IRATIONALISM IN THE FIGHT AGAINST SEX-ECONOMY

I. BIOPHYSICAL FUNCTIONALISM AND MECHANISTIC NATURAL SCIENCE*

By Wilhelm Reich, M.D.

Editor's note: The following article was written in November 1941, as if with a presentiment of what was going to happen shortly afterwards. Dr. Reich had not intended it for publication at this time. Now, however, after the incredible incident of Dr. Reich's arrest, this article may well serve as an introduction to a series of articles about similar irrational incidents which happened in Europe and about which nothing has as yet been published.

On December 12, 1941, at two o'clock in the morning, Dr. Reich was routed from bed by three agents of the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation), arrested, and taken to Ellis Island. He was given no reason for his arrest. He thought he was merely going to be questioned and would be released within a few hours. However, he was held at Ellis Island for over three weeks, not being released until January 5, 1942.

In reality, Dr. Reich's arrest had nothing to do with the simultaneous arrest of some 600 "enemy aliens." The FBI had investigated Dr. Reich's "case" for a considerable period of time prior to his arrest. We knew that. These investigations made it clear that there was not the slightest reason for suspicion against Dr. Reich as an "enemy alien," "subversive element" or whatnot. Neither Dr. Reich nor any of his co-workers or acquaintances would have dreamed of the possibility of his being arrested as an "enemy alien"; his pro-American feelings and his previous activities as a democratic anti-Fascist and anti-Stalinist were a matter of record and widely known. Evidently, his arrest was the result of a denunciation on the part of some overzealous opponents of Dr. Reich's scientific work who were too cowardly to come out against him in the open field of scientific discussion. This is nothing new. It had happened more than once in Europe that such individuals had run to the police, though an arrest had never occurred. It seems that the secret police, in understandable ignorance of Dr. Reich's work (although the writer had spent the better part of two hours in an attempt to explain its principles to the responsible FBI agent) were at a loss as to which of the groups, if any, that were considered inimical to the state they should put Dr. Reich in; yet, in spite of a complete lack of any evidence against him, they were unable to take the responsibility of leaving him at liberty.¹

1 Translated from the manuscript by the Editor.

¹ The public seems to have been aware of the real state of affairs, to judge from the following story which circulated in New York: "They didn't know what to make of it, so they arrested Reich together with his laboratory mice."
Of course, Dr. Reich would have been only too glad to answer any questions that any agent of the secret police might have asked him: on the subject of the "structural anchoring of a mechanistic civilization," on the "relationship of the discovery of the orgone energy to mysticism," on "the irrational content of the Fascist theory of race" or about "work democracy." However, he himself was never questioned previously to his arrest. At the hearing before a board, at which Dr. Reich was questioned by the District Attorney, it was perfectly clear that there was nothing to incriminate him; it was equally clear that nobody took seriously the question as to whether Dr. Reich was "a paid agent of Moscow." In other words, his arrest was clearly a matter of a mistake, of an irrational whispering campaign. It was impossible to find out who the informers were, since there is no legal way of getting at such people.

On October 20, 1941, when an FBI agent came to question me about Dr. Reich, he asked me not to tell Dr. Reich about this investigation. I told him that we had nothing to hide, so why should they? I told him, further, that it was to be expected that certain people would spread rumors about Dr. Reich, as had happened in Europe, and that—for this reason—we were only too glad to give the FBI the facts. Unfortunately, I was right in these expectations, but—even more unfortunately—I was wrong in believing that to give the FBI the facts would mean anything from a rational point of view. Thus it becomes necessary to dispel the veil of the "dangerous" and the "mystical" which from many sides has been spread around Dr. Reich and his work—if for no other reason than to reduce, if possible, the danger of having incidents of this kind recur. It is mainly for this reason that Dr. Reich has agreed to let me publish the following article at this time.—T. P. W.

