

WILHELM REICH

The Mass Psychology of
FASCISM

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P R E F A C E

*to the Third Edition,
Revised and Enlarged*

Extensive and painstaking therapeutic work on the human character has led me to the conclusion that, as a rule, we are dealing with three different layers of the biopsychic structure in the evaluation of human reactions. As I demonstrated in my book *Character-Analysis*, these layers of the character structure are deposits of social development, which function autonomously. On the surface layer of his personality the average man is reserved, polite, compassionate, responsible, conscientious. There would be no social tragedy of the human animal if this surface layer of the personality were in direct contact with the deep natural core. This, unfortunately, is not the case. The surface layer of social cooperation is not in contact with the deep biologic core of one's selfhood; it is borne by a *second*, an intermediate character layer, which consists exclusively of cruel, sadistic, lascivious, rapacious, and envious impulses. It represents the Freudian "unconscious" or "what is repressed"; to put it in the language of sex-economy, it represents the sum total of all so-called "secondary drives."

Orgone biophysics made it possible to comprehend the Freudian unconscious, that which is antisocial in man, as a secondary result of the repression of primary biologic urges. If one penetrates through this destructive second layer, deeper into the biologic substratum of the human animal, one always discovers the third, deepest, layer, which we call the *biologic core*. In this core, under favorable social conditions, man is an essentially honest, industrious, cooperative, loving, and, if motivated, rationally hating animal. Yet it is not at all possible to bring about a loosening of the character structure of present-day man by

penetrating to this deepest and so promising layer without first eliminating the nongenuine, spuriously social surface. Drop the mask of cultivation, and it is not natural sociality that prevails at first, but only the perverse, sadistic character layer.

It is this unfortunate structuralization that is responsible for the fact that every natural, social, or libidinous impulse that wants to spring into action from the biologic core has to pass through the layer of secondary perverse drives and is thereby distorted. This distortion transforms the original social nature of the natural impulses and makes it perverse, thus inhibiting every genuine expression of life.

Let us now transpose our human structure into the social and political sphere.

It is not difficult to see that the various political and ideological groupings of human society correspond to the various layers of the structure of the human character. We, however, decline to accept the error of idealistic philosophy, namely that this human structure is immutable to all eternity. *After social conditions and changes have transmuted man's original biologic demands and made them a part of his character structure, the latter reproduces the social structure of society in the form of ideologies.*

Since the breakdown of the primitive work-democratic form of social organization, the biologic core of man has been without social representation. The "natural" and "sublime" in man, that which links him to his cosmos, has found genuine expression only in great works of art, especially in music and in painting. Until now, however, it has not exercised a fundamental influence on the shaping of human society, if by society we mean the community of mankind and not the culture of a small, rich upper class.

In the ethical and social ideals of liberalism we recognize the advocacy of the characteristics of the surface layer of the character, which is intent upon self-control and tolerance. This liberalism lays stress upon its ethics for the purpose of holding in suppression the "monster in man," our layer of "secondary drives," the Freudian "unconscious." The natural sociability of the deepest third layer, the core layer, is foreign to the liberal. He deplors the perversion of the human character and seeks to overcome it by means of ethical norms, but the social catastrophes of the twentieth century show that he did not get very far with this approach.

Everything that is genuinely revolutionary, every genuine art and science, stems from man's natural biologic core. Thus far, neither the genuine revolutionary nor the artist nor scientist has won favor with masses of people and acted as their leader, or if he has, he has not been able to hold them in the sphere of vital interest for any length of time.

The case of fascism, in contrast to liberalism and genuine revolution, is quite different. Its essence embodies neither the surface nor the depth, but by and large the second, intermediate character layer of secondary drives.

When this book was first written, fascism was generally regarded as a "political party," which, as other "social groups," advocated an organized "political idea." According to this appraisal "the fascist party was instituting fascism by means of force or through 'political maneuver.'"

Contrary to this, my medical experiences with men and women of various classes, races, nations, religious beliefs, etc., taught me that "fascism" is only the organized political expression of the structure of the average man's character, a structure that is confined neither to certain races or nations nor to certain parties, but is general and international. Viewed with respect to man's character, "*fascism*" is the basic emotional attitude of the suppressed man of our authoritarian machine civilization and its mechanistic-mystical conception of life.

It is the mechanistic-mystical character of modern man that produces fascist parties, and not vice versa.

The result of erroneous political thinking is that even today fascism is conceived as a specific national characteristic of the Germans or the Japanese. All further erroneous interpretations follow from this initial erroneous conception.

To the detriment of genuine efforts to achieve freedom, fascism was and is still conceived as the dictatorship of a small reactionary clique. The tenacity with which this error persists is to be ascribed to our fear of recognizing the true state of affairs: fascism is an *international* phenomenon, which pervades all bodies of human society of *all* nations. This conclusion is in agreement with the international events of the past fifteen years.

My character-analytic experiences have convinced me that there is not a single individual who does not bear the elements of fascist feeling

and thinking in his structure. As a political movement fascism differs from other reactionary parties inasmuch as it is *borne and championed by masses of people*.

I am fully conscious of the enormous responsibility involved in making such an assertion. And in the interest of this lacerated world I should like the toiling masses to be just as clear about their responsibility for fascism.

A sharp distinction must be made between ordinary militarism and fascism. Wilhelmian Germany was militaristic, but it was not fascistic.

Since fascism, whenever and wherever it makes its appearance, is a movement borne by masses of people, it betrays all the characteristics and contradictions present in the character structure of the mass individual. It is not, as is commonly believed, a purely reactionary movement—it represents an amalgam between *rebellious* emotions and reactionary social ideas.

If we conceive of being revolutionary as the rational rebellion against intolerable conditions in human society, the rational will “to get to the root of all things” (“radical” = “radic” = “root”) and to improve them, then fascism is *never* revolutionary. It can of course appear in the guise of revolutionary emotions. But it is not the physician who tackles a disease with reckless invectives whom we call revolutionary, but the one who examines the causes of the disease quietly, courageously, and painstakingly, and fights it. Fascist rebelliousness always accrues where a revolutionary emotion, out of fear of the truth, is distorted into illusion.

In its pure form fascism is the sum total of all the *irrational* reactions of the average human character. To the obtuse sociologist who lacks the mettle to recognize the supreme role played by irrationality in the history of man, the fascist racial theory appears to be nothing more than an imperialistic interest, or, more mildly speaking, a “prejudice.” The same holds true for the irresponsible glib politician. The scope and widespread dissemination of these “racial prejudices” are evidence of their origin in the irrational part of the human character. The racial theory is not a product of fascism. On the contrary: it is fascism that is a product of racial hatred and is its politically organized expression. It follows from this that there is a German, Italian, Spanish, Anglo-Saxon, Jewish, and Arabian fascism. *Race ideology is a pure biopathic expression of the character structure of the organically impotent man.*

The sadistically perverse character of race ideology is also betrayed

in its attitude toward religion. Fascism is supposed to be a reversion to paganism and an archenemy of religion. Far from it—fascism is the supreme expression of religious mysticism. As such, it comes into being in a peculiar social form. Fascism countenances that religiosity that stems from sexual perversion, and it transforms the masochistic character of the old patriarchal religion of suffering into a sadistic religion. In short, it transposes religion from the “other-worldliness” of the philosophy of suffering to the “this worldliness” of sadistic murder.

