

WILHELM REICH  
BEYOND PSYCHOLOGY  
LETTERS AND JOURNALS  
1934–1939

EDITED and with an INTRODUCTION by  
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FARRAR, STRAUS AND GIROUX  
NEW YORK

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Printed in the United States of America  
Published simultaneously in Canada by HarperCollinsCanadaLtd  
First edition, 1994

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA

Reich, Wilhelm, 1897-1957.

Beyond psychology : letters and journals, 1934-1939 / Wilhelm Reich : edited and with an introduction by Mary Boyd Higgins. — 1st ed.

p. cm.

Includes index.

1. Reich, Wilhelm, 1897-1957—Diaries. 2. Reich, Wilhelm, 1897-1957—Correspondence. 3. Psychoanalysts—Austria—Diaries. Psychoanalysts—Austria—Correspondence. I. Higgins, Mary (Mary Boyd) II. Title.

RC339.52.R44A3 1994 150.19'5'092—dc20 [B] 94-14721 CIP

## EDITOR'S NOTE

It is a great privilege to have access to the unpublished writings of Wilhelm Reich and to be in a position to compile and edit this autobiographical work which follows his life from August 1934, when his active participation in the international psychoanalytic movement was ended, to the beginning of his American experience in 1939. In this period Reich moved from the clinical setting into the laboratory and to new experimental realms in biology and physics.

There have been many difficulties in preparing the work, not the least being the enormous amount of material from which selections had to be made. Reich was a prolific writer. Throughout his adult life, he scrupulously recorded his observations, findings, and thoughts in diaries and workbooks, in personal and professional correspondence, as well as in published manuscripts. My task has been to choose from these diverse materials in a way that reveals within the confines of a limited number of pages the scope and diversity of Reich's story. I do not know if I have succeeded in this effort, but I have honestly tried. There have been many times when I felt overwhelmed. Reich's life was neither neat nor smooth, nor did it always conform to the social mores of his time. It was passionate and bold, full of controversy and conflict, always in motion, and, in its unwavering search for the simplest truths about life itself, extraordinarily complex.

Readers who are familiar with Reich's account of his early years, *Passion of Youth*, will undoubtedly note and question the time gap between its ending in 1922 and the beginning, in 1934, of *Beyond Psychology*. Let me explain. During the confusion that followed Reich's death, his archives were stolen. Although a legal action forced the return of most of this material, some documents are still missing, including all diaries from 1922 to 1934. Since attempts to retrieve them have so far failed, it was decided to proceed with the publication of these later writings and to bridge the gap with a summary of the missing years. In preparing this summary, I have drawn heavily upon an unpublished manuscript by Reich entitled *History of Sexpol*, from

which he extracted two major works, *The Function of the Orgasm* and *People in Trouble*. These books are now the best source of information about that formative period in his life.

In conclusion, I would like to thank my editor, Roslyn Schloss, our translators, Philip Schmitz and Derek and Inge Jordan, and Reich's American publisher, Roger W. Straus, for their significant contributions to the creation of this book.

Mary Boyd Higgins  
The Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust  
Forest Hills, New York  
September 1994

## INTRODUCTION

### REICH'S DEVELOPMENT, 1922–1934

When Wilhelm Reich graduated from the medical school of the University of Vienna in 1922, he had already practiced psychoanalysis for three years and been a member of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society for two. Absorbed by the basic question “What is life?” and convinced of the central role of sexuality in it, he had been drawn to the work of Sigmund Freud by Freud’s understanding of sexuality as a developmental process that begins at birth and by his hypothesis of the existence of a psychic-sexual energy, the libido theory. In addition, the technique of psychoanalysis provided the young physician with a practical tool. But there were many unsolved problems, many unanswered questions in psychoanalytic theory and therapy and in the relation of this new discipline to the world in which it was growing. During the years from 1922 to 1934, Reich would struggle to protect and extend Freud’s original clinical formulations and, in so doing, come into conflict with Freud himself.

The neurosis was originally understood by Freud as the result of a conflict between instinctual sexual drives and a negating society that prohibits and suppresses them. Symptoms observed in patients were considered to be expressions of these instincts that, for some unknown reason, had broken through in a distorted form from an unconscious psychic level. Implicit in the instinctual drives was an energy function Freud called “libido.” Its reality had yet to be proved, although Freud conjectured that it might be of a chemical nature. On the basis of this formulation of the neurosis, Freud had developed a therapy he hoped would “cure” neuroses. Using the technique of free association, in which the patient was to say anything but do nothing, psychoanalysis sought to get the patient to remember the events and feelings that had been repressed, to make the unconscious impulses conscious so they would be available to the individual’s control and could be rejected or sublimated in some socially acceptable activity. Just here, in the

goal of psychoanalytic treatment, lay the seeds of the conflict between Reich and Freud, because the demand for rejection or sublimation implied a moral judgment that the biological instincts are “bad” and society is immutable.

Reich had come to psychoanalysis with a grounding in basic science. He had studied astronomy, electronics, the quantum theory, and the physical theories of Einstein, Heisenberg, and Bohr. While his psychoanalytic colleagues tended to focus on the content of their patients’ memories and its interpretation, Reich was absorbed by questions of energy, the economic, quantitative factor in the neurosis. He would search for the energy source of neurosis, its somatic core.

Little was known about the nature of mental illness. The individual neurotic symptom was viewed as a foreign body in an otherwise healthy organism. Freud had said that symptoms must disappear when the unconscious was made conscious, but success was limited, and he later acknowledged this, stating that they may disappear. But, Reich asked, what led from “may” to “must”? What else besides making the unconscious conscious was necessary to assure the disappearance of the symptom? These questions were not generally asked, but Reich struggled with them in his practice. He began to investigate fantasies accompanying masturbation and to pay close attention to the types of masturbation engaged in by his patients. He found that the form of the fantasized act offered an approach to unconscious conflicts and infantile experiences. In addition, he observed that some patients’ symptoms would disappear if they were able to have a satisfying sexual experience, whether through masturbation or intercourse. The symptoms would return after several days but again disappear with sexual gratification. Increasingly, Reich focused his attention on the genital function and its central mechanism, the orgasm. In November 1923, he reported on “Genitality from the Viewpoint of Psychoanalytic Prognosis and Therapy,” asserting that the genital disturbance was an important, perhaps the most important, symptom of neurosis. His proposition was received with hostility by psychoanalytic colleagues who claimed that many patients were genitally healthy. What then constituted “genital health”? Reich investigated it more closely. He had his patients give exact descriptions of their behavior and sensations during the sexual act and, in the case of men, discovered that even with erectile potency they experienced little or no pleasure. Nor was

there any involuntary behavior or dimming of consciousness. The meaning of sexual potency was now at issue. "The concept of sexual potency," Reich stated, "has no meaning at all without the inclusion of the economic, experiential, and energy aspects. Erectile and ejaculatory potency are merely prerequisites for *orgastic potency*. Orgastic potency is the capacity for sexual surrender without any reservations, the capacity for complete discharge of all dammed-up sexual excitation through involuntary, pleasurable convulsions of the body. No neurotic is orgastically potent." The somatic core of the neurosis had to be dammed-up sexual energy that could only be adequately discharged in the orgasm. Hence the study of orgastic impotence became the central clinical problem of Reich's research and orgastic potency the goal of his therapeutic efforts. Becoming aware of the repressed sexuality must go together with the capacity for orgastic discharge. Reich had expanded Freud's concept of cure with the addition of the economic energy factor, and he began to use the term *sex economy* to describe it.