The following presentation of the mechanistic concept of life is based on the author's experiences in Europe, a Europe which was to undergo Fascistic degeneration. Mechanistic concepts in biology usually go hand in hand with biological mysticism. Mysticism will fill in the gaps which a mechanistic concept of life of necessity leaves open. Biological mysticism is celebrating bloody triumphs in the Fascist theory of race. Every single threat to sex-economic biology has stemmed from the Fascist camp and from the Fascist ideologies of various circles. The comprehension of life on the basis of a functional natural science would be the most dangerous enemy of the Fascist emotional plague; for it sees the function of life as the safeguarding of living functioning instead of as pathological sadistic warfare. The battle between brutal biological mysticism and biological functionalism was raging in Europe long before the Hitlerian era. Most likely, this battle will also be decided in Europe. America—except for the prevailing race prejudices—seems as yet hardly touched by this subterranean conflict concerning the comprehension and guidance of living functioning.

The investigation of biological energy encountered not only the obscurities of the life problem itself, it also ran, again and again, into the most peculiar reactions on the part of physicians, psychoanalysts, biologists, physicists and others, reactions which at first glance seemed to be nothing but an expression of the general negative attitude of the world toward new discoveries.

The archives of the Orgone Research Institute contain numerous documents concerning such reactions, the significance of which cannot be discussed in this context; they are open to examination by anyone who is interested. It will remain for future historians of science to shed light on the dangerous indecencies which I experienced. They range all the way
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from breach of faith, defamation, and deprivation of financial support to political denunciation and attempts to have me deported on the part of so-called "authorities" and "guardians of the law." In spite of all this, two decades of hard work resulted in the discovery of the biological energy and in the confirmation of my findings.

It would be so much simpler to explain away the hostility toward our work by pointing out that "it has always been that way." Was not every important discovery disavowed, disregarded or fought by its contemporaries? Was not suffering always the lot of scientific pioneers? Were they not always decried as charlatans, frauds or psychopaths? To bow to what seems an inevitable fate would seem understandable indeed.

However, such reasoning is more than dubious. Why is it, one must ask, that the sciences, instead of participating in new discoveries and instead of learning something new, continue to endanger research work in new fields and often succeed in destroying it? Up to now, it has always been left to later generations to blame "narrow-mindedness," "jealousy" or "profit interests" for such occurrences. One might think that it would be possible to gain such insights in time instead of afterward; that it would be possible to take a decent attitude toward contemporary discoveries.

There is an element of derision in the fame which is heaped on courageous pioneers at a time when their exhausting struggle is long past, when they have ceased to suffer and the fruits of their struggles have become the easily acquired property of all. This recognition, late as it always is, is motivated much more by profit interests than by the desire to do better in the next case of pioneer work, that is, to help it along in its difficult stages rather than to endanger it. There is no consolation in the sadistic commiseration which later generations bestow upon the broken pioneer. The very same characters who as contemporaries interfere with pioneer work are the ones who later—after others have won the fight—pick the easy fruits.

The malicious attitude of so-called "authorities" and "critics" during these years of hard struggle has revealed a similarity and a significance which are too important to go unmentioned.

Let us imagine that a stone, lying there on the ground, would suddenly begin to move, to expand and contract. The involuntary reaction to such a phenomenon would be horror and fright, similar to that at the unexpected sight of a poisonous snake. True, the object of any new discovery is in itself "alive," i.e., it functions; but to the eye of the average observer it is invisible, rigid, unalive. The discovery consists in the fact that one makes the invisible visible, the seemingly immobile mobile, the rigid functioning, the non-living living. Understandably enough, bion research had to experience this reaction of horror on the part of an unsuspecting world with particular force. For what it demonstrated was exactly the fact that high temperatures change inorganic material into "energy vesicles" or "bions" with a life-like motion; that, in other words, life can owe its existence to fire. That is, the actual facts are not at variance with the picture of the stone that begins to stir.

To the physician or teacher practising vegetotherapy it is a banal everyday fact that the human is the only living species who has smothered autonomic life in himself with cultural illusions and a mechanistic civilization and thus has removed it from consciousness and cut it off from natural activity. This is why the human of today, in spite of his innate longing for a knowledge of the living function, is characterized by a tremendous fear of the pulsations of life within himself. Clinical
observation shows us again and again the fear of the vegetative plasma current, in other words, the fear of the involuntary which dominates the human of today. The elimination of this fear is one of the main tasks of our medical and pedagogical work. The knowledge of this fear puts the motives which are commonly adduced for the malicious and indecent behavior toward new discoveries in a new light: they become immaterial and secondary. In reality, the irrational reactions toward a new discovery are nothing but a manifestation of the enormous fear of the motility of that which is not perceptible to the senses or which seems immobile.

