A DANGEROUS TENDENCY IN CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT

By Myron Sharaf

In the January, 1948 issue of the English magazine, The New Era in Home and School, there is an article by Lance Whyte which very clearly illustrates a tendency in present-day thinking, which, in my mind, deserves the sharpest condemnation. Let us first examine the article and then move on to the larger implications which it illustrates.

The author begins by describing the current chaos in human civilization and thought. Considering offered solutions, he rejects—we need not go into his reasons here—both religion and Marxism as inadequate. The slogan: "More education" is empty because it does not say which concepts are to be taught to the young generation. Other usual answers he also finds sterile.

No, says Mr. Whyte, nothing less than a "new foundation for human consciousness, i.e., for all thought, scientific or otherwise," is necessary. This foundation must be universal, applicable for social and personal as well as scientific integration. The "new" methodology Mr. Whyte proposes is that of a non-mechanical "unitary formative process, a process in which patterns are developed and transformed according to some law which has not yet been discovered." This idea of a formative process, if justified by physics, would form the coordinating principle for knowledge already accumulated, and would replace the mechanical principles of the Newtonian outlook which furthered "the great dualism of mind and matter which has so long haunted human thought." It would be "very like what Dialectical Materialism would have been if the Dialectical Materialists had not allowed many of their conceptions to become static." Instead of analyzing systems into permanent and unchanging entities and then studying their interactions, it would study the formative processes displayed in the system comprising all the "interacting" entities.

Whyte gives an example. "When two adolescents fall in love a psychosomatic change... takes place in each of them, each being changed under the influence of the other. But it is impossible to describe this process as the interaction of two unchanging entities, because each of them is changing. Therefore the only way to regard it is through the conception of a single process affecting them both and developing complementary characteristics in each of the two. Here we have the essentials of a formative process, the two individuals forming one developing pattern of complementary parts."

(Italics the reviewer's.)

I have quoted from Whyte's short article in some detail because it is important to note exactly what he is saying. To the student of orgonomy, all of it—right down to the example—sounds familiar, too familiar. It is an un concession version of what Reich has been writing for many years, most fully and over the ground Whyte covers in "Orgonomic Pulsation" (International Journal of Sex-Economy and Orgone Research 3, 1944, Nos. 2 & 3). But Whyte's very unspecificity betrays the crucial difference: whereas his formulations are still only theoretical and do not tell us how to proceed factually, Reich's thought technique of functionalism, the guiding line of which for over 15 years has been the principle of a simultaneous identity and antithesis in nature, is today a proven mirroring of basic natural processes. Developed originally through a consistent study, continued over decades, of the emotions in general and the orgastic function in particular, the thought technique of functionalism led to the discovery of the cosmic, primordial energy, the orgone, which is itself neither mechanical nor mystical, but functional, changing, "unitary and formative." Its discovery and practical application prove the validity of the thinking behind it.

Here, concretely, is all, and much more than Whyte was asking for. Here is the way of thinking that can be and has been applied to human and social life as well as to the natural sciences, that eliminates the dualism between mind and matter, that replaces mechanism without being mystical, that is very like what Dialectical Materialism would have been if it had not become static. Here, in tangible form as opposed to Whyte's hopeful proposals, is the "new foundation for human consciousness."

And yet Whyte is strangely silent about Reich and his work. Not so much as a mention, though Reich's thought seems to permeate every line. Having written the author telling him about Reich's work and asking him whether...
he was familiar with it, and having received the answer that he "had heard of it though did not know it in detail," I am forced to the conclusion that the article is another example of conscious or unconscious intellectual plagiarism.

We are familiar with such diluted borrowings from sex-economy: Franz Alexander’s "Character-Apalysis" (cf., "Character-Analysis" by T. P. Wolfe, *International Journal*, 1, 1942, 90 ff.), Eric Fromm’s books on the fear of freedom in the masses (cf. Harry Obermayer’s review of Fromm’s *Escape from Freedom*, *International Journal*, 2, 1943, 173 ff.), current pedagogic writings on “freedom for the child” with little mention or watered-down statements on the genital rights of infants, children and adolescents. These are only a few examples; one could cite many more. Their common factor—the factor that betrays them—is that, while taking over parts of sex-economy and orgonomy, the central point of the elucidation of the energy function of the orgasm is never treated. No one could use this fact fruitfully without connecting in honest, clear fashion with Reich’s work. What they do is take over only what can be used comfortably within the present framework of thinking and leave behind the dangerous rest. To quote from *Listen, Little Man!*, they want the raisins from Reich’s pie but not the thorns of his roses. Then they are hailed for their “daring,” “original” thinking (but still how safe it all is!) and the real thing is ignored or fought.

