

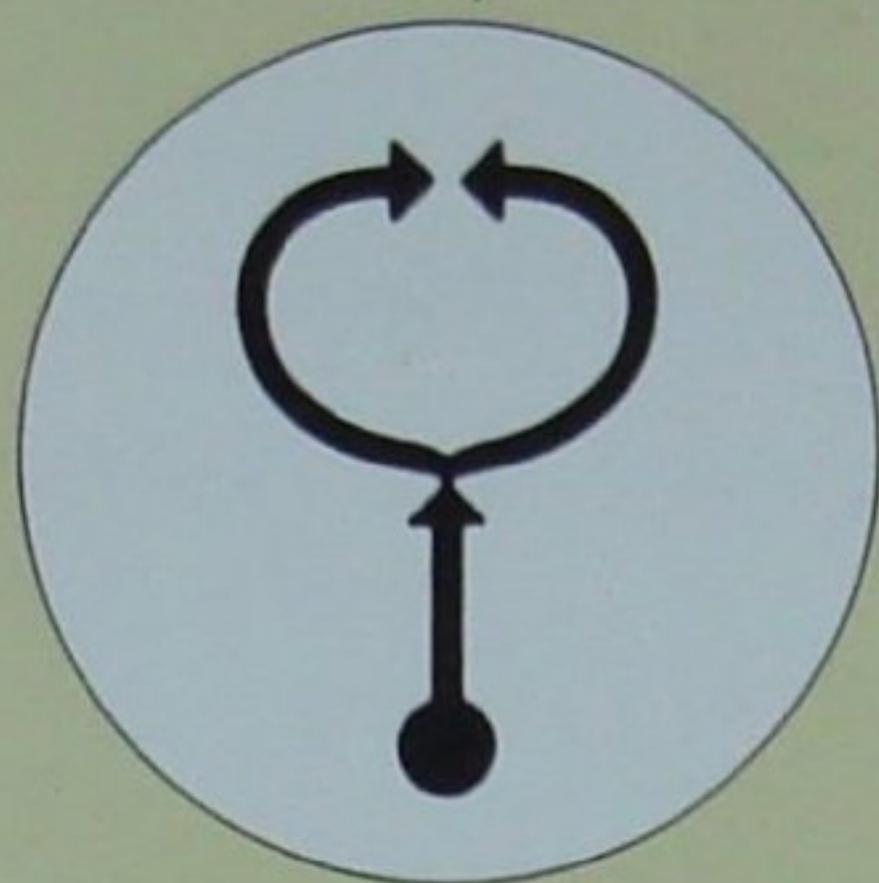
ORGONOMIC

FUNCTIONALISM

A JOURNAL DEVOTED

TO THE WORK OF

WILHELM REICH



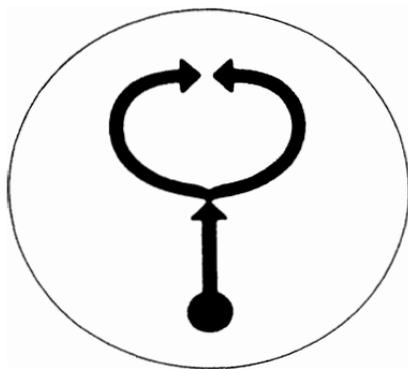
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# WILHELM REICH



Editors: Mary Boyd Higgins, Chester M. Raphael, M.D.  
Jacket design by Cynthia Krupat

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*Love, work, and knowledge are the wellsprings of our life.  
They should also govern it.*

**Wilhelm Reich**



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# *The Developmental History of Orgonomic Functionalism\**

## Part Two

### THE FOUR BEAT RHYTHM OF THE ORGASM FORMULA - THE LIFE FORMULA

In contrast to the neurotic character structure, the genital character is distinguished by "orgastic potency," which forms the common functioning principle of all human character structures whose functioning is not interrupted by armor blocks between the deep biological level and the psychic surface and therefore *flows freely*. This character structure experiences contradictions and conflicts, inhibitions, and even repressions, but the capacity for orgastic convulsion is specific to it. Thus, the unarmored character structure represents the functional antithesis of the armored character structure.

The common functioning principle of genital and neurotic structures is easily found. If the biological emotions are loosened from their frozen state in the armor, so they can flow freely from the depths to the surface, we find that both armored and unarmored organisms experience the build-up of instinctual charge in the biological core. However, while the armored organism does not lack the ability to eliminate the instinctual tensions as such, it lacks the capacity for orgastic convulsion and discharge of surplus bioenergy, in short, orgastic potency.

The build-up and release of the instinctual tensions are *periodic* life processes that can be subsumed under the concept of PULSATION. If we trace the manifestations of build-up and release, we find in the first process, as clearly evidenced in sexual excitation, an initial heightening of turgor of the tissues, especially in the genitals, whereas the release goes together with

a decrease in the turgor. Functionally speaking, turgor constitutes *mechanical tension* brought about by the filling of an organ with fluid (erection), its disappearance corresponds with a *mechanical relaxation*. Tension and relaxation form an antithetical pair of functions which share the common functioning principle of vasomotor activity and the movement of fluid.

We can now confirm that the functional thought technique will inevitably reveal new facts if it correctly observes and accurately describes the function to be examined.

It appears logical to regard *mechanical* tension of the tissues as the basis of sexual excitation and *mechanical* relaxation as the basis of sexual gratification. In fact, the old system of sexual physiology arrived at precisely this conclusion and in particular viewed the build-up of tension in the seminal vesicles as being responsible for sexual excitation in the male. At this point, the introduction of the concept of "orgastic impotence" was a decisively important step, not only clinically but also theoretically.

Clinical observation has shown that the processes of tension and relaxation in the *mechanical* sense can take place freely without any sensations of sexual excitation and gratification. Consequently, sexual sensations could not be functionally correlated in any way with the mechanical processes occurring in the organism. According to the functional work hypothesis, dating from approximately 1930-1934, there must be something else, in addition to the mechanical tension, which brings about the sensation of pleasure, the excitation, and the gratification. This missing element had to be found.

It was thus the *functional* and not the mechanical formulation which ultimately yielded the four-beat "orgasm formula." The hypothetical conclusion reached was that pleasure sensation and psychic excitation come about only when mechanical tension occurs together with a biological *energy charge* at the periphery of the organism. I have presented these fundamental aspects of my research so often that I can keep my remarks brief at this point. The above formulation achieved two goals: First, the psychic sensation of pleasure was separated from the mechanical processes in the body. Second, our attention was drawn to a still unknown factor which had to be present and functioning

if the existence of the pleasure sensation was to be comprehensible. As a result, our investigations began to focus more and more on BIOLOGICAL ENERGY. It was obvious that there is such a thing as biological energy. But *what* was it, and *how* did it function? It probably had something to do with charge and discharge. The orgasm showed every sign of being a discharge of previously built-up charges. This gave rise to a host of highly fruitful lines of investigation:

a. The relationship between the *intensity* of a sensation and the *extensiveness* or *quantity* of the energetic charge. (Not the relationship with mechanical tension, because a direct correlation between sensation and tension could not exist, given the fact of orgasmic impotence.)

“Intensity” and “quality” are properties of *psychic* sensations, and “extensivity” or “quantity” are properties of *physical* processes. Quality and quantity are properties which do not coincide. We experience a sound or a color as intensive qualities. These sensations correspond to objective quantities, such as the number and amplitude of the wave oscillations responsible for producing the sound or the color.

The *intensity of sensation* and the *quantity of charge or excitation* form a functional pair of opposites because they are fundamentally different and yet they determine each other. They must therefore have a common principle in which they are functionally identical. The task was to look for, find, and correctly formulate this principle. I knew that if I were to succeed in finding the common functioning principle of sensation and excitation, *then for the first time in the history of natural scientific research a usable bridge would have been established between the subjective, psychic world and the objective, physical world.* Yet, as always, this was another case in which the riddle could not be solved by philosophical speculation but solely through observation of nature and the correct connection of the observed facts.

b. If mechanical tension and relaxation and the charge and discharge of energy form two pairs of opposites which fuse the orgasm function into one unit, the next question was *how* these pairs of functions were to be arranged in relation to each other.

Was it to be in the way which I have described above, or in some other way? Could they be grouped as tension and charge on the one hand and as relaxation and discharge on the other? These are essential details of the thought technique. I wish to convince the reader that *functionalism cannot be arbitrarily or mechanically applied if it is to yield practical results capable of further development*. The manner in which we arrange the different functions is not trivial. There is only *one* correct arrangement, and not four or sixteen. Anyone familiar with my writings knows what this arrangement is. Nevertheless, here, we want to deduce it logically.

Let us try to arrange the four functions in different patterns and see which arrangement coincides with the objective processes. Various authors have referred to my orgasm formula, but they have stated it in the wrong order, as if the order were unimportant. In fact, it is decisive not only for the formulation of the orgasm function but also for all the consequences which can be derived from it.

First possibility:

Tension —————> Relaxation —————> Charge —————> Discharge

This does not illustrate the process because in the orgasm function the charge obviously occurs before the relaxation.

Second possibility:

Tension —————> Charge —————> Relaxation —————> Discharge

This arrangement avoids the mechanical sequence of the first one, but it again fails to coincide with the process because the relaxation of the organism does not occur between charge and discharge.

Third possibility:

Tension —————> Discharge —————> Relaxation —————> Charge

This is patent nonsense, as is also the sequence: relaxa-

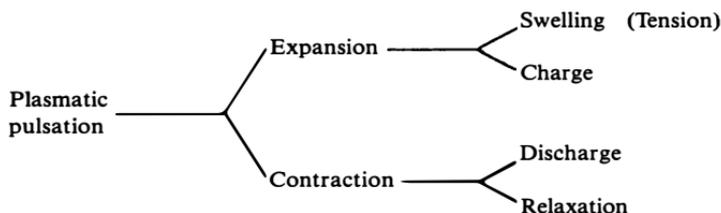
tion → tension → discharge → charge. I include this nonsense here in order to show that, just like in other scientific operations, illogical and logical connections can also occur in functional formulations.

Certain, well-defined natural functions always obey only *one* logical and therefore rational connection of their intrinsic functions which objectively describes the process and can accommodate any variations. For the orgasm function there is only one logical arrangement of the four functions, and no other, which is capable of defining practically the function to be formulated. We can demonstrate this immediately in concrete terms. The logical formulation is as follows:

*Mechanical tension — bioenergetic charge — bioenergetic discharge — mechanical relaxation*

Let us refer to this process simply as the “orgasm formula.” It is specific for the orgasm, which, if we restrict ourselves to characterology, is the common functioning principle of all genital characters. No more than a brief moment of reflection is required to show that only the slightest deviation from this principle will prevent the natural process which it controls from taking place. If we omit mechanical tension or bioenergetic charge, then relaxation and discharge are lost. If we allow relaxation to precede discharge, then we contradict our observation of the facts. We would then permit a bioenergetic discharge to take place in a non-turgid organ, e.g., in a limp penis. We could permit the bioenergetic charge to precede the mechanical turgidity, because it is conceivable that a charge or excitation leads to a swelling of the tissue. However, this is at variance with the facts revealed by other observations. In the orgasm formula, the bioenergetic charge takes place at the *periphery* of the organism, but it *does not occur* unless there is prior swelling of the peripheral organ. The charge must somehow get to the periphery. The next step in our thought process tells us that the excitation can originate only at the *center* of the organism, and that it moves from the center to the periphery: centrifugal plasma flow. This consideration is supported by microscopic observations of flowing amoebae. Before the latter form a pseudopodi-

um at the periphery, bions radiate in the center of the organism and a streaming of plasma is initiated from the center to the periphery. We are justified in transferring our conclusions about the amoeba to the developed animal because plasmatic streaming is a function common to *all* plasmatic substance. It is a pulsatory process composed of expansion and contraction. The expansion goes together with swelling and charge, and the contraction with discharge and relaxation. We can therefore write, in functional terms:



Only *one* deviation from the four-beat rhythm of the orgasm function is possible. Mechanical tension of the peripheral organ may occur without being followed by the other three elements. This is what actually happens in the case of "cold erection." It results in severe pathological priapism.

The four-beat of the orgasm function constitutes simultaneously a *functional* and a *temporal* sequence of processes which, except under pathological circumstances, forms an inseparable unit. In it, four individual functions are linked in a characteristic way and are dependent on each other. Swelling and charge occur gradually, while discharge and detumescence constitute a rapid, rhythmically convulsive process. Is pulsatory convulsion characteristic merely of orgasm? That is the next question. The rhythmically convulsive sequence of the second part of the overall function is in fact found only in the orgasm. The repeated convulsion of the organism distinguishes the orgasm from other biologically autonomous functions. However, the four-beat rhythm of tension (swelling) → charge → discharge → relaxation is a function of *all* autonomous organs, i.e., it is not specific merely to the orgasm. The movement of muscles, the motion of jelly-

fish, the beating of the heart, intestinal peristalsis, the movement of worms and snakes, all provide obvious proof of the general validity of the orgasm formula in the sphere of living matter. Thus, the orgasm formula describes a principle which extends far beyond the realm of the sexual function. It is just that it is very clearly pronounced in the sexual sphere, because here the biological emotions with their concomitant energy processes are particularly vigorous. But the four-beat rhythm can even be traced back to the division of the egg, and it is also visible in the convulsions that accompany the sudden transitions in embryonic development. This gives rise logically to the next question, namely, how far does the functioning realm of the orgastic four-beat extend?

Since all living organs are involved, the orgasm formula seems to be the "life formula" per se. This is a far-reaching and radical conclusion because it brings us to the boundary of the living realm and, whether we like it or not (not out of vain curiosity but out of the necessity to understand and demarcate our frame of reference), we must look at the neighboring area, the realm of *nonliving* nature.

*How is the boundary between living and nonliving nature constituted?* Is the demarcation distinct? Are there transitions? Do certain functions from the neighboring area extend into the living realm? Do specific life functions extend into and act in some form or another in the realm of nonliving nature? Are the mechanists right in insisting there are no fundamental distinctions between the living and nonliving? Are they right in expecting that a more complete chemical and physical analysis of the functions of nonliving matter will throw light on the problem of life? Or are the metaphysicians and mystics correct in also assigning the properties of the living to nonliving nature, and even in assuming that there is a general spirit or divine force which is independent of nature?

Such questions are not philosophical speculations but a necessary review of the subject under study, providing orientation in a strange and foreign environment. In a familiar residential neighborhood one knows exactly where one's own street begins, where one's property ends, and where the neighboring street and

the neighbor's property begins. One even knows the neighbor and his family. Nothing is foreign and strange. In contrast, a scientist whose research is breaking ground into new territory feels something like a 15th-century mariner must have felt; or he proceeds with the same degree of circumspection as an American pioneer opening up the Wild West. It is not always necessary for him to know the environment in every detail, but he does need to know the kind of territory in which he finds himself. This is a part of the mechanism of survival and security, not only in seafaring but also in genuine natural research.

Fruitful scientific research alternates between periods of uncertainty, on the one hand, and total clarity on the other. The scientist is like a hiker in the mountains who suddenly emerges from a dense tangle of trees and finds himself on a plateau from where he has a clear view into the distance and over the surrounding countryside.