The basic contradiction in the biologically rigid human—his longing for knowledge of living functioning and his simultaneous fear of it—explains the contradiction in his attitude. Humans expect the paradise for which they long to be brought about immediately and without effort. As nobody, of course, can do this for them, they react with disappointment or bitter hatred. We, the workers in sex-economy and orgone research, are met with deep anxiety and with a degree of defensiveness which gives food for thought to the psychiatrist. Our interest in the continuation and consolidation of our work demands that we try to understand these human reactions and try to find means of dealing with them. Of course, we cannot find consolation in the expectation that our work will "somehow and some day" find general recognition. Our work is neither of the other world, like that of the church, nor of some distant future, as people would like to see it; no, it has its roots in contemporary life, here, today, and in a practical way. We do not intend to wait until, fifty or a hundred years from now, the existence of the orgone may finally be conceded. It is up to us, and not to any so-called "authority," to see that the existence of the biological energy is recognized.

Our work suffers, further, from the fact that the humans who are alienated from natural sexuality believe they see in us an affirmation of their own lasciviousness and perversity. Thus, they meet us with a peculiar mixture of curiosity, bad conscience and a fear of being put beyond the pale of "good society" by contact with us. We did not, indeed, create the sexual chaos, the sexual smut and pornography; actually, we fight it vigorously; but we have to bear the consequences of the fact that the human being of today, sexually enslaved as he is, cannot distinguish genuine, natural love from secondary, perverse instinctual activity.

The fact that our biophysical research derives from the elucidation of the function of the orgasm constitutes a major difficulty. True, every single individual knows or has at least an inkling of the fact that "love" is a fundamental natural phenomenon in the realm of living functioning. But can we imagine that a member of the French Academy of Science would take an address on the disturbances of potency in man and woman as seriously as an address on electrons and protons? It is very unlikely that he who would succeed in mastering the sexual and psychic misery of the human beings of today could ever become a member of any of the existing Academies. No doubt, the electrons and protons are extremely important, but my contention is that what people expect of responsible scientific bodies is the solution of the problems of their disturbances of potency, of their marital and family difficulties, the problems of how to bring up their children, how to experience nature, etc. There is no doubt: the fear of living functioning also distorts thinking in the realm of scientific investigation. It is relevant to point out here that Freud, the founder of scientific psychology, did not receive the Nobel Prize, a distinction which is unhesitatingly bestowed upon every average discoverer in the fields of
physics or chemistry. Yet nobody will doubt for a moment that Freud’s contribution to humanity is infinitely more important and deep-reaching than the electronic theory. The conclusion is inevitable that these highly esteemed electronic theories, in addition to their rational function, have another function: to divert people from those things which are closest to their hearts and—truly—to their genitals. Physics and chemistry regard themselves as “pure” sciences, having nothing to do with such “filthy” things as sexual emotions. As a result, we see metaphysics and pornography flourish side by side.

Imagine an animal breeder who, instead of cleaning his stables every day, would busy himself with spraying perfume toward the sun. He would rightly be called crazy. But that is exactly how our society behaves. During the Rococo period, people were not in the habit of bathing. The resulting body odor was covered up with perfume which at that time was a bit of inviolable custom. Nevertheless, there were then as yet no wars on the later mass scale. The custom of the compulsive participation of whole populations in the war disputes of sovereigns is a “product of civilization” which we owe to a—quite unjustifiably—glorified corporal named Napoleon. Since then, the cultivation of human brutality has—in spite of all the cultural talk—not decreased, but considerably increased. This brutality, together with the neuroses, psychotic tendencies, cancerous putrefaction of the tissues, constipation, perversions, murderous impulses, etc., is covered up by a ritualistic make-up in dress, cosmetics and behavior. This highly cultivated make-up however, cannot cover up the stench of the psychic pestilence. It reeks through the make-up and shows in spite of it.