Fascist mentality is the mentality of the “little man,” who is enslaved and craves authority and is at the same time rebellious. It is no coincidence that all fascist dictators stem from the reactionary milieu of the little man. The industrial magnate and the feudal militarist exploit this social fact for their own purposes, after it has evolved within the framework of the general suppression of life-impulses. In the form of fascism, mechanistic, authoritarian civilization reaps from the suppressed little man only what it has sown in the masses of subjugated human beings in the way of mysticism, militarism, automatism, over the centuries. This little man has studied the big man’s behavior all too well, and he reproduces it in a distorted and grotesque fashion. The fascist is the drill sergeant in the colossal army of our deeply sick, highly industrialized civilization. It is not with impunity that the hullabaloo of high politics is made a show of in front of the little man. The little sergeant has surpassed the imperialistic general in everything: in martial music: in goose-stepping; in commanding and obeying; in cowering before ideas; in diplomacy, strategy, and tactic; in dressing and parading; in decorating and “honorating.” A Kaiser Wilhelm was a miserable duffer in all these things compared with the famished civil servant’s son, Hitler. When a “proletarian” general pins his chest full of medals, he gives a demonstration of the little man who will not be “outclassed” by the “genuine” big general.

An extensive and thorough study of the suppressed little man’s character, an intimate knowledge of his backstage life, are indispensable prerequisites to an understanding of the forces fascism builds upon.

In the rebellion of vast numbers of abused human animals against the hollow civilities of *false* liberalism (not to be mistaken with *genuine* liberalism and *genuine* tolerance), it was the character layer, consisting of secondary drives, that appeared.

The fascist madman cannot be made innocuous if he is sought,

according to the prevailing political circumstances, only in the German or the Italian and not in the American and the Chinese man as well; if he is not tracked down *in oneself*; if we are not conversant with the social institutions that hatch him daily.

Fascism can be crushed only if it is countered *objectively* and *practically*, with a well-grounded knowledge of life's processes. In political maneuver, acts of diplomacy and making a show, it is without peer. But it has no answer to the *practical* questions of life, for it sees everything merely in the speculum of ideology or in the shape of the national uniform.

When a fascist character, regardless of hue, is heard sermonizing about the "honor of the nation" (instead of talking about the honor of man) or the "salvation of the sacred family and the race" (instead of the community of toiling mankind); when he is seen puffing himself up and has his chops full of slogans, let him be asked quietly and simply in public:

"What are you doing in a practical way to feed the nation, without murdering other nations? What are you doing as a physician to combat chronic diseases, what as an educator to intensify the child's joy of living, what as an economist to erase poverty, what as a social worker to alleviate the weariness of mothers having too many children, what as an architect to promote hygienic conditions in living quarters? Let's have no more of your chatter. Give us a straightforward, concrete answer or shut up!"

It follows from this that international fascism will never be overcome by political maneuver. It will fall victim to the natural organization of work, love, and knowledge on an international scale.

In our society, love and knowledge still do not have the power at their disposal to regulate human existence. In fact, these great forces of the positive principle of life are not conscious of their enormity, their indispensability, their overwhelming importance for social existence. It is for this reason that human society today, one year after the military victory over party fascism, still finds itself on the brink of the abyss. The fall of our civilization is inevitable if those who work, the natural scientists of all living (not dead) branches of knowledge and the givers and receivers of natural love, should not become conscious of their enormous responsibility quickly enough.

The life-impulse can exist without fascism, but fascism cannot exist without the life-impulse. Fascism is the vampire leeches to the body of the living, the impulse to murder given free rein, when love calls for fulfillment in spring.

Will individual and social freedom, will the self-regulation of our lives and of the lives of our offspring, advance peacefully or violently? It is a fearful question. No one knows the answer.

Yet, he who understands the living functions in an animal and in a newborn babe, he who knows the meaning of devoted work, be he a mechanic, researcher, or artist, knows. He ceases to think with the concepts that party manipulators have spread in this world. The life-impulse cannot "seize power violently," for it would not know what to do with power. Does this conclusion mean that the life-impulse will always be at the mercy of political gangsterism, will always be its victim, its martyr? Does it mean that the would-be politician will always suck life's blood? This would be a false conclusion.

As a physician it is my job to heal diseases. As a researcher I must shed light upon unknown relationships in nature. Now if a political windbag should come along and try to force me to leave my patients in the lurch and to put aside my microscope, I would not let myself be inconvenienced. I would simply throw him out, if he refused to leave voluntarily. Whether I have to use force against intruders to protect my work on life does not depend on me or on my work, but on the intruders' degree of insolence. But just imagine now that all those who are engaged in vital living work could recognize the political windbag *in time*. They would act in the same way. Perhaps this simplified example contains some intimation of the answer to the question how the life-impulse will have to defend itself sooner or later against intruders and destroyers.

The Mass Psychology of Fascism was thought out during the German crisis years, 1930-33. It was written in 1933; the first edition appeared in September of 1933 and the second edition in April of 1934, in Denmark.

Ten years have elapsed since then. The book's exposure of the irrational nature of the fascist ideology often received a far too enthusiastic acclaim from all political camps, an acclaim that was not based on accurate knowledge and did not lead to appropriate action. Copies of the book—sometimes pseudonymously—crossed the German border in

large numbers. The illegal revolutionary movement in Germany accorded it a happy reception. For years it served as a source of contact with the German anti-fascist movement.

The fascists banned the book in 1935, together with all literature on political psychology.¹ Excerpts from it were printed in France, America, Czechoslovakia, Scandinavia, and other countries, and it was discussed in detailed articles. Only the party Socialists, who viewed everything from an economic point of view, and the salaried party officials, who were in control of the organs of political power, did not and still do not know what to make of it. In Denmark and in Norway, for instance, it was severely attacked and denounced as "counterrevolutionary" by the leadership of the Communist party. It is significant, on the other hand, that the revolution-oriented youth from fascist groups understood the sex-economic explanation of the irrational nature of the racial theory.

In 1942 an English source suggested that the book be translated into English. Thus I was confronted with the task of examining the validity of the book ten years after it was written. The result of this examination exactly reflects the stupendous revolution in thinking that had taken place over the course of the last decade. It is also a test of the

¹ *Deutsches Reichsgesetzblatt* (an official gazette announcing new laws), No. 213, April 13, 1935. According to the VO* of February 4, 1933, the publication "What Is Class Consciousness" by Ernst Parell**; "Dialectical Materialism and Psychoanalysis" by Wilhelm Reich; No. 1 and No. 2 of the politico-psychological series of the publishers for sexual politics, Copenhagen-Prague-Zurich, as well as all other publications scheduled to appear in this series, are to be confiscated and withdrawn from circulation by the Prussian police, as they constitute a danger to public security and order.