Reich's conclusions had been drawn not only from clinical experiences with private patients but also from careful observations on disturbances of genitality among working-class people at the Vienna Psychoanalytic Clinic, where he was given access to a wide variety of serious pathology not seen in private practice. These disturbances were not sexual in the more general sense of Freud but specifically genital in the strict sense of orgastic impotence. The disturbance of genitality was not *one* symptom but *the* symptom of neurosis.

During these years from 1922 to 1926 when the orgasm theory was being formulated and tested, Reich was deeply involved in efforts to understand and improve psychoanalytic technique. Psychoanalysis depended on free association, but few patients could free-associate. Improvement relied on random breakthroughs that were not understood. In 1924, Reich assumed the leadership of the Psychoanalytic Technical Seminar that had been created two years earlier at his suggestion. The problem was to work out a technique to find and eliminate all pathological attitudes preventing the establishment of orgastic potency. He designed a plan for systematic reporting of cases that would focus on resistance situations and emphasize technical problems rather than case histories. Gradually, it was learned that most analysts avoided negative reactions in their patients and were helpless in the face of

resistances. In addition, psychoanalytic therapy was burdened by Freud's changing views. In 1920, he had hypothesized the existence of a death instinct and assigned it equal importance with the sexual instinct. At the Psychoanalytic Congress in 1922, he spoke of an "unconscious feeling of guilt" and, in discussing the so-called negative therapeutic reaction wherein the patient gets worse just as he is getting better, he said there must be a force in the unconscious ego that opposed getting well. The idea of a death instinct gradually changed the whole concept of neurosis, which was now formulated as the result of a conflict between sexuality and the *need* for punishment, instead of between sexuality and the *fear* of punishment. To Reich, this contradicted all clinical experience and would make any therapeutic efforts pointless. He viewed the psychoanalysts' growing adherence to an unsubstantiated death instinct with alarm and shared his concern with Freud. Freud assured him that it was just a hypothesis, not clinically founded. Reich felt momentarily relieved, but Freud did nothing subsequently to stop the misuse of his unfounded speculations. Only Reich resisted. He continued to struggle with practical therapeutic problems.

At the Psychoanalytic Congress in Salzburg in 1924, Reich introduced the concept of orgasmic potency, directing particular attention to the clinical difficulties in achieving it. Only rarely, he had found, did the liberation of genital excitations from the patient's symptoms lead to orgasmic potency. Where else, then, was sexual energy bound? Psychoanalytic theory offered no solutions. It even contradicted Reich's observations that there is a fundamental qualitative difference between genitality and pregenitality. Only the genital apparatus can provide orgasm and discharge sexual energy completely. Pregenitality can only increase tension. It is obvious that these divergent viewpoints would lead to incompatible therapeutic conclusions, for if genital excitation is a mixture of pregenital excitations, the therapist's task would be to shift the pregenital onto the genital. On the other hand, if genital excitation is biological, then it must be freed from any mixture with the pregenital.

Sharp discrepancies in psychoanalytic theory were also apparent in terms of the central problem of anxiety. Freud's original assumption was that if sexual excitation is barred from perception and discharge, it is converted into anxiety. But no one knew how this conversion takes place. In wrestling with this question therapeutically, Reich ob-



served the relation of anxiety to the vegetative (autonomic) nervous system. "There is not conversion of sexual excitation into anxiety," he concluded. "The same excitation which appears as pleasure in the genital is manifested as anxiety if it stimulates the cardiovascular system." Sexuality and anxiety represent opposite directions of vegetative excitation. Reich presented this finding to Freud toward the end of 1926. To his surprise, it was rejected. At the same time, in *Inhibition, Symptom, and Anxiety*, Freud retracted much of his original formulation about actual anxiety. Anxiety, he wrote, could be considered no longer as the result of sexual repression but as its cause. It would now become more difficult for Reich to defend the position that anxiety results from a damming up of sexual energy, i.e., sexual stasis, and that its basic mechanism is the overburdening of the vasovegetative system with undischarged sexual energy. Reich was observing physical mechanisms. "Sexual energy" was becoming increasingly real. But as he drew closer to the physiological, the breach with Freud and the psychoanalytic community widened, despite Freud's dictum that someday psychoanalysis must be given a biological base.

Reich continued to work with the reality of technical problems. Why were some patients inaccessible? Why did all his efforts rebound as from an impenetrable wall? The patients appeared "armored" against any attack. The entire person resisted. Gradually, he realized that the obstacle to recovery lies in the patient's whole being, his or her "character," which forms a unified, automatic resistance. The character armoring protected against unpleasure, but it also inhibited the capacity to experience pleasure and to function rationally. There was a stratification of armoring, a layering, which revealed a specific structure in each case, corresponding to its development. What had been repressed lay closest to the surface. Systematic analysis of these layers of resistance provided an orderly way to reach the patient and revealed that the experiences of the past were alive in the character attitudes of the present. Reich tried to convince the other analysts, who paid little attention to character, that only the removal of the characterological basis of the symptoms could really bring about a cure.

One of the major problems in psychoanalytic theory was the question of the origin of the destructive impulses that were found in every patient. Was it biological? Freud wrote an article on "primary masochism" in which he again modified an earlier concept. Previously,

masochism was viewed as the result of a destructive impulse toward the world that was turned back on the self. Now, according to Freud, the destructive impulses were expressions of a primary masochism, as was the patient's resistance to cure and the unconscious feeling of guilt. Freud was extending the death instinct theory into the most essential areas of psychoanalytic practice. Yet there was no clinical evidence for the existence of such an instinct. On the contrary, Reich found that, carefully examined, every psychic manifestation that might be interpreted as "death instinct" proved to be a destructive impulse that gave way to a sexual one. The destructive aggression bound in the character was nothing but rage over disappointments in life and, in particular, the lack of sexual gratification.