Expanding the functioning realm of the orgasm formula from the sexual sphere to that of the living in general was the equivalent of acquiring such an overview and looking far into the distance. This position had not been sought but had been reached as a logical consequence of functional thinking. There was nothing new in the fact that we now had an overview of the entire sphere of life, but it was new that this sphere was now seen to be governed by one broad functioning principle, one functional law of nature. Most details were still obscure, but the general validity of the "life formula," as I now called the orgasm formula, seemed to be confirmed. Before it was possible to proceed, several precautions had to be taken to guard against drawing wrong conclusions which could be catastrophic. A mistake in small areas of work is easily corrected, but to err in fundamental, far-reaching matters can cost one his life's work. My hypothesis was now as follows:

For a mechanist, the living is merely an electrical and chemical machine which he expects to understand completely after further knowledge has been accumulated on electrical and chemical processes. On the other hand, a vitalist regards the living as fundamentally different from the nonliving. He assumes a "vis vitalis," which is metaphysical in nature. The arguments of

the vitalists are no weaker than those of the mechanists. Both sides can cite many weighty facts in their favor. But the contradiction between the two viewpoints remains distinct and unresolvable. The problem can only be overcome by seeking out the common functioning principle between the living and non-living realms of nature.

Both these realms are governed by the processes of tension and relaxation, and of charge and discharge. But the *manner* in which they are combined distinguishes the living from the nonliving. In living nature these processes function in a specific rhythmic four-beat cycle: *TENSION* → *CHARGE* → *DISCHARGE* → *RELAXATION*.\* (Instead of tension we can also speak of swelling.) What we see here, therefore, is commonality and variation expressed in the same functions. The deviation of the living from the rest of nature is defined only by a rhythmic arrangement of the part-functions. Let us reiterate that the number of part-functions which makes up *one* basic function is *four*.

To start with, it was necessary to establish a functional connection between the life formula and already well-known and well-defined part-functions. To use an analogy: when an expedition arrives at an advanced outpost, it secures its lines of communication with the civilization it has left behind. In the course of firmly establishing this new scientific position, further light had to be shed on the relationship between living and nonliving nature; there were details which had been overlooked or wrongly assessed. Seemingly trivial details often gain major importance when they are placed in a broader framework of functioning. We must therefore return to some earlier points of departure.

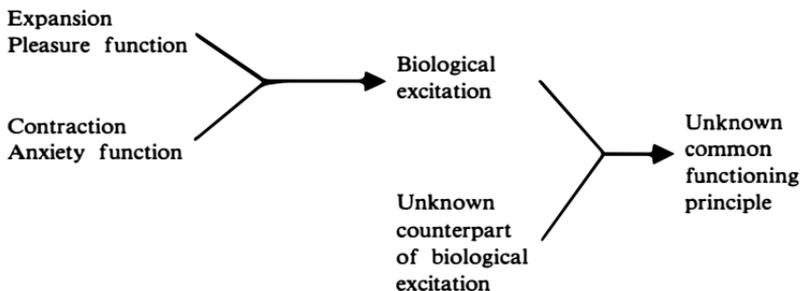
## THE BIOENERGETIC PLASMA CURRENT

Around 1926, my sex-economic studies had revealed an important antithesis which proved to be generally valid in the realm of biopsychic emotions—the antithesis of pleasure and anxiety. To recapitulate: the common functioning principle of these sen-

\*In this four-beat, we recognize the phenomenon of "orgonotic pulsation."

sations is *the streaming of biological excitation in the organism*, even though it is still unclear what we mean in practical terms when we say "biological excitation." The differentiation of the common functioning principle of biological excitation or current into pleasure or anxiety is determined by the direction of the current or excitation. Pleasure is generated when the excitation flows toward the periphery, and anxiety when it flows toward the center, thereby inhibiting expansion impulses. This fact was confirmed by clinical observation of the corresponding phenomena. But it was unclear what streams or flows, what moves in the body independently of the nerves and tissues.

The embryonic science of oronomy was familiar with the elements of the antithetical function of pleasure and anxiety, and it recognized their common functioning principle, the "bioenergetic" current. But it is a long way from pleasure or anxiety to an understanding of their biological origins. The antithesis of the pleasure sensation and the anxiety sensation and their functional identity in biological excitation was described, but biological excitation, which formed the common functioning principle of pleasure and anxiety, must itself be a derivative of a deeper natural principle. Neither the essence of this biological excitation, nor its functional antithesis, or the deeper-lying common functioning principle of biological excitation and its unknown counterpart were understood or even surmised.



Let us start our journey into the unknown by searching for the counterpart of pleasure and anxiety. We will find that when conducting a functional investigation of natural processes, we can

seek and arrange only *one* pair of functions at a time. We get nowhere if we try to include more than one pair in the functional schema.

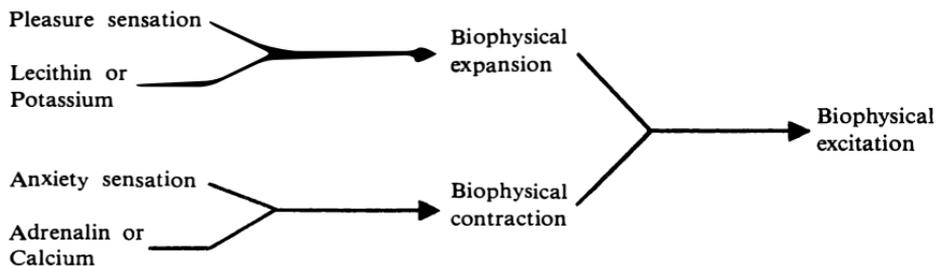
Pleasure and anxiety are sensations. While they are certainly opposites, they both belong to the functioning realm of the psyche. At the same time, they give expression to biological, i.e., extra-psychic processes. Unless we wish to commit the mistake of obliterating the functioning stages in nature and spiritualizing *all* of nature, we must distinguish between the concepts "psychic" and "biological" and keep them permanently apart. The thought technique used in many depth-psychological studies frequently makes the fundamental error of confusing biological and psychic processes or arbitrarily replacing one for the other. It is necessary to restrict the concept "psychic" to the realm of the sensations and thus use it to describe only the subjective experiencing of objective life processes. *The biological realm of objective life processes is broader than that of the psychic.* To be sure, all psychic, subjective experience is contained in the functioning realm of the living, but not all life processes are also psychically perceived. There is a broad area of biological functioning, such as the life activity during sleep, cell division, metabolism, etc. which we do not perceive or experience subjectively. They are not represented or expressed in the unconscious mind. This is not to say that we wish to restrict sensation to conscious experiencing or even to "consciousness." There are sensations, in particular organ sensations, which seldom reach the threshold of consciousness. These considerations are decisive when formulating so-called psychosomatic diseases, the "biopathies" of orgone biophysics. Incorrect ideas about the functional correlation between the narrow psychic and the broad biological realm lead to incorrect clinical conclusions.

Certain considerations of thought technique force us to make a distinction between functional antitheses which operate *within* a particular realm and pairs of functions whose separate elements are located in realms of varying depth or width. This proposition, which sounds incredibly theoretical, becomes easy to understand if we bring together the sensations of pleasure and anxiety as functional opposites, but then search for their

correlate in the deeper realm of the biological. In the first case, both functioning elements are psychic in nature. They function "horizontally" in opposition to each other. In the second case, one element is situated in the psychic realm and the other in the biological, which is not perceived. They still form a pair of opposites, but one is at a higher and the other at a deeper level. This dissimilarity could be reflected by writing our functional symbol differently, but that is unnecessary. It would only complicate the relationships. In each case where we establish functioning antitheses, it is sufficient that we be clear whether the two elements of the function are at the same or at different levels, with the deeper level always being the broader of the two.

The psychic sensation of anxiety at the deeper functioning level is most clearly represented in the biochemical substance adrenalin. Here, a psychic and a biochemical function form a functional pair. The physiological counterpart of the pleasure sensation at the deeper level is represented by the biochemical substance lecithin and the inorganic substance potassium.

Like all other paired functions, these must also have a common functioning principle which makes them functionally identical. The common functioning principle of the pleasure sensation and potassium or lecithin is the biological *expansion* of the vasovegetative apparatus. The common functioning principle of the anxiety sensation and adrenalin (also calcium) is the biological *contraction* of the life apparatus. The unity and antithetical nature of psychic and biochemical functions can be classified in this way.



We had previously discovered a functional identity and antithesis of pleasure and the parasympathetic function, and of anxiety and the sympathetic function. In the first case, the common functioning principle is the biological expansion and, in the second case, the biological contraction of the life apparatus. We had thus managed to discover and formulate the principle not only in one and the same, but also in different functioning layers. The attentive reader will already have noted what this means: Connecting natural processes within one specific functioning area contributes nothing toward "integration," i.e. toward unifying the various special sciences of natural research. On the other hand, the linkage of processes from different functioning realms, which are strictly separated in the mechanistic view, in principle, breaks down the boundaries between the various sciences.

If a specific special function in a scientific field, such as psychology, has a specific special and opposite function in another scientific field, such as physiology or electrical phenomena, and if it shares with that other function a common functioning principle in a third scientific field, such as biology, then the boundaries between psychology, physiology, electrical phenomena, and biology fundamentally break down. In practical terms this means, at least with regard to the already concretely formulated natural functions, that *in nature, there are no boundaries in the common functioning principle of the first (or last) order*. The boundaries were introduced by the specialization of mechanistic disciplines. Energetic functionalism removes these boundaries. In this way scientific research is brought closer to nature, not only as regards the content of the research, but also in the thought technique used. And, in principle, there are no fundamental but only technical or methodological barriers left to cross in order to arrive at the uniform functioning principle of all nature, the functional law of nature, even though in concrete terms we are still far from attaining this goal. The framework of thought can encompass all of nature, even though observation and experiment lag behind.

The results of this thought technique are of decisive importance, as can easily be proved if they are tested. However, before

we contrast the dualistic, monistic, and mechanistic principle of thought to the functional one, using practical examples, we still have to take a few more steps toward the common functional principle of the living.

So far, we have formulated two series of antithetical functions which, among each other and in their links with each other, describe objective natural functions. Let us now arrange them synoptically.

Paired Functions		Principle
Pleasure sensation	— Anxiety sensation .....	Psychology
Parasympathetic	— Sympathetic .....	Physiology
Lecithin, Cholin	— Adrenalin .....	Biochemistry
Potassium	— Calcium .....	Inorganic chemistry
<i>EXPANSION</i>	— <i>CONTRACTION</i> .....	Physics, mechanics
<i>PULSATION</i> .....		Orgonomic functioning principle

Each individual function forms a specific relationship with every other function. Each of these individual relationships has its own special common functioning principle. And, as groups, the two rows form antithetical pairs of functions, of different rank, with regard to the general biological principle of pulsation.

The pair of functions closest to pulsation is formed by expansion and contraction. These are mechanical functions in the living realm which are best represented by the processes of swelling (hydration) and shrinking (dehydration).

The reader will have asked himself what has happened to the antithetical grouping of charge and discharge. Anyone who thinks carefully about the functions of energetic charge and discharge will find that they do not fit into our functional schema. If charge were functionally identical with one group, and discharge with the other, as, for example, pleasure and parasympathetic activity are functionally identical with expansion, and anxiety and sympathetic activity with contraction, then there would be no difficulty in arranging the charge and discharge of tissues in the functional schema. However, functionalism does not permit any mechanical classifications. Theories must correspond to functions, otherwise one falls prey to error.

The difficulty of incorporating charge and discharge, which are obvious biological functions and the main elements of the extremely important orgasm formula, into the schema which had been arrived at, forced me, around 1934, to verify the entire theory experimentally. The only way to decide whether and how the antithesis of charge and discharge coincides with the functionalism of the living organism was to conduct controllable experiments. It was clear that charge cannot automatically be paired with pleasure, or discharge with anxiety, because both the charge and discharge of biological energy in the sexual act are pleasurable processes. And an anxiety attack certainly does not look like a discharge. It is inevitable that such tangled facts will be encountered in the course of research. In fact, an experienced natural scientist becomes suspicious if his work proceeds without impediments, and he actually welcomes such complications, for experience has taught that each tangle of facts carries within it a very important secret of nature. The difficulty described here was resolved satisfactorily in the course of further research and its enormous secret was revealed. *The ultimate result was the discovery of cosmic orgone energy.*

## THE "BIOELECTRICAL" FUNCTION OF PLEASURE AND ANXIETY

In 1934, the functions of charge and discharge of the tissues could only be studied in terms of electrical energy. Earlier research by Veraguth and Tarchanoff had revealed the so-called psycho-galvanic phenomenon. They had found that the affects of anxiety, sadness, rage, etc. are associated with electrical processes, with changes in the skin potentials. The term "associated with" means in this case that psychic processes are accompanied by or caused by physiological, chemical, or physical processes, depending on whether the scientist espouses the thought technique of psychophysical parallelism or mechanistic materialism. To my knowledge, the pleasure sensation had not been studied experimentally until 1934, but it was precisely this omission which held the key to solving the riddle.

Technically, the experiments could be conducted only on the surface of the skin. I will pass over the technical details, which are not essential at this point and have been described elsewhere in detail.\* We must remain with the theme of the functional thought technique. When I started the experiments, I had no preconceived ideas. Since it had proved impossible to incorporate charge and pleasure, discharge and anxiety as pairs of functions into the theoretical structure, there was absolutely no sense in forming any hypotheses or anticipating certain results. It was only clear that, far from being excluded, the pleasure sensation had to be central to the experiments.

Let us reexamine the contradiction under consideration: Both the pleasure and the anxiety function exhibit the phenomena of high bioenergetic charge in the organism. The discharge in the organism is in fact the climax of the pleasure sensation. Where, then, was the discharge of biological energy compatible with anxiety and thus with the basic antithesis of pleasure and anxiety? It was not until much later, after the experiments had yielded their results, that I discovered that the hypothesis which I had formulated about nine years earlier, based solely on clinical observation (*Die Funktion des Orgasmus*, 1927),\*\* turned out to be approximately correct. However, I must stress that at the time of the experiments I was working without any preconceived notions and indeed, because of the many contradictions, I was, if anything, confused.

After about a year of trying different approaches, most of which turned out to be failures, the first clear result emerged. *Of all the known affects or emotions, only the pleasure sensation is capable of increasing the bioenergetic charge of the skin surface. All other affects, such as anxiety, rage, depression, etc., are associated with a lowering of the skin potentials.*

Another year of intense experimentation confirmed this initial result, which seemed to be unknown in the physiological literature. It was surprising, and to a certain extent confusing, that

\*Cf. Reich, *The Bioelectrical Investigation of Sexuality and Anxiety*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1982 [Eds.]

\*\*Cf. Reich, *Genitality in the Theory and Therapy of Neurosis*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1980 [Eds.]

this conclusion angered several of my co-workers and friends and they left me. What is nowadays a banality was 15 years ago sufficient reason for scientific enmity and personal discord. My finding could not be reconciled with any mechanistic theory, and at a single stroke it brought crashing down a large number of firm opinions held in psychological, physiological, and biological circles. I wish now to present the most important results of these experiments. Their implications struck me like an earthquake.

Mechanistic physiology assumes that when muscles respond to stimuli, electric currents move in rigid nerves. Our experiments showed that *energy itself moves when sensations are experienced*, without the slightest muscular movement occurring. The bioenergy moves in a way which has nothing to do with the classical neural pathways. In the course of the pleasure sensation, the energy flows toward the periphery, and when anxiety is experienced, the energy flows from the periphery to the center of the organism, thereby retarding the peripherally directed impulses.