41230/35 II 2 B 1 Berlin
9/4/35 Gestapo

No. 2146, May 7, 1935. According to the VO of the President of the State issued on February 28, 1933, the distribution of all foreign publications of the politico-psychological series of the publishers for sexual politics (Publishers for Sexual Politics, Copenhagen, Denmark, also Prague, Czechoslovakia, and Zurich, Switzerland) is prohibited in the State until further notice.

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* VO = Verordnung = decree.

** A fictitious name used by Reich.

tenableness of sex-economic sociology and its bearing on the social revolutions of our century. I had not had this book in my hands for a number of years. As I began to correct and enlarge it, I was stunned by the errors in thinking that I had made fifteen years before, by the revolutions in thought that had taken place, and by the great strain the overcoming of fascism had put on science.

To begin with, I could well afford to celebrate a great triumph. The sex-economic analysis of fascist ideology had not only held its own against the criticism of the time—its essential points were more than confirmed by the events of the past ten years. It outlived the downfall of the purely economic, vulgar conception of Marxism, with which the German Marxist parties had tried to cope with fascism. That a new edition is called for some ten years after its initial publication speaks *in favor of Mass Psychology*. None of the Marxist writings of the 1930's, whose authors had denounced sex-economy, could make such a claim.

My revision of the second edition reflects the revolution that had taken place in my thinking.

Around 1930 I had no idea of the *natural work-democratic relations* of working men and women. The inchoate sex-economic insights into the formation of the human structure were inserted into the intellectual framework of Marxist parties. At that time I was active in liberal, socialist, and communist cultural organizations and was regularly forced to make use of the conventional Marxist sociologic concepts in my expositions on sex-economy. Even then the enormous contradiction between sex-economic sociology and vulgar economism was brought out in embarrassing disputes with various party functionaries. As I still believed in the fundamental scientific nature of the Marxist parties, it was difficult for me to understand why the party members attacked the social effects of my medical work most sharply precisely when masses of employees, industrial workers, small businessmen, students, etc., thronged to the sex-economic organizations to obtain knowledge of living life. I shall never forget the "Red professor" from Moscow who was ordered to attend one of the lectures in Vienna in 1928, to advocate the "party line" against me. Among other things, this professor declared that "the Oedipus complex was all nonsense," such a thing did not exist. Fourteen years later his Russian comrades bled to death under the tanks of the führer-enslaved German machine-men.

One should certainly have expected parties claiming to fight for

human freedom to be more than happy about the effects of my political and psychological work. As the archives of our institute convincingly show, the exact opposite was the case. The greater the social effects of our work on mass psychology, the harsher were the countermeasures adopted by the party politicians. As early as 1929-30, Austrian Social Democrats barred the doors of their cultural organizations to the lecturers from our organization. In 1932, notwithstanding the strong protest of their members, the socialist as well as communist organizations prohibited the distribution of the publications of the "Publishers for Sexual Politics," which was located in Berlin. I myself was warned that I would be shot as soon as the Marxists came to power in Germany. That same year the communist organizations in Germany closed the doors of their assembly halls to physicians advocating sex-economy. This too was done against the will of the organizations' members. I was expelled from both organizations on grounds that I had introduced sexology into sociology, and shown how it affects the formation of human structure. In the years between 1934 and 1937 it was always Communist party functionaries who warned fascist circles in Europe about the "hazard" of sex-economy. This can be documentarily proven. Sex-economic publications were turned back at the Soviet Russian border, as were the throngs of refugees who were trying to save themselves from German fascism. There is no valid argument in justification of this.

These events, which seemed so senseless to me at that time, became completely clear while revising *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*. Sex-economic-biologic knowledge had been compressed into the terminology of vulgar Marxism as an elephant into a foxhole. As early as 1938, while revising my "youth" book,* I noticed that every sex-economic word had retained its meaning after eight years, whereas every party slogan I had included in the book had become meaningless. The same holds true for the third edition of *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*.

It is generally clear today that "fascism" is not the act of a Hitler or a Mussolini, but that it is the *expression of the irrational structure of mass man*. It is more clear today than it was ten years ago that *the race theory is biologic mysticism*. We also have far more knowledge at our

* This is a reference to *Der Sexuelle Kampf der Jugend* (The Sexual Fight of Youth).

disposal, which enables us to understand man's orgasmic yearnings, and we have already begun to divine that *fascist mysticism is orgasmic yearning, restricted by mystic distortion and inhibition of natural sexuality*. The *sex-economic* statements about fascism are more valid today than they were ten years ago. On the other hand the Marxist party concepts used in this book had to be completely eliminated and replaced by new concepts.

Does this mean that the Marxist economic theory is fundamentally false? I should like to answer this question with an illustration. Is the microscope of Pasteur's time or the water pump constructed by Leonardo da Vinci, "false"? Marxism is a scientific theory of economy, which originated in the social conditions at the beginning and middle of the nineteenth century. But the social process did not stop there; it continued into the totally different process of the twentieth century. In this *new* social process we find all the essential features that existed in the nineteenth century, just as we rediscover the basic construction of the Pasteurian microscope in the modern microscope, or da Vinci's basic principle in modern water supply. Yet neither the Pasteurian microscope nor Leonardo da Vinci's pump would be of any use to anybody today. They have become outdated as a result of the totally new processes and functions corresponding to a totally new conception and technology. The Marxist parties in Europe failed and came to naught (I don't derive any malicious joy from saying that!) because they tried to comprehend twentieth-century fascism, which was something completely new, with concepts belonging to the nineteenth century. They lost their impetus as social organizations because they failed to keep alive and develop the vital possibilities inherent in every scientific theory. I have no regrets about the many years I spent as a physician in Marxist organizations. My knowledge of society does not derive from books; essentially it was acquired from my practical involvement in the fight of masses of people for a dignified and free existence. In fact, my best sex-economic insights were gained from the *errors* in thinking of these same masses of people, i.e., the very errors that made them ripe for the fascist plague. As a physician I got to know the international working man and his problems in a way that no party politician could have known him. The party politician saw only "the working class," which he wanted "to infuse with class consciousness." I saw man as a creature who had come under the domination of the worst possible social conditions, conditions

he himself had created and bore within himself as a part of his character and from which he sought to free himself in vain. The gap between the purely economic and bio-sociologic views became unbridgeable. The theory of "class man" on the one hand was set against the *irrational* nature of the society of the animal "man" on the other hand.

Everyone knows today that Marxist economic ideas have more or less infiltrated and influenced the thinking of modern man, yet very often individual economists and sociologists are not conscious of the source of their ideas. Such concepts as "class," "profit," "exploitation," "class conflict," "commodity," and "surplus value," have become common knowledge. For all that, today there is no party that can be regarded as the heir and living representative of the scientific wealth of Marxism, when it comes to the actual facts of sociological development and not to the slogans, which are no longer in agreement with their original import.