In May 1926, Reich gave Freud a copy of the manuscript of his first major work, *The Function of the Orgasm*.<sup>\*</sup> Freud, to whom the work was dedicated, received it coolly. "So thick?" he said. More than two months passed before Reich received a formal response from Freud, which seemed to reject the orgasm theory. In December 1926, Reich spoke on character-analytic technique in Freud's inner circle. "The main problem I presented was whether one should interpret the patient's incestuous desires in the presence of a latent negative attitude, or whether it was better to wait until the patient's distrust had been eliminated. Freud interrupted me: 'Why do you *not* want to interpret the material in the sequence in which it appears? Of course one has to analyze and interpret the incest dreams as soon as they appear!' I had not expected this. I continued to substantiate my point of view, but the whole idea was foreign to Freud. He did not understand why one should work in the line of the resistances and not in that of the material. This contradicted things he had said in private conversations about the technique. The atmosphere of the meeting was unpleasant. My opponents in the seminar gloated over it and pitied me. I grit my teeth and remained silent."

But the pain of these two bitter disappointments in Freud took a heavy toll. Reich contracted tuberculosis, a disease that had previously claimed the lives of his father and brother. In January 1927, he went to a sanitarium in Davos, from which he returned, cured, three and

\* Revised by Reich and published as *Genitality in the Theory and Therapy of Neurosis* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1980).

a half months later. Work in the technical seminar proceeded, bringing some system into therapeutic practice. Reich continued to feel that he was applying analytic principles to the study of character, a task consistent with psychoanalysis.

During these formative years from 1922 to 1934, Reich was married to a woman named Annie Pink, who had been an analytic patient of his when he was a medical student. They had agreed, upon marriage, that they would remain together as long as they loved each other but would separate when either one no longer loved the other. Reich therefore felt it was essential that Annie have her financial independence. Wanting to be able to share everything with her, he encouraged her to become a physician. But according to Reich, Annie resented his insistence that she have her own career. She wanted to be taken care of and felt that he was not willing to provide for her. "I believe she never forgave me for the fact that, with my economic and emotional support, she became an independent physician and actually stood on her own feet twelve years later when we separated." Nevertheless, the first six years of their marriage, he said, were happy. A daughter, Eva, was born in 1924 and a second child, Lore, in 1928.

Although Reich worked with Vienna's destitute in the psychoanalytic clinic and was in touch with social issues and events as they were reported in the newspapers, neither he nor Annie was particularly interested in politics. However, Reich was faced with the growing contradiction between his clinical experiences and the psychoanalytic cultural concepts, which demanded renunciation and the sublimation of sexual impulses. Whoever was incapable of this was considered neurotic. Yet Reich found that, the more successful the therapy, the more difficult it was for the patient to renounce happiness. You could divert one interest to another, but you could not divert a physical tension that pressed for gratification. Furthermore, he observed that people who were genitally satisfied were more productive in their work. The psychoanalysts carefully avoided the question of what happens to physical excitation when it is free. They equated free sexuality with chaos and disorder. The patient was supposed to be abstinent during treatment; marriage and family were not to be touched. But if the goal of therapy was orgasmic potency, this was impossible. Where does sexual repression and suppression come from? Reich asked. And what is its function? These questions drove him to study ethnology and sociology.

Then in July 1927 Reich witnessed a strike by thousands of workers in Vienna. The police fired indiscriminately into the crowds, killing one hundred people, while the Social Democratic defense troops, whose function was to protect the workers, walked away from the conflict and returned to their barracks. Reich could scarcely believe what he saw. This was not “class warfare”; working-class people were fighting each other. The police behaved like “senseless machines,” “mechanical men.” The crowds were helpless and submissive. Why? Was this culture? It was assumed that people are capable of freedom once the external oppressing force is removed. But are they? Can the masses build a free society? And what is the relation of politics itself to the real life of people? Freud could provide no answers. They could only be elicited from practical experience. After the strike, Reich joined the Austrian Communist Party and became a politically active physician.

He also studied the work of the great socialists and, in particular, that of Karl Marx. In his discovery that the value of a commodity is created by the human work power, or energy, invested in it, “Marx was for the science of economics what Freud was for psychiatry,” Reich wrote. “Both claimed that social life was governed by factors independent of conscious human will. For Marx, it was the economic conditions and processes. For Freud, it was psychic, instinctive forces. Both sciences had been built on as yet undiscovered biosocial and biological laws.” But these common factors were overlooked at the time Reich became involved in political life. Psychoanalysis and Marxism were considered separate and irreconcilable. “Two basic objective biological functions of the living, work and sexuality, were treated as two separate scientific systems.”

Between 1927 and 1930 Reich formulated a sociological critique of psychoanalysis, utilizing Marx’s methodology of dialectical materialism. It was presented in a series of publications. With Freud’s approval, he founded six sex-hygiene clinics for workers where psychoanalytic sex-economic knowledge could be applied on a broad social scale. Character analysis was also developed and Reich published his findings in individual clinical articles. These writings included a clarification of the problem of masochism and a refutation of the death-instinct theory. But inevitably all psychiatric work led into the social sphere, and Reich became increasingly involved in the turbulent politics of

the time. He watched the Austrian Social Democrats fail and the Christian Socialist and German Nationalist parties grow in strength. There were only about three thousand Communists in Austria, mostly among the unemployed. Reich spoke on problems of mass hygiene at meetings for the unemployed and was active in all the Communist demonstrations. But he recognized that between the wretchedness of people's real lives and the goals of social revolution there was a gap that no slogans or propaganda could bridge.

When he first started his sociopolitical activities, Reich spoke to various organizations about psychoanalysis, the Oedipus complex, castration anxiety, and so on. He soon realized that these theories had no practical use for people. They sounded ridiculous. He began to speak about human problems that affect everyone: marriage, family life, sexual difficulties, distress in adolescence. He solicited written questions from his audiences, answering every one, no matter how personal. Again and again, the discussion of real problems in people's intimate lives would lead to general social issues, and people began to develop social goals of their own. For instance, the lack of privacy in housing stimulated ideas on new architectural designs. A discussion of marital distress might lead to consideration of marital legislation, the experience of the Soviet Union, to nature, the church, belief in God. Reich's lectures generally lasted about forty-five minutes, but questions and answers continued for hours. They dealt with common life interests that cut across party and class lines. And it was precisely this that the political parties would find threatening. Their strength lay in people's helplessness. Reich was stimulating people to think and act for themselves. Instead of attacking outside oppression by the law or the state, he would suggest tasks that the people themselves could undertake to alleviate their misery, such as the organization of children's clinics.

The Socialist and Communist parties had largely ignored the problems of youth. Reich made contact with young workers and adolescents from the working class. Gradually winning their trust, he uncovered the connection between their restlessness or hostility and their genital frustration. This forced a decisive correction of a basic psychoanalytic concept. "True," he wrote, "the Oedipus complex causes the puberty conflict, but it is the actual negation of adolescent love life which causes the child to fall back into the infantile neurosis in an intensified

form.” The only possible solution was a full, satisfying sexual life for adolescents.