*Thus the counterpart to the antithesis of pleasure and anxiety is the antithesis of the periphery and center of the organism.* The bioenergetic center has nothing to do with the "center" of mechanistic neurology. It is not situated in the cerebrum but in the *middle of the body*. It coincides with the position of the largest and most important ganglion center, the solar plexus ("ganglion coeliacum"). The movement of the biological energy from the center to the periphery is functionally identical with the sensation of pleasure. It is expressed in increased skin potential. The movement of bioenergy from the periphery toward the center is functionally identical with the sensation of anxiety. Since the genitals are the most excitable area of the periphery, the genital apparatus and the diaphragmatic region form an antithetical pair. This was confirmed many years ago by clinical observations: *Bioenergy oscillates between cardiac excitation and genital excitation in certain anxiety neuroses.*

This is easy to detect clinically. For example, women tend to exhibit "nervous anxiety" only when they are face to face with a man who excites them sexually, i.e., toward whom their life

apparatus reaches out in a state of excitation. They do *not* experience anxiety if the man does not have an exciting effect on them, or if the sexual attraction is not reciprocated. In other words, *anxiety is the expression of a biological expansion which is curbed*. Uncurbed expansive excitation does not produce anxiety.

Respiration has an unmistakable influence on these processes. The skin potential over the diaphragm decreases with deep inhalation and increases with deep exhalation. During the breathing-in stage, the diaphragm exerts pressure on the solar plexus, and this is released again upon breathing out. The lowering of the diaphragm which takes place upon inhalation thus impedes the pleasurable expansion of the life apparatus and acts in the direction of anxiety. This opened the door to understanding the *physiology* of psychical disorders, the central function of which is anxiety. From that time on, my attention was drawn to the breathing in neurotic and psychotic patients: *The blocking of the ability to exhale fully, and the chronic inspiratory attitude of the chest proved to be a universal phenomenon in "psychical" disorders*. I had discovered the fundamental mechanism of the so-called biopathies. I will not discuss here the clinical details of biopathic mechanisms because they have been fully described elsewhere.\* What is important is not so much the individual clinical mechanisms but the breakdown of so many boundaries between scientific areas if we wish to understand the fundamental principles of functionalism in nature.

Upon superficial examination, the appearance of light streaks on the oscillograph seemed to have an "emotional character."\*\* Depending on the emotion, the wandering of the light streak was "animated" or "hesitant," "mistrustful" or "cautious." A "disappointment reaction" occurred when, for example, instead of the promised sugar, some salt was placed on the subject's tongue. When sugar was actually given, the charge at the skin's surface did not increase but receded as if salt had been administered. A long period of adjustment was required before the

\*Cf. Reich, *The Function of the Orgasm*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1973 [Eds.]

\*\*Cf. Reich, *The Bioelectrical Investigation of Sexuality and Anxiety*, [Eds.]

normal positive sugar reaction was reestablished. There were signs of habituation or "dulling"; the bioenergetic reactions were quantitatively diminished when the same stimulus was applied several times in succession. The deviations of the light streak from its zero position were smaller, and they occurred more slowly. For example, whereas the potential of the tongue had fallen rapidly and completely when the subject was first exposed to the unexpected striking of a gong, nothing happened when the gong was struck repeatedly.

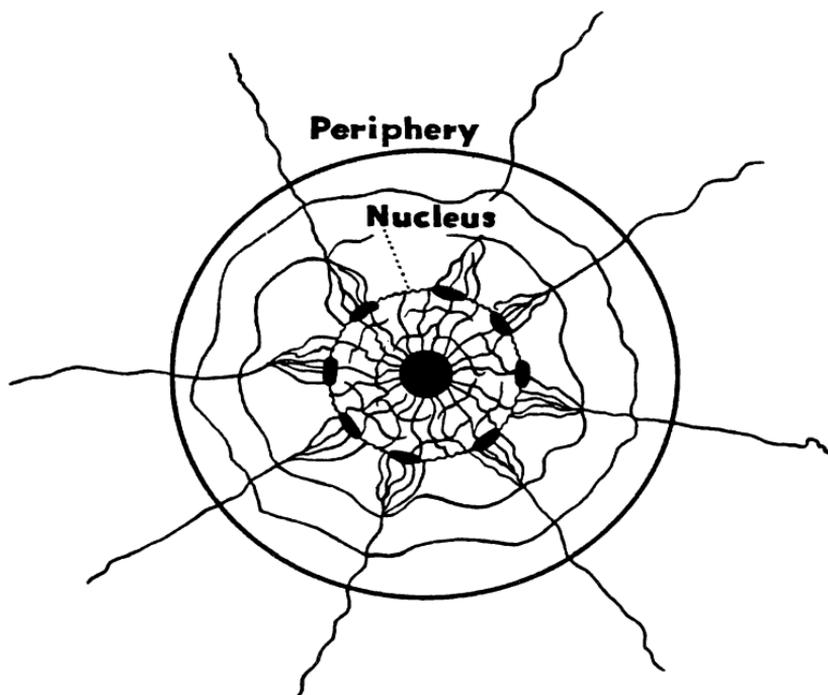
It is now clear that the movements on the oscillograph were not caused by psychic sensations but by *physical charges*. The character of the movements corresponded precisely with the sensations and reactions of a living organism in an emotional situation. The physiological parallel to psychic sensation was thus not a chemical reaction, nor a "central neural impulse," but instead a hitherto totally unknown process. *Depending on the circumstances, the bioenergy moves at different speeds, in different directions, and in different ways in the organism.* It moves in a biologically comprehensible manner independent of the nerve pathways and areas. Even the amoeba exhibits the corresponding plasma currents from the center to the periphery in pleasurable situations, and from the periphery to the center in anxiety situations. Thus, man and amoeba are functionally identical as far as the fundamental biological excitations and directions of current are concerned. The amoeba does not possess a nervous system, but the emotional basic antithesis of the living functions even in such a creature. The autonomic nerves are thus not a precondition for the cardinal life reactions. Instead, they appear as *organized forms* of functions belonging to a biologically deeper functioning realm. The functions of pleasure and anxiety are much older phylogenetically than parasympathetic and sympathetic.

I stressed earlier that the biological plasma currents are "emotional" in character. Now a new common functioning principle emerged: *The type of emotion was identical with the type of movement of the bioenergy.* The character of the movement can best be described as a kind of slow undulation of *wave-like* motion. Several years later, this fact played a major role in the

orgone-physical study of the aurora borealis. But the path to understanding these connections is a long one. The fact that catatonic patients did not produce any wave-like motions on the oscillograph was fully in accord with their emotional block.

Probably the most important result of the experimental verification of my clinical theory was a new functional understanding of the energetic structure of the bio-apparatus. It was now composed of a "bioenergetic center" or core and a "bioenergetic periphery." The center was formed by the autonomic ganglion apparatus and the periphery by the surface membrane. The typical ganglion cell apparently reflected this schema in its own particular realm of functioning. This schema has nothing to do with the depth-psychological one of the superego, ego, and id.

### Field



It describes the organism not at the psychic but at the biological level. There is only one possible point of contact between the depth-psychological and the biophysical functioning schema. The "id" of psychoanalysis is one of the many functions of the bioenergetic apparatus in unconscious psychic life. However, there is no way in which one should ever confuse the psychic functions of the ego, id, or super-ego with biological concepts. Any attempt to do so would display a total ignorance of the principles of scientific thinking. Our theoretical concept covers, in each case, certain functioning realms, or different functions of one and the same realm. It is just as impossible to apply the psychological method of thought to the biological plasma function as it is to use the cast steel piston of a steam engine to make an electric dynamo. The theoretical concepts must be constantly modified, depending on the natural function to be studied. The theory is simplified only to the extent that we progress in nature from the complicated to the simple, from the variations to the common functioning principle. But, no matter how well it is able to comprehend all natural processes, even our schema of energetic (orgonomic) functionalism cannot be transferred mechanically from one function to another. *The individual functioning groups must always be arranged anew.* Mechanical clichés would lead us nowhere.

The theory derived from the bioelectric experiments on the energy principle of the organism first had to be examined to see whether *all* living organisms obeyed it. It would seem to apply to all animals and to the cells with their "nucleus" (core) and "plasmatic periphery." It was manifested visibly in the body structure of jellyfish, starfish, and related organisms. When I tried to apply this theory to plants, I ran into difficulties which are unresolved. There was a gap here, even though the form of a flower or of a fruit made the application possible.

Initially, the organized extensions of the cell body, such as the tentacles of a jellyfish or the fibrils of a ganglion cell could not be understood. What bioenergetic function are they expressing in organized form? This question was answered beautifully when one of my co-workers committed a serious technical error during the bioelectric experiments. The results had shaken him

so deeply; they had upset his classical physiological assumptions to such an extent that he resisted the obvious facts in an irrational way. He insisted that the same reactions which had been obtained on the living body could be demonstrated on the non-living. His prejudice was so emotionally charged that, despite the irreproachable care he took in all other respects, he blundered in trying to prove his assertion. He pressed the electrode onto a cloth *without insulating his fingers*. When his fingers were in contact with the electrode, and the electrode was touching the dampened cloth, the nonliving material did seem to produce the typical biophysical reactions on the oscillograph. When the fingers were insulated, the phenomena produced by the "living cloth" disappeared. But a new puzzle arose. We were forced to ask ourselves, *how is it possible for a dampened cloth to produce the same reactions to tickling as a living, healthy organism?* Contact with the body of the person conducting the experiment or of the test subject was an insufficient explanation, *because it was the cloth itself and not the living organism which was tickled*. But when it was linked with the body by fluid the cloth behaved *as if* it was "alive." When such connection was lacking, the cloth was "not alive" and did not react to tickling. Therefore the thoughtless mechanistic interpretation of this phenomenon, namely, that "it was 'just' the ions in the fluid," was meaningless. After all, the ions in the fluid were the same *whether or not* there was any contact with the living body.

It was not until many years later, when atmospheric orgone energy had been discovered and experiments had been conducted with the orgone energy field, that the puzzle was solved: *The organism has an orgone energy field which belongs to the living functioning unit*. It therefore displays all the biological reactions, just like the skin. It expands, it contracts, it can be excited and, as the "living cloth" so drastically demonstrated, it can transfer its properties to a nonliving body such as a piece of linen. There was no longer any mystery; there was a distinct bioenergetic difference between living and nonliving matter.

Tracing individual basic functions in the realm of the living yields a less distinct but nevertheless unmistakable separation of the psychic from the biological. Of course, people are at liberty

to equate the psychic sphere with that of the living, just as they are free to attribute a soul to nonliving nature. It all depends on what one wants to achieve. Anyone who postulates the existence of God must endow all nature with a soul. Anyone who feels it is correct to investigate all nature psychoanalytically, i.e., to equate the "id" with the living and to believe that it is accessible to psychological research, will not accept the existence of a boundary between biological and psychic events. No matter how difficult it is to delineate such a functional boundary in living nature, there is no doubt about its existence and indeed it is essential for correctly describing living functions. This can easily be demonstrated in any process which simultaneously reveals both physical and psychic disease mechanisms if they have their common functioning principle in emotional disorders. Such practical clinical examples demonstrate the importance of pure methodological thinking, and show how easy it is to become the victim of serious errors if one fails to distinguish between psychic and physical, and physical and biological functioning, although, physiological, psychic, and biological functions form an indissoluble unity.

The reader will ask why I mention this problem when discussing the bioenergetic experiments. The question is justified because it is not yet evident what a disease symptom has to do with the experiments. It will soon become clear that there is only *one* correct way in which the various functions of the life apparatus can be arranged if one wishes to comprehend a disease process as fully as possible. From the wealth of clinical symptoms, I will select the *stomach ulcer* as the best studied and best known symptom in the field of psychosomatic medicine.

To be continued.

## *The Silent Observer*\*

### SIGMUND FREUD'S POSITION IN THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION

When Wilhelm Reich (WR) coined the term "Sexual Revolution" in the 1930's, he had the vision of a basic change from the then prevalent negation of life and love to a rational, life-positive, happiness-enhancing handling of the love functions of mankind.

In 1952, WR's son frequently comes to his father and tells him a delightful love story: this girl has looked at him, that girl has kissed him, and another girl has refused to look at him. Forty years ago, most fathers would have beaten their sons for such talk. In the conservative, quiet New England village where we live, as in many other American villages, everyone knows, though few say it openly, that the fifteen-year-old girls have boyfriends and they embrace in certain places at night. There are many children from these embraces because, still, no public agency has taken up this social problem in a benign, protective manner. But the adolescents live their love life, even though some go down emotionally because of hasty, compulsory marriage in cases where children are born.

The church congregation knows all this. Some old ladies frown upon it or gossip about it, but everything remains peaceful, and everybody hopes the community, like many others, will keep out the freedom peddlers and politicking meddlers. This is actually what, among other things, WR termed "Sexual Revolution." It will change the world of man completely.

Twenty-five years ago, in 1927, when WR and Sigmund Freud discussed such things, it was altogether different. There was no talk anywhere of adolescent genitality. One spoke with great dignity of "cultural puberty," which meant complete genital absti-

\*Written in English, 1952.

nence during the years of adolescence. Freud had just a few years previously objected to a daughter of his friend Rie cutting her hair short into a "bubikopf." WR evoked a stir in the Viennese psychoanalytic community of 1920 because he never wore a hat and because he hiked with his friends through the Vienna woods in short trousers with bare knees, as was quite common at the time but unheard of in the circles of the culturalist psychoanalysts who officially advocated the sublimation of all instincts. Later, they praised WR's *Die Funktion des Orgasmus* privately. For example, Eduard Hitschmann told WR, after the publication of this book, "Sie haben den Nagel auf den Kopf getroffen." (You have hit the nail on the head.) But in the psychoanalysts' seminars genitality problems were not mentioned, or mentioned only clandestinely, just as "orgastic potency" fails to appear in psychoanalytic literature today and is still handled with silk gloves in circles of medical organomists.

To social-economists, sexuality was a highly private matter, if not pornographic fun, to be lived out at costume balls, but never mixed with "high politics." They still hobble along, trailing far behind actual developments. But there are already some social-economists who send in papers on human armoring to be published in the *Orgone Energy Bulletin*.\*

In 1927, there was no sexological institute in Vienna. The Berlin Institute of Sexology under Hirschfeld was concerned mainly with the legal affairs of sexology, treatment of perversions in the courts, etc. The Marcuse Institute of Sexology was open-minded, but the views of hereditary ethics, not science, governed the scene. There could be no talk of an American birth control physician going to India to help out in questions of planned parenthood. The USA Babbitt was still fighting Margaret Sanger, the great pioneer in American birth control, who had just been imprisoned for her good work. In 1952, you can buy contraceptives freely at the counter of any drugstore in any small village of the USA. The Catholic Church is still against it, of course, but it too has had to yield. Even the Archbishop of Canterbury is advocating birth control, incredible as it may

\*A journal on Reich's work published in the United States between 1949 and 1953. [Eds.]

sound. There *is* progress in this world. American theological institutions openly deal in sexual matters, in some cases even positively. The sexuality of the child is recognized as existent, even if the genitality of the adolescent is still prohibited. But everybody studies books on the subjects, good ones and bad ones, the latter prevailing.

