THE "LIVING PRODUCTIVE POWER, WORKING POWER" OF KARL MARX*

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INTRODUCTION.

This article was written in 1936, at a time when the sociological illusions in the Soviet Union were put into the form of a constitution ("Introduction of Soviet Democracy"). At that time, it was not published. If it is published now, 8 years later, it is mainly for two reasons:

1. Humanity is more in need of scientific, that is, truthful thinking than ever before. Armed disputes will not change its misery an iota. Even after the military victory over German fascism, the fascist human structure will continue to exist in Germany, Russia, America and everywhere else. It will continue to grow subterraneously, will seek new forms of political organization and will inevitably lead to a new catastrophe, unless the responsible people all over the world will rally to protect and utter truth as today only the political lie is protected and uttered. This can be predicted with absolute certainty.

Karl Marx discovered vital facts with far-reaching social consequences, but the realization of these consequences is not possible because knowledge and technique are not sufficiently developed to bring about a correspondingly rapid change in human emotional structure. One may welcome or condemn Marx; that is a matter of taste. What one cannot do, however, if one lays any claim to decency, is to refer to Marx and at the same time to distort his scientific facts in the interest of political manoeuvres. One cannot distort scientific truths without becoming sooner or later an accomplice of fascism, the master of distortion and lying. Even though the alteration of human conditions according to scientific findings is not possible, the misery of daily living should not lead one to smash the only hope of humanity, which lies in rational truth.

Ten years ago or so one was severely brought to task if one did not adhere to the letter of Marx's writings; one was condemned for the scientific statement that Marxist economy was in urgent need of being complemented by a scientific mass psychology. Yet recently, Marxism was "revised" in Soviet Russia. Official government economists "discovered" that Marx was wrong in contending that in socialism there would be no production and accumulation of surplus value, that, in other words, the production of surplus value was a specific characteristic of capitalism.

The distortion of the facts is the following: Nowhere in Marx's economic theory is to be found the contention that in socialism the production of surplus value would cease to exist. To "revise" a contention which was never made is nonsense.

The fundamental problem of Marx was not whether or not surplus value is produced in socialism; the problem was the nature of the surplus value, the question where it comes from and who disposes of it. Surplus value is produced on the basis of the specific character of living working power. The core of Marx's economics is the fundamental difference between living and dead productive power.

From the finding of the nature of living working power, and with that of the origin of surplus value, follows the further question who appropriates the surplus value. It is always appropriated by the

* Translated by the Editor.
owners of the social means of production: in private capitalism by the individual capitalists, in state capitalism by the state, and in a free work democracy by the society of the working individuals, as historically in primitive societies and as foreseen in a future truly democratic society.

One may welcome these findings or one may hate them, but it is not admissible to distort them. To shift the problem of the production of surplus value from the questions of its nature, origin and appropriation to the question of its existence is an inadmissible distortion of a scientific finding. The exposition which follows has nothing to do with any kind of political ideology but only and alone with the vital interest in the protection of scientific integrity. In these times, it is not superfluous to point out that such scientific problems cannot be solved by firing squads, these most modern means of settling differences.

2. The second reason for the publication of this article at this time is the connection between Marx's analysis of living working power in the production of surplus value and the orgone-physical study of human biological activity. Since about 1928, sex-economy has been aware of the fact that what Marx calls living working power is identical with what orgone biophysics calls work function of the biological energy. Particularly at this time, it is a matter of profound human and scientific gratification that a thinker and searcher of the stature of Marx made a specific life function the core of his "dry" economic theory. He was the first to do so, for which working humanity owes him gratitude. That humanity almost let him starve; that it continues to smear him; that it begins to impute things to him which he never said; that it appropriates his practical scientific discoveries without giving him credit; all this adds another heavy debt to an already gigantic debt account of this humanity. It is not the fault of Marx. I felt it my scientific duty to set straight what an almost incomprehensible social mentality tries to distort and obliterate.

Orgonon, July, 1944.

Karl Marx was for the science of economics what Freud was for psychiatry. His basic concept was simple and at variance with all traditional views. Pre-Marxian and non-Marxian economics tried to explain profit from the "natural value" of dead material, from the existing and invested capital, etc. The economists before Marx had contended that the value of commodities was determined by the law of supply and demand. Marx showed that this produces no more than slight price fluctuations, and that the value of a commodity is basically determined by the human working power invested in it. A tree, e.g., has no "value" in itself, i.e., not until human work is "added to it." Not until the tree is felled and sawed into boards or made into masts does it assume "value" for man. This applies to everything which has "value." The air has no "value"; it is obtained gratis, because it can be consumed without the addition of human working power. The hide of an ox has no value until human hands fashion it into shoes.