It became clear that the repression of sexuality has the function of making people susceptible to exploitation and suppression. The longing for happiness was everywhere, but so was sexual distress. Between them lay sex-negative education in childhood, denial of sexual fulfillment in adolescence, and the demand for monogamy in marriage. How could things be changed to help everyone? Little could be done medically. Individual treatment was senseless from the social point of view. But Reich still believed in the possibility of change through political action. Working within the Socialist and Communist parties, he created a movement for radical sexual reform based on the principles of sex economy. It would be called “Sexpol.” He devoted himself to this cause, giving all his money except that needed to support his family. He organized meetings, founded revolutionary cells in factories, spoke almost daily at gatherings, and answered hundreds of letters. Throughout, he assumed that the socialist parties and his psychoanalytic colleagues would react positively and would want to help in this, or any other, serious social effort. He was wrong. The Marxists began to complain that Reich’s emphasis on the sexual problem might divert working-class people from the class struggle, and the psychoanalysts were becoming increasingly uneasy with Reich’s determination to draw the logical consequences from Freud’s basic formulations and to focus on the need to prevent neurosis by changing social conditions.

By 1929, Reich had begun to realize that the basic conflict between pleasure and moral denial is anchored physiologically to muscular disturbances. Excitation is bound in chronic muscular spasms. This relation was manifested with particular clarity in masochism. Whereas the psychoanalysts maintained that the disorder resulted from a biological need to suffer, Reich’s clinical research showed that masochism is the expression of a painful inner tension that cannot be discharged, the result of an imbalance between inner pressure and surface tension. Reich considered the analogy of the female egg that divides when internal pressure and surface tension reach a certain level. Since the human organism cannot do this, it can only become masochistic, pleading to an outside source for relief of tension, if it is unable to allow the orgasmic discharge of pent-up energy. This organismic energy appeared to move in two directions: out of the self, toward the world,

and back into the self, away from the world. The movement of expansion from the center to the periphery was expressed in sexuality. The reverse direction, from the periphery to the center, was functionally identical with anxiety. Reich hypothesized that there is one process of excitation, within which an antithesis of sexuality and anxiety is manifested in the opposite directions of biological activity.

Reich's emphasis on the function of energy was reflected in his developing technique of character analysis. Since most patients could not free associate, he used everything the patient did as a point of departure. How the patient acted and reacted became more important than what he or she said. The *form* of the communications became more important than the content, because the form was now understood as an immediate expression of the unconscious. Following the path of his clinical work, Reich discovered that correct dissolution of the psychic armor always led to a liberation of anxiety, and once this anxiety was freed, there was a chance to recover free-flowing energy and genital potency. If the capacity for genital surrender was attained, it was observed that the patient experienced feelings of current in the body, described as "streamings," and exhibited fundamental changes in behavior, a different kind of morality based on the organism's ability to regulate its own biological energy rather than on any externally dictated compulsion. The individual functioned according to a self-regulatory principle and, in so doing, exemplified precisely those characteristics of rational activity, gentleness, and strength that society reveres as ideal. Yet Freud insisted that culture depends on the suppression of instincts. That might be true for the existing culture, Reich reasoned, but does culture per se depend on this suppression?

In December 1929, Reich gave a talk to Freud's inner circle on the prevention of neurosis. It was essential, he maintained, to destroy the sources of neurotic misery. He pinpointed major areas of concern: the authoritarian family, marriage, housing, the need for economic security, and, above all, the puberty problem. The sexual happiness of youth was central to the prevention of neuroses. Freud opposed Reich's views, insisting that, even though natural sexual pleasure is the goal of life, it must be renounced. Man must adjust to the "reality" of culture. Human structure was basically unchangeable, as were social conditions. This was abject hopelessness. Reich could not understand how Freud could believe that his discovery of infantile sexuality would

not effect changes in the world. "He seemed to be doing a cruel injustice to his own work. The human longing for pleasure could not be eliminated, but the social regulation of sexual life could be changed. I had grasped the biological goal of human striving which was in conflict with existing human structure. Freud sacrificed the goal to the existing structure." Reich determined to retain the goal and study the laws by which human structure develops. Sooner or later, all the political, social, and scientific forces would reject or attack his efforts. But Reich persisted, always stressing the vital connection between the social and the sexual. "Human structure is determined by the way in which the social organization influences the biological sexual energy. Hence, the sexual problem is a major aspect of social politics."

Reich's continuing involvement with social issues and his criticism of bourgeois sexual reform not only strained his relationship with Freud and the Viennese psychoanalysts but also affected his marriage. Annie shrank from Reich's radical politics and the conclusions his medical and social experiences led him to draw about marriage and the family. She forced herself to participate in the sex-hygiene clinics, but Reich sensed her hesitancy and thought she did not share his goals, especially as she expressed doubts about any new thoughts he had. She also opposed him in matters regarding their children's sexual education. Although she might agree with him intellectually, Reich felt, she could not deal with manifestations of their daughters' sexuality. Annie was better suited to the milieu of psychoanalysts like Anna Freud, who considered all children little wild animals who had to be tamed. Gradually, according to Reich, he and Annie began to long for others. Reich had an extramarital relationship with a woman he had known when he was a medical student. Annie, too, became involved with someone she had known previously, and the marriage deteriorated. Although they were not divorced until 1934, the relationship was basically over when Reich moved to Berlin in November 1930.

There his work flourished. The German psychoanalysts were more advanced in social issues, and the orgasm theory was better understood. Reich came in contact again with Otto Fenichel, with whom he had attended medical school, and Fenichel agreed to help him organize young psychoanalysts for practical social work. Reich lectured to student organizations and gave courses on "Marxism and Psychology" and "Sexology" at the Marxist Workers School, which distributed his



writings throughout Germany. Communist demonstrations were more militant than those in Vienna, but the party line was the same. Very few of the leaders tried to analyze opponents and none had read Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, despite the alarming growth of the National Socialist Party since the collapse of the German banks in 1931.

There were about eighty sex-political organizations in Germany, with a total membership of approximately 350,000. They supported birth control and legal abortion and opposed the punishment of homosexuals. However, the organizations often fought among themselves, and there was no basic thinking about sexology or political organization and no mention of youth problems. Reich wanted to unite these groups under the Communist Party and train leaders in sex-political principles. Once again, the party functionaries felt threatened by the inclusion of emotional issues and maintained that Reich wanted to replace politics based on economic issues with sex politics. Reich withdrew from a leadership role and tried to set up a pilot group, but the demands were too great and the functionaries too frightened. The whole movement bogged down in organizational politics. Then, in 1932, the police intervened and the united congress of the organization was dissolved. Reich continued to teach and concentrated his efforts on youth groups, at whose request he wrote *The Sexual Struggle of Youth*. The Communist Party refused to publish it. So Reich established his own publishing house, Verlag für Sexualpolitik, and paid for the publication of the book, as well as his ethnological work *The Invasion of Compulsory Sex-Morality* and two books for children. They were received enthusiastically by the young, but on 5 December 1932, the party banned their distribution, claiming that they had nothing to do with "proletarian class morality" and that they "corrupted youth's fighting spirit." The young people continued to distribute them.