In the years between 1937 and 1939 the new sex-economic concept "*work-democracy*" was developed. The third edition of this book includes an exposition of the principal features of this new sociologic concept. It comprises the best, still valid, sociologic findings of Marxism. It also takes into account the social changes that have taken place in the concept "worker" in the course of the last hundred years. I know from experience that it is the "sole representatives of the working class" and the former and emerging "leaders of the international proletariat" who will oppose this extension of the social concept of the worker on grounds that it is "fascist," "Trotskyian," "counterrevolutionary," "hostile to the party," etc. Organizations of workers that exclude Negroes and practice Hitlerism do not deserve to be regarded as creators of a new and free society. Hitlerism, however, is not confined to the Nazi party or to the borders of Germany; it infiltrates workers' organizations as well as liberal and democratic circles. Fascism is not a political party but a specific concept of life and attitude toward man, love, and work. This does not alter the fact that the policies pursued by the prewar Marxist parties are played out and have no future. Just as the concept of sexual energy was lost within the psychoanalytic organization only to reappear strong and young in the discovery of the orgone, the concept of the international worker lost its meaning in the practices of Marxist parties only to be resurrected within the framework of sex-economic sociology. For the activities of sex-economists are possible only within the frame-

work of socially necessary work and not within the framework of reactionary, mystified, nonworking life.

Sex-economic sociology was born from the effort to harmonize Freud's depth psychology with Marx's economic theory. Instinctual and socio-economic processes determine human existence. But we have to reject eclectic attempts to combine "instinct" and "economy" arbitrarily. Sex-economic sociology dissolves the contradiction that caused psychoanalysis to forget the social factor and Marxism to forget the animal origin of man. As I stated elsewhere: Psychoanalysis is the mother, sociology the father, of sex-economy. *But a child is more than the sum total of his parents.* He is a new, independent living creature; he is the seed of the future.

In accord with the new, sex-economic comprehension of the concept of "work," the following changes were made in the book's terminology. The concepts "communist," "socialist," "class consciousness," etc., were replaced by more specific sociologic and psychologic terms, such as "revolutionary" and "scientific." What they import is a "radical revolutionizing," "rational activity," "getting to the root of things."

This takes into account the fact that today it is not the Communist or the Socialist parties but, *in contradistinction to them*, many *non-political* groups and social classes of every political hue that are becoming more and more revolutionary, i.e., are striving for a fundamentally new, rational social order. It has become part of our universal social consciousness—and even the old bourgeois politicians are saying it—that, as a result of its fight against the fascist plague, the world has become involved in the process of an enormous, international, *revolutionary* upheaval. The words "proletariat" and "proletarian" were coined more than a hundred years ago to denote a completely defrauded class of society, which was condemned to pauperization on a mass scale. To be sure, such categories still exist today, but the great grandchildren of the nineteenth-century proletariat have become specialized, technically highly developed, indispensable, responsible industrial workers who are conscious of their skills. The words "class consciousness" are replaced by "*consciousness of one's skills*" or "*social responsibility*."

In nineteenth-century Marxism "class consciousness" was restricted to *manual* laborers. Those who were employed in other vital occupations, i.e., occupations without which society could not function, were labeled "intellectuals" or "petty bourgeois" and set against the "manual

labor proletariat." This schematic and no longer applicable juxtaposition played a very essential part in the victory of fascism in Germany. The concept "class consciousness" is not only too narrow, it does not at all tally with the structure of the class of manual workers. For this reason, "industrial work" and "proletariat" were replaced by the terms "vital work" and "the working man." These two terms include *all those who perform work that is vital to the existence of the society*. In addition to the industrial workers, this includes the physician, teacher, technician, laboratory worker, writer, social administrator, farmer, scientific worker, etc. This new conception closes a gap that contributed in no small way to the fragmentation of working human society and, consequently, led to fascism, both the black and red variety.

Owing to its lack of knowledge of mass psychology, Marxist sociology set "bourgeois" against "proletariat." This is incorrect from a psychological viewpoint. The character structure is not restricted to the capitalists; it is prevalent among the working men of all occupations. There are liberal capitalists and reactionary workers. *There are no "class distinctions" when it comes to character*. For that reason, the purely economic concepts "bourgeoisie" and "proletariat" were replaced by the concepts "reactionary" and "revolutionary" or "free-minded," which relate to man's character and not to his social class. These changes were forced upon us by the fascist plague.

The dialectical materialism Engels outlined in his *Anti-Dühring* went on to become an *energetic functionalism*. This *forward* development was made possible by the discovery of the biological energy, the orgone (1936-38). Sociology and psychology acquired a solid biological foundation. Such a development could not fail to exercise an influence on our thinking. Our extension of thought brings about changes in old concepts; new ones take the place of those that have ceased to be valid. The Marxist word "consciousness" was replaced by "dynamic structure"; "need" was replaced by "orgonotic instinctual processes"; "tradition" by "biological and characterological rigidity," etc.

The vulgar Marxist concept of "private enterprise" was totally misconstrued by man's irrationality; it was understood to mean that the liberal development of society precluded *every* private possession. Naturally, this was widely exploited by political reaction. Quite obviously, social development and individual freedom have nothing to do with the

so-called abolishment of private property. Marx's concept of private property did not refer to man's shirts, pants, typewriters, toilet paper, books, beds, savings, houses, real estate, etc. This concept was used exclusively in reference to the private ownership of the *social* means of production, i.e., those means of production that determine the general course of society. In other words: railroads, waterworks, generating plants, coal mines, etc. The "socialization of the means of production" became such a bugbear precisely because it was confounded to mean the "private expropriation" of chickens, shirts, books, residences, etc., in conformity with the ideology of the expropriated. Over the course of the past century the nationalization of the social means of production has begun to make an incursion upon the latter's private availability in all capitalist countries, in some countries more, in others less.

Since the working man's structure and capacity for freedom were too inhibited to enable him to adapt to the rapid development of social organizations, it was the "state" that carried out those acts that were actually reserved for the "community" of working man. As for Soviet Russia, the alleged citadel of Marxism, it is out of the question to speak of the "socialization of the means of production." The Marxist parties simply confused "socialization" with "nationalization." It was shown in this past war that the government of the United States also has the jurisdiction and the means of nationalizing poorly functioning industries. A *socialization* of the means of production, their transfer from the private ownership of single individuals to social ownership, sounds a lot less horrible when one realizes that today, as a result of the war, only a few independent owners remain in capitalist countries, whereas there are many trusts that are responsible to the state; when one realizes, moreover, that in Soviet Russia the social industries are certainly not managed by the people who work in them, but by groups of state functionaries. *The socialization of the social means of production will not be topical or possible until the masses of working humanity have become structurally mature, i.e., conscious of their responsibility to manage them.* The overwhelming majority of the masses today is neither willing nor mature enough for it. Moreover, a socialization of large industries, which would place these industries under the sole management of the manual laborer, excluding technicians, engineers, directors, administrators, distributors, etc., is sociologically and economically

senseless. Today such an idea is rejected by the manual laborers themselves. If that were not the case, Marxist parties would already have conquered power everywhere.