Bestsellers are bestsellers in the USA in 1952 because they handle the problem of human social and personal sex-economy in a frank, open manner. *From Here to Eternity* describes truthfully the sexual misery of the soldier, but still badly misses the point of social sex-economy. Everybody reads about love life in the brothel or in the home of the commander, but the love life of adolescents remains taboo. In *The Caine Mutiny* the writer, Herman Wouk, penetrates deeply into the secret of the Little Man character. Yet the basic trends of the sexual revolution are still not integrated; the common functioning principle of human bioenergetic existence is still obscure for the majority. Nevertheless, all this is clearly in the direction of the sexual revolution.

In the middle of the 1920's, people began to feel that with Sigmund Freud something crucial had happened in human society. As WR expressed it in one of his books, *sexuality became aware of itself in the person of Sigmund Freud*, just as economy began to be aware of itself in the person of Karl Marx. The trend to unite Freud and Marx in Europe started to prevail in about 1927. At that time, there was no indication of the future split of a mechanized and ruined Karl Marx who would be confined to an imperialist Russian tyrant state, and a badly mauled Freud confined to the USA, appearing frequently in a commercial manner as thousands of "lay psychotherapists."

In 1927 WR had no inkling of any unification of Marx and Freud or, for that matter, any later antagonism between them. He was going to learn it all the hard way. He would fall into this pit unaware of his true function which, around 1940, turned out to be the discovery of the common functioning principle of both Freud and Marx, i.e., the *life energy in the libido theory*, and the *life energy in the theory of surplus value*.

WR also had no idea at the time of his talks with Freud in 1927-28 that, in 1934, a few men in the International Psychoana-

lytic Association would have succeeded in destroying the splendid relationship between him and Freud, and that he would be maneuvered out of the IPA for the alleged reason that he drew the social consequences from the libido theory. These same consequences were a matter of course in the 1940's in the USA, just as many social innovations and ideas of Karl Marx (strikes, social security, participation of workers in the distribution of wealth, 8-hour workday, child labor laws, representation of labor in government) were taken for granted in the USA and extinct in Stalinist Russia. While ignorant American Babbitts tried to persecute free thought, at the same time they justly fought the red fascist, underhanded, subversive spy who was around whenever he could sneak in, Marx's basic ideas, born in the misery of the manual worker's life in English manufacturing towns of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, were alive in the splendid social legislation in the USA and other western countries. In the USSR, the workers had no legal protection.

But no one in Europe or in the USA had an inkling in 1927 of the events of a few years later, when millions of helpless and rebellious Little Men would carry a nuisance of an incompetent house painter to supreme power over seventy million people. And no one at that time could have even guessed that a Djughashvili,\* a third-rate politician from Georgia, would sneak and shoot his way to supreme power over many millions, again on the basis of human helplessness and mystical, authoritarian need for leadership. The Russian Revolution had been concluded only a few years before in 1920. Lenin had been dead only three years. Progressive sexual legislation was still active in the USSR; it was far superior to what the European conservative had to offer to the pioneer in social sex-economy. WR did not know that, in 1929, he would realize that this Russian legislation would be withdrawn and replaced by extreme sexual reaction around 1935.

WR had several talks with Freud on these issues and the following facts were clear and agreed upon in 1927:

1. The psychoanalytic technique for treating neuroses was far

\*Stalin's given name.

from effective. It needed much improvement. The technical possibilities were studied in the Vienna Psychoanalytic Technical Seminar led by WR. Freud was being kept informed about this work by Anna Freud who was a regular participant in the seminars.

2. At that time, Freud began to withdraw his interest from medical affairs in general and psychoanalytic technique in particular. He told WR on several occasions not to be too eager in his therapeutic zeal. The technical, therapeutic side of psychoanalysis was, to his mind, limited. Its main value lay in its power to understand the depth of human nature. But Freud stated explicitly that, though this was true, WR should go on probing into the possibilities of changing human psychic (later, so-called structural) functions. From this, great insights into the operations of the human unconscious mind were to be expected. In these discussions about psychoanalytic technique and depth psychology, Freud knew of no such thing as an ego psychology set against a libido theory, an "either sex or ego" and "either biology or sociology." WR never had the impression, or even as much as the indication of such an impression, that the libido theory was to be abandoned and replaced by an "ego theory." All such claims are concoctions of the minds of fearful, socially anxious, spell-bound psychoanalysts who had nothing in mind but getting away as quickly as possible from the unpleasant task of studying the bio-sexual structure of man. Freud explicitly and repeatedly stressed the point that the libido theory stands and would continue to stand. The ego theory was *not* set up against the libido theory. The Id, of which the Ego was only an outer part, continued to contain the powerful, affective libidinal drives. The death instinct was no more than a speculation he had engaged in for a change. WR should continue to do clinical research and not worry about the animosity against the libido theory. The problem of anxiety in its relation to the libido still remained to be solved (a "non liquet" Freud felt in his book on anxiety, 1926). Major discoveries were to be expected in the realm of human biology which most likely would help solve the core problem of human anxiety.

3. In these talks, Sigmund Freud repeatedly and continually stressed the clinical, empirical view, the operation of theory formation by way of experience. WR had the impression that, though he did not say so explicitly, Freud was worried about the attempts on the part of a few prominent psychoanalysts to solve the great problem of human structure formation by way of a single supposition, such as the birth trauma, or the will to power, or economic class interests of two centuries duration. The problem was clearly much deeper. But it was unclear where it was rooted.

No one in 1928 could have predicted that Freud would refuse to fully understand the character armor, that he would reject WR's direction in mass psychology which led through the Marxist political parties, that WR would be rejected by both Marxists and Freudians after a brief period of enthusiasm over his success, that, in 1939, an American psychoanalyst would advise WR not to lecture publicly on the libido theory to students of psychiatry, and that WR would give up individual therapy entirely in 1950.

4. There was no indication in these talks, which delved into the human misery, of an antithesis or contradiction between a "biological" and a "sociological" school in psychoanalysis, as later claimed and maintained by the respective schools. There was never any doubt but that the biology of man could not be separated from his social existence, that biological drives were moulded by the social forces at work in the particular period. Freud knew very well that he had, of necessity, devoted himself mainly to the biological or psychological side of man's structure. Nobody else had done it before or had done it with his new method of opening up the unconscious mind. Freud was, there is not the slightest doubt about it, fully aware of the crucial importance of the "outer world" which exerted its influence on the child by way of the family (Oedipus complex). True, Freud adhered to the patriarchal view of the family, to the *biological* nature of the Oedipus conflict. True, he interpreted society wrongly in many places, but he was perfectly clear as to the impact of social, outer-world influences upon the "instincts."

He had only not delved into sociology, except in such books as *Totem and Taboo* or the later *The Future of an Illusion*.

To summarize: Freud did not neglect or deny sociology. He refused, however, to fully realize and to accept it as a plain fact that, in Europe, sociology, as represented by the actions of multitudes of people, ran according to Marxist principles. He did not see that one had to deal with this tremendous sociological fact in 1928-1934, just as the U.S.A. is forced to deal with it in 1951. But Freud had done enough and should not be reproached for this.

One should also keep well in mind that the world was quite different in the 1920's from what it is in the 1950's. A tremendous number of grave things have happened: Fascism (red and black), a second world war, migration of millions upon millions of people upon the earth, sociology as a nightmare, the sexual revolution in the realm of infant and child upbringing, etc. Reading Freud in the 1950's gives the impression that the Freud of the 1920's did not know a thing about social matters. This is definitely wrong. Sigmund Freud was one of those few who opened up the view toward the social impact upon the psychological apparatus. Nobody can reproach him for not having known in 1920 what we know today in 1952. The reproach toward Freud, if any, is in an entirely different place.

*Sigmund Freud accepted the world's acclaim of psychoanalysis too easily.* He did not make it as hard as possible, not difficult enough for the world to accept him. He said clearly in 1926 that the world was accepting him only in order to destroy psychoanalysis, which it did, in the late 1920's. He knew very well what the game was. But he did not resist strongly enough the pull of the world which was to level out the sharpness of his discovery and mitigate what was so revolutionary in it: the discovery of the psychic energy and infantile sexuality.

Freud permitted himself too readily to fall for the mystical attitude of his students, though he knew he was caught in organizational mire. And he refused to enter the new venture of facing the social emotional plague.

The eagerness with which he followed WR's early undertakings proves that Freud knew well, true scientist that he was, that

he was only a beginning, and he said so candidly. More, much more was to come from the exposure of the depth of the human mind. Nobody could tell what kind of new surprises were to come, but they were certain to come. The nature of the sexual urge, the sadism of man, the confusion, the illusions, the hypocrisy, the great miseries, all this and more of the stuff which was at the roots of the mess of the twentieth century was somehow latently present in these talks. It was this that later jolted WR so irresistibly into experiencing man's political plague.

It was quite obvious that making nothing but a paying profession out of psychoanalysis would ruin its research qualities. It was equally obvious that the social riddles and their solutions were buried deep in the small, private lives of the people at large, and not in the offices of individual, well-to-do psychoanalytic physicians.

There could be no doubt about the fact that the psychoanalytic polyclinic in which WR worked so avidly (and he spoke often to Freud about the headaches caused by this clinic) could not possibly solve the problem of the neuroses. There were too many sick. So little was known about most emotional diseases, and so little medical skill was at one's disposal. This was perfectly clear. Clear, too, was that only further research into human structure would possibly accomplish things, and for this purpose it was necessary to stick to the guns of the libido theory which was dying at the hands of many psychoanalysts.

The differences between Sigmund Freud and Wilhelm Reich began to appear when the Modjus\* started digging and confused an issue which otherwise could doubtlessly have been resolved. It was a matter of how to study the effects of society on the human depth. Was the "free association" method sufficient? Or had one to develop, as WR did in the psychoanalytic technical seminar, a new technique to cope with what was termed then for the first time the "character resistance?"

There can be little doubt that such differences could have been dissolved, had the Modjus kept out. They felt threatened

\*Acronym for *Mocenigo* and *Djugashvili*, two historical representatives of the emotional plague in the sixteenth and twentieth centuries, respectively. [Eds.]

by the new and great strides in the development of psychoanalytic research techniques. Character analysis opened wide the gates into a depth from which later was to emerge the discovery of the life energy in man. They just sat there with their association method and influenced Freud in an underhanded manner and most likely by plain lying about WR. Nobody had an inkling of what WR later came to call "Emotional Plague," but it already operated right there in the Psychoanalytic Association in Vienna, and it destroyed a human relationship of great value.

All involved, including WR, became victims of the activity of the human depth structure which refused to be revealed fully and effectively: Sigmund Freud by permitting himself to be seduced into abandoning the emphasis on libido in his later years, and into dropping WR; WR in that he did not understand what was going on, what was happening to him, in view of the splendid work he did in the polyclinic and in the technical seminar. He permitted himself to abandon the psychoanalytic movement altogether and to give himself over to the high seas of the social storm of the time. However, he never for a moment lost his bearing as a natural scientist and physician. Modju Paul Federn and companions fell victim to the emotional plague by permitting themselves to become tools of underhandedness against a highly esteemed member of the psychoanalytic community, using calumny and defamation against this man since they could not contradict him factually and had to acknowledge his accomplishments even during the feud. And, finally, the hundreds of psychoanalysts who fell prey to expediency, organizational quarrels, intrigue, boiling their petty little psychoanalytic soups on petty little stoves, and, unintentionally, messed up a clear, clean theory of human depth.

It is only natural then that Sigmund Freud withdrew completely around 1924, not only because of sickness, but in disillusionment, giving up hope. WR went his own way, extricating himself completely from the mess of psychoanalytic organization politics. He went a way which later led toward the discovery of the orgone energy (Life Energy). The psychoanalytic movement split up into dozens of schools with little theoretical direction, some accomplishing much, most of them accomplishing

little as far as basic scientific work is concerned. But one great thing happened: *The public at large took over*, not in the form of clear theory formation or special organizations, but *in the form of biting deep into the sexual problem of living man*. It is here to stay and will never again disappear from the social scene, no matter what turn this great and true revolution in the life of the human species may still take; no matter whether the road will be straight or twisted, whether there will be great or little clarity regarding the economy of human bioenergy, whether our children and children's children will live their little and great loves freely and happily in twenty or in two hundred years.

Sigmund Freud can only be understood in these terms. He was one of the very few pioneers, a crucial step in the course of the biological (biosexual) revolution of mankind. However, he was not the first and not the last. He opened up vast domains without working out a fraction of what he had opened up. To be aware of the basic and true nature of all this is crucial to one's procedure in life, as well as in the science of man. One will blunder less if one will be more aware of the meaning of the *biosexual revolution of mankind*. On the other hand, one will help in the mass killing of babies to the extent that one will *not* be aware of this.

To understand Sigmund Freud, his accomplishment, his mistakes and hesitations, in a candid, friendly, and one would like to say, loving manner, means a great deal. And to be truthful toward him is to handle him the way he would have been the first to insist upon. All this requires guts and truthfulness. Until the sexual revolution will bear its fruits, many stupidities will occur.

## *Wrong Thinking Kills\**

Thinking is our sixth sense. It feels out our world, controls our actions. It amasses experiences and draws conclusions, so that our behavior is altered. Since no living creature wants to die, correction of our behavior through thinking can only have the function of protecting our life, as does sight, hearing, touch, and smell. Thought is a function of plasmatic life, a unique manifestation of our organ sensations. We do not think with our brain, but with our whole body system. To bind thinking to the brain or even to individual brain cells is like equating a trip across country with turning the steering wheel of an automobile. It is impossible to drive without turning the wheel, but just turning the steering wheel will not get you from New York to Maine.

The notion that the brain is the apparatus of thought is therefore concrete evidence of wrong thinking. Like everything else, there is a reason for it. Man does not understand his sixth sense, just as he does not understand his visual faculty, despite all his knowledge of optics. Further, he *must not* understand his thought function. If he understood it, his wrong thinking would collapse. There must be reasons why man so strongly resists grasping his faculty of thought. And these reasons must be serious, because man pays a high price for his wrong thinking. Wasteful use of vital energy, endangering of life, anger and misunderstanding, war and disease are all the results of wrong thinking.

Life can be threatened by ignorance or by imperfect technique. No one is to blame for an earthquake. The bubonic plague was the result of a lack of knowledge. Endemic cancer and heart disease, on the other hand, are acts of suicide and, obviously, all suicidal acts originate in wrong thinking.

Man does not understand his own visual faculty or a dog's sense of smell, because he lacks knowledge of the energy which

\*Written in 1936. Translated from the German by Margaret Butler.

alone could make these functions intelligible. Man waits patiently, writes no articles, does not prattle, does not philosophize, does not argue, when he is lacking knowledge. He endures and keeps silent, dies, or sees others die. However, when he *resists* knowledge, he degenerates into a strange monster which senses what it is unwilling to experience and strikes out at it. To be sure, man thus betrays his real feelings. But his wild gestures thrust him into a false pathos, into a world that is remote from his desires and things he does not really know.

*Wrong thinking is a disease, a biopathy of mankind.* It is as if a person willingly took all sorts of worthless medication to treat pneumonia, but went into a fit of rage when offered one that might help him.

Right thinking goes with strong, pleasurable organ sensations, and often with a shudder of delight. There is an ecstatic feeling of well-being that comes with true insight. Man does not resist correct thinking because he is "stupid" or "bad," but for the simple reason that he is frightened of contact with things, and above all, because *he is afraid of bodily pleasure*. Such feelings remind him of intense sexual pleasure, against which he once struggled, which was forbidden to him, which caused him pain *because* it was forbidden, and which he learned to avoid and finally to hate. He thinks wrongly, and continues to do so, if he fears the honest experience of pleasure. On the other hand, wrong, superficial, hit-and-miss thinking go with a desire for lewd experiences. Lust is a caricature of love, like the tickling of an aborted orgasm. The decaying product of a miscarriage is not a bright-eyed baby, even though both come from an egg and sperm cells.