Marx distinguishes the constant from the variable capital. The constant capital consists of non-living raw materials and non-living machines. These, in themselves, give no profit; not until human work, the variable capital, changes them into commodities, into use values. Since money can be lent for interest, the value of the capital seemed to be determined by the fact that it brought in more money, be it through investment in industry (industrial capital) or through lending (bank capital). According to Marx, money is no more than a paper issued on the basis of a social agreement, for the facilitation of
trade. In itself, it has no more value than the working power which was expended in its manufacture. Its actual value it derives only from what it represents, from what it can be exchanged for, as, e.g., a commodity. However, one buys not only dead commodities, but also living commodities. The entrepreneur pays the worker for the use of the "commodity, working power." This working power can be sold and bought like any other commodity. When a shoemaker makes a pair of shoes and sells them, they no longer belong to him. Neither does the working power which, say, a lathe worker sells to the capital owner. Just as the buyer of the shoes can do with the use value of the shoes what he pleases, so can the entrepreneur do what he pleases with the commodity, working power which he has bought; he can exploit it as he pleases. In doing so, he is not "bad"; he acts, according to the laws of market economy, altogether legally.

The effect of the emotional plague on Marx's scientific theory of value expresses itself in the following manner: In their attempt to arouse the emotions of the masses and to win them over, the party politicians forgot about the unemotional explanation of the value of working power. They attached to the factual concept of "surplus value" an emotion composed of resentment, hatred, envy and the urge to pocket surplus value oneself. Thus the fruitful and promising objective findings of Marx got lost in a heap of irrational emotions which not only led to no practical result but brought ruin to the whole workers' movement. True, the emotional plague can shoot to pieces, burn or otherwise destroy millions of trees. But one cannot prescribe to a tree how fast and how much it should grow. On the other hand, scientific research into the laws of tree-growth can provide the means of preventing damage to trees, of improving the conditions under which trees grow faster and better.

This example shows clearly the biological function of natural science as contrasted with the destructive function of every kind of emotional plague: What political groups, in Europe and America, fight as "Marxism" has nothing to do with Marx's economic teachings. Similarly, the various "Marxist" parties of today have nothing in common with Marx's science. Marx defined the concept of capitalist scientifically. A capitalist is not, as commonly assumed, a man who has a great deal of money, but a man who, based on the laws of market economy, can use his money to buy and utilize the working power of others. If I am a well-trained physician, if I develop a successful therapeutic method and have good therapeutic results, I will have many patients. They pay me for my time, i.e., for the value of my working power. In order to do my work, I must continue to re-create my working power, that is, I must have food, clothes, a house, etc. This represents a part of my working power. But this alone would not be sufficient to do my special work. It takes, in addition, a specific training which costs work and money. In addition, continuous work is needed for further training, etc. This takes instruments, etc., in which other workers, in turn, have expended their working power. The patient, then, pays for all the working power, not only my own, which is expended in my work with him; he pays with a conventional value-substitute, with "money," which enables me in turn to buy the results of the working power of
others, such as food, clothing, instruments, etc., that is, use values. As long as I work myself I am not a capitalist, no matter how much money I may earn. If, however, I were to employ, say, four physicians at a monthly salary of two hundred dollars and would let them treat patients for me, thus exploiting their working power for 8 hours a day, then I would be a capitalist. In that case, I would “exploit” the working power of others, that is, I would appropriate it in the form of money. By myself I could treat 8 patients a day and thus earn, say, 800 dollars in 25 working days. Four physicians, however, could earn four times as much; that is, 3200 dollars. I would have to pay the four physicians a total monthly salary of 800 dollars, but I would pocket the 3200 dollars for which they worked. Thus I would have made 2400 dollars without having worked myself, by the exploitation of others’ working power. According to the laws of market economy, I would not be a swindler, but would act entirely within the law. Nobody could sue or reproach me.

It is Marx’s great merit to have disclosed the secret of the living commodity, working power, its dual character, and the difference between the exchange value and the use value of the commodity, working power. A pair of shoes are not a use object for the one who produces them, but only an exchange object. If he does not want to use them himself, he may exchange them for meat, cloth or money. He will receive the approximate equivalent of the value of the working power expended in their manufacture. Working power is measured in average working time. The buyer, however, does not buy the shoes as exchange value, but as use value. He needs them for the satisfaction of a need, in this case, for the protection of his feet. He is entitled to receive, in the form of the use of the shoes, the total exchange value of the shoes, as paid by him in meat, cloth or money. In dead commodities, the exchange value and the use value are identical. In them, human working power is represented. It is different, however, with the only living commodity, the commodity, working power, for the very reason that it is a living power. Here, exchange value and use value are not identical. Here, the use value is much higher than the exchange value.