This is the most essential sociological explanation of the fact that more and more the private enterprise of the nineteenth century is turning into a state-capitalist planned economy. It must be clearly stated that even in Soviet Russia state socialism does not exist, but a rigid state capitalism *in the strict Marxian sense of the word*. According to Marx, the social condition of "capitalism" does not, as the vulgar Marxist believed, derive from the existence of individual capitalists, but from the existence of the specific "capitalist modes of production." It derives, in short, from *exchange economy* and not from *use economy*, from the *paid labor* of masses of people and from *surplus* production, whether this surplus accrues to the state *above* the society, or to the individual capitalists through their appropriation of social production. In this strict Marxian sense the capitalist system continues to exist in Russia. And it will continue to exist as long as masses of people are irrationally motivated and crave authority as they are and do at present.

The sex-economic psychology of structure adds to the economic view of society a new interpretation of man's character and biology. The removal of individual capitalists and the establishment of state capitalism in Russia in place of private capitalism, *did not effect the slightest change in the typical, helpless, subservient character-structure of masses of people*.

Moreover, the political ideology of the European Marxist parties was based on economic conditions that were confined to a period of some two hundred years, from about the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, during which the machine was developed. Twentieth century fascism, on the other hand, raised the basic question of *man's character, human mysticism and craving for authority*, which covered a *period of some four to six thousand years*. Here, too, vulgar Marxism sought to ram an elephant into a foxhole. The human structure with which sex-economic sociology is concerned did not evolve during the past two hundred years; on the contrary, it reflects a patriarchal authoritarian civilization that goes back thousands of years. Indeed, sex-economy goes so far as to say that the abominable excesses of the capitalist era of the past three thousand years (predatory imperialism, defraudation of the working man, racial subjugation, etc.) were possible only because the

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human structure of the untold masses who had endured all this had become totally dependent upon authority, incapable of freedom and extremely accessible to mysticism. That this structure is not native to man but was inculcated by social conditions and indoctrination does not alter its effects one bit; but it does point to a way out, namely *restructuring*. If being radical is understood to mean "getting to the root of things," then the point of view of sex-economic biophysics is, in the strict and positive sense of the word, infinitely more radical than that of the vulgar Marxist.

It follows from all this that the social measures of the past three hundred years can no more cope with the mass pestilence of fascism than an elephant (six thousand years) can be forced into a foxhole (three hundred years).

Hence, the discovery of natural biological work-democracy in international human intercourse is to be considered the answer to fascism. This would be true, even if not a single contemporary sex-economist, orgone biophysicist, or work-democrat should live to see its complete realization and victory over irrationality in social life.

WILHELM REICH
MAINE, AUGUST 1942

I

Ideology as a Material Force

THE CLEAVAGE

The German freedom movement prior to Hitler was inspired by Karl Marx's economic and social theory. Hence, an understanding of German fascism must proceed from an understanding of Marxism.

In the months following National Socialism's seizure of power in Germany, even those individuals whose revolutionary firmness and readiness to be of service had been proven again and again, expressed doubts about the correctness of Marx's basic conception of social processes. These doubts were generated by a fact that, though irrefutable, was at first incomprehensible: Fascism, the most extreme representative of political and economic reaction in both its goals and its nature, had become an international reality and in many countries had visibly and undeniably outstripped the socialist revolutionary movement. That this reality found its strongest expression in the highly industrialized countries only heightened the problem. The rise of nationalism in all parts of the world offset the failure of the workers' movement in a phase of modern history in which, as the Marxists contended, "the capitalist mode of production had become economically ripe for explosion." Added to this was the deeply ingrained remembrance of the failure of the Workers' International at the outbreak of World War I and of the crushing of the revolutionary uprisings outside of Russia between

1918 and 1923. They were doubts, in short, which were generated by grave facts; if they were justified, then the basic Marxist conception was false and the workers' movement was in need of a decisive reorientation, provided one still wanted to achieve its goals. If, however, the doubts were not justified, and Marx's *basic* conception of sociology was correct, then not only was a thorough and extensive analysis of the reasons for the continual failure of the workers' movement called for, but also—and this above all—a complete elucidation of the unprecedented mass movement of fascism was also needed. Only from this could a new revolutionary practice result.¹

A change in the situation was out of the question unless it could be proven that either the one or the other was the case. It was clear that neither an appeal to the "revolutionary class consciousness" of the working class nor the practice *à la Coué*—the camouflaging of defeats and the covering of important facts with illusions—a practice that was in vogue at that time, could lead to the goal. One could not content oneself with the fact that the workers' movement was also "progressing," that here and there resistance was being offered and strikes were being called. What is decisive is not that progress is being made, but at what tempo, in relation to the international strengthening and advance of political reaction.

The young work-democratic, sex-economic movement is interested in a thorough clarification of this question not only because it is a part of the social liberation fight in general but chiefly because the achievement of its goals is inextricably related to the achievement of the political and economic goals of natural work-democracy. For this reason we want to try to explain how the specific sex-economic questions are interlaced with the general social questions, seen from the perspective of the workers' movement.

In some of the German meetings around 1930 there were intel-

¹ Cf. Preface.

ligent, straightforward, though nationalistically and mystically oriented, revolutionaries—such as Otto Strasser, for example—who were wont to confront the Marxists as follows: “You Marxists like to quote Marx’s theories in your defense. Marx taught that theory is verified by practice only, but your Marxism has proved to be a failure. You always come around with explanations for the defeat of the Workers’ International. The ‘defection of the Social Democrats’ was your explanation for the defeat of 1914; you point to their ‘treacherous politics’ and their illusions to account for the defeat of 1918. And again you have ready ‘explanations’ to account for the fact that in the present world crisis the masses are turning to the Right instead of to the Left. But your explanations do not blot out the fact of your defeats! Eighty years have passed, and where is the concrete confirmation of the theory of social revolution? Your basic error is that you reject or ridicule soul and mind and that you don’t comprehend that which moves everything.” Such were their arguments, and exponents of Marxism had no answer. It became more and more clear that their political mass propaganda, dealing as it did solely with the discussion of *objective* socio-economic processes at a time of crisis (capitalist modes of production, economic anarchy, etc.), did not appeal to anyone other than the minority already enrolled in the Left front. The playing up of material needs and of hunger was not enough, for *every* political party did that much, even the church; so that in the end it was the mysticism of the National Socialists that triumphed over the economic theory of socialism, and at a time when the economic crisis and misery were at their worst. Hence, one had to admit that there was a glaring omission in the propaganda and in the overall conception of socialism and that, moreover, this omission was the source of its “political errors.” It was an error in the Marxian comprehension of political reality, and yet all the prerequisites for its correction were contained in the methods of dialectical materialism. They had simply never been turned to use. In their political practice, to state it briefly at the outset, the Marxists *had failed to take into account the character structure of the masses and the social effect of mysticism.*

Those who followed, and were practically involved in the revolutionary Left's application of Marxism between 1917 and 1933, had to notice that it was restricted to the sphere of *objective* economic processes and governmental policies, but that it neither kept a close eye on nor comprehended the development and contradictions of the so-called "subjective factor" of history, i.e., the ideology of the masses. The revolutionary Left failed, above all, to make fresh use of its own method of dialectical materialism, to keep it alive, to comprehend every *new* social reality from a new perspective with this method.