Man thinks wrongly when he calls his titillation sexuality. He does this to avoid true sexual experience. He is afraid of it. And because he is afraid of it, he fears everything, without exception, that moves forward in the stream of the living. He sets himself against it, he besmirches it, misconstrues it and, because he cannot stop it, he destroys himself.

As I was writing this, I felt something restrain me, something like a paralysis that froze the energy in my muscles. Is it worthwhile to demand honest thinking? People do not *want* to think

correctly, they are *afraid* of the consequences of thinking. How often have we heard the expressions: "fear of the new," "phlegmatic masses," "stupid herd animals"? What practical changes for the better have Nietzsche's thought and suffering brought about? None whatsoever! People generally know his name, but not his work. The herd animal has an extraordinarily naive way of *not* taking true thinking seriously, of shutting it out when the name of the thinker sounds in his ears. He succeeds in protecting himself against clear thinking by raising the thinker to the status of an unintelligible authority. "This man was too great for us ordinary mortals." This comment does not seek to absorb, to drink in the authority, or to honor him. No, quite the contrary! It seeks to render him harmless; he was too great for us ordinary mortals. This attitude might serve to halt all thinking for all time with a shrug of "it's not worth it," were thinking not an autonomous manifestation of life which insists on understanding itself and on existing at all costs. Understanding is as essential to it as breathing is to life. One does not think correctly for the sake of others. Anyone who imagines this is already guilty of erroneous thinking. To think for other's sake means to want to be understood, to want to please. If human thought were not generally inimical to life, then it would be possible to think that way.

Right thinking is slow, deep-rooted; it grows organically like a tree. Wrong thinking is hasty, unorganic, suited to the moment, commonplace, and ephemeral. It avoids the precipice. It thinks around the root of things. It is the same sick thinking that shifts itself to the brain, so as to remove itself as far as possible from the sex organs. It sets itself in sharp opposition to feeling and becomes the weapon of the pharisees. This antisexual thinking governs all our sociology and economics. It has so completely ignored the creative man, it is so conceitedly intent on imposing itself and on controlling life, that it only feels comfortable in war. There, it can finally achieve the mass death of what it hates the most, the living, which is its deadly enemy, just as it is itself the deadly enemy of the growth of flowers. Have you ever seen a true-blue economist or sociologist come down to earth, come close to real people? As statisticians, they

are the gnats that swarm around the cadaver. Their thinking is wrong primarily because right thinking would eliminate them, and the economy of society would then appear as a rational biological phenomenon in the service of biological needs. For them, however, the need is simply the shelf on which they display their economic factors.

In these years of deepest human need, no economist was able to calculate what enormous elimination of human suffering could be brought about by a week of unrestrained crying. Because their thinking is anti-life, this is understandable. If man's thinking were in step with life, there would be no war.

Why am I writing this? It goes against my conviction that right thinking is not acceptable to people today. But since I am putting it down on paper, it must be that I believe it is the right thing to do. Since my thoughts are dictated by my interest in the living, they follow the tug of logic that says the living is invincible. Some day, long before the destruction of this planet, right thinking will become general. This will happen when mass death compels people to recognize that, in order to endure, they must think in the right way, i.e., they must think with their sex organs, as all honest people do today, and as man did in primitive times when he was in harmony with nature. Today, the notion of thinking with one's genitals sounds blasphemous, but only to rigid, sick, conceited people—the impotent, the philistine, the statesman, the general, the usurer—not to the thinker, the genius, the researcher, the farmer, or the lumberjack.

Unless we think with our genitals and thus with the source of love and vitality, we cannot understand Hitler. This impotent sadist felt the urge to mass murder with particular intensity in the Spring. This has been noted by several authors, but the connection with his love life, transformed into sadism, has been overlooked. We need only look at one sadistic mercenary to see them all and to realize that aborted love in the form of sadistic brutality drove all the actions of the carriers of the German plague. Hitler was taken seriously and seen as rational by statesmen of the entire world. This is why that brutal, mentally deranged butcher and the aspiring butchers were not locked up.

People in fact negotiated with him. We shoot mad dogs and lock up the mentally ill. But we let carriers of the emotional plague run around free. They are merely an exaggeration of what has gone on in society for thousands of years. Democracy sees it all as serious and rational, instead of treating it as an illness. Even today, in the middle of the third year of the mass murder, no one has succeeded in drawing the proper conclusions from the dawning realization that we are dealing with mental illness and nothing else. Wrong thinking takes root in Hitlerism and prevents us from noticing the numerous steps that lead from everyday habits to Hitlerism.

### *Why Our Thinking is Wrong*

Thought is a biological sense like sight. When I see a tree trunk in my way, I sidestep it so as not to fall. It might happen that I see the tree trunk, but do not see its connection with my ability to proceed on my way; then I trip over it and end up with a bloody nose.

Men think in vain. They saw Hitlerism long before Hitler came to power. They knew about militarism just as they knew about diplomacy, rigidity, and artificiality, just as they knew about obscene acts and intrigues. Despite this, they ran head-long into Hitlerism. Why?

Their knowledge of life was antisocial; they saw with the eyes of a social order based on the oppression of the living. This oppression and misinterpretation of life functions is some thousands of years old, as old as patriarchy. Once, society's organization was in harmony with basic life functions, which worked spontaneously, without scientific comprehension or guidance, driven simply by an organic sense of life. The first steps towards economic patriarchy were also the first steps of the intellect in the direction of technical control of the exchange of goods. Today's commerce grew out of this primitive exchange of goods. Originally a biological function to better care for races of men that had come together as nations, the exchange of goods became social plundering of defeated races, predatory war, and oppression of the living in the defeated. Yet the conquerors, the powerful, did not themselves escape the fate of this initial mis-

development of nature. They had to distance themselves from the oppressed, who had nothing left but their pain-filled disposition for life. (Consider today's negro spirituals!) They became rigid; they developed lifestyles that were alien and inaccessible to the economically oppressed. The "conventions" of the ruling class could only be inimical to the living because it was represented by the "conventionless" masses of the oppressed. Gradually the masses came to adopt the habits and rigidities of their oppressors. This led to new attempts by the ruling class to distance itself, to the extent possible, from a society still rooted to the soil. They culminated in a feudal attitude, characterized essentially by a denial of the existence of natural functions. It lost contact with that against which it attempted to raise barriers. The deeper the neglect and the displacement of nature, the more unnatural will be the lifestyle of this class of people. Out of it develops the warrior caste, the warrior nobility. The masses take no part in this development, which proceeds at the hands of mercenaries, drawn from a group of lawbreakers. Even in the Middle Ages, indeed even in the time of Napoleon, there was no standing army, only mercenaries. War is alien to the ordinary masses of farmers, artisans, and tradespeople who are close to the soil. The warrior is the ruler, the knight, the nobleman, the swordman and fighter, but in reality he is a do-nothing, a parasite of society. The ever-increasing masses of ordinary people lie deeply enslaved. They do not lose contact with their primordial life feelings, but they become more and more ashamed of them. The Church does its part to plant the seeds of anti-nature by making God into an anti-instinctual, antisexual ideal. "God," in all phases of life's development, is clearly nothing more than a continuation of the primordial feeling for life that men have lost. Thus all religious ideologies have some form of return to nature as their content. The idea of "redemption" has a real meaning. "Community with God," his "omnipresence," and the dependence on him are clear reflections of an obscure natural feeling that is experienced mystically. It is the tragedy of man that he prays for what he lost, once prayed for, and now mistrusts and resists. With every step that takes man away from his animal origins, it becomes more and more clear that "God"

is this very origin. Still, this distancing from the animal is only apparent. Man cannot free himself from his plasmatic organization. He always remains closer to the animal than to whatever he dreams of being or becoming. The laws of nature follow him in all his illusions and dreams. He has sacrificed the experience of orgasm in the sex act on the altar of ideas, but God has joined their names. He has described nature as sinful, but he flagellates himself in order to again experience his plasmatic convulsion. He dreams of a sin-free paradise and ignores the original state in which natural love was not yet a sin or a disgusting perversion.

Humans cannot escape from the animal, from the body, from orgasmic feeling. Every thought of their scholars, every hymn of their poets, every performance by their actors, converges on one theme: *love*. "Redemption," "paradise," "freedom from sin," "nearness to God" are merely and remain eternally one gigantic, many-faceted cry for a return to organic life feelings. But how can the society of biologically miscarried human masses be freed, whether they be warriors, priests, scholars, poets, musicians? In each, life development follows the flight away from the living toward the living. It distorts, mistrusts and misuses, fears and crushes it. But the living remains indestructible. Man, like a jellyfish or a goldfish, cannot escape moving convulsively. The attempt to do so is his tragedy, his ruin, the source of all his dreams and myths, his illnesses and his intellectual production. He flees into higher mathematics. This only brings him closer to his cosmic feelings. He fantasizes that his earth is the center of the universe. But mathematics teaches him that his earth is a little star amid billions of starry worlds. He has lost the ability to expand. He is constricted, frightened, small, broken, whether he is hoarding money, killing in war, or struggling to educate himself. As he flees from the feeling of expansion, he must admit that the cosmos is expanding, that it is not rigid, as he would like to believe. His organization, the Church, which he created in order to keep us from the plasmatic convulsion, made a martyr of Galileo, who tried to bring men back to the truth. (The priests travel the bridges that Galileo created, fly in the aircraft that Galileo's closeness to nature prepared men

to build.) He does not rightly know who Galileo was. He is blocked and thirsting for pleasure, because he is incapable of pleasure and thus becomes ungrateful and shallow. Today, he hears jazz and bad jokes on the radio, but does not know who gave him the radio. He has petting parties in the back seats of cars, but does he know who invented the automobile? He does not know and has no desire to know, because that would force him to look into himself. And he has learned to hate himself. He does not want to return to his true self, to the way he was thousands of years ago and still is deep-down. But in that gap between his thinking and willing on the one hand, and his bond with nature on the other, lies the source of his perversity and criminality, his cowardice and indolence, his brutality and baseness. This is what he has become. This is not what he was. If he seeks to understand his condition, his place in the enormous realm of living things, he stumbles over the beast that he has become. He hates and fears himself as a beast. He tries to free himself from the beast, sometimes by claiming that he is not descended from the animal. Another time, he trumpets that the animal in man is in opposition to God, thus overlooking that God is the true, proper, decent animal within him. He also teaches and proclaims that his higher ideals are more important than sexuality, that, for example, he can and will fly and therefore children are not allowed to know where their brothers and sisters come from. At other times, he attributes to animals what the beast within him feels. He mistrusts and fears himself. He has lost self-respect to such an extent that he drags down all his fellowmen, destroys them one way or another if they dare to take him seriously, to trust him, to consider him a decent person. He smiles wistfully when he is reminded of his own desires. He is sarcastic because he is afraid to be deep, because he wants to love and cannot love. Above all else, he uses most of his strength and intelligence to prove that he has no genitals, that he is not an animal, did not evolve from amoebae, in other words, that he is cultured, knowledgeable, a national warrior, or a diplomat. When he can no longer help himself without castrating himself, he goes "girling," without failing to be morally indignant on hearing that love is possible between

15-year-olds. He feels national pride, attaches great importance to the family, is against the Bolsheviks, without knowing what any of these things are. He has the political opinions of his time and believes in going to Church. He is the pillar of society and admires the intellectual giants whom he would stone if they belonged to his time. He is against radical thinking and for the golden middle road. When a Hitler turns up, he appears as a strong man. He considers social hygiene as superfluous.

These are things that have been said often and better. Why then are the Babbitts of this world still in control, despite all the efforts and self-sacrifice of bigger men, entire classes of men, of great nations? Because we do not yet know or still deny the sexual background of the Babbitts. Man thus denies the philistine in himself. As a young student, I wrote in my diary that the mark of the philistine is his unreadiness for bodily experience. That was almost 20 years ago. It is even truer today than it was then. I know that it will serve no purpose if I write it down, cry it out, found a party to combat it, and enlist the greatest discovery in the battle against it. The problem remains the philistine and the sway he holds. That is the whole depressing fact of the matter. Revolutions are set in motion against the philistine and are put down in blood. Wars are waged, reducing entire peoples to misery. Great thinkers have died martyrs' deaths. In vain! Impotence still reigns supreme. And the living slinks down the back stairs in search of its rights, despairing, threatened, calumniated, disgraced, tracked, besmirched. It has no home, no protection! The palaces of science show it the door. Helpless, it is given freely to every executioner, every pig, every pervert, and every living corpse. The living knows that, scientifically comprehended, socially organized, and democratically interpreted, it would conquer the entire world. Nothing, absolutely nothing, could resist it. Without a trace of violence, everything that today kills the living would be swept away by it. It has no brazen stride, but it pulsates to the rhythm of the universe. It knows no "economic factors" and no "unrelenting course of history," but it would not let any living creature go hungry or suffer. This would be solved automatically, so much is oppression alien to it. It organizes no political parties, because

it lives in all beings, guides all thinking, is active in creation, pulsates in love's ecstasy. It founds no churches and creates no religions, because the sphere of the stars is its home and "God" is itself. It establishes no diplomatic missions, because it knows only one way, the truth, the simple, straightforward truth.

It does not understand what "tactics" are. Politeness is inherent in it, but it becomes impolite, isolates itself, when it finds itself constrained within an image. It does not understand why people bring up children to be submissive. It is not afraid of children because it is itself a child. It learns gladly from the butterfly and the dog. When it sees or hears a university professor teach, it looks on bewildered and helpless. "You take such roundabout paths to discover me? I am here and everywhere. But I am not in the places where men seek me. That is why I am not visible." When it is betrayed, it would like to fly into a rage, but it prefers to wait. The betrayer finds himself ultimately betrayed. *Life cannot be betrayed.* It thinks that God is being sought in the wrong place. He is precisely where man imagines the Devil. He is not in jazz, but in Beethoven's feeling for life.

## *On Using The Atomic Bomb\**

I should like to propose that the following remarks on the use of the atom bomb be considered with the same scientific calm that went into the design and construction of this new instrument of death. Since my authority to speak on this matter will undoubtedly be questioned, I should first explain why I feel I have the right to do so.

1. For about 20 years, I have worked experimentally and theoretically with atomic energy. My work, however, was done with *natural* atomic energy, and it has already uncovered and demonstrated new, promising uses of this force for the protection of human life. *Orgone energy is nothing other than atomic energy in its natural state.* So I do know something about atomic energy, and much more than I have published.

2. Another thing that entitles me to express an opinion is the fact that I am a professor of biophysics and medicine whose duty it is, in all circumstances, to favor human life over the destruction of human life, when this can guarantee further protection of the living.

3. I claim a further right to speak out insofar as I consider myself a citizen of this planet and I am not prepared to grant freedom of expression only to the representatives of the emotional plague. The much touted and highly praised right to free speech exists precisely so that one may utter those truths which cannot be spoken under a dictatorship.

