Greck, genuine and extraordinary work can be done only in so far as its author disregards the method, the thoughts, the opinions of his contemporaries, and quietly works on, in spite of their criticism...—ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

From Libido Theory to Orgonomy*

By OLA RAKNES, PH. D. (Oslo, Norway)

Ever since the beginning of scientific psychotherapy as a causal therapy the question of the physical basis of psychic phenomena has aroused much interest and also much debate among therapists and psychologists. I shall not here go into the different theories concerning the relations of body and mind, of soma and psyche. I just mention the debates between materialists and spiritualists and the theories of psychophysical parallelism or psychophysical identity. Most scientists, at least most medical scientists, considered psychic phenomena either as a result of processes in the organism or as the outcome of an interaction between psyche and soma. This view is also expressed in the name of one of the newest and most popular branches of official medicine, namely, psychosomatic medicine. Very popular was and is the theory that the physical changes underlying mental phenomena are of a chemical nature. This theory can point to the well-known fact that certain chemical substances, as for instance alcohol, when introduced into the organism are able to influence the course of psychic phenomena. The theory was much strengthened by the discovery of the hormones and other inner secretions and their influence on mental as well as on organic functioning.

I just mention these things because Freud, the propounder of the libido theory, to some extent shared the opinions current in contemporary medicine. His fundamental discovery was, as you all know, the sexual etiology of the neuroses. By that he meant that the neuroses were due to disturbances in the sexual functions, and such disturbances he first thought of as caused by impediments to the free circulation of what he termed Sexualstoffe, which

may be rendered by "sexual substances." He hoped that in some future period science would be able to establish the chemical composition and properties of such substances as well as their laws of action.

Freud, however, soon gave up speaking of "sexual substances" and instead developed the theory of the instinctual energies, called the libido theory.

The main tenet of the libido theory is the fundamental dualism of the instinctual energies. Man, according to this theory, is motivated by two basic instincts, those of self-preservation and of sexuality. If I have understood Freud rightly, he at first thought that the instinct of self-preservation was behind our need for food, shelter, security and perhaps power. The sexual instinct, whose claims could bear postponement, was more plastic or malleable, and perhaps in general less imperative, was behind our love, physical as well as spiritual, and our aspirations towards beauty and perfection. The motor force or active energy of the sexual instinct was what Freud termed the libido. Whatever object arouses our interest, be it object human, animal or inanimate or even an idea or a mental image, is said to have a libidinous cathexis, in so far as the interest does not derive from the instinct of self-preservation.

Freud tried to show how our interest in many objects which consciously we never associate with sexuality, is derived from sexual drives and turns to non-sexual objects. In such cases both the cathexis of the objects in question and the amount of energy, or libido, involved are said to be desexualized. This distinction between desexualized libido and non-sexual interest led to ever greater complications in the theory. I shall just give one example, a relatively simple one: A definite craving for food derives from the instinct of self-preservation in so far as it springs from hunger; but in so far as it springs from the sight or the idea of some delicacy the craving is libidinous. The libido involved will be desexualized unless the thought or the sight of the food also arouses some sexual feeling.

The complications which Freud's original libido theory engendered may have been one of the reasons that induced him in his later years to remodel his conception of the instincts, introducing a new basic instinct, the death instinct. Retaining the fundamental dualism Freud no longer opposed the instincts of self-preservation and of sexuality; he now opposed the death instinct or Thanatos to the life instinct or Eros. Freud's chief reason, however, for introducing this innovation into his theory seems to have been his inability to otherwise account for a phenomenon that had baffled his therapeutic efforts in certain cases, the phenomenon he called the negative therapeutic reaction. By this expression Freud designated the fact that some patients, whenever an analytic problem was correctly and effectively solved, reacted by getting worse instead of by getting better. Freud's explanation of this fact was that in all human beings the life instinct, Eros, has some admixture of the death instinct, which normally will make the life instinct more active, more aggressive. In patients showing the negative therapeutic reaction, the analytic work will lead to the separation of the two basic instincts, and the "liberated" death instinct will turn against the subject and destroy him.

The chief opposition to Freud's death instinct theory within the psychoanalytic movement came from Wilhelm Reich. Reich set out to prove clinically—and in my opinion successfully—that the main basis of the theory, the negative therapeutic reaction, was due to an imperfect therapeutic technique. When by the technique of consistent resistance analysis and character analysis as elaborated by Reich, the patients were brought to experience and to express their hidden aggression, there was no longer any negative therapeutic reaction.\(^1\)