The use of dialectical materialism to comprehend *new* historical realities was not cultivated, and fascism was a reality that neither Marx nor Engels was familiar with, and was caught sight of by Lenin only in its beginnings. The reactionary conception of reality shuts its eyes to fascism's contradictions and actual conditions. Reactionary politics automatically makes use of those social forces that oppose progress; it can do this successfully only as long as science neglects to unearth *those* revolutionary forces that must of necessity overpower the reactionary forces. As we shall see later, not only regressive but also very energetic progressive social forces emerged in the rebelliousness of the lower middle classes, which later constituted the *mass basis* of fascism. This contradiction was overlooked; indeed, the role of the lower middle classes was altogether in eclipse until shortly before Hitler's seizure of power.

Revolutionary activity in every area of human existence will come about by itself when the contradictions in every new process are comprehended; it will consist of an identification with those forces that are moving in the direction of *genuine progress*. To be radical, according to Karl Marx, means "getting to the root of things." If one gets to the *root* of things, if one grasps their contradictory operations, then the overcoming of political reaction is assured. If one does not get to the root of things, one ends, whether one wants to or not, in mechanism, in economism, or even in metaphysics, and inevitably loses one's footing. Hence, a critique

can only be significant and have a practical value if it can show where the contradictions of social reality were *overlooked*. What was revolutionary about Marx was not that he wrote this or that proclamation or pointed out revolutionary goals; his major revolutionary contribution is that he recognized the industrial productive forces as the progressive force of society and that he depicted the contradictions of capitalist economy as they relate to real life. The failure of the workers' movement must mean that our knowledge of those forces that retard social progress is very limited, indeed, that some major factors are still altogether unknown.

As so many works of great thinkers, Marxism also degenerated to hollow formulas and lost its scientific revolutionary potency in the hands of Marxist politicians. They were so entangled in everyday political struggles that they failed to develop the principles of a vital philosophy of life handed down by Marx and Engels. To confirm this, one need merely compare Sauerland's book on "Dialectical Materialism" or any of Salkind's or Pieck's books with Marx's *Das Kapital* or Engels' *The Development of Socialism from Utopia to Science*. Flexible methods were reduced to formulas; scientific empiricism to rigid orthodoxy. In the meantime the "proletariat" of Marx's time had developed into an enormous class of industrial workers, and the middle-class shopkeepers had become a colossus of industrial and public employees. Scientific Marxism degenerated to "vulgar Marxism." This is the name many outstanding Marxist politicians have given to the economism that restricts all of human existence to the problem of unemployment and pay rates.

It was this very vulgar Marxism that maintained that the economic crisis of 1929-33 was of such a magnitude that it *would of necessity* lead to an ideological Leftist orientation among the stricken masses. While there was still talk of a "revolutionary revival" in Germany, even after the defeat of January 1933, the reality of the situation showed that the economic crisis, which, according to expectations, was supposed to entail a development to the Left in the ideology of the masses, had led to an extreme development to

the Right in the ideology of the proletarian strata of the population. The result was a cleavage between the economic basis, which developed to the Left, and the ideology of broad layers of society, which developed to the Right. This cleavage was overlooked; consequently, no one gave a thought to asking how broad masses living in utter poverty could become nationalistic. Explanations such as "chauvinism," "psychosis," "the consequences of Versailles," are not of much use, for they do not enable us to cope with the tendency of a distressed middle class to become radical Rightist; such explanations do not really comprehend the processes at work in this tendency. In fact, it was not only the middle class that turned to the Right, but broad and not always the worst elements of the proletariat. One failed to see that the middle classes, put on their guard by the success of the Russian Revolution, resorted to new and seemingly strange preventative measures (such as Roosevelt's "New Deal"), which were not understood at that time and which the workers' movement neglected to analyze. One also failed to see that, at the outset and during the initial stages of its development to a mass movement, fascism was directed against the upper middle class and hence could not be disposed of "*merely* as a bulwark of big finance," if only because it was a mass movement.

Where was the problem?

The basic Marxist conception grasped the facts that labor was exploited as a commodity, that capital was concentrated in the hands of the few, and that the latter entailed the progressive pauperization of the majority of working humanity. It was from this process that Marx arrived at the necessity of "expropriating the expropriators." According to this conception, the forces of production of capitalist society transcend the limits of the modes of production. The contradiction between *social* production and *private* appropriation of the products by capital can only be cleared up by the balancing of the modes of production with the level of the forces of production. Social production must be complemented by the social appropriation of the products. The first act of this

assimilation is social revolution; this is the basic economic principle of Marxism. This assimilation can take place, it is said, only if the pauperized majority establishes the "dictatorship of the proletariat" as the dictatorship of the working majority over the minority of the now expropriated owners of the means of production.

According to Marx's theory the *economic* preconditions for a social revolution were given: capital was concentrated in the hands of the few, the growth of national economy to a world economy was completely at variance with the custom and tariff system of the national states; capitalist economy had achieved hardly half of its production capacity, and there could no longer be any doubt about its basic anarchy. The majority of the population of the highly industrialized countries was living in misery; some fifty million people were unemployed in Europe; hundreds of millions of workers scraped along on next to nothing. But the expropriation of the expropriators failed to take place and, contrary to expectations, at the crossroads between "socialism and barbarism," it was in the direction of barbarism that society first proceeded. For the international strengthening of fascism and the lagging behind of the workers' movement was nothing other than that. Those who still hoped for a revolution to result from the anticipated second World War, which in the meantime had become a reality—those, in other words, who counted on the masses to turn the weapons thrust into their hands against the inner enemy—had not followed the development of the new techniques of war. One could not simply reject the reasoning to the effect that the arming of the broad masses would be highly unlikely in the next war. According to this conception, the fighting would be directed against the unarmed masses of the large industrial centers and would be carried out by very reliable and selected war-technicians. Hence, a reorientation of one's thinking and one's evaluations was the precondition of a new revolutionary practice. World War II was a confirmation of these expectations.

ECONOMIC AND IDEOLOGICAL STRUCTURE OF THE GERMAN SOCIETY, 1928-1933

Rationally considered, one would expect economically wretched masses of workers to develop a keen consciousness of their social situation; one would further expect this consciousness to harden into a determination to rid themselves of their social misery. In short, one would expect the socially wretched working man to revolt against the abuses to which he is subjected and to say: "After all, I perform responsible social work. It is upon me and those like me that the weal and ill of society rests. I myself assume the responsibility for the work that must be done." In such a case, the thinking ("consciousness") of the worker would be in keeping with his social situation. The Marxist called it "class consciousness." We want to call it "consciousness of one's skills," or "consciousness of one's social responsibility." The cleavage between the social situation of the working masses and their consciousness of this situation implies that, instead of improving their social position, the working masses worsen it. It was precisely the wretched masses who helped to put fascism, extreme political reaction, into power.

