part III, Chapt 54.
6. Ibid., Chapt 28.
7. Op. cit., Atlas, p. 202.

his activity. However, beyond this goal of knowledge of one's affects, was a supra-rational knowledge, an intuitive knowledge, which led man to blessedness, the supreme goal of life. This blessedness permitted man to arrive at an intellectual love of God - the union with God which was "virtue itself."[8]

Both Maimonides' and Spinoza's views of self-realization were theologically oriented. In briefly comparing these two views of knowledge and the consequences of each, Dr. Atlas has stated,"Spinoza's concept of the intellectual love of God does not imply activity or creative initiative, but tranquility and quiescence. Just as Spinoza's God is not creative, neither is man.... The ultimate value, according to Maimonides, is not aloofness and unconcern, but creative initiative and activity, aiming at the realization of the absolute good which is an endless goal. Just as God is creative, so is man."[9]

Fromm's view of knowledge, on the other hand, is not theologically oriented, but is humanistic, as he so freely admits.[10] To him the knowledge of one's own nature is paramount if one is to live productively. But this knowledge must also be put to the proper use. It should be the stimulus which leads to productive living through the development of the humanistic conscience - the regard for one's self and for its proper care and cultivation, with the eventual blossoming of the self into the flower of realization. Thus to Fromm, as to Maimonides,

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8. Ethics, Part 5, Prop 42.
9. Op. cit., Atlas, p. 204.
10. Man for Himself, pp. 20ff.

knowledge is activistic, however leading to man's activity "for himself" rather than an imitation of God.

From these brief comparisons we see clearly that despite interpretational differences, all three men maintained the traditional Jewish point of view that the nature of man is basically good, because only a person with this view of man could envision the goal of intellectual perfection, imitatio dei, or productive living. These goals are unthinkable to anyone holding that man is sinful by nature. In addition we see that all three prescribed a method of self-realization and urged that man strive for this goal in life - a similarity despite diversity of time-place and world outlook.

A comparison can also be made of the aspects of life upon which Maimonides, Spinoza and Fromm looked with disparagement, the negative side of self-realization. Maimonides looked down upon perfections which were not truly the person's own, that belonged to society or to the individual as a living being. While he admitted them to the realm of perfections, they were not truly of man as man. These perfections, wealth, physical well-being and moral perfection, were merely steps on the path to true perfection, the perfection of the intellect which was the only one man could call his own. Spinoza distained the passions which effected man's life and prevented him from acting rationally. These passions, in a sense, man could not call his own also, for they were the product of the inadequate ideas of the mind. As in Maimonides, they too prevented the achievement of the knowledge of God. Fromm placed the lack of concern

and appreciation of one's self as the deterent to self-realization. This included any subjegation to an external authority and the acting in a non-productive manner. Although his terminology and method are different, his view is similar to both Maimonides and Spinoza in that it is the lack of perfection in the qualities which truly belong to the individual as a human being which prevent self-realization. Thus we see that for all three men, non-realization is the lack of development of one's rational capacities and there consequent non-function.

The views of Maimonides, Spinoza, and Fromm all deny the criteria of pleasure and happiness as being of primary importance, as in other theories of man, although they allow them as secondary and contributory to man's realization.

The concept of self-realization as man's goal in life has a number of short-comings. Some of these short-comings we mentioned in our chapter on Fromm. However, Rashdall lists a number of cogent ones which we shall present briefly:

1) The self needs to be regarded as real before one can set out to realize it, thus giving a contradiction of terms.

2) Whenever a person acts or ceases to act he is realizing some one aspect of his capacities, be it ever so small, since no one can ever do anything which he was not first capable of doing.

3) When man realizes one capacity, he non-realizes or sacrifices another capacity, even if it also merits realization.

4) It is often impossible to know which self ought to be realized.

5) The realization of the individual self necessarily excludes the realization of other selves of other persons.[11]

Despite these valid criticisms of self-realization as an ethic, there are still lessons to be learned from the presentations of Maimonides, Spinoza, and Fromm which can be applied to our modern situation. One of these is their view of the negation of the self. Despite varying views of the end of life, there was general agreement on what realization was not - the non-realization of one's capacities. At this level we are able to say that man has many potentialities, and although we cannot place them in exact numerical order, there are some which are obviously more deserving of realization than others - certain potentialities that man has which if realized leave unrealized other potentialities which would make the person's life fuller and more "productive," in Fromm's terminology. Thus, at this level, their approach is valid in that certain potentialities are not truly man's own and do not lead him to the fullest utilization of his capabilities.

Their positive approach to realization also provides us with a valid universal and that is the importance of the development of man's rational powers. If we grant that the universe is a rational one, and that man can only participate in it through the proper use of his rational powers, then man needs to develop these powers to the best of his ability in order to participate at his highest level. Thus we find that

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11. Op. cit., Rashdall, pp. 61ff.

self-realization, whatever this may mean in specific terms, is only achieved through the development of one's rational powers. However, this cannot preclude the development of man's other human faculties, such as emotion, physical well-being, etc. which cannot be separated from man as a human being. Nevertheless, reason needs to dominate life if it is to make sense in a reasonable, orderly world.

Man's proper living of his life has always been a problem. No one system of orientation has answered every question which can be raised concerning life. Each one answers some. The ethic of self-realization attempts to present man's responsibility to himself as an individual. In this it points a direction, despite its not being able to answer a number of crucial questions.

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