Reich's effort to understand how people experience the social process and to bring their sexual lives into that process was meeting increasing hostility from both the Marxists and the psychoanalysts. To the former, it was "unproletarian." To the latter, it was "unscientific adventuring." Reich said later that he was often tempted to give up the mass-psychological work, but his burning interest in human responses held him.

Between 1930 and 1933, he watched closely as the National Socialist movement gained power. Reich recognized that Hitler's program mir-

rored the prevailing human character structure. The masses' longing for sexual happiness and freedom was opposed by their fear of it. Hitler freed them from the struggle to resolve this contradiction and to assume responsibility for their own lives, the task to which Reich had devoted himself. His classic work on the mass psychology of fascism was written in 1932 and published the following year.

While the various socialist party leaders squabbled among themselves, Reich called for unified action against the planned fascist seizure of power. On 28 February 1933, he returned to Berlin from a trip to Copenhagen, where he had lectured on race and fascism to a Danish student organization. That night the Reichstag was burned. He only escaped immediate arrest because he had not held an official position. But soon afterward, a newspaper article on his youth book appeared and he had to leave Germany. He returned to Vienna, where he found little understanding of the German disaster and increasing personal hostility from his psychoanalytic colleagues. The year before, Freud had insinuated that Reich's work on masochism, which refuted the death instinct theory, was influenced by his communist ideology. Efforts were made by the president of the psychoanalytic association to curtail Reich's teaching activities, and he was told to stop lecturing in socialist and communist organizations. When he refused to submit unconditionally but agreed to consult with the committee before accepting speaking engagements, he was told that he could not attend any psychoanalytic meetings. His contract with the psychoanalytic press for *Character Analysis* was canceled "because of the political situation," and later Reich had to borrow the money to publish it himself. Members of the psychoanalytic association were advising physicians not to study with Reich. He asked the executive committee to take an official position on his work, but the secretary hedged and all Reich's efforts were futile. Finally, a young Danish physician suggested that Reich come to Copenhagen to train physicians. He was given a six-month permit by an uneasy Danish bureaucracy, which was concerned about the lectures he had given there earlier. Having borrowed the money for the trip to Copenhagen, Reich left Vienna at the end of April 1933. Annie and the children were to join him later.

In Denmark, Reich continued with his therapeutic and teaching activities, but he soon found himself in conflict with the Danish Communist Party, which ignored starving German refugees unless they

were party members and angrily rejected Reich's contention that Hitler's triumph was a defeat for the German working class. In addition, there was controversy over an article by Reich that had been translated and published by an intellectual communist journal called *Plan* before he came to Denmark. Certain words relating to a child's penis had been poorly translated, and the journal editor was accused of pornography and sentenced to sixty days in jail. The party blamed Reich. It also disapproved of the interest generated in his meetings and lectures by the discussion of sexual issues. On 21 November 1933, he was excluded from the Danish Communist Party (to which he had never belonged). At the same time, conservative psychiatrists complained about Reich. This, combined with the uproar over the *Plan* article, caused the authorities to deny Reich a residency permit. One of Reich's students wrote to Freud, asking for his help, but Freud refused, acknowledging Reich's stature as an analyst but criticizing his political ideology. Despite these overt acts of hostility on the part of communists and psychoanalysts alike, Reich continued to feel himself a part of both organizations, "a badly treated and misunderstood opposition."

He arranged to move to Malmö, Sweden, in January 1934, hoping his students would be able to continue their work with him there. But first he met Annie and the children in the Tyrol after a seven-month separation and visited with analysts and exiled German communists in England, France, and Switzerland. He found no real understanding of events in Germany. No one grasped the real issue of mass psychology, the irrational reactions of the masses. On his return to Denmark, Reich passed through Germany, spending three hours in Berlin. He found it frightening: soldiers everywhere, people moving tiredly, furtive glances, the seemingly incomprehensible fact that many communists had become fascists. He was joined in Berlin by Elsa Lindenberg, a dancer and political activist he had met at a communist demonstration in 1932. They had established a personal relationship, and now she returned with him to Scandinavia.

In Malmö, Reich continued to work with his students, and he founded a new journal, *Publication for Political Psychology and Sexual Economy*. However, he was primarily occupied with plans for laboratory experiments to attempt to confirm his hypothesis that sexuality is identical with a bioelectrical charge and that the orgasm is fundamentally an electrical discharge. Intrinsic to this assumption was his

clinical observation of a four-beat process in the orgasm which he called the tension-charge (TC) or orgasm formula: mechanical tension→bioelectrical charge→bioelectrical discharge→mechanical relaxation.

Meanwhile, the conflict within the psychoanalytic movement was intensifying. Reactionary analysts were gradually taking over the German organization. All Jewish members, whatever their orientation, were removed from leadership positions, and it was even suggested that they could or should retire. A group of young analysts who opposed the death instinct theorists and adhered to the possibilities of Reich's sex-political work gathered together as "dialectical-materialistic" analysts. They considered themselves an opposition group within the international organization. When Reich left Berlin, Otto Fenichel had assumed leadership of this group. He tried to run it as a secret organization, writing long, gossipy letters which were supposed to be burned after they had circulated. He carefully avoided mention of Reich's sex-economic viewpoint and his critique of psychoanalytic social concepts, and he determined to keep Freud out of the conflict. In fact, he stated that nothing new had been learned about sexuality since Freud. For all intents and purposes, the orgasm theory did not exist or was "old hat."