It is a question of the role of ideology and the emotional attitude of these masses seen as a historical factor, a question of the *repercussion of the ideology on the economic basis*. If the material wretchedness of the broad masses did not lead to a social revolution; if, objectively considered, contrary revolutionary ideologies resulted from the crisis, then the development of the ideology of the masses in the critical years thwarted the "efflorescence of the forces of production," prevented, to use Marxist concepts, the "revolutionary resolution of the contradictions between the forces of production of monopolistic capitalism and its methods of production."

The composition of the classes in Germany appears as follows. Quoted from Kumik: "An Attempt to Establish the Social Composition of the German Population," *Die Internationale*, 1928, edited by Lenz: "Proletarian Policies," *Internationaler Arbeiter-verlag*, 1931.

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	<i>wage earners</i>	<i>with families</i>
	IN THOUSANDS	IN MILLIONS
Industrial workers ²	21,789	40.7
Urban middle class	6,157	10.7
Lower- and middle-class farmers	6,598	9.0
Bourgeoisie (including property owners and big farmers)	718	2.0
Population (excluding children and wives)	34,762	total 62.4

² "The proletariat" according to Marx.

DISTRIBUTION OF URBAN MIDDLE CLASS

IN THOUSANDS

Lower strata of small tradesmen (Home industries, tenant farmers, shops operated by one person, shops operated by less than three persons)	1,196
Small shops having three or more employees	1,403
White-collar workers and civil servants	1,763
Professional people and students	431
People with small independent means and small property owners	644
	<u>total 6,157</u>

DISTRIBUTION OF THE WORKING CLASS

Workers in industry, trade, commerce, etc.	11,826
Agricultural workers	2,607
Home workers	138
Domestics	1,326
Social security recipients	1,717
Lower white-collar workers (less than 250 marks per month)	2,775
Lower civil servants (and pensioners)	1,400
	<u>total 21,789</u>

THE RURAL MIDDLE CLASS

Small farmers and tenant farmers (less than 5 hectare)	2,366
Middle-class farmers (between 5 and 50 hectare)	4,232
	<hr/> total 6,598

These figures are taken from the German census of 1925.

It is necessary to point out, however, that they represent the distribution solely according to the socio-economic position; the ideological distribution is different. Thus, *socio-economically* viewed, the Germany of 1925 comprised:

	<i>wage earners</i>	<i>including families</i>
Workers	21,789,000	40,700,000
Middle Classes	12,755,000	19,700,000

On the other hand, a rough estimate of the *ideological* structure showed the following distribution:

<i>Workers</i> in industry, trade, commerce, etc. and agricultural workers	14,433,000
<i>Lower middle class</i>	20,111,000
Home workers (individual production)	138
Domestics	1,326
Social security recipients	1,717
Lower category of white-collar workers (employed in big industries, e.g., "Nord- stern," Berlin)	2,775
Lower category of civil servants (e.g., tax auditors, post office employees)	1,400
	<hr/> 7,356
	(of economic "proletariat")
Urban Middle Class	6,157
Rural Middle Class	6,598
	<hr/> total 20,111

No matter how many middle-class employees may have voted for left-wing parties and how many workers may have voted for right-wing parties, it is nonetheless striking that the figures of the *ideological distribution*, arrived at by us, *agree approximately with the election figures of 1932*: Taken together the Communists and the Social Democrats received twelve to thirteen million votes, while the NSDAP* and the German Nationalists received some nineteen to twenty million votes. Thus, with respect to *practical politics*, it was *not the economic but the ideological distribution that was decisive*. In short, the political importance of the lower middle class is greater than had been assumed.

During the rapid decline of the German economy, 1929–32, the NSDAP jumped from 800,000 votes in 1928 to 6,400,000 in the fall of 1930, to 13,000,000 in the summer of 1932 and 17,000,000 in January of 1933. According to Jäger's calculations ("Hitler" *Roter Aufbau*, October 1930) the votes cast by the workers made up approximately 3,000,000 of the 6,400,000 votes received by the National Socialists in 1930. Of these 3,000,000 votes, some 60 to 70 percent came from employees and 30 to 40 percent from workers.

To my knowledge it was Karl Radek who most clearly grasped the problematic aspect of this sociological process as early as 1930, following the NSDAP's first upsurge. He wrote:

Nothing similar to this is known in the history of political struggle, particularly in a country with firmly established political differentiations, in which every new party has had to fight for any position held by the old parties. There is nothing more characteristic than the fact that, neither in bourgeois nor in socialist literature, has anything been said about this party, which assumes the second place in German political life. It is a party without history which suddenly emerges in German political life, just as an island suddenly emerges in the middle of the sea owing to volcanic forces.

—"German Elections," *Roter Aufbau*, October, 1930

We have no doubt that this island also has a history and follows an inner logic.

* Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei.

The choice between the Marxist alternative: "fall to barbarism" or "rise to socialism," was a choice that, according to all previous experience, would be determined by the ideological structure of the dominated classes. Either this structure would be in keeping with the economic situation or it would be at variance with it, as, for instance, we find in large Asian societies, where exploitation is passively endured, or in present-day Germany, where a cleavage exists between economic situation and ideology.

Thus, the basic problem is this: What causes this cleavage, or to put it another way, what prevents the economic situation from coinciding with the psychic structure of the masses? It is a problem, in short, of comprehending the nature of the psychological structure of the masses and its relation to the economic basis from which it derives.

To comprehend this, we must first of all free ourselves from vulgar Marxist concepts, which only block the way to an understanding of fascism. Essentially, they are as follows:

In accordance with one of its formulas, vulgar Marxism completely separates economic existence from social existence as a whole, and states that man's "ideology" and "consciousness" are *solely* and *directly* determined by his economic existence. Thus, it sets up a mechanical antithesis between economy and ideology, between "structure" and "superstructure"; it makes ideology rigidly and one-sidedly dependent upon economy, and fails to see the dependency of economic development upon that of ideology. For this reason the problem of the so-called "repercussion of ideology" does not exist for it. Notwithstanding the fact that vulgar Marxism now speaks of the "lagging behind of the subjective factor," as Lenin understood it, it can do nothing about it in a practical way, for its former conception of ideology as the product of the economic situation was too rigid. It did not explore the contradictions of economy in ideology, and it did not comprehend ideology as a historical force.