Every kind of worker, that is, one who creates use values, sells his commodity, working power, to the entrepreneur, according to the same laws of market economy as the shoemaker sells a pair of shoes. The working individual must “re-create” his working power, by eating, keeping himself dressed and housed. In order to do so he must work, say, three hours a day, if we measure the value of food, clothing and housing in terms of the average work which is necessary for the reproduction of the working power. According to the laws of market economy, these three hours represent the exchange value of his working power. The capitalist, then, does not cheat the worker when he pays him the exchange value of his commodity, working power, the value of three hours’ daily work. For according to the laws of market economy, human working power is a saleable commodity like any other. But the buyer of the commodity, working power, say, a manufacturer, uses the working power of the worker not three hours a day—that is, in the value of the hours of work necessary to reproduce the working power—but 8 or 10 hours. That means, the worker spends the use value of his working power, which is far higher (8 hours of work) than the exchange value paid to him (3 hours). The difference between the low exchange value (3 hours’ working time) and the far higher use value (8 hours’ working time) of the commodity, working power, represents the profit in market economy. If a wealthy buyer of
working power buys the working power of thousands or tens of thousands of workers, he utilizes its use value that many times over its exchange value. For now a thousand or ten thousand workers, by adding their working power a thousand or ten thousand times, change dead material, dead capital, into commodities. Their work is collective, but the appropriation of the commodities is individual ("capitalist"). If a shoemaker, in his own shop, produces two pairs of shoes a day he receives the exchange value of two pairs of shoes. If, by using machines, he produces ten pairs a day, he can get the exchange value of ten pairs of shoes. If, however, he works in a shoe factory, which continues to improve its machinery, he receives, in spite of increased production of use values, a wage which does not exceed the exchange value of his working power. For this is still three hours of working time. The utilization of his working power by the entrepreneur has remained about the same, but the "exploitation" has increased, for now the exchange values (use values) of the commodity which he produces has increased considerably.

The working individual does not dispose of the product of his work. He continues to sell his commodity, working power, at the market price (3 hours' working time). Every one who lives by selling his working power is a worker. Every one who buys the exchange value of the commodity, working power, and exploits its use value, on the virtue of the differential between the exchange value and the use value of the living working power, is a capitalist in Marx's sense. On the basis of Marxist principles it would be wrong to make the capitalist responsible for the exploitation of the people who create values. It is not the individual capitalist or the class of capitalists who are to be "blamed," as the narrow-minded socialist believes. The essence of the exploitation lies in the essence of a society which is based on market economy and which is split into economic classes. It is this society which enables individuals to acquire—in one way or another—sufficient capital to buy the working power of others and thus pocket the difference between the exchange value and the use value of working power. The economic defraudation of the working individuals lies in the capitalistic conditions of production, and not in human intentions.

In order to understand natural work democracy, it is indispensable to understand the following contradiction in the thinking and in the propaganda of the Marxist parties: On the one hand, they had a purely economistic orientation; they completely excluded from consideration the character structure of people as they are. More than that, they fought violently against the inclusion of character structure in the fight for genuine democracy. On the other hand, however, Marxist propaganda operated not with the "material" facts of biological and social existence, but essentially with secondary, neurotic drives such as hatred, envy, lust for power, etc. This statement will undoubtedly offend many Marxist party followers. It is not my intention to offend anybody, but only to point out facts which helped to bring about the catastrophe.

I would like to illustrate the difference between the attitude of Marxist party politicians on the one hand and work-democratic endeavor on the other by a simple example from medical practice. If I am presented with a neurotic child suffering from insomnia and learning difficulties, it will soon be obvious that the neurosis was produced by a wrong kind of education on the part of the neurotic mother. Now, it would be completely useless to condemn the neurotic mother moralistiically or to provoke the child's hatred against the mother. My finding that the neurosis is due to the harmful
educational influence of the mother has only one function, that of eliminating the child's neurosis. This finding enables me to help. Without this knowledge, or by arousing the child's hatred, or by showing revolutionary moral indignation, I would not be able to help either the child or the mother. The neurotic mother who made her child neurotic in turn is not "bad," not a "suppressor" or an "exploiter" of infantile helplessness. She is the victim of an unfortunate sex-sociological situation in society.