In May 1934, Reich's residency permit in Sweden expired and he was denied an extension. No reason was given. Once again, Freud refused to help. Reich returned to Denmark, where he lived illegally under an assumed name. Then, on 1 August 1934, three weeks before the International Psychoanalytic Congress in Lucerne, Reich received a letter from the secretary of the German association, advising him that his name would not appear on the list of German members. This had no particular significance, he hastened to add, as Reich's name would soon be listed among the Scandinavians. When Reich arrived at the congress on 25 August, however, he learned that he had been excluded from the German association in a secret meeting the previous year and thus automatically excluded from the international association. He tried to find out why this step had been taken and why he had not been informed, but the only reply he received was a shrug of the secretary's shoulders. Suddenly, a wide space separated him from his colleagues. The dialectical-materialistic analysts who had previously grouped together with him in opposition to Freud presented their

papers, which were often based on Reich's work, without mentioning his name. Ernest Jones told Reich that he could not attend the business meeting and could only give his scheduled lecture as a guest. Leading analysts, including Jones, Federn, and Eitingon maligned him, saying that he seduced all his female patients and was a psychopath. With Annie's help, this slander would grow into the rumor that Reich was insane and would be repeated mindlessly to this day. The executive committee tried to convince Reich to resign, but he refused. He maintained that the orgasm theory and the concepts that grew from it did not contradict clinical psychoanalysis, but, in fact, represented its legitimate scientific development. Since the executive committee rejected these concepts, he would proceed alone and call his work "sex economy." Only the Norwegians were supportive, assuring him a place in their organization and offering him the opportunity to continue his work and use the physical laboratory at the Psychological Institute in Oslo.

Finally, on the fourth day of the conference, Reich addressed the International Psychoanalytic Association for the last time.

M. B. H.

1934

*“Like fishermen, we scientists sit, perfectly ignorant, on the banks of the stream of life and cast our hooks more or less at random. Sometimes one of us pulls out mud and weeds, another fishes out a piece of gold, but a third one comes up with something that will change part of the world.”*

31 August 1934

My dear colleagues!

Having been a member of the International Psychoanalytic Association for fourteen years, I am speaking to you for the first time as a guest of the congress. One year ago, the Executive Board of the German section of the organization decided to exclude me; neither I nor the Executive Board of the IPA heard about this until four days ago. Since the Executive Board approved my exclusion, it is now my strange task to give as a nonmember a report to the congress on the current status of my scientific position. It is customary for such exclusion from an organization to be carried out or to be accepted with protestations, mutual repudiation, and other unfruitful types of behavior. Since the majority of those present do not understand the exclusion, because neither my scientific views nor my political convictions nor the remarks of those responsible revealed any reasons for this action, I believe that I can best serve the cause of psychoanalytic research by trying to disclose the background to these differences. I have frequently done this in the past in various areas, but I believe that the papers presented at this congress have proved, as never before, that the gap between two irreconcilable tendencies, which I discovered some eight years ago and which has in the meantime become unbridgeable, does indeed exist, and that my exclusion means simply that one of these tendencies is currently responsible for the field of psychoanalysis. You will already have guessed that I am referring here to the gap between the representatives of the death instinct theory and the theoreticians of the libido theory.

At this point, I do not wish to set forth in detail the fundamental differences. Instead I will try to demonstrate the direction that consistent pursuit of the problems associated with the libido theory has taken me . . .

31 August 1934

## LECTURE NOTES

FURTHER PROBLEMS AND SOME CONSEQUENCES  
OF CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Origin of the “ego-drive” energy, with clinical case histories. Fear of falling and superficial association. Fear of object loss and characterological contactlessness. Vegetative reactions after dissolution of character armor. Muscular rigidity and character block. Some psychophysiological borderline questions.

TO LOTTE LIEBECK \*

10 November 1934

Dear Lotte Liebeck:

Your letter was a great pleasure. I might have many things to say, but will have to be brief because I have little time.

While my concept of masochism, in character analysis, wrests the problem from the metaphysical realm of the death instinct, it is still far from complete. Nevertheless, it can be comprehended; one merely has to dig deep down into the analyses to reach the anxiety about the “bursting” of the genitalia. I have now finished my congress lecture and was able to expand on the relation between masochism and orgasm. Should I eventually send a copy or galley proofs to the group, for critical comment?

With Otto Fenichel the situation is *very* difficult! This friendship and inclination to understand the orgasm theory, combined with a structural inability and unconscious hostility, is a complicated problem for me. I am glad that you could judge this for yourself when you were in Sletten.

You have good reason to be deeply moved by Freud’s books; he was

\* German psychoanalyst and student of Reich’s. Translation by Therese Pol.



a wonderful man. But I was even more affected by the subsequent break in his work. This is tragic. I am curious to know if you will discern it before it becomes openly manifest. It goes back to the earliest writings (predominance of symbolic interpretation over questions of dynamics, economy, genitility, etc.). But this can only be discovered *ex post facto*. Enjoy yourself, then, and good luck in your work.

Tomorrow will be the first decisive meeting with the physiologist.\* Am very excited.

Best regards to all the colleagues and to yourself.

12 November 1934

People are armored! One feels this in every attempt at progress. This coldness and professional disinterest!

Finally had a session with Nordbo† yesterday—extremely difficult.

14 November 1934

After 1¾ years of roving, a place to live again. In Oslo, thirty-six hours from the children. Hard being without children—this active life. My vision has cost me wife and family, but it does contain an inherent logic, which is irresistible.

TO ANNIE REICH

17 November 1934

My dear Annie,

Your letter was very refreshing, and I am happy to respond to your request that I tell you more about my life. I am going through a

\* Reich was seeking a physiologist's help to design an experiment with which he could test his clinical hypothesis that sexual excitation is functionally identical with an energy charge that can be measured at the skin's surface. Cf. *The Bioelectrical Investigation of Sexuality and Anxiety* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1932).

† Norwegian physiologist.

difficult, a terribly, inordinately difficult period. I came to Oslo with some firm agreements to carry out my experiments, but as usual I am running up against people's unsociability, indifference, and feigned, profoundly paralyzed willingness to help. It will take a lot of effort to overcome all this. At any rate, by a stroke of good fortune, I have found myself an apartment to rent. Somehow or other, I will get by. But your question about my current life is more general in nature. Let me have a go at it. You see, Annie, about thirteen years ago when I described to you my absolutely rotten mood and met with rejection on your part, I did not know, and did not even suspect, that I was experiencing in myself the much maligned vegetative longing, the feeble vestiges of life, the ruins of the yearning for happiness on which reactionary mysticism is based. There are three possibilities in such a situation: one can become a resigned or melancholic cynic like Céline (whose book I am now reading); one can be destroyed by it, like all psychopaths in the world; or one can fight against the misery of the world and thereby run the risk of being thought a Don Quixote. Without realizing what I was doing, I chose this last route in becoming a sexologist and discovering the function of the orgasm. My choice has proved as bitter as it was unavoidable. I have so far fought my way through many difficulties and achieved quite a lot, but the task is immense and there is no end in sight, no matter how much I would like it to be otherwise. The problems continue to spread like fire. Let me give you some examples. The tension-charge law, which I see as the basis of orgasm, seems to control the mitotic processes of cell division; you will already have read that the sexuality-anxiety antithesis leads to a unitary view of the vegetative apparatus. It is not my fault that I happened to make an observation that has unearthed such an enormous amount of material for discussion. Like fishermen, we scientists sit, perfectly ignorant, on the banks of the stream of life and cast our hooks more or less at random. Sometimes one of us pulls out mud and weeds, another fishes out a piece of gold, but a third one comes up with something that will change part of the world. You must understand that I am deeply immersed in the subject matter and, as a consequence, I can sense perspectives long before someone less well versed and less interested in the topic can see them. Often, such a person regards me as a psychopath. Whether and to what extent that is a true description of me will become clear one day, thirty or three

hundred years from now. I am not a megalomaniac, I just have agonizingly good intuition; I sense most things before I actually comprehend them. And the most important “intuitions” usually turn out to be correct, like the belief I expressed in Seefeld in 1923 that an erection is identical with the reaching out of a pseudopod, that anxiety is a retreat into oneself. Now, eleven years later, a whole new area of physiology revolves around that. You will be reassured to know that this has been confirmed to me by a physiologist.