The conflict with Freud about the death instinct reactivated in Reich an old interest in the biological and physical origin of psychic phenomena, especially as he met them in his clinical work. Little by little he gave up Freud's fundamental dualism of the instincts, and replaced it with the concept that all psychic phenomena are manifestations of one single instinct, the Life or Love Instinct, identical with the sexual instinct. Otherwise expressed, Reich found no reason for postulating a separate sexual instinct, sexuality being nothing but a function of the life energy itself. Reich's therapy from now on became ever more a biotherapy and not only a psychotherapy, its object being to free the life energy of the organism so as to enable it to regulate itself in a harmonious way, leaving no internal necessity for either stases or explosions. This view Reich also expressed in the name he gave to his theory, sex-economy. Here, however, I shall not go into this theory, nor into the therapeutic techniques elaborated in conjunction with

---

\(^1\) Editorial note: It is much more correct to say from the present-day point of view of orgonomy: The contracted bio-energetic structure of the mentally ill does not permit of sudden or strong expansion ("pre-orgastic anxiety"). The energy level is kept low. The structure is incapable of experiencing great happiness and contracts against it, if energy is freed from either psychological repression or from deeper bio-energetic blocking. The establishment of orgastic potency removes this obstacle.
and further that the stronger ones by their presence would reduce or even

several kinds of them—Reich found that they differed in strength or vitality,

repeated the experiments without becoming convinced of the reality of this

assure you that since 1936, when I first became acquainted with these experi-

ments, I have neither met nor read nor heard of a single person who has

vesicles that under favorable conditions can organize into living cells or

bacteria and cocci. This put Reich upon the idea that bions might prove useful in combating cancerous growths in living tissues. He set about

studying the developments of such growths and found that cancer cells

organize and develop much the same way as some of the protozoa he had seen organizing out of bions. The material from which the cancer

cells organize is the result of the disorganization of normal cells cut off

from the normal renewal of vital energy. Here again Reich was confronted

with the problem of this energy.

During the winter of 1938 to 1939 Reich was working intensely in his laboratory in Oslo with his bion experiments. Several happenings in the

course of the experiments seemed to indicate that some of the bions emitted a certain kind of radiation which did not conform to the laws of any known

form of energy. Different series of new experiments convinced him that he had discovered a new kind of energy, which he called orgone, from “organic”

and “orgasm,” because it was specific for organisms and had been discovered

as a consequence of the study of the orgasm. Later he found that every

living organism is surrounded by an orgone energy field, and he invented an “orgone energy field meter” capable of measuring the strength and the

extension of individual orgone fields.

In 1941, a couple of years after he had settled in the United States, Reich
discovered that the activity of the orgone energy was not limited to living

organisms, but was to be found also in the atmosphere, where it may be

observed by several means which I cannot go into here. Still later Reich

found orgone energy to be omnipresent and from then on often spoke of it

as “cosmic orgone energy.” The question now naturally arose whether the

orgone was identical with the cosmic radiation discovered by the physicists.

I do not know if that question has been fully decided as yet, but I know

from having seen and heard it that a Geiger-Müller counter tube, the well-

known device for detecting and measuring cosmic radiation, will, after

having been kept for some length of time in an orgone energy accumulator,

show an impulse frequency hundreds of times greater than before.

After the discovery of the cosmic orgone energy, Reich devoted a major

part of his time and energy, in the last years almost all of it, to the study of

the new science of orgonomy, dealing with the properties of the cosmic

orgone energies, with its laws and with its applications in the various fields,
from biology to medicine, pedagogics and sociology, from physics to meteorology and astronomy.

The number of his followers and collaborators has been steadily though slowly increasing. Most of them are physicians using his discoveries in their medical practice, but there are also a few psychologists, educationists, social workers, biologists and physicists, all gathered—rather loosely—around the Wilhelm Reich Foundation in the state of Maine, though most of them have their professional work elsewhere, the majority in or around New York.

But, you may ask, what has this development into the study of cosmic energy to do with psychology? Very much, I should say. I even think that the knowledge of the energy that conditions our actions and our experiences and the gradual understanding of the properties and laws of this energy will revolutionize many sections of the science of psychology. The object of psychology as I see it is to help man understand his own sensations, emotions, thoughts and actions so that he can be able to harmonize his life with the law governing all life and thus attain the highest amount of what I shall call creative happiness. I think that the study of ergonomy will contribute and already is contributing considerable means for the realization of such a purpose.

---

*Energy is the only life and is from the Body; and Reason is the bound or outward Circumference of Energy.*—William Blake
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.