The same thing applies to the "exploiting capitalist" and the "exploited wage worker." To arouse the hatred of the worker against the capitalist, to kindle envy, to incite to murder, to inveigh against the capitalists, etc., will not in the least change the law of the market economy of private capitalism or state capitalism. This law states: "I, the capital owner (be it state or individual) pay you, the worker, peasant, technician, scientist, etc., 30 or 50 dollars a week, in order to enable you to take care of the food, clothing and housing needs of yourself and your family, in other words, to enable you to reproduce your commodity, working power. You, in turn, sell to me your commodity, working power, for 8 hours a day, regardless of the exchange value (use value) of the commodities produced by you in these 8 hours, regardless of the fact that this exchange value may be three or five times that of what you must produce in one day to support yourself and your family." The capital owner as well as the wage earner enter their mutual relationship not of their own free will and cannot change it at their will. They are both the objects of a certain social condition which functions independently of their wills and based on a historical development and which governs them both.

Whether or not the reader will understand the development of sex-economic sociology and mass psychology depends on whether he will be able to approach Marx's analysis of the laws of market economy not ethically or morallyistically, not emotionally, but factually and scientifically. It is a matter of facts and laws of functioning, not of ideals and postulates. Actual endeavors can only stem from the finding of actual facts.

One of the main reasons for the chaotic misery in which humanity finds itself again and again is that the politicians build their ideals and goals not on facts, but on mostly irrational emotional valuations. Everybody who knows my writings knows that I have always been on the side of the emotions, but only of emotions and goals based on actual facts; I have always fought against illusionary and irrational goals and ideals.

The finding of the law of market economy and of the peculiar contradiction inherent in the living commodity, working power (exchange value is less than use value, in contradistinction to the dead commodity where exchange value equals use value), is a scientific finding; it is neither good nor bad, it is merely true. It has nothing to do with ethics or morals. The capitalist who pays for the exchange value of the working power and utilizes its far higher use value does not act out of malicious intent. Personally, he may be a scoundrel or a kindly man. Usually, he does not even know the mechanism to which he owes his wealth. He is himself enmeshed in the process, he is himself subject to all the consequences of the law of market economy, such as the competition with other concerns, the course of economic crises, etc.

I am neither fighting nor defending the capitalist. I am ready to admit that, personally, I do not like the character of the typical capitalist whose whole thinking, feeling and action is concentrated on making money, in whom financial power replaces natural love, who is an artist when
it comes to taking and a nitwit when it comes to giving, who is incapable of comprehending the joy in giving. But such a personal dislike should not keep one from distinguishing the human characteristics of an individual capitalist from the laws of market economy the functionality of which he has become by heritage or his own efforts.

I may say that I consider the discovery of this law of economics one of the greatest achievements of human thinking. True, the law of market economy was discovered and exemplified by Marx in terms of the last 300 years of capitalistic machine civilization. But it reaches much farther back, to the early history when society increasingly ceased to produce use values and proceeded to produce exchange values, that is, "commodities." With that, natural economy based on the exchange of goods developed into "money economy." At the same time, sex-affirmation, which guaranteed a natural regulation of the sexual energies, turned into sex-negation and the emotional plague. The discovery of Marx has changed the face of society as a whole. It has made thousands of economists and sociologists conscious of what has become modern socio-economics. There are innumerable economists and sociologists who never read Marx or even refute him but who, nevertheless, wherever they work factually, are deeply influenced by Marx's economics and sociology. It was not Ricardo or Smith but Marx who brought the laws of modern technical development into general consciousness. The many liberal and socialist organizations would never have been able to keep in step with this development had they not been — consciously or unconsciously — under the influence of Marx's sociology. I know from experience that there are many responsible capitalists who hold Marxian economics in high esteem and understand them better than ever so many socialist party politicians.

Understandably enough, Marx left serious gaps in his sociology. First of all, he lacked the knowledge of man's biological anchoring, of his being determined by his instincts. In the place of this knowledge, the party politicians put unscientific ethical concepts, freedom slogans and formal, bureaucratic "freedom organizations." I do not know how many economists in the Soviet Union are aware of the fact that, according to the strict definitions of Marx's theory of value, Russian economy is still governed by market economy, with its conflict between exchange value and use value of working power, with its inevitable exploitation of human working power. It makes no difference whether it is the "state" or the "capitalist" who does the exploiting. What matters is whether he determines society who creates the surplus value which results from the differential between exchange value and use value of working power, or he who merely makes use of it, be it "state" or "capitalist."