My contention is this: *Even though this horrible war has come to a sudden end, the worst enemy of humankind could not have conceived of a worse ending.* It is not self-justification, but honest conviction, born of a knowledge of human nature and of the administrative apparatus, which leads me to add that I do not believe that anyone beyond a few fascistically-structured militarists is responsible for it. *With this unspeakable tool of*

\*Written August 10, 1945. Translated from the German by Margaret Butler.

*death available, the war could have been ended without the need to murder hundreds of thousands of totally innocent children, young people, men and women.* I know this attitude will anger those who always support such actions, and especially those who are directly responsible for what happened and have a guilty conscience.

I ask: *Why were the Japanese people not warned*—of course, without revealing any secrets—*about the effects of the atom bomb by means of millions of leaflets dropped from the air? Why wasn't the destructive power of the bomb demonstrated two or three times in an uninhabited area after this warning?* Then, and only then, if the Japanese military regime had not capitulated, might there have been a glimmer of a moral right to drop the bomb on living people, i.e., if from the standpoint of the war ideology, which is alien to me, a quick end to the war was absolutely essential.

Why, instead, without any concrete warning or demonstration, was the atom bomb dropped twice on cities whose populations numbered hundreds of thousands of people? I shall proceed to explain how the stupid militarists have “cut their own throats.”

1. Being in possession of the secret of the atom bomb gave the power apparatus an insurmountable material advantage. The militarists know this as well as we. But when, as in America, one seeks to better the world, there is a much greater and more effective moral source of power that must accompany the mechanical one. America could have won the hearts of the entire working world and ended the war just as quickly, if it had refused to actually use this instrument of destruction. If, instead of being the first country to drop the atom bomb, it had used this instrument of death only in the case of absolute necessity and only then if Japanese militarists had refused to surrender despite a complete demonstration of its effects, we would have shown the entire world, including the Japanese, exactly what they are—militarists, just like the Prussians, the Russians, the Americans, etc.

2. I know the argument that the emotional plague will now use to portray this view as “friendly to the Japanese” or as a “betrayal of America”: “Did the Japanese inform the Ameri-

cans of their intentions before attacking Pearl Harbor?"

If we are really serious about lasting peace, then we cannot take the attitude that a person has to hang himself because someone else has done so, or that we have to rob someone because we have been robbed. "Two wrongs do not make a right," goes the adage. The responsibility that America, to which the entire world looks today, has assumed toward that world, is so incomparably greater and more important than the petty eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth ideology, that we are filled with terror for the future when we realize the extent to which this responsibility is impeded by the "tooth for a tooth" viewpoint. And what reason is there to believe that the Japanese, the Russians, or the German militarists will not soon have discovered the secret of the atom bomb? Then the lives of millions of Americans will be on the conscience of those who dropped the bomb on inhabited cities without first demonstrating its effect.

It is perfectly clear that this outrage grew out of fascist racial blindness, which viewed the Japanese people as monkeys, as experimental rabbits, so to speak. We must clearly separate ourselves from this attitude. In our eyes, a Japanese militarist is exactly like a Russian one, just as a Japanese baby is like an American one. Whoever does not know, feel, and advocate this truth becomes the gravedigger of humankind. Nothing is more important at this moment than a thorough, practical understanding and correction of the basic attitudes which led to this atrocity.

3. The feeling that the use of this instrument of destruction has been hasty and ill-considered is general. Everyone is afraid and looks to the future with foreboding. This is even reflected in reports in major newspapers where the advocates of the atom bomb comfort us with the "peaceful use" of atomic energy, and where the opponents of this view have spoken loud and clear. Based on my knowledge of atomic energy, I agree with those who maintain that a useful, safe, industrial deployment of this unspeakable invention is impossible. There is nothing in our past history to suggest it and nothing in the process by which atomic energy was produced from the explosion of matter. The emotional plague always succeeds in making us forget what hap-

pened in the past. The invention of the atom bomb is rightly compared with the invention of gunpowder. Has gunpowder or dynamite or any other such "achievement" of the torpid human animal saved one human life? Why should this bomb be any different? I repeat, and I do so fully aware of the implications of what I am saying: *Mechanistic natural science never has saved and never will save human lives with its explosives. It will only destroy them, and in larger and larger numbers.* It lacks the feeling for life, otherwise it would long since have discovered atomic energy in its natural state, which we call orgone. And when this discovery was made many years ago, it would not have obstinately and systematically attempted to conceal it. Furthermore, if it could spend two billion dollars to build the instrument of destruction which is the atom bomb, it could have found a hundred thousand dollars to safeguard the discovery of atomic energy in its natural state. If the living were not so alien to the mechanistic way of thinking, then responsible physicists, like the famous Leonardo da Vinci before them, would have done everything in their power to keep the invention of the atom bomb from being made public. But that is not our world! And it is not the world of tomorrow. Ours is a world without hope that will annihilate itself. The most important task of our society of human animals is to let this world of mechanical death annihilate *itself* and not go down with it.

*We possess atomic energy in a form in which it can be used for the protection of life.* We can only hope, and strive, with all our moral, intellectual, and technical might, to use the natural form of atomic energy against the deadly form of this same energy, as only nature is capable of doing. The atom bomb is unnatural and anti-nature. It is the invention of human animals who know no other way of relieving tension. We shall never forget these excerpts from the newspapers:

"The feeling of the entire assembly . . . was one of profound awe," said General Groves.

General Farrell said: "Everyone in the room realized the awful potentiality of the thing about to happen."

Churchill: "We must pray that these awful agencies will be made to conduce to peace among the nations and that, instead of reeking measureless havoc

upon the entire globe they may become a perennial fountain of world prosperity.”

Hansom Baldwin: “. . . We have sowed the whirlwind. Much of our bombing throughout this war - like the enemy's - has been directed against cities, and hence against civilians. Because our bombing has been more effective and hence more devastating, Americans have become a synonym for destruction. And now we have been the first to introduce a new weapon of unknowable effects which may bring the victory quickly but which will sow the seeds of hate more widely than ever. We may yet reap the whirlwind. Certainly with such God-like power under man's imperfect control we face a frightful responsibility. . . .”

Dr. Earl F. Adams, executive director of the Protestant Council of the City of New York, declared that the atomic bomb brought to America a crisis, and one of the gravest problems in all human history. “It is a challenge to every element of our national life, but most of all to organized religion,” he asserted, adding that the problem was beyond human remedy.

Dr. J.R. Oppenheimer, director of the atomic bomb laboratory of New Mexico upon whom had rested a heavy burden, grew tenser as the last seconds ticked off. He scarcely breathed. He held onto a post to steady himself. For the last few seconds he stared *dreamily* ahead and then when the announcer shouted “Now!” and there came this tremendous burst of light followed shortly thereafter by the deep growling roar of the explosion, his face relaxed into an expression of tremendous relief!

This way of discharging pent-up energy is the bane of mankind. We must sensibly, unerringly, and for all time, distance ourselves from this type of science, from this type of joy at this type of success. We are in possession of the primordial cosmic atomic energy, which furthers and protects life. We must never cease to protest loudly and energetically and to combat the continued use of mechanistic, or I should say, pathological inventions. Not one responsible physicist protests. No one lifts a finger to protect mankind from this invention. I do not know whether the discoverer of the connection between matter and energy will protest.\* I should like to say here that he knows about the discovery of the natural form of atomic energy, which is orgone.

I have not written this as a sensation-seeker, because I hate sensationalism and want peace for my experimental work. I have not written it because I have anything personal against those

\*This is a reference to Albert Einstein. For further information, see *The Einstein Affair*, Orgone Institute Press, Rangeley, Maine, 1953. [Eds.]

responsible. I have also not written it, though I could well have done so, because I would now like to replace the atom bomb with orgone energy. Orgone energy will never be used to destroy life. I should like to say that I already possess some of the formulae for the cosmic function of the natural atomic energy, orgone. It is in the interest of protecting life to keep these formulae secret and not to make them available to any power, until such time as we have full assurance everywhere on the planet, that nature's endless sources of energy will no longer be misused. I have written all of this because, in 25 years as a physician, I have come to know the life of the little, oppressed, mistreated, betrayed human beings. I have written this because I am deathly afraid for the life of my son who, in 20 years, will be handed over to the military death machine if we do not succeed in turning our fine phrases about peace into real peace. Lastly, I have written this because, for a decade, I have been working day in and day out with the living and I have confidence in it. I know that I am expressing the feelings of millions and millions of working people, and I am ready to publically acknowledge and accept responsibility for what I have said here in words that are inadequate to describe the calamity that has befallen mankind in August, 1945.

## *Man's Roots In Nature\**

I want to take you into an airplane today and get you up high over a territory where I have worked quite alone now for about the last ten years. But, first, may I be permitted to say a few introductory words.

When things become very tough outside, the smearing goes on, when defamation of good work happens, when co-workers, wives of co-workers, husbands of co-workers are afraid because of their licenses, marriage licenses, etc., then I withdraw. I don't go crazy as so many went, I just withdraw. I withdraw into a territory which is as yet inaccessible to most of the people of my time. Now, you will ask why do I introduce you to this territory? Why do I take you on this airplane trip? The reasons are two: First, though I love to be quite alone in the universe, so to speak, I also sometimes long to be among human beings and to have other human beings know what I'm doing and where I am. The second reason is more impersonal. I have experienced so often during the last thirty years that if I proceed, my best co-workers remain behind and don't join up. That is a very painful experience and I want to do whatever I can to prevent a new break in the lines of our workers, of our group. I am, to begin with, a natural scientist, not a psychologist and not a psychoanalyst, of course. I went into the whole field of psychiatry as a natural scientist. This interest was dictated primarily by the problem of energy. That was already the case in 1919. And you know what it did to psychiatry. I don't have to go into that. Now, these interests in natural science have developed quite a bit and the danger exists that if I go on further, the understanding between us will be less and less in due time, unless you join up, unless you join up in getting a clear cut, thorough, natural scientific foundation under your work as educa-

\*This is a transcription of an extemporaneous talk given by Reich at the Second Organismic International Convention at Organon, Rangeley, Maine, on August 26, 1950. For a more comprehensive presentation, see *Cosmic Superimposition*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1973.

tors, as physicians, nursery school teachers, social workers, etc.

I don't know how many of you are aware of the fact that whatever anybody does, whether he knows it or not, is based on some kind of natural-scientific theory, a natural-scientific method of approach to nature. For instance, when a physician gives injections, that's a chemical method of treatment in medicine based on the atomic theory in physics. Surgery is based on the mechanical laws of motion and of stress and strain. Now the next question is, follows quite logically, where are we rooted, we, with our handling of children, the sick, etc., in the realm of psychiatry? For instance, the report given yesterday on the genital games of children put it clearly before me just how different can be the positions from which you view two children loving each other. There's quite obviously no procreation involved in it. There's no procreation in that function. It is not even the function of the acme or the discharge of seminal fluid on the part of the boy. So why does it happen? What does it mean? Now, one very glib way of going about things in such a very important function is to say: "Well, it's just so. It's just infantile genitality." That is not only glib talk, it's silly talk; it's stupid talk. It's just talky-talk. Doesn't mean anything! Doesn't give you anything that will lead you anywhere! Things are much more serious than that. Viewed from my realm, when I listen to such a lecture I see two energy systems approaching each other and merging. I do not think in terms of psychology, genitality, psychiatry, education, etc. I just see two orgonotic systems, energy systems, approach, superimpose, and merge energetically. Now this is our base of operation. When we speak of man's roots in nature, it cannot be his walking, talking, eating, sleeping, metabolism, heartbeat, and any of these things. Why not? Because if man is to be rooted in nature, and, quite clearly, he is rooted in nature, there must be a red thread which goes right through him down into nature, into *nonliving* nature. That means, man must be connected in some way with nonliving nature, identically, as we say. There must be a functional identity between something in man and something basic in nature. Now, for many years we used to talk about cosmic longing,

orgonotic expansion, streaming, "back to nature," etc., etc. That is talk, too. It doesn't mean much. It gives you direction if it's well expressed and well meant. But it is talk, too. It is essential to find out exactly what this common functioning principle between man and nature is. The answer is here, ready. The common functioning principle, the function which unites man with nature, is an energy function which expresses itself in such functions as that described yesterday in the lecture on the genital games of children. We call it superimposition. That means, two orgonotic systems superimpose on each other.

Once we hit upon such a function in a certain realm, then we must learn to distinguish very clearly what is essential and what is not essential in this connection, what is a variant, a variable, and what is a common root function. It is essential in your work to know where you are. If you deal with children, for instance, you must know whether you deal with specifically human things, or with specifically animal things, or with specifically biochemical things, or with functions which are basic, that means, which derive from basic natural processes and pervade the whole of the living realm.

Now, if we follow this common functioning principle of superimposition, and we search for it, where else can we find it except in the function of the genital games of children and the grownup embrace. We must go outside living nature, because it's quite clear that superimposition governs the whole of living nature. That's quite clear. Now, where is it found outside living nature? The question must be logical. You must follow it to its end wherever it leads. And you will be quite astonished, as much astonished as I am, flabbergasted, as to where these things lead—right into the aurora borealis and into hurricanes. That sounds peculiar, doesn't it? No, it's not peculiar. It's quite logical. I only hope I shall be able to convey to you the logic which is in nature, that logic, that rationality in nature, which was known to all sages for the past four thousand years. Only very little was known factually about it, what it really was, how it worked. But, in numbers, in functions, in harmony, in the functions of the planetary system, the galactic system, and so on,

this rationality, this logic in nature was the most impressive thing. And it has moved humanity since it began to think.

Now, where do we find superimposition again? First, we find it in the micro-realm. As you sit in the darkened orgone room\* and you observe the orgone energy, then you see a motion that we call KRW, that is *Kreiselwelle* or spinning wave, a spinning motion like this with curves of "particles."\*\*

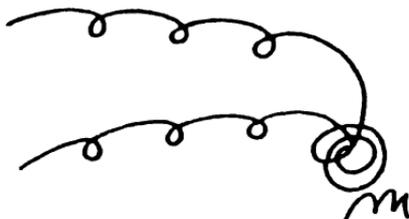


They luminate strongly when they go up, and they deluminate when they go down. (That has a special significance, a quite different reaction.)

There is a theoretical possibility of deriving superimposition and the generation of matter (I shall not go very deeply into that, just mention it) from two such energy waves. They move, approach each other, and superimpose, and then their motion decreases. The energy decreases and instead of energy, mass appears. (Those who know physics know what I'm talking about. That is very well worked out already but it would be too complicated to go into it right now.) So you have a superimposition in the realm where matter is generated from mass-free energy through superimposition, or let us call it differently, through creation. Creation through superimposition. The matter appears when two or more orgone energy "particles" are approaching, superimposing, and start whirling on the spot. And that apparently, or most probably, is the way matter appeared for the first time in the orgone ocean.

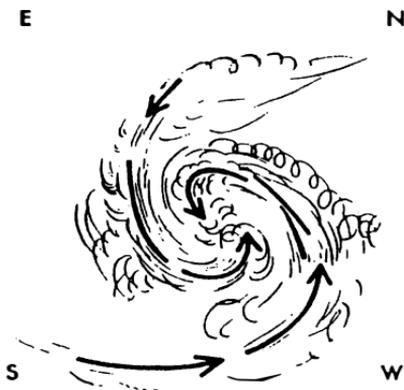
\*Reich is referring to a room in the laboratory at Orgonon the walls of which were layered as an orgone energy accumulator. [Eds.]

\*\*Throughout this talk, Reich is using a blackboard to visualize his concepts. [Eds.]