Sometimes I feel like despairing. There are so many difficulties on all sides that I often wish I had dealt with the biophysiological aspect of the problem first before tackling the sexual-sociological side. Hostility upon hostility, conscious or unconscious, wherever I turn. People cannot stand being told that they are throwing away their lives for nothing, that they have lost their lives. This is not just sexual resistance on their parts. They are afraid of perceiving their own vegetative longing. That may sound romantic to you, but romanticism, or what is at its root, is, after all, a reality that brought Hitler to power. Is that not sufficiently material? So I am still fighting on and could not turn back even if I wanted to. Please believe me, finally, that I am not opposing Otto [Fenichel] out of masochism or for some frivolous reason. I dread the thought of it. But the man is so unthinking, for all his awareness. He has badly misunderstood my orgasm theory and everything connected with it; he is so tied to me and at the same time so hostile, jealous, nervous that I am afraid I will soon have to deal forcefully with him. If only he would just sit there quietly and call himself my personal friend but not my champion. I got on well with Barbara Lantos\* in Paris, for example, after she told me that she was not interested and would not fight for the cause. I also get on with you better since you openly declared where you stand. But Otto circulates these silly letters, plays like a small child at being an organizer, and has no idea what it is all about. I would also be willing to let him go right ahead as he is doing were it not for the fact that he is already obscuring the painfully gained clarity about the method and character of dialectical-materialistic psychoanalysis, is making stupid compromises, and is a coward. It is better to have an openly declared enemy than an unconsciously hostile friend. Otto is an example to us all.

\* German psychoanalyst who had contact with Reich in Berlin.

But there is more involved. I had to get away from your world of doubts, precisely because I loved you. I had to fight against Freud, put my good position at risk, abandon the children, make enemies with so many people. I often yearn for calm and quiet and peaceful work, but I know too much. In Scandinavia I have a group of about twenty very smart, educated, dear people. One of them said to me once: "It is almost unbearable to have a better understanding of so much, to understand so much more about human longing." The age and the society in which we live are currently against us. We work like the devil and encourage one another to hang on. We are not utopian dreamers; we proceed step by step, from detail to detail, with a basic view of life that we constantly verify. We may end up destroying ourselves, but we may also achieve a breakthrough. That is how I live.

Elsa is a major part of all this. She understands me without flattering me; on the contrary, she is sharply critical, but in a structured way. She is, however, suffering from a severe neurosis, and I am afraid that we will not be able to remain together if she is not cured. She has bravely borne all the misery of the last two years of nomadic life, but she suffered during that time and could not develop anything for herself; she relies on me, which is very difficult for her to accept as someone who is striving to be independent. Perhaps now we will get some peace. But the fact that we were stopped by the police at the Swedish border is proof that the political reactionaries are keeping an eye on us. Stockholm had notified them. And yet, I have done nothing public for one and a half years. No, these people know what it is all about.

Very often I waver and start to doubt things that once appeared as solid as a rock. But then, so many new confirming facts come streaming from newspapers, from movements like the Oxford Movement, and from thousands of details, that I cannot keep up with it all. I am suffering a great deal, but on the whole I am in good spirits and I am happy to be a pillar of support for a large group of people. (Incidentally, most of them have not been analyzed by me, i.e., have not been hypnotized.\*)

It is not clear how long I will remain in Oslo. Probably one year if the experiments are a success and develop further, but most likely I will stay longer unless I manage to continue the experiments in Paris

\* Reich had been accused of having hypnotic power over his patients.

or Vienna. Perhaps institutes in other cities will let me conduct the experiments there. But I doubt it. I would very much like to go back to Vienna. I don't know whether I will be allowed. I want to, if only because of the children. I suffer terribly from being separated from them. After all, I have only experienced a part of their growing up, and I love children so much. I will definitely have more children of my own. Later.

Perhaps, dear Annie, we will get on better with each other one day. Somewhere you have it in you, like everybody has. But this damn wall, this armor. I now understand everything much better and regret a great deal. I am not only older but also wiser, and all in all I have calmed down.

I probably will not come down at Christmas. It costs too much and right now I need an enormous amount of money for the publishing business and also for the apartment. But it's extremely difficult for me to accept the idea that I will not see the children again until Easter. What do you think about allowing Eva to come here for Christmas? I realize that it would be difficult. Think about it carefully and tell me what I should do.

How did you like the last issue of the journal? Sometimes I feel that we are talking into a great void without getting an answer but that the walls have ears that are listening attentively. Can you try to gather up a few people in Prague willing to donate about 10 Danish kroner a month? That would be a great help. We are starting to organize circles of friends. But I am not clear as to what form the future organization will take. For the time being the main work is purely scientific. All polemics against political parties have been stopped. We are now also analyzing the mass psychology of films. It is tremendously interesting and important work. One can learn a lot in the process. The work is being done by a woman in Copenhagen, an industrial artist.

Write again. It makes me so happy. Living here one feels "totally alone in space."

TO PSYCHOANALYSTS IN DENMARK, NORWAY,  
AND GERMANY WHO ARE IN CONFLICT  
WITH FREUD  
16 December 1934\*

Dear Colleagues:

My exclusion from the International Psychoanalytic Association resulted from a chain of circumstances that served the interests of my opponents. The German association did not actually want to exclude me and had taken it for granted that I would automatically become a member of the Scandinavian section. I was asked by numerous colleagues from various local groups to rejoin via the Norwegian organization, and three of its members, who were attending the congress, assured me of acceptance. I could not make up my mind at that time and wished to consider the matter. When I moved to Oslo to carry out certain experiments concerning my sexual theory, people collaborated with me as if I were a member. The close connection of my work with the IPA group, and renewed assurances from colleagues in Oslo, prompted me to reapply for membership. No one had expected that Dr. Fenichel would bitterly oppose me and use his influence against me. A few days earlier, I had asked Fenichel for his opinion, but he merely shrugged. The reason for his opposition is as follows: he said I harmed the cause of natural scientific (dialectical-materialistic) psychoanalysis; it would be better if I remained outside and if the cause were even dissociated from my name and person.