"State" and "society" mean two basically different social facts. There is a state which is above or against society, as best exemplified in the fascist totalitarian state. There is a society without a state, as in the primitive democratic societies. There are state organizations which work essentially in the direction of social interests, and there are others which do not. What has to be remembered is that "state" does not mean "society." In the course of 20 years, I have not heard one Soviet economist mention this fact. According to Marxian principles, there is, in the Soviet Union, no socialism, that is, no abolition of market economy; there is state capitalism, that is, capitalism without individual capitalists. One cannot, without losing all sound orientation, replace scientific insights by slogans, ideologies, illusions and theses.
It is not the individual capitalist or the state which is responsible but the function of market economy. Only when one fully and clearly recognizes this, can one judge the social effects of market economy on human life; can one ask oneself whether it might be possible to abolish this market economy of thousands of years' standing and to replace it by an economy of utility. A planned economy into which economy, everywhere, increasingly develops, automatically furthers the change from market economy to an economy of utility. One produces goods which one needs and not goods which one can sell for profit. To the extent to which Soviet economy was planned economy it developed an economy of utility. These facts are neither good nor bad, but actual processes. It was not party-political but scientific sociological work which led in directions which put sociology and economics on their feet.

I wish to emphasize the fact that the basic elements of Marx's discovery of the theory of value and, with that, of human work in general, are of a biological and biosocial nature. This basic fact escaped the attention of the party politicians. It is only the living working power (the "variable capital") which creates values, and not the dead capital.

One might ask why I am such a strict advocate of Marx's theory of value. It certainly is not because of any political orientation, nor because of poor economic conditions, but for the sole reason that there is no other sociology besides that of Marx which would be in better harmony with my own discovery of the biological energy. The natural organization of work as a biological fact (that is, not as a moral or political demand) as well as the findings of orgone biophysics demand the recognition of the fact of the "living commodity, working power" and its characteristics. Such facts become of tremendous weight and decisive influence when they are supported from two sides, independently of each other.

Marx's economic theory meant the same for economics as Freud's theory of unconscious psychic life meant for psychology. Both presuppose a certain conception, based on facts, of the laws which govern human life of today.

The production of goods in society is collective, their appropriation individual. The working individual does not dispose of the product of his work, neither in private nor in state capitalism. He is a wage worker, that is, he is paid for the exchange value of his commodity, working power. Socially, we have on one side the capital as social power, represented in the private or state ownership of the means of production, of the soil and of houses, and on the other side we have wage work. To this correspond the two economic classes: capital owners (private or state) and wage workers. Their interests are antithetical. It is inherent in capital that "it should pay." That, however, it does only if it bears interest. And this it can do only if the capital owner gains the "surplus value," the differential between the exchange value and the use value of working power. The worker, naturally, desires to see his wages increased. The capitalist, be it individual or state, has the equally natural desire to keep wages down or to lower them. Two classes oppose each other in a hostile manner. What causes this condition and perpetuates it by means of special institutions are the socio-economic laws of market economy.

Marx's teachings, like all great human thoughts, showed all the signs of immodest boundlessness. That this boundlessness was replaced by party-political narrow-mindedness when Marx's burning intelligence was no longer present is itself one of the problems of Marxian sociology. Marx himself early drew the line between
himself and his followers when he said, "I am not a Marxist."

I am not a Marxist either, but I seriously believe to have understood Marx, in his important greatness and his unimportant weaknesses. Let us return to his great discoveries and attitudes. He was very consistent; for this he had to pay with expatriation, abject poverty and persecution. Before Marx, the belief was prevalent that "man makes history," the leader, the genius. Marx did away thoroughly with this illusion. True enough, man makes history, who else could? Certainly not the machines. But he can make his history only under certain conditions which govern him. The will of people and the degree to which they attain their goals are always dependent on the development of the technical mastery of nature and society at any given time. Daedalus and Icarus had the will to fly. But they could not succeed. The knowledge and the technique were lacking to produce gasoline and to construct motors which could lift a burden into the air. True, human phantasy and activity are the source of all social endeavors. But they are themselves determined and limited by the times. Copernicus and Galileo could not take away from people the feeling of the uniqueness of the role of their earth. They were severely punished because their times were as yet unable to make anything of their discovery in a practical way. There were no astronomers and no stratosphere aviators to whom the knowledge of the earth's rotation around the sun would have been indispensable. If one values one's life it is better not to be all too far ahead of one's times. Only Marx can make comprehensible to us the fact that he was not recognized during his lifetime and why his movement, 50 years after his death, suffered a deadly defeat at the hands of idiocy. Without Marx, we cannot understand Marx, or Marxism, or extreme metaphysics, fascism.