Sobre o Instituto Wilhelm Reich e Bibliografia
About the Wilhelm Reich Institute and Bibliography

----------------------
International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research
----------------------
The Orgone Institute
----------------------

01 Wilhelm Reich About the History and the Activities of our Institute 1942
International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 1 Number 1 1942
Interval 6-15 Pag. 1-10

02 Outline of Present Activities of the Orgone Institute 1945
International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 4 Number 1 1945
Interval 98-101 Pag. 96-99

03 The Annals of The Orgone institute 1947
04 Walter Hoppe. Sex-economy and Orgone Research in Palestine 1947
McF 207 Annals of the Orgone Institute, Number 1. 1947
Interval 40-44 Pag. 73-81

--------------------------------
Orgone Energy Bulletin
--------------------------------

01 Myron Scharaf. The First Orgonomic Conference at Orgonon 1948
Interval 15-18 Pag. 23-29

02 Orgonomic Movement 1949
Interval 17-19 Pag. 77-81

03 A. E. Hamilton. Reaction to the First Orgonomic Conference 1948
Interval 14-17 Pag. 117-123

04 Notes Editorial. A Letter to the American Medical Association 1949
Interval 25-25 Pag. 186-187

05 Notes Editorial. A correspondence 1949
Interval 25-26 Pag. 44-46

06- Our Biosocial Base of Operation 1950
Interval 3-4 Pag. 97-98

Interval 27-35 Pag. 143-151

08 Orgonomie Literature Ordered from Russia 1950
Interval 36-40 Pag. 152-160

09 Wilhelm Reich. The Orgone Energy Observatory (1948)
Interval 33-34 Pag. 217-219

10 Elsworth F. Baker. The Orgone Institute Diagnostic Clinic. 1951
11 Ola Raknes. Orgonomic Work in Sacandinavia 1951
Interval 22-23 Pag. 39-41

12 Ilse Ollendorff. Orgone Energy Accumulators in U.S.A. 1951
Interval 24-29 Pag. 53-58

13 The Wilhelm Reich Foundation 1951
Interval 29-32 Pag. 59-60

14 An Experiment in Social Administration 1952
Interval 3-5 Pag. 128-129

15 From The Charter of the Wilhelm Reich Foundation 1952
Interval 5-6 Pag. 135-136

16 The Wilhelm Reich Foundation By-Laws 1952
Interval 6-10 Pag. 137-145

17 Financial Report of the WRF 1952
Interval 11-14 Pag. 146-153

---------------------------
Bibliography on orgonomy
---------------------------

01 Glossary 1949
Interval 25-27 Pag. 93-96

02 Orgonomie Lectures January 1948 to Date Jul 1949
Interval 20-20 Pag. 128-129

03 Bibliography of works on Orgone Energy 1951
Interval 83-84 Pag. 342-344

04 Ola Raknes. From Libido Teoria to Orgonomy 1952
Interval 8-11 Pag. 13-18

05 Bibliography (1950-1951) 1952
Interval 15-18 Pag. 154-161
06 History of Orgonomy (1897-1952) 1953
Interval 47-49 Pag. 90-94

7 Literature on Orgone Energy 1948-1951
McF 517 Oranur Project. Orgone Energy Emergency Bulletin No. 1 1950
Interval 6-7 Pag. 10-12

08 Wilhelm Reich Biography Material 1953
Interval 2-3 Pag. I-II

09 Prefatory Note 1953
Interval 6-8 Pag. 1-4

10 Background and Scientific Development of Wilhelm Reich 1953
Interval 8-10 Pag. 5-9

11 Glossary and Abbreviations 1953
Interval 11-13 Pag. 10-14

12 Books, Articles and Seminars by Wilhelm Reich 1953
Interval 13-25 Pag. 15-36

13 Articles on Orgonomy by Coworkers 1953
Interval 25-33 Pag. 37-53

14 Books and Articles about Orgonomy 1953
Interval 34-37 Pag. 54-61

15 Books, Articles and Reviews with References to Orgonomy 1953
Interval 38-59 Pag. 62-105

16 Listings and Campaign by Wilhelm Reich (1949) 1953
Interval 60-66 Pag. 106-119

17 Index by authors 1953
Interval 67-76 Pag. 120-137

---------
CORE.
---------
01 Wilhelm Reich - Response to Ignorance 1955
McF 512 Wilhelm Reich Biographical Material, History of the Discovery of the Life Energy.1955

02 Grossroads Ahed - Wilhelm Reich at the Supreme Court (E.U.A.) in 1956
McF 504 A Court Case VII 1954-1957
Interval 4-29 Pag. 1-51

03 Appendix - Orgonomic State of Maine (1948-1952) 1956
McF 504 A Court Case VII 1954-1957
Interval 38-46 Pag. 17r-33r

04 Bibliography of Works on Orgone Energy (1937-1951) 1952
McF 504 A Court Case VII 1954-1957
Interval 49-51 Pag. 39r-43r

05 Texts of the orgonomy indicated at the Court Case in 1956
McF 509 A Court Case XII 1954-1957
Interval 4-4 Pag. IV-V

06 Backgroud and Scientific Devolopmente of Wilhelm Reich 1956
McF 509 A Court Case XII 1954-1957
Interval 43-45 Pag. 11a-15a

07 Glossary 1956
McF 509 A Court Case XII 1954-1957
Interval 45-48 Pag. 15a20a