1. *Chairman Prof. Schjelderup's† stand:* Schjelderup personally favors my readmission and only wished to bring up two questions for discussion: First, are we factually (orgasm theory and character analysis) in agreement with Reich? (His other activities do not concern us.) Second, are we willing to take the risk connected with Reich's admission—for instance, exclusion of the whole group?

2. *Fenichel's function:* I must recall briefly that before I moved to Berlin in November 1930, Fenichel had neither called himself a dialectical-materialistic analyst nor been connected with the cause in

\* Translation by Therese Pol.

† Harald Schjelderup, Norwegian psychoanalyst and student of character analysis, whose position as a professor at the Psychological Institute of the University of Oslo had made it possible for him to offer Reich a position at that institution.

any way except through my writings, which he had reviewed. In Berlin, there formed a small circle of analysts, among them Fenichel, who were interested in my scientific concepts. Since the situation in the association soon became difficult and the confusion in the field of libido theory and death instinct theory was enormous and since I had no time myself, I asked Fenichel to keep the interested colleagues continually informed on the status of the problem. I soon had the uncomfortable feeling that, although Fenichel reported on my concepts very ably and at first openly championed them, he increasingly—in direct ratio to the growing difficulties—tried to bridge contradictions, to water down concepts—in short, to reconcile all sides. In my paper “Dialectical Materialism and Psychoanalysis” I had clearly shown which of the scientific views I had always advocated were held in common [with Freudian theory]. But the contradiction between death instinct theory and orgasm theory, between the biological and the sociological concept of sexual repression, between the bourgeois-metaphysical and the dialectical-materialistic ideology had to be worked out equally clearly. I know from experience that there is no better way to serve Freud and psychoanalysis than to separate the scientific from the nonscientific within the doctrine of psychoanalysis. This is the right way to gain adherents to psychoanalysis in those circles that matter. Fenichel never wanted to commit himself unequivocally to my scientific platform. He did not want to be just one of the “Reich group,” but neither did he do anything on his own to oppose the death-instinct theory and everything connected with it. Instead, he based the struggle on purely organizational questions and presented a childish stubborn opposition. I was always against it and tried to make clear to him that a struggle within a scientific organization must be conducted along factual and professional lines, excluding political and even organizational factors. I told him that if we aroused the professional interest of our colleagues they would be more likely to commit themselves politically and organizationally. At the congress, colleagues who were friends of Fenichel’s and had no connection with me made the same criticism, and when the board resorted to all its diplomatic wiles, Fenichel caved in completely. The true reason is that he never intended to risk exclusion. However, he should have come out and said so instead of hiding behind the excuse that one first has to have greater influence. How? By avoiding all controversy,

by soft-pedaling one's work, and by alienating all sympathies with such timorous attitudes? Look how differently the non-Marxist Schjelderup behaved, purely instinctually! And look how much sympathy the Norwegians gained from his stand! Although I suffered an organizational defeat at the congress, sympathy for me had never run so high. It was Fenichel's job to use this as the basis for his own work. Instead, because he felt I was becoming more and more of a burden, he turned against me, became vindictive, and finally, as I have said, opposed my readmission—always on the pretext that he was protecting the “cause” from me.

3. I would ask you to note that I deeply regret having placed any confidence in Fenichel and seeking his help. I cannot entrust the dialectical-materialistic theory of psychoanalysis, which I have worked out over many years despite the gravest trials, to anyone else, nor can I dissociate myself from it. I have no quarrel with anyone doing exactly as he pleases, but I must defend myself against usurpers and other such services of friendship. Responsibility for the “cause” of “dialectical-materialistic psychoanalysis” and its core, orgasm theory, must still be reserved for me alone. Naturally, one may hold different opinions on what I have called dialectical-materialistic psychoanalysis and sex economy. But when I describe my orgasm theory as its primary criterion and when Fenichel, as has been shown, will not accept it or misunderstands it, we are back to the unhappy confusion of terminology and concepts. I therefore find myself faced with the unpleasant task of summarizing my scientific position. Basically, it consists of three main parts:

- a. *The concepts held in common with Freudian theory* (the materialistic dialectic already developed by Freud).
- b. *Orgasm theory and character analysis* as consistent extensions of Freud's natural science and, simultaneously, as representative of those theories that I oppose to death instinct theory and the interpretive technique. Part *b* is still in the realm of psychoanalysis.
- c. My own concepts of sexuality, based on orgasm theory and transcending the sphere of psychology (sex economy and sex politics). Part *c* has merely points of contact with psychoanalysis. It forms an independent field: the basic law of the sexual process.

Whoever expounds a “dialectical-materialistic psychology” without



explicitly expounding its very core, with the risks and sacrifices this entails, has simply made up his “own” dialectical-materialistic psychology and is at liberty to teach it. There is nothing we can do about the nuisance of activities named at whim.

I realize that these comments on the nature and particularity of the scientific trend I represent will continue to be misunderstood by those who have not experienced with me the developments of the last twelve years. I can only ask you to have patience until the planned comprehensive presentation is submitted. The basic principles worked out in special fields are set down in my published writings.

The fact that I dissociate myself from imprecise, nebulous concepts should not be held against me any more than I hold it against people that they react to my concepts cautiously or negatively. It was from my teacher Freud that I learned the art of waiting and keeping my ideas free from undesirable interpretations and mongrelizations. I prefer to have fewer relationships and, instead, more order in my work.

I would not like for this letter to be misconstrued as an attempt to alienate Fenichel’s “circle” and his friends. Every colleague is of course free to identify himself with Fenichel’s brand of dialectical-materialistic psychoanalysis and to declare himself against my concept. But my task can only be to continue developing the trend I have established and to keep those groups that are interested continually informed on the progress of the work. I am also grateful for every suggestion and constructive criticism.

Finally, a few comments on the struggle for the scientific trend in psychoanalysis. I do not believe that this struggle can be won without a clear-cut, courageous, and factual differentiation of common features and differences. Whoever fears exclusion—which is not so reprehensible—cannot take part and is much more valuable as a quiet sympathetic bystander than as an active fighter. It is self-evident, however, that the victory of the scientific over the metaphysical trend in psychoanalysis will be more easily attained and secured if we succeed in revealing to those groups that have plainly demonstrated their scientific orientation the various consequences inherent in the raw material of their own work. The commitment to the dialectical-materialistic trend in psychoanalysis in no way entails a similar commitment to the political trend of communism. There is no doubt that the person who is a valid scientist in his chosen professional specialty

is to that extent safe from the influences of political reaction. And scientific integrity carries infinitely more weight than political commitment. Such natural scientists will someday become the decisive force of social progress. They should merely recognize the origins of the error in their work.