Every working individual is interested in the improvement of life. If, as the metaphysicists contend, man made his history by his "free will," we would have had paradise on earth long since. The fact that we do not have it, that, on the contrary, human society is threatened with destruction, shows the correctness of scientific sociology: People have, without being aware of it, created conditions and relationships which now govern them. They built machines in order to produce more efficiently. The machines kill them and make them starve. They discovered the movies. Innumerable actors became destitute. The more wheat and coffee is harvested the more of it is burned up or dumped into the sea, the less do the millions have to eat. This is an idiocy which certainly deserves intensive scientific scrutiny. Capitalist economy is a profit economy. It does not produce goods for use but for sale. The economic system does not serve the gratification of needs; rather, the needs are created, suppressed or displaced according to the laws of profit economy. World economy does not ask how many Chinese or Negroes go barefoot. But it holds annual conventions to determine this or that small change in ladies' and gentlemen's shoes in order to propagate a new "shoe fashion" as a vital necessity. The movie industry does not ask what human, pedagogical, medical or technical problems could be treated in the films. Instead, it provokes perverse and sadistic feelings in the people, in the interest of the box office. There are hardly any films at all which really solve any human problem. Most of them do not even present vital problems, and the majority provoke pathological longings. The film does not serve the people but the profit interests.

Profit economy lives by eliminating the competitor. Competition, called free enterprise, destroys small enterprises and gathers the large ones into ever more powerful concerns and trusts. "Capital becomes con-
centrated in a few hands." Pauperization keeps growing. The shoe manufacturing concerns ruin the shoemaker, the agricultural machines the farmer. The big capitalist ruins the small one, after he in turn has ruined the craftsman. The free craftsmen of yore changed into an army of employed technical specialists or largely unskilled laborers.

The rationalization of economy, instead of reducing working time, created unemployment. If business was good, if the demand was high, one kept producing more and more. The capitalists the world over do the same thing, in order to make more money, in order not to be left behind. Then the demand decreases. The capitalists have huge stocks of which they cannot dispose. The economic crisis begins, and with it a dreadful vicious circle. The entrepreneurs dismiss workers. This decreases the purchasing power of the population. Banks fail because of failing trade. This ruins the small fortunes which again reduces purchasing power. The reduced purchasing power of the population increases the stagnation of distribution. This leads to new dismissals of workers, and so on. Wages are lowered. Working time, if possible, is increased without increase in wages, or decreased with decrease in wages. Neither the entrepreneur nor the worker really comprehends what is going on. This was the effect of objective conditions of production around 1930.

Society is not simply a sum of individuals who live and work side by side. Social life is determined by the over-all effect of all forces in and between people. The determining factors are the mutual "social" interdependencies. Sociology is the teaching of these interpersonal relationships. The "well-ordered legal state" is an illusion, not a reality. It is an illusion just like the "harmony of the perfect personality" in the old ethical psychology. Since people know only the smallest fraction of their interrelations, they also are unable to govern or alter them. For this reason, the interpersonal relationships take on the character of an inexorable fate. The average individual considers his social position such a fate. Those who see through the maze of the social dependencies and the mechanism of exploitation become "class-conscious," the capital owner as well as the owner of working power, the wage worker. Then, the former can exploit all the better, the latter can fight more successfully against exploitation. This was the theory of the Marxist parties.

This conflict remains unsolvable within the capitalist order. Either the working producers possess the means of production, or the capital owners do. That both should do so at the same time is inconceivable. The will to exploit others' working power cannot be united with the will not to let oneself be exploited. Any such union would take place at the expense of the consciousness of the process of exploitation. Capital and labor can get along "peacefully" with each other only if the exploitation is kept from the consciousness of the exploited. He who fights against this is a "Communist agitator." Marx was the greatest "Communist agitator" for nobody else has more clearly demonstrated the nature of the creation of values out of the "commodity, working power."

The practical consequence of Marx's theory of value is the appropriation of the use values by all working individuals, that is, the social appropriation of the products. I repeat: the social appropriation, not appropriation by the "state" or private monopolies. The socialist politicians confused social appropriation and appropriation by the state, greatly to the detriment of the clarification of socio-economic questions. While social development as a whole, as a result of the war, is more and more in the direction against private monopoly as well as state monopoly, the socialist parties still wish to replace private monopoly by state monopoly. This follows logically
from their equating state and society. Genuine democratic endeavor, however, is in the direction of eliminating private as well as state monopoly. The “labor management committees” in the U.S.A. represent a beginning of a work-democratic form of social appropriation; here, part of the social responsibility is shifted to work itself. What is meant here is the participation of the industrial workers in the management of production and distribution, in contrast to a representation of their interests by party or trade union in which the workers themselves remain passive.