The behavior of our society toward its body odor is no different from that of the people of the Rococo period. It glorifies flights into the stratosphere but does not allow the Augean stable to be cleaned which poisons everyday human life. He who, instead of meditating about space and time, undertakes to clean this stable or even suggests ways of doing it, is called crazy.

It is an old story. It is older than the ancient Greeks whom we consider the bearers of a flourishing culture: Anaxagoras was accused of heresy and imprisoned, because he dared to deny that the earth enjoyed a privileged position among the planets. Socrates was condemned to death. Plato, in order to escape the same fate, spent many years in exile. Aristotle, his pupil, who was to determine thinking for two thousand years, was accused of heresy and condemned to death; he died in exile. Diagoras was condemned to death for denying the existence of the Gods. Protagoras was exiled from his country and his writings were publicly burned. Prodikos was executed for his contention that the Gods were the personification of natural forces.

It was no different two thousand years later. Giordano Bruno, who fought for scientific knowledge and against astrological superstition, was condemned to death by the Inquisition. It is the same psychic pestilence which delivered Galileo to the Inquisition, let Copernicus die in misery, made Leeuwenhoek a recluse, drove Nietzsche into insanity, Pasteur and Freud into exile. It is the indecent, vile attitude of contemporaries of all times. This has to be said clearly once and for all. One cannot give in to such manifestations of the pestilence.

But these “academic” attitudes—it would be more correct to call them panic reactions—have bitter consequences for their bearers. Since natural love and the autonomic life process are fundamentally identical, the exclusion of sexual problems from the scientific academies has completely blocked the approach to the central problems of natural science. Pathology
and medicine suffocate in mechanistic detail work on the dead organ and do not get at the living functioning of the organism—for this functioning smacks of sexuality. True, physics and mathematics have devised cosmic systems; but the orgone energy which we breathe, which flickers in the sky, which is at the basis of the sexual act, which explains the phenomena of biogenesis and which in all likelihood will dissolve many of the physicists' cosmic phantasies into nothing, this energy has been overlooked so completely that one must ask oneself how it was at all possible. Our academicians feel so loftily removed from the living function, their language has become so complicated, so much out of the world, so unrealistic, vain and basically untrue that they have completely lost all contact with the real life process. More than that, they function like a machine which has been designed for the special purpose of preventing, by all means, the investigation of the life process.

For this reason, scientific youth feels dissatisfied and insecure. Every simple, unsophisticated and decent mortal, as can easily be demonstrated, is quite well acquainted with the fact that cancer is the result of the ruinous effect of civilization on the autonomic life function. But to thousands of cancer researchers, the fact that cancer is a process of putrefaction in the blood and the tissues seems too banal, too simple to be recognized. Year in and year out, millions of dollars are spent on highly complicated experiments and theories which have no other purpose than that of keeping hidden the simple fact that the cancer cell is a protozoon which develops from biologically spastic and suffocated tissues. Today, almost at the middle of the 20th century, decades after Freud discovered unconscious psychic mechanisms, surgeons attack the brain with the knife in order to "influence psychic functions." More than forty years ago, cardiac neuroses were clearly recognized to be the result of dammed-up sexual excitation in the organism. Yet, even today, reputable physicians prohibit sexual intercourse to patients with cardiac neuroses, on the erroneous assumption—which only confirms to the patient his neurotic phobia—that sexual intercourse in the presence of hypertension is "dangerous." In brief, medicine and natural science pass by the living, the human included, and are bogged down—all high-sounding talk and all boasting notwithstanding—in the morass of mechanistic thinking of the pigeon-hole variety.

Considering the magnificent technical means at the disposal of natural science, the living functions would have been discovered long ago were it not for the embarrassing fact that they are identical with the natural sexual function, were it not for the fact that the idea of God is identical with the orgastic excitation in the autonomic life system, and the fact that the neuroses are a universal pandemic in the form of pathological character formations. Even in the latest edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica the word "orgasm" 1 is still conspicuous by its absence.

1 Translator's note: If one looks up the word in standard dictionaries, one finds, for example, the following (italics are mine): "Immoderate or extreme excitement or behavior" (Funk & Wagnall's Desk Standard Dictionary); "Eager or immoderate excitement or action; esp., the culmination of coition" (Webster's Collegiate Dictionary); "Eager or immoderate excitement or action; the state of turgescence of any organ; erethism (excessive irritability); esp., the height of venereal excitement" (Webster's New International Dictionary).