It is not our intention to blame anybody. We realize why these writers avoid mentioning the orgasmic function and the orgone. But we do believe that diluted articles on “unitary, formative thinking,” “self-regulation,” an "organismic psychology" etc. are in the long run more dangerous than writings which are openly reactionary and mimical to orgonomy. For while the latter are transparently off-the-track and reveal themselves to all for what they are, the former give the impression to the general public of being progressive and of grappling honestly with crucial contemporary problems. This seeming functionalism, self-regulation, mass psychology, psychosomatic medicine or whatever could destroy the findings of orgonomy by passing them on to the public after dissecting their spine—the study of energy processes in sexuality which, with inescapable logic, led to the discovery of the cosmic orgone energy.

It is necessary to expose the basic char of these attempts and to demonstrate their ultimate sterility. One cannot have a genuine functionalism without studying that which is functional within human beings, the emotions, and moving from there to the basic natural process which follows the same laws as do the emotions. One cannot have a genuine self-regulation without a clear and unequivocal orientation on the sexual life of infants, children and adolescents. One cannot have a genuine mass psychology without understanding the irrational structure of contemporary man. One cannot have a genuine psychosomatic medicine without tackling the basis of psychosomatic illnesses: the basis of sexual (biological) energy in chronic muscular armoring. All attempts to detour logical thinking degenerate into words without substance and serve to confuse the true issues. We intend to go into this in detail in future articles. Suffice it here to say that there is no easy way. Only the very factual, consistent and dangerous work on forbidden functions yields what Mr. Whyte and others are calling for—the real solution of the personal, social and scientific problems which haunt our age.
Projeto Arte Org
Redescobrindo e reinterpretando W. Reich

Caro Leitor
Infelizmente, no que se refere a orgonomia, seguir os passos de Wilhelm Reich e de sua equipe de investigadores é uma questão bastante difícil, polêmica e contraditória, cheia de diferentes interpretações que mais confundem do que ajudam. Por isto, nós decidimos trabalhar com o material bibliográfico presente nos microfilmes (Wilhelm Reich Collected Works Microfilms) em forma de PDF, disponibilizados por Eva Reich que já se encontra circulado pela internet, e que abarca o desenvolvimento da orgonomia de 1941 a 1957.

Dividimos este "material" de acordo com as revistas publicadas pelo instituto de orgonomia do qual o Reich era o diretor.
01- International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research (1942-1945).
02- Orgone Energy Bulletin (1949-1953)
03- CORE Cosmic Orgone Engineering (1954-1956)

E logo dividimos estas revistas de acordo com seus artigos, apresentando-os de forma separada (em PDF), o que facilita a organizá-los por assunto ou temas.
Assim, cada qual pode seguir o rumo de suas leituras de acordo com os temas de seu interesse.
Todo o material estará disponível em inglês na nuvem e poderá ser acessado a partir de nossas páginas Web.

Sendo que nosso intuito aqui é simplesmente divulgar a orgonomia, e as questões que a ela se refere, de acordo com o próprio Reich e seus colaboradores diretos relativos e restritos ao tempo e momento do próprio Reich. Quanto ao caminho e as postulações de cada um destes colaboradores depois da morte de Reich, já é uma questão que extrapola nossas possibilidades e nossos interesses. Sendo que aqui somente podemos ser responsáveis por nós mesmos e com muitas restrições.

Alguns destes artigos, de acordo com nossas possibilidades e interesse, já estamos traduzindo. Não somos tradutores especializados e, portanto, pedimos a sua compreensão para possíveis erros que venham a encontrar.

Em nome da comunidade Arte Org.

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