Work democracy is based essentially on two facts:

1. A worker is every one who does socially necessary work, that is, not only the manual worker.

2. Social responsibility rests with the society of the workers and not with private individuals or individual state functionaries.

The question which, peculiarly enough, neither socialist nor any other “freedom parties” ask themselves, is the following: Are the millions of working individuals willing and able to take their responsibility for the social process?

Marx himself did not ask the question what would be the attitude of the suppressed and exploited themselves toward the disclosure of the process of exploitation and suppression. The Marxists did not doubt that the exploited would joyfully accept the “gospel of liberation.” From the point of view of rationalism, this was entirely correct. Unfortunately, human thought and action is determined not only rationally. There is also irrational thinking and acting. This is a fact which Freud had demonstrated. Nobody had an inkling then that this fact would one day confront the workers’ movement as a central and crucial problem. Marx and Freud formed two enemy camps fighting each other for the recognition of their respective interpretation of social living. This was the starting point of my attempt to unite the two theories, an attempt which, logically, failed.

Marx’s sociology demonstrated the economic processes which determine the interpersonal, that is, social, relationships. Freud’s psychology, on the other hand, demonstrated the unconscious, that is, in the last analysis, biological forces which govern human thought and action. Thus we had, side by side, or, rather, opposed to each other, a scientific sociological and a scientific psychological interpretation of human existence.

“Objective socio-economic conditions and processes, independent of conscious human will, determine your thinking and existence,” is what Karl Marx found.

“Psychic instinctual forces which are independent of conscious human will and which are, in the last analysis, rooted in as yet unknown biological sources of energy, determine your thinking and existence,” is what Sigmund Freud found.

The socio-economic conditions, Marx’s “productive forces,” are at work outside of the human biopsychic organisms, or between them: technical development, labor conditions, family conditions, ideologies, organizations, etc. Freud’s psychic instinctual forces, however, are at work inside the biopsychic organisms. They are as inaccessible to conscious control as are the socio-economic productive forces of Marx.

These two scientific interpretations of human existence seemed to be contradictory and mutually exclusive. Accordingly, the schools of sociology and psychoanalysis were engaged in a bitter feud. The Marxist socio-economists who had a fundamental influence on the public life of Germany and Austria viewed psychoanalysis as a dangerous and undesirable competitor in the interpretation of social and individual existence, just as the psychoanalysis considered Marxism as such.

Yet, the two schools had a common
meeting ground: both of them looked for and described the objective process which, hidden from human consciousness, is at work behind the superficial phenomena of ideology, of valuation, of ethical concepts and social demands. In so doing, they both proceeded truly scientifically, like physics which seeks to find the law of kinetics behind the phenomenon of motion or the functional laws of the invisible electrical energy behind the spark of a battery. Both did away with the psychologisms and ethicisms of economics and psychology which did not go below the surface phenomena.

It was a gigantic achievement of human thought to progress from empty demands and moral evaluations which had no basis in fact, no matter how well-meant they may have been, to the nature of factual processes. Only from such facts, and not from empty demands, could a non-utopian, realistic practice for the improvement of individual and social existence develop.

The economists, philosophers and psychologists of Marx's times continued to adhere to the metaphysical concept of man's "free will." They were unable to let go of this concept because it meant an illusory consolation in the existing chaos. We know that illusions always have a greater attraction than tangible truths. The illusion of a free will and of a supernatural determination of man, of a Providence and a fatefulness of life, fulfills two irrational functions: For one, it makes man forget his helplessness in the face of nature, including his own drives, and drowns out his feeling of impotence and his fear of living, by giving him a feeling of being like God. This function found its extreme expression in the fascist emotional plague. As we know today, but did not know in 1928, it was the result of the irrationalism in the masses of people, and not the achievement of one man, a man who had completely failed in any rational work.

The second function of the concept of free determination has a rational, though always misleading, core. This is the function of giving people the courage to fight for their existence even where they feel helpless, small and impotent, where they lack the knowledge of the processes they are dealing with. Man has to exist in any case, with or without knowledge. For that he needs the emotion of illusion. Illusions, then, are not just irrational formations; seen from the emotional point of view, they are also power-giving attitudes. Hence the simile of "the faith that moves mountains." The success of Hitlerist mysticism has clearly demonstrated the fact that mysticism, based on emotions as it is, has a much more powerful social effect than scientific knowledge.

Illusion, then, has to be recognized as justified and necessary, but only where man has not progressed to actual knowledge. If we were to condemn illusion as such in an absolute and mechanistic manner, we would be apt to be intolerant toward such achievements as are based on illusions. The actual achievement of the Soviet Union in creating a better economy and in eliminating the crassest social injustices was based on the illusion that one was "developing socialism." The illusion of mechanistic natural science that, in fighting religion and mysticism, it was discovering the "nature of the soul" led to great achievements in the fields of physiology and colloid chemistry.