*Creation of the primordial mass particle (m)  
through orgonotic superimposition*

Now, most interesting is what happens in the macro-world, in the galaxies. We have some pictures here. I won't burden you with the names or the numbers. These are classical pictures, not mine. They are from the Mt. Wilson Observatory and other observatories. Here you see, clearcut, one arm and another arm. It is quite clear that the central ball is the future sun. And this is still in motion, whereas that slows down and rolls more on the spot.



*A drawing from a photograph showing the direction of  
flow of the two orgone energy streams.*

In other pictures you have one, two, three, four, and five, five functions, or let us call them five orgone streams, five orgone streams merging into one through superimposition. You realize that the function of attraction is there, already there. The functional identity here is the attraction developed in the function of superimposition in galaxies and in those two children described yesterday. We are permitted to jump that far. It is very important to be a very good jumper and not to break one's neck. That means, if you jump, you should jump from a very safe position, without fear, and land, and don't break your neck. And another thing, don't jump in a silly way. To jump in a silly way is very bad. This is a good jump. This jump connects the superimposition of the child with the galactic system, with what's going on in the galactic system.

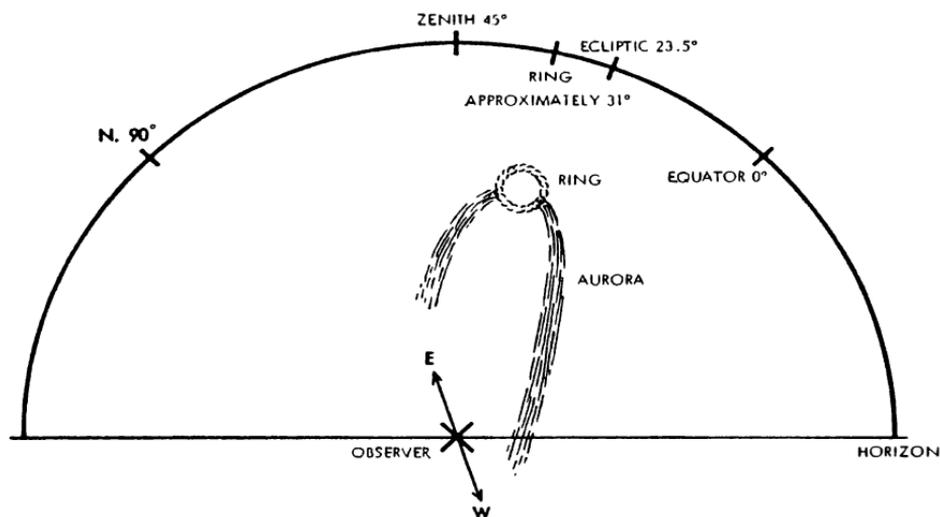
I would like to mention that in classical astronomy the question has been raised whether or not these arms are moving. This is not the official theory, but some astronomers have already assumed that this represents the motion of a spinning wheel.

Here we have the functional identity of a very vast realm, involving animal, man, and the galaxy. Well, that is only hypothesis, a work hypothesis. Now, in scientific research one is bound to keep quiet. And I kept quiet for about 7 or 8 years—more, 10 years. You must keep quiet until you have proof, and good proof, that your thought, your hypothesis, your jump was correct.

Now I want to tell you how I found, to my own greatest amazement, the true nature of this jump, of this functional hypothesis. I was unprepared for it. I didn't know anything about it when I started out and I just observed, and followed the logic. And here is what I found.

For about eight years, since 1942 or '43, since I knew that the aurora borealis is an orgonomic phenomenon, I observed during the summer and late autumn, very carefully, every single aurora borealis. Now, in due course, a phenomenon appeared which was not mentioned in the literature. I looked through everything I could find and it was not mentioned. And that is the following: You are looking up. Here is the zenith. (That is

the point where we look straight up above our heads.) The aurora borealis begins to luminate from the north and streams upward, back and forth, it pulsates upward. When it reaches a certain point in the zenith the south begins to luminate. That means there's a dividing line somewhere. And a ring appears some seven or twelve degrees to the south of the zenith. I observed that now for seven years, and if the aurora develops completely, fully, then the ring develops.



*Drawing of the west—east bands meeting  
at the ring of the aurora on May 30, 1949*

But before the ring appears clearly demarked, there are two streamers coming, one here from the north and then the south begins to luminate, and it goes like that. What is that? The same function: the superimposition and the merging of two orgone streams. This ring now became of the utmost importance. It became really the key to the whole orgonomic astronomical work that has been done for about the last ten years. It cleared up

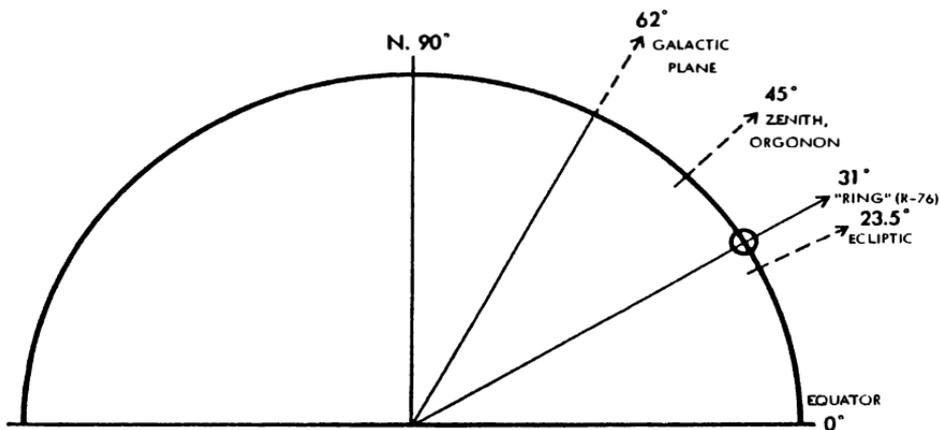
many things that happened before that were unclear, and it opened the door wide to the understanding of such things as hurricanes, sunspots, and so on. I won't bother you with all that today. I shall only lead you for a certain stretch.

Now, the first thing to do when you have a phenomenon is to describe it qualitatively. How does it look? What does it do? I told you what it does. Two streams merge. They whirl around each other, they form a ring, and then it disappears. The other description is a quantitative one: Where is it situated? In order to understand that, you must look at this.\* This plane here where the wheel rolls is the equatorial plane, so called. (These are all classical terms.) That is the plane where the earth's equator moves, the earth rolls around the equator. Now, imagine yourself inside here, in the center. This is the sky around you. This is the equatorial plane, this blue ring. Now, the earth, as you know, does not roll in space in the plane of this equatorial plane, but in the so-called ecliptic. That means, the earth, the ball, moves in this plane,\*\* but in space it moves here.\*\*\* That means, as it rolls around its own axis in this plane, in space it moves here. That's a fact, established, measured clearly, but never understood. I never could find any indication of an understanding of why the whole planetary system moves that way. That means there is an angle of  $23\frac{1}{2}$  degrees to the North. The movement in space is  $23\frac{1}{2}$  degrees farther north than the equatorial plane. That is the situation in classical thinking. Now where's our ring, the aurora ring? It's a bit higher than the ecliptic, a bit farther away from the equator. It's always 31 degrees north of the equatorial plane. Please keep that well in mind.

\*The schematic drawings showing the ring of the aurora were incorporated in a 3-dimensional model that Reich is using as he lectures. The planes were represented by metal rings of different colors, and the plane of the earth's equator was a rotating wheel with a blue ring around its rim. [Eds.]

\*\*Reich is showing the earth spinning on its axis in the plane of the equator. [Eds.]

\*\*\*Reich shows the entire earth moving through space in the plane of the ecliptic. [Eds.]



*Scheme depicting the angular relationship of "ring"  
(R-76) to the galactic and equatorial planes*

I need your attention now for a few minutes. It's a bit complicated, but you can understand all the facts. You stand here and you look up—you have your zenith up there. As you look around your horizon, you have this line here. The zenith changes of course with every observer. That's clear. Now the equator is, in our region, exactly 45 degrees above the horizon. That's the nice thing about it. The ecliptic, that means the path of the sun, is 23½ degrees above the equator, and the ring is 31 degrees from the equator, 31 degrees above the equator. Everything clear? And now our functionalism comes in.

In classical astronomy, it is known that the planets and the sun move in the same plane. They all move in the same plane in the same direction. We have added one point. And that is, that every planet and the sun are surrounded by an orgone envelope, which moves faster than the globe and in the same direction, except for weather changes.

Now, in classical astronomy there is no explanation for these movements. There's only a mathematical explanation which is not the real explanation. It's the mathematical formulation of the laws. And that's the Newton formula of gravitation which is based on the assumption that the sun is the center of gravita-

tion and that the planets move around the sun with a tendency to fall toward the sun. The beauty of all that is that it is wrong and, at the same time, in a deeper sense, very true. It is really true that the planets and the moons behave as if they were falling toward the center of gravity, toward the sun. But our orgonomic thinking does not permit such a conclusion. The sun does not attract the planets, and the orbits of the planets around the sun are not closed. They cannot be closed. Simple reasoning will tell you that. If the sun moves ahead and the planets move, then an ellipse is out of the question. Is that clear? The paths of the planets are open, not closed. This is the first major theoretical logical conclusion we must draw from practical facts. We don't need our orgonomy yet. If you integrate the movement of the sun with the movement of the planets, then you get this motion.\* And that's again our spinning wave. Now, the assumption with which I operated for the past ten years is this: The sun and the planets are swinging in the orgone ocean on the orgone waves, simultaneously, carried along by the orgone stream in the universe. And that is, in our case, the milky way galaxy. And the milky way galaxy also has two arms, as you may well observe, two arms which merge into one. That's well known; that's not my work.

What does all that have to do with 31 degrees? Astronomy uses different systems, as I told you. They have the horizon system of measuring, of establishing a point here or here, north and south, and so on. They have the equatorial system to determine where stars are, with angles toward this plane. And then they have the galactic system, seen from the center of the galaxy. You don't have to go into that; only know that these are the three systems. Now I integrated these systems into one. It is known now in astronomy, and very well calculated, that the galactic plane is 62 degrees from the equatorial. You understand that? No, you didn't get it yet? Twice 31. I was quite amazed, I was stunned when I found that logic in the universe and in thinking.

Classical astronomy provides the measurements. I'm observing

\*Reich draws the spinning wave on the blackboard. [Eds.]

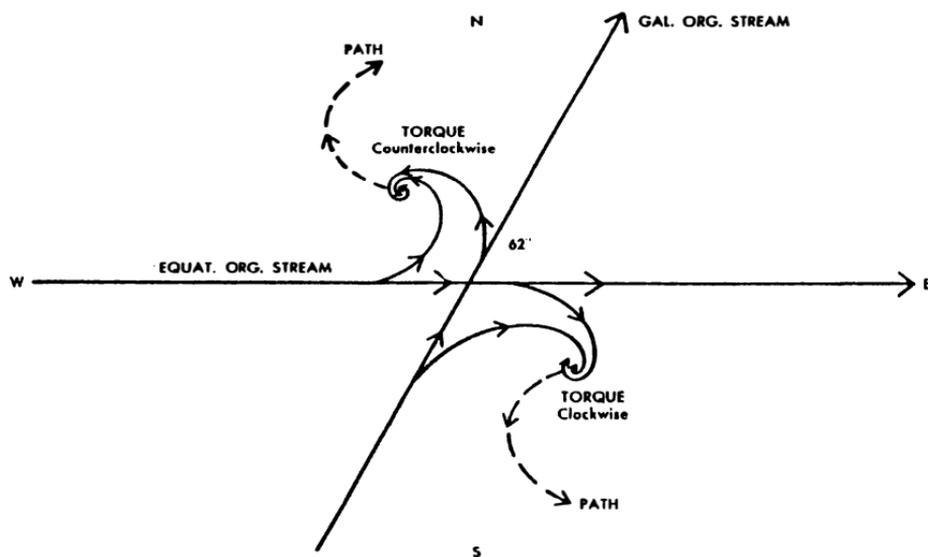
the aurora. I find the ring, determine its position at 31 degrees and observe it for about eight years or so. It's 76 degrees above the horizon because the equator is 45 degrees from the horizon. 45 and 31 is 76. And I call it R-76. It is exactly in the middle between the galactic and the equatorial plane. Now I could go on. It's limitless. You just tell me when to stop. I shall not talk too long about it, just give you the main points.

It has always been my tendency, and a great pleasure, to confirm classical findings, to confirm them. I'm not a rebel. I don't want to overturn things. I follow innovations and I follow discoveries very reluctantly, very reluctantly. I hate it at times when I find something new. And I always worry that it could happen that some very well-founded classical theory would not stand up to the new facts. And I always rejoice when I can find the connecting link, the integration of the new and the old. So I'm not quite the bad man people like to make me out to be.

Classical astronomy does not assume that anything carries the planets and the sun along. That's unknown classically. It's unknown. It's just not sought. But they have measured out the coordinate systems—the equatorial, the galactic, the ecliptic—which I'm happy to say correspond to realities. And what are these realities? There are two streams in the universe. One stream is the galactic stream of orgone, and the other stream is the equatorial orgone envelope of the earth which whirls around the earth. The resultant of the two is the ecliptic. Is that clear? That means, it's all reality; it's not only a thought system. And that's the beauty of it. And that is what makes me very happy. So these things are not only constructions of the mind. They're realities.

Now, this again is a theory, of course, hypothesis if you want to call it. How are you going to confirm whether it is true or not? And that will be the last thing I'll tell you about these processes. Pondering about these two streams and how they meet around the earth's globe which is drawn up here on a scale. This is the equatorial orgone envelope stream from west to east. You know that it moves West → East and not East → West. Is that clear? Then, here is the galactic with 62

degrees in between. Here, the two streams somehow interfere with each other. Some laws of the hurricane appear to solve one element in this riddle. Hurricanes usually develop around the equator, in the realm of about 11 degrees north and south of the equator. Now a peculiar thing has been established and there's no exception to it. Northern hurricanes whirl or spin counterclockwise. And in the southern hemisphere, they spin clockwise. That's a fact which is reported in the literature. Well it's very queer. Why should that be? Now if you look at these four spirals here, the equatorial orgone stream always spins that way and the galactic this way. And if it happens in the north it must whirl that way. It can't go down. Is that clear? In the south it must whirl clockwise. If you assume and if you state there are two forces, two streams, which move at this angle and they turn. That means, here is again the superimposition between the galactic and the equatorial streams.



*Torque and path of hurricanes*

Now is that true or not? Yes, it is true. Here are your pictures of hurricanes. These were taken by radar, by Naval Service down in Washington. We got them from Washington. One, two. And if you measure exactly their tangent\* they are 62 degrees. Now, this is incredible. It was so incredible that I not only didn't dare believe it, I mean the logic of it, the "clicking" of it, that I withheld it for a long time and last night I must say I had a rather bad time in thinking over whether to tell it to you or not. I would have preferred to keep it for another five, six, or ten years. But I decided to bring it forth and to get rid of it in some way. So here's another picture of another hurricane. You can look up the dates. I don't want to bother you now with that. Here's one and here's another. I measured it out and tangents are 62 degrees. They approach each other with an angle of 62 degrees.