In other words, orgasm is defined as an abnormal phenomenon. This is entirely logical because the average individual in our society is orgastically impotent, and what is "average" is commonly considered "normal." The definition shows clearly that what is considered an orgasm is sexual excitation and not its release. This again is quite logical because the orgastically impotent individual knows only sexual excitation (which, in him, as a result of sexual stasis, is always "immoderate") while the orgastic release of tension is unknown to him.
though, undoubtedly, it gives rise to dirty jokes at cocktail parties or in after-dinner talk. Vacuous merchants of science and politics still dare to poke fun at Freud. Biology of the 20th century has devised highly complicated formulae which are incomprehensible to any mortal; but in no textbook on protozoa can there be found as much as a mention of vegetative movement and contraction, for they are suggestive of the orgasm reflex. The reason why so many physicists and biologists are religious in the bad sense of the word is that—in spite of all their academism—they are, deep down, not satisfied by their work. The Indians who thrust their sick people into the ground to get the effect of the life energy contained in the soil have more contact with life and its dependence on natural processes than does our whole pharmaceutical industry.

Such facts could be enumerated indefinitely. I do not mention them because I believe that I can change them in any way. I mention them for the sole reason that it is exactly these ossified, mechanistic, unalive, life-alienated academicians who assume the role of “authority,” who behave as if they were qualified to judge the validity of bion research and the sex-economic theory of autonomic functioning. After the first encounters with this science paralyzed by panic, I had to explain to my co-workers that there are no authorities in our field, that nobody can presume the right to criticize us without having first studied the material. All these things would hardly be worth mentioning were it not for the fact that neurotic representatives of this kind of science have tried to endanger and destroy our laborious work. Where objective argument fails, they resort to rumor. They are curious, but they take pains to avoid straightforward and simple contact with my laboratory and go asking questions of others instead. It is a fact that Norwegian “authorities” sent emissaries to Malinowski in London, to Bonnet in Paris and to Du Teil in Nice, in order to find out what on earth I was doing. They could have reached my laboratory in Oslo by a fifteen minutes’ journey on the streetcar. Nevertheless, there is ample interest, and it shall not be disappointed. The only way in which I can counter indecent behavior is by setting the facts into focus.

The attitude of the various organizations of scientific specialists toward our work is extremely confused. The psychiatrists seem unable to establish contact with the biological foundation of their own field of work. It seems as if psychiatry were unwilling to take the responsibility either for a comprehension of the mind-body problem or for the correction of the biological malfunctioning in the human. The psychoanalysts, on their part, praise me as a “former” good analyst. They even admit having learned a good deal from me; but they deplore my having “gone off on a tangent.” They say that they have accepted my character-analysis, with the “necessary corrections,” i.e., scrapping the orgasm theory; but, they say, what I have been doing in recent years is downright crazy, or incomprehensible at best. They did not see that what had happened was that Freud’s psychology had been put on a solid biological foundation and was no longer a mere superstructure without a basis in natural science. This achievement took place precisely in that decade during which psychoanalysis, for the very lack of such a foundation, split up into all kinds of factions.

In another group there are the biologists, physiologists, and internists. They do not know at all what to do with the psychology of the instincts; they are completely untrained in sexology and in questions of the dynamics of the instinct; thus, their reactions to bion research are in no way influenced by any insight into the problems at hand. Nevertheless, the connection is very simple. The orgasm is a central
Problem of living functioning in general and orgasm research had of necessity to strike roots in biophysics.

In still another group, there are the economists and sociologists. Sex-economy has made recognized and essential contributions to the understanding of irrationalism in politics and in society. But the economists and sociologists are bogged down in the mechanics of figures and in a rationalistic kind of thinking which belongs to the 19th century to such an extent that they are completely helpless in the face not only of any kind of psychology based on natural science, but, quite particularly, in the face of the irrational happenings of our times. All they do is to put down that what happened did happen; this, though, they do with a great show of dignity. I shall not even mention the politicos who play the role of saviors of humanity. Their knowledge is in inverse proportion to the vehemence of their savior's gestures.