Nevertheless, the dangers and the harmfulness of illusions are far greater than their usefulness. What achievements spring from them cannot stand comparison with practical achievements springing from actual knowledge concerning facts and processes. Again and again, illusionary Weltanschauungen nullify the rational striving of man to reduce the realm of the unknown and to widen the field of knowledge. Illusions again and again lead to reactionary, regressive social institutions.
This is shown in the regressive development of the Soviet Union as well as in the inhibition which mechanistic concepts in natural science exert on the growth of knowledge of the living function. Thus, if I point out the rational function of the illusion, this does not mean that the scientific struggle for the expansion of human knowledge should be relaxed. If I cannot use my leg I will use a crutch in order to walk as best I can. Just the same, I shall throw away the crutch as soon as I regain the natural motility of my leg.

Because of the bolstering of their egos which the metaphysicists and mystics of every kind obtained from their illusions, they have continued to take a violent stand against Marxism and Freudism. Yet, their cries, "I am so free, so superior, so God-like, master of myself and of nature," such cries have not changed in the least their dependence on psychic irrationalism on the one hand and on the chaotic socio-economic processes on the other. Indeed, the world catastrophe of the past decade has demonstrated this tragic dependence in an unmistakable manner.

The sciences of Marx and of Freud were indispensable prerequisites for a mastery of these two kinds of human dependency. They had a common meeting ground also in the fact that Marx as well as Freud built his science on as yet undiscovered bi-social and biological laws:

Marx's whole socio-economic concept rests on the living nature of human work. Work is a basic biological activity, characteristic of even primitive organisms. Man, in his work functions, is not distinguished from other animals by the fact that he works; that, all living beings do, or they could not exist. What distinguishes him is only the fact that he tried to improve his work functions by the invention of tools. Marx has shown us that man, in this social differentiation from other animals, came to grief in that he became the slave of the tools which he had created.

To judge from their publications, the fact has escaped the Marxists that it is the difference between the use value and the exchange value of the living working power which for thousands of years has determined the social mechanisms of patriarchal civilization. In his philosophical writings, Marx continually stressed the fact that, in the last analysis, man with his biological organization is the "pre-requisite of all history." Of the concrete nature of this "biological organization," of course, Marx knew nothing, for biology did not know anything about it either; and the specific biological energy, the cosmic orgone, was not discovered until the years between 1936 and 1939.

The two basic objective biological functions of the living, then, "work" on the one hand, "sexuality" or "pleasure function" on the other, were treated, apart from each other, in two separate scientific systems, Marx's sociology on the one hand, and Freud's psychology on the other. In Marx's system, the sexual process led a Cinderella existence under the misnomer, "development of the family." The work process, on the other hand, suffered the same fate in Freud's psychology under such misnomers as "sublimation," "hunger instinct," or "ego instincts." Far from being basically antithetical, the two scientific systems, their originators being altogether unaware of it, met in the biological basis of living matter, in the biological energy of all living organisms which, according to our functional method of thinking, expresses itself in work on the one hand and sexuality on the other.

The clarification of this functional character of biological energy, its simultaneous identity and antithesis, remained the task of sex-economic research. Of that I had, of course, no inkling at the time, when, between 1928 and 1930, I made the first attempts to introduce psychological methods into sociological thinking. My attempts of that time to solve the conflict
between the two scientific systems forced me, with the logic of fact-finding, on the path which finally led to the discovery of the orgone, the cosmic life energy. I doubt that I would ever have succeeded in discovering the orgone had I not for years, in the hard struggle of everyday work, applied sociological criticism to Freud’s psychology and had I not demonstrated the gap in Marx’s socio-economy and bridged it with the concept of “character structure.”

The laws of biological energy, of the orgone, comprise the basic mechanisms of work as well as of sexuality, and, with that, the emotional forces within, without and between people. These laws are the basis of rational human strivings as well as of irrational strivings, of scientific search as well as of the mystical belief in the existence of an unknown Almighty.

The basic biological mechanisms of the living are not a mechanical summation of work functions plus sexual functions. Rather, they constitute a third factor which is at one and the same time identical and different as well as something deeper. Sex-economy and orgone biophysics, then, are not a summation of Marxian and Freudian concepts. They are new disciplines based on sociological as well as depth-psychological findings, the incompatibility of which led to the discovery of the third factor which they have in common.
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.

Textos da área do funcionalismo orgonômico

Texts from the area of Orgonomic Functionalism.

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