I'm at the end now. I could go on and on. I could talk until tomorrow morning. I only hope that I have convinced you that there's a road, clear-cut, with windings, a few windings, into the realm of astronomy and astrophysics built by the laws which we found in psychiatry. *Laws which we found in psychiatry guide us right through into the universe.* We have the approach, we have the connection, and we must start seeing human beings as cosmic concentrations of energy with cosmic laws. Otherwise, we shall get lost in talky-talk. The only safeguard to keep ourselves clear, courageous, to know where we are, what we are doing, what our background is, where our direction is, is to see such two children as were described yesterday not as psychological beings, not even biological beings, but as concentrations of two orgone streams, superimposed, merging energetically so that further creation later can emerge. Thank you.

Student: It has always puzzled me how the orgone envelope of the earth could move faster than the earth. Is the answer that in the process of formation of the earth in the superimposition of two orgonotic systems, the

\*Reich is referring to tangents drawn to the curved arms in the hurricane photos and measuring the angle between the two tangent lines. [Eds.]

slowing down in the formation of mass was at the center?

Reich: That's right.

Student: Where mass exists there is slowing, whereas at the periphery, where there is still field, there is movement faster.

Reich: Perfectly correct, perfectly correct.

The earth does not behave like a ball rolling on stagnant water. What would roll it then? How would it roll? It rolls like a ball on water waves, slower than the waves. The waves are our orgone ocean. That is a part of our whole work hypothesis. The cosmic orgone ocean moves, energy streams superimpose, they slow down, matter appears, and this matter spins slower through the orgone ocean, with an orgone envelope around it which moves faster than the globe. That has very grave consequences. That goes very far.

Student: One more question. I hesitate, I don't know if it's too long. Is there anything here which tells us anything about the origin of man's troubles?

Reich: Yes. Yes. Very good. Thank you very much. The origin of man's trouble—shall I go into that now? That's another lecture. Only quite briefly: In *Ether, God and Devil*,\* I have tried to explain that man runs away from his own core, from the living in it, and how he runs away. Now we're proceeding further. We're proceeding to answer the question from what, or from where does man run away? He runs away exactly from this here, from his cosmic consciousness, I would call it, which is expressed in religion, in religious thinking in a mystical way, through the exclusion of reality. We

\*Cf. Reich, *Ether, God and Devil*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1973 [Eds.]

are not in disagreement with religion. We are not. We are in agreement with religion. We are in disagreement with one thing, with one point. It's not mystical. It's real. It's physical. If only the priest or the religious man wouldn't be afraid to listen to it, to make contact with his own stream within himself. Because this orgone moves within you just as it moves outside. And that constitutes your longing, your cosmic longing, your puberty fantasies, all the organ functions, and so on. But that is not new. That was known in natural philosophy for a long time, for a long time, for thousands of years.

What is new is the actual property, the actual quality of that "something" which binds you together with the universe. Everything is not known about it. We're just beginning to scratch the surface. I would like to add that right away.

Now, about the trouble. We understand the mechanism of the trouble, the armoring, everything which precedes it, and follows it. What remains a great riddle in psychiatry, ethnology, and so on, is why did it come about? When? How? How did it happen that the human species, the human race, became the only animal species which lost its contact with the cosmic orgone ocean? Every dog has it, every deer has it, every animal, and so on. Why did man lose it? Don't know, don't know!

Student: I'd like at this point to raise this question. What have we been doing here in a sense? We've been using our receptive powers and our intellect in effect to make up this contact which we've lost through some basic tendency to err. Now, I'd like to ask if this is a valid antithesis—the human tendency to err and the development of the intellect which work against each other and are at the same time identically rooted. And if

it is a valid antitheses, what is the common functioning principle?

Reich: Give me another three years? How about it?

I would like to answer something. Yes. There's a very thrilling question there. If you want to fly ahead still more, let's go on. (I don't know if you'll get frightened now.) The question is: consciousness, self-perception, where do these functions come in? Do they appear suddenly or through a transitional process? I mean, is there gradual development of self-awareness from nonliving nature? Now, religion has a ready-made answer. It says, everything has consciousness, everything has spirit. That's obviously wrong that way. Even if it's true, it's wrongly answered. It ignores the process. There is development, there's functioning, there's process. What we have to do is to think in the direction of where does the pulsating system, the closed system, develop out of the orgone ocean and, with that, where does self-awareness begin to develop? It's never a clear jump from nothing to something. That I learned from Freud, from Sigmund Freud: to think in historical, developmental terms—always, always. How does it develop? Which is the first step, the second, the third, and so on, to our fully developed process? But one question there is still bothering me. And that is: The orgone ocean is excitable, reacts to excitation. The light function is one of the results of that. When we catch a signal from thousands of miles away on our electroscope in the observatory, that means that something travels through the orgone ocean. Call it whatever you want, whatever you will. It might happen that someone would step up, and ask the question, "Does it have consciousness? Now, I deny it. I deny it. But I couldn't prove that I'm right. And here is the breaking point between natural-scientific and mystical-religious attitudes. I learned to respect relig-

ious thought. I have to confess that. I didn't twenty years ago. I began to see how deep the religious probing goes, how deep down, even though it is mystical. In reading Buddha or Christ or any other theory, it's incredible how much these founders of religion knew about the orgonotic functioning. It's incredible! Disguised, or not in scientific terms, but the basic cosmic laws were known somehow. And here I think the discussions of the future will take place, this borderline here. Perception, consciousness, self-awareness, and spirit, absolute God. The present standpoint is, of course, that there must be somewhere a transitional realm where, on one side, self awareness is not there yet and, on the other side, it is there. And in between it somehow develops. And here we can learn very much from the schizophrenic. I tried a bit in my paper on the schizophrenic.\* When such a paper is written, all these things are always in the background. Always. I didn't answer your question, but I think I posited it in its proper place.

**Student:** Are there two superimposing fields in the human orgonotic system?

**Reich:** I don't know. Maybe. I don't know. I don't think so. I don't know. It should be studied. The human orgonotic system is a unity, a single unit. But the superimposition in the embrace, the sexual embrace, with all that goes with it, is a clear example, I think, of the tendency that the animal splits up into two, male-female. That's a functional setup. Male and female seen physically, energetically, two variations of one stem. And when they mate they're united again. All the functions develop here in mating. Then further creation comes out of that. But the origin of male and

\*Cf. Reich, "The Schizophrenic Split" in *Character Analysis*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1972 [Eds.]

female, one of the darkest problems in natural science, I have nothing to say about it, nothing, just don't know, might be solved one day from this issue here. But I don't think there are two streams in the organism. I think it's only one, circulating stream. You can see it in amoebae. But two streams merge into one in the genital embrace. There's no doubt about that. The genital embrace is a cosmic event beyond all psychology, biology, and so on.

**Student:** You say the closing of the organotic fields is already the decline of the organism.

**Reich:** I think it's too detailed a question. We are still in the framework, you know. We are building our hypothesis, our work framework.

**Student:** I have thought a lot about the origin of the human troubles, I have not found an answer, but I think it may lie in the relations between perception, consciousness, and the effort to formulate what is perceived, what is coming to consciousness. And to some extent I have the impression that this effort to formulate in order to communicate to others is at the basis of many human troubles, because it's so difficult to express what comes to one's consciousness through perception so as to make it understandable to others.

**Reich:** Yes, I think you have said something very deep. There is a painful awareness in every human being and we meet it in every single case where we go deep enough. We also meet it in natural philosophy and all philosophies, religious teachings, and so on. It is as if the human animal is flabbergasted or cannot understand how it comes about that it perceives, that it can think, that it can handle situations in nature by ratio, and so on. This is dark there; that's a dark thing. I

only wish that we could get rid of the politicians and start working on these problems. That would be quite essential. But I think there's a deeper function there. And that is the constant feeling of human beings, which is hidden in neurotics and biopathic, armored individuals, but quite manifest in what we call "healthy people." (We should get away from that term, too. It becomes a religion again.) And that is a feeling of a separation, the feeling of a separation from something. It is most clearly expressed in the pain, in the aching pain of being separated from the beloved, whether child, or wife, or husband, with a longing to unite again, to be together again, to be in contact again. But I think that this love experience is one of the functions, one of the variants of a much deeper thing. Somehow, you think such thoughts on very quiet nights, no noises around except the high wind, thoughts of being separated from the cosmic orgone ocean, of being singled out, so to say. And what they call Nirvana, or the cosmic longing, all that, seems to be the deepest expression of a very deep wish or tendency ("Wish" is too psychological to describe that.) to return to the cosmic orgone ocean. And here somewhere Freud was right with his death instinct, but he didn't know it. And nobody knew it at that time. The deep return that was described as the return to the womb, return to the mothers in the old Greek anthology, the return to the orgone ocean. This longing is not as painful if you are in a happy functioning love relationship, or if you have a child you love, and so on. Then it can merge with that. It can be satisfied, gratified there. But I think that goes quite far.

Student: Does superimposition apply to all organotic systems?

Reich: All organotic systems do that. Yes! Even egg and spermatozoa. That's superimposition. The formation of

the zygote—you know what the zygote is—that is a superimposition. That means, an orgonotic system A divides into  $A^1$  and  $A^2$  and  $A^1$  and  $A^2$  merge again into  $A^x$ . Yes? And then the propagation begins. That means that the superimposition even reaches to such deep levels as the zygote. That goes very deep. It's cosmic.

Student: I think we shouldn't leave Experiment XX\* out of this discussion, as if it were a stepchild.

Reich: May I say a word here now. Experiment XX is the experiment which is the real key to these functions here. It's not worked out yet. It will take some ten years, fifteen years, to work out experimentally the answers to the questions of superimposition which, as you have realized, is a basic natural cosmic function permeating and pervading the whole world of the animal kingdom, constituting its longing, its continuity in the universe. And it might very well become a new foundation (It sounds very queer now but I'm going to say it.) to a new social setup.

Dr. Raknes\*\*: I would not like to leave this discussion before I have told how afraid I was of Reich going into astronomy and into all those things. There was still something left of my old fear of going ever farther, still something left of my old wish of finally finding something where I could just sit down instead of walking on. I had a little idea of some of this before from what Reich had told me. But now that I have got it connected in the way he has done today—well, I'm so glad that I didn't stop.

\*Cf. Reich, *The Cancer Biopathy*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1973 [Eds.]

\*\*Dr. Ola Raknes was moderator of this program. [Eds.]

Student: In connection with what Dr. Reich said just now, I think that yesterday, in dealing with children, we saw people's terror of the genitality of children, but today we can perhaps get something that is even deeper, and that is the terror we feel at the healthy child's contact with the cosmic orgone ocean.

Reich: May I use the opportunity now to warn against something. This deep contact between a child and the cosmic function, whether it's nature, or a nice Sunday, a sunny day, or so, is very often derided by the emotional plague as schizophrenic. The term schizophrenia is used very loosely, especially here in the United States. Everybody who is not a *homo normalis* is a schizophrenic. And it is quite clear to me that schizophrenia, especially the dementia praecox type, is *the* disease of people who have broken down because of the inability to maintain that contact and to live it. They broke down between the requirements of the social setup and this entirely different, qualitatively different, experience which you have when you make contact with—when you have contact, not make. I have it all the time. I have that contact all the time—with nature around you.

Student: I would like just now to speak of feelings of which I've just become aware, and that is a feeling of envy when I am around schizophrenic patients. They have something I don't have.

Reich: That's it. That's it.

Student: About this superimposition—When two orgonotic systems superimpose you get hurricanes, you get the ring at the zenith. In the case of the living, you get a fusion of two systems.

Reich: And a child. That's right. That's a ring—a child. The child is a ring.

Student: The question is, in the nonliving you have immediate effects. In the case of the living, you have open ended.

Reich: That's right. That means, you have propagation. That will be the distinguishing mark between the biological and the cosmic. And cell division; a planet doesn't divide. Yes. But I spoke only about the common functioning principle, about the red thread. I didn't speak about the variations. Of course, there are millions of variations. They are very important to study.

Student: You said that the schizophrenic broke down because he could not maintain the contact with the cosmic.

Reich: Yes.

Student: Well, what about *homo normalis*? Does that mean he does [maintain contact with the cosmic]?

Reich: No, no, he doesn't feel it. He has it completely shut out. His armor shuts it out.

Student: The schizophrenic feels it but—

Reich: Can't stand it. That's right.

Student: You have been talking very often about the hate of the living and what is the origin of the misery. And I can't help but be struck right now by the feeling that I had all through adolescence of a pending catastrophe, as if somehow something were going to crash and go into something bad. The feeling that I have here is a complete split now between the way which you are going,

which seems to be a melting into something bigger, and the way in which the world is going.

Reich: Yes. The human animal has become incapable of coping with the cosmic forces within him. That's the answer.

May I say something now. I'm very glad, especially with what Dr. Raknes said. I wondered yesterday how many will understand it. Shall I be left alone again? How will it be? Well, I'm very much encouraged. I think that from now on we can all walk together, just proceed together. If you pay a bit of attention, no, not a bit, quite a bit, to natural scientific thinking, and put that base under your work.

I'm hesitating almost to publish these things. They have been laying around for years, about five years or so. I don't know if it's not a mistake on my part to hesitate so long, that it wouldn't be wise to just come out with it. But there's another reason why I hesitate. This is very responsible stuff. If I would make a mistake, a basic mistake today, then I would cause quite a bit of harm for a long time to come. So I have to be very careful and very slow. But I would suggest that if you feel that you need to discuss these things, you just come to me and put your questions, ask your questions, and get your explanations. But I do not believe that we can any longer be psychiatrists, or educators, or any such thing, without having this connection between the infant, the child, the boy or girl in puberty, with the cosmic event outside. It's one and the same energy, one and the same. Only one has more; it has a perception of it. And that's a trouble. That's a part of the trouble. There seems to be a basic, I would call it a physiological trouble. The physiological trouble is that the piece of orgone perceives itself. And the other trouble, which is unnecessary, which is irra-

tional, is that this natural perception of what you are, namely, a part of the cosmic orgone ocean, is split up, disturbed, blocked off, and this causes disease, and misery. And, due to this armoring, the majority of educators, teachers, physicians, philosophers, and I don't know who, obstruct the way to establish this unity again. But it will be done. There's no doubt. The question is only how many human lives will go to hell before that will be achieved.

Dr. Raknes: I think Dr. Reich will say some concluding words about the conference.

Reich: Well, we are at the end of our convention and I shall be very brief. I should like to say that I never in my life (I attended many conventions, I saw many people, thousands of them.), but never in my life did I have such contact, such cooperation, such being together, such integration of a group of working people into one. Now you will go home to your offices, as educators and physicians, and I hope you got one thing from here. And that is a bit of courage and conviction. We are not alone. We have a good thing in our hands. We can do a lot of good. What we need is a bit more fist, hardness, rational hardness in our approach to our problems. A bit less fear of what somebody says. The best thing you have got is your conviction that you are right. That's the best thing you have got. And as you go out, then try to maintain it. I can assure you that if you stop evading issues, if you go in a very prudent manner right through the stuff you have to penetrate, people will respect you, very highly. They're afraid of you somewhere, but if you show courage, if you maintain your position, if you are a learning human being, and modest, *very modest*, then you'll gain respect, very much, among the people, and every single one of you will be a center. And this is not a very

pleasant position to have. The responsibilities are tremendous, quite tremendous. But, it can be done! Every one of you can acquire the abilities to administer, not to govern, to administer. To administer education, to administer medicine, to administer natural science, to administer honesty, decency, truth, and maintain it against whatever might happen there. I wish to thank you very very much.