Thus we find ourselves in an embarrassing, even dangerous situation. We went—at first gropingly and later systematically—to the roots of living functioning; we do not ourselves know as yet what will be the consequences of a comprehension of the dynamics of the instincts; and we find ourselves more and more isolated from the customary and recognized forms of thinking, the forms of thinking which have driven human society to the verge of ruin. We have become alien to them and they to us. In fact, it often seems to us that we cannot understand, here and there, a bit of their thinking and reacting out of their ignorance of the dynamics of living functioning. We are often disinclined to recognize the irrational in serious scientists; yet, in order to do our work and our research, we are forced to look for the irrational in ourselves every hour of the day. Thus, there seems no reason why other branches of science like physics, chemistry or sociology and their representatives should be exempt from a scrutiny of the irrational contents of their statements and their research methods. After all, the physicists, the chemists and the sociologists are no more, but also no less, affected by the neurotic pestilence than other mortals.

We, with our background of depth psychology, are always looked upon with some contempt because psychology is not considered an "exact" science by the "pure" natural sciences. However, my contention is not only that psychology has now been put on an exact, experimental foundation, but also that those are correct who again and again point out that that branch of research which will really comprehend the emotional plague at the biological core of the human organism and which will show ways and means of mastering it biologically as well as socially, will finally decide the fate of the world. Whatever the progress of the mechanistic natural sciences and of civilized technics may be, they have not brought us an iota closer to an understanding of the psychic pestilence in the human. They have demonstrated their complete incapacity to solve human, that is, social problems. All the electron research, all the atom-smashing, all the expanding of the universe notwithstanding, human misery continues unabated: every day and every hour our children are being tortured and are having their psychic backbones broken, there is cancerous putrefaction of living tissue, there is nonsensical and aimless slaughter of millions of humans, and there are pederasts and impotent neurotics who can determine whether and when millions of people will lose their homes.

It is my conviction that the discovery of the biological energy, that energy which is at the basis of our feeling for life, our vegetative sensations, actions, religious feelings and cosmic phantasies, will provide a solid scientific foundation for the cultural process. Many pillars of the mech-
anistic conception of the universe will tumble. There will be new concepts in natural philosophy, concepts which will lead to the full recognition and social effectiveness of the dynamic, living process of nature.

If we are to do our work and are not to fail, we finally have to become clear in our own minds as to our position in the world of science:

1. There is, in the fields of sex-economy and orgone biophysics, no authority save that acquired by work and achievement in these fields.

2. Sex-economy and orgone biophysics are not a branch of medicine or even psychiatry. They are a special branch of natural science which reveals new facts not only to medicine and psychiatry, but to education, physics and biology as well. Sex-economy, as a new branch of natural science, takes its own place among the natural sciences on an equal footing with the others. It is autonomous, no matter whether some physicist, biologist, psychologist or medical man concedes this autonomy or not. In order to be really autonomous, it must first realize this autonomy itself.

But to achieve this realization of our own autonomy is impossible without a clear and radical understanding of the motives which have thus far prevented the human from comprehending the living function. The orgone energy is what conveys those feelings of life (demonstrable at the oscillograph) which humanity, for millennia, has been calling "God." It is present "everywhere"; it is responsible for the existence of living matter; it is a cosmic energy and it creates many of the typical attitudes which are held in high esteem by genuine religion.

I recently had to revise some of my earlier evaluations of religion. There was a time when I believed, with the rationalist Marxists, that religion was a conscious invention of the ruling class for the purpose of dominating the ruled classes. There was a time when I believed, with the psychoanalysts, that religion was a compulsion neurosis, that there was nothing genuine in religious feelings, that, in other words, there were no "oceanic feelings," no "cosmic sensations," that, in short, religion, with everything that belongs to it, was an "illusion."

Now, it is true, without doubt, that brutal ruling forces utilize the existing religiosity of the masses the better to suppress them. But that does not mean that the ruling interests of money or political power created these religious feelings in the masses. Also, there is no doubt that most religious ideas are of an illusionary character in the sense that we recognize as unrealistic the ideas of "God," of sin, of salvation and of a return of the dead. However, all this does not alter the existence and the reality of religious and cosmic feelings and sensations, whatever their ideational expression may be. Though there is no personal God, yet there is doubtless an extremely powerful feeling which brings humans to the point of believing in the existence of a personal God. We have to make a sharp distinction between the ideational content of religion on the one hand and the religious feeling on the other hand; the former is clearly unreal, while the latter is a decisively important reality.

No doubt, humanity has always known of the existence of the biological orgone energy; only, this knowledge took the form of the religious and ecstatic experiencing of their bodies and sensations. All genuine legends of creation give us the picture of a cosmic (supernatural) power which created the world and man and governs them. Man—in capable of comprehending and mastering this power—could only feel himself as its object, its toy and its product; he could experience this power only as something to which he surrenders and which not only governs him
but by which he likes to be governed; for orgone energy functions, biologically, as pleasure energy, as biological pulsation. This explains man’s enormous readiness to give himself over to religious feelings and to be governed by them. Up to the discovery of the orgone and the vegetative currents, the world of vegetative sensations was not only being denied, but excluded from any scientific discussion. The functioning of the life energy finds its direct subjective expression in these vegetative sensations; it is at the basis of all mystical practices, such as Yoga and the fakirs’ methods of voluntarily influencing the involuntary life functions, the irrational contentions of astrology and Fascist irrationalism; but it is also at the basis of the folk dance and the folk song, of music in general, of the scientific phantasies of the great discoverers and the philosophy of great poets and sages. One may say that the discovery of the cosmic life energy which, indeed, functions before the eyes, noses and ears of the scientists, functions in their very senses and nerves, was prevented by the passive submissive attitude of the human. More than that: that which governs the world today and has power, is not only alien to the feeling of living beings, it is hostile to it; as if it were especially designed to smother it. Let us beware of this human attitude!

As long as people believed that diseases were caused by evil spirits they were not able to assume an active attitude toward disease. In order to discover the orgone energy, the fear of that which moves spontaneously, of that to which we owe our existence, had to be overcome. To master it, it was necessary first of all to achieve a scientific comprehension of the autonomic vegetative sensations, of that which Bergson so splendidly described as the sensation of time duration in the ego. We understand now the religious prohibition of “Knowing God,” the belief that He can only be experienced and felt. It is a prohibition which the human, motivated by fear, imposes on himself, a taboo against lifting the veil of secrecy from the origin of life. To this taboo, we owe the devastating psychic pestilence. Due to this taboo, any serious attempt at such discoveries seems a sacrilege. It is as if there were some temple to see the inner sanctum of which is the deepest longing of every human being; great people have sacrificed their lives in the attempt. At the same time, anyone who does dare to penetrate into the inner sanctum and tries to lift the veil, is stoned by these same human beings—because he dared to touch on that which is most sacred to them. It is the same with orgastic excitation; one wants to experience it but one does not want to hear it mentioned.

This seems to be the reason, too, why the atmospheric, cosmic orgone energy was not discovered long ago, and why mechanistic science behaves irrationally, even runs amok, as soon as it comes in contact, in whatever form, with the problems of the autonomic movement of the living, the problems of vegetative sensations and that of the autonomic, orgastic plasma contraction.

My attitude, as expressed here, will be called aggressive. What is aggressive and destructive in reality, however, are the reactions of this psychically sick world and not we, who only advocate simple and clear facts. These facts ask to be seen. They ask to be mastered. They ask not to be covered up by academism and clericism; they ask to be uncovered. Humanity, living as it does in material, intellectual and sexual misery, dreams forever of work, freedom and happiness in life. Natural science has the task of turning this dream into reality. Everything else is nothing but idle talk! A drowning man, fighting for his naked life, will not ask for learned discussions of the chemical composition of water. He has to learn to swim, if he is not to drown. Human society is drowning,
and the vegetative sensations are the water. Instead of drowning in their mystification, society must learn to understand and govern them. This fact is not going to be altered by any new campaign on the part of self-styled "authorities," or of party politicians, or of neurotic moralists, or of out-of-the-world specialists (or by senseless arrests and detentions—Ed.). The attempts at a rational mastery of human mysticism may again and again be nullified, but there will be ever new attempts—and finally the natural facts of living functioning will win out.
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)  
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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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