In fact, it does everything in its power *not* to comprehend the structure and dynamics of ideology; it brushes it aside as "psychol-

ogy," which is not supposed to be "Marxistic," and leaves the handling of the subjective factor, the so-called "psychic life" in history, to the metaphysical idealism of political reaction, to a Gentile and a Rosenberg, who make "mind" and "soul" *solely* responsible for the progress of history and, strange to say, have enormous success with this thesis. The neglect of *this* aspect of sociology is something Marx himself criticized in the materialism of the eighteenth century. To the vulgar Marxist, psychology is a metaphysical system pure and simple, and he draws no distinction whatever between the metaphysical character of reactionary psychology and the basic elements of psychology, which were furnished by revolutionary psychological research and which it is our task to develop. The vulgar Marxist simply negates, instead of offering constructive criticism, and feels himself to be a "materialist" when he rejects facts such as "drive," "need," or "inner process," as being "idealistic." The result is that he gets into serious difficulties and meets with one failure after another, for he is continually forced to employ practical psychology in political practice, is forced to speak of the "needs of the masses," "revolutionary consciousness," "the will to strike," etc. The more the vulgar Marxist tries to gainsay psychology, the more he finds himself practicing metaphysical psychologism and worst, insipid Couéism. For example, he will try to explain a historical situation on the basis of a "Hitler psychosis," or console the masses and persuade them not to lose faith in Marxism. Despite everything, he asserts, headway is being made, the revolution will not be subdued, etc. He sinks to the point finally of pumping illusionary courage into the people, without in reality saying anything essential about the situation, without having comprehended what has happened. That political reaction is never at a loss to find a way out of a difficult situation, that an acute economic crisis can lead to barbarism as well as it can lead to social freedom, must remain for him a book with seven seals. Instead of allowing his thoughts and acts to issue from social reality, he transposes reality in his fantasy in such a way as to make it correspond to his wishes.

Our political psychology can be nothing other than an investi-

gation of this "subjective factor of history," of the character structure of man in a given epoch and of the ideological structure of society that it forms. Unlike reactionary psychology and psychologistic economy, it does not try to lord it over Marxist sociology by throwing "psychological conceptions" of social processes in its teeth, but gives it its proper due as that which deduces consciousness from existence.

The Marxist thesis to the effect that originally "that which is materialistic" (existence) is converted into "that which is ideological" (in consciousness), and not vice versa, leaves two questions open: (1) *how* this takes place, what happens in man's brain in this process; and (2) how the "consciousness" (we will refer to it as psychic structure from now on) that is formed in this way reacts upon the economic process. Character-analytic psychology fills this gap by revealing the process in man's psychic life, which is determined by the conditions of existence. By so doing, it puts its finger on the "subjective factor," which the vulgar Marxist had failed to comprehend. Hence, political psychology has a sharply delineated task. It cannot, for instance, explain the genesis of class society or the capitalist mode of production (whenever it attempts this, the result is always reactionary nonsense—for instance, that capitalism is a symptom of man's greed). Nonetheless, it is political psychology—and not social economy—that is in a position to investigate the structure of man's character in a given epoch, to investigate how he thinks and acts, how the contradictions of his existence work themselves out, how he tries to cope with this existence, etc. To be sure, it examines individual men and women only. If, however, it specializes in the investigation of typical psychic processes *common* to one category, class, professional group, etc., and excludes individual differences, then it becomes a *mass psychology*.

Thus it proceeds directly from Marx himself.

The presuppositions with which we begin are not arbitrary presuppositions; they are not dogmas; they are real presuppositions from which one can abstract only in fancy. *They are the actual*

individuals, their actions and the material conditions of their lives, those already existing as well as those produced by action.

—*German Ideology*

“Man himself is the basis of his material production, as of every other production which he achieves. In other words, all conditions affect and more or less modify all of the functions and activities of man—the subject of production & the creator of material wealth, of commodities. In this connection it can be indeed proven that all human conditions and functions, no matter how and when they are manifested, influence material production and have a more or less determining effect on them” [My italics, WR].

—*Theory of Surplus Value*

Hence, we are not saying anything new, and we are not revising Marx, as is so often maintained: “All human conditions,” that is, not only the conditions that are a part of the work process, but also the most private and most personal and highest accomplishments of human instinct and thought; also, in other words, *the sexual life of women and adolescents and children, the level of the sociological investigation of these conditions and its application to new social questions.* With a certain kind of these “human conditions,” Hitler was able to bring about a historical situation that is not to be ridiculed out of existence. Marx was not able to develop a sociology of sex, because at that time sexology did not exist. Hence, it now becomes a question of incorporating both the purely economic and sex-economic conditions into the framework of sociology, of destroying the hegemony of the mystics and metaphysicians in this domain.

When an “ideology has a repercussive effect upon the economic process,” this means that it must have become a material force. When an ideology becomes a material force, as soon as it has the ability to arouse masses, then we must go on to ask: How does this take place? How is it possible for an ideologic factor to produce a materialistic result, that is, for a theory to produce a revolutionary effect? The answer to this question must also be the answer to the question of reactionary mass psychology; it must, in other words, elucidate the “Hitler psychosis.”

The ideology of every social formation has the function not only of reflecting the economic process of this society, but also and more significantly of embedding this economic process in the *psychic structures of the people who make up the society*. Man is subject to the conditions of his existence in a twofold way: directly through the immediate influence of his economic and social position, and indirectly by means of the ideologic structure of the society. His psychic structure, in other words, is forced to develop a contradiction corresponding to the contradiction between the influence exercised by his material position and the influence exercised by the ideological structure of society. The worker, for instance, is subject to the situation of his work as well as to the general ideology of the society. Since man, however, regardless of class, is not only the object of these influences but also reproduces them in his *activities*, his thinking and acting must be just as contradictory as the society from which they derive. But, *inasmuch as a social ideology changes man's psychic structure, it has not only reproduced itself in man but, what is more significant, has become an active force, a material power in man, who in turn has become concretely changed, and, as a consequence thereof, acts in a different and contradictory fashion*. It is in this way and *only* in this way that the repercussions of a society's ideology on the economic basis from which it derives is possible. The "repercussion" loses its apparent metaphysical and psychologistic character when it can be comprehended as the functioning of the character structure of socially active man. As such, it is the object of natural scientific investigations of the character. Thus, the statement that the "ideology" changes at a slower pace than the economic basis is invested with a definite cogency. The basic traits of the character structures corresponding to a definite historical situation are formed in early childhood, and are far more conservative than the forces of technical production. It results from this that, as time goes on, *the psychic structures lag behind the rapid changes of the social conditions from which they derived, and later come into conflict with new forms of life*. This is the basic trait

of the nature of so-called tradition, i.e., of the contradiction between the old and the new social situation.

HOW MASS PSYCHOLOGY SEES THE PROBLEM

We begin to see now that the economic and ideologic situations of the masses need not necessarily coincide, and that, indeed, there can be a considerable cleavage between the two. The economic situation is not directly and immediately converted into political consciousness. If this were the case, the social revolution would have been here long ago. In keeping with this dichotomy of social condition and social consciousness, the investigation of society must proceed along two different lines. Notwithstanding the fact that the psychic structure derives from the economic existence, the economic situation has to be comprehended with methods other than those used to comprehend the character structure: the former has to be comprehended socio-economically, the latter biopsychologically. Let us illustrate this with a simple example: When workers who are hungry, owing to wage-squeezing, go on strike, their act is a direct result of their economic situation. The same applies to the man who steals food because he is hungry. That a man steals because he is hungry, or that workers strike because they are being exploited, needs no further psychological clarification. In both cases ideology and action are commensurate with economic pressure. Economic situation and ideology coincide with one another. Reactionary psychology is wont to explain the theft and the strike in terms of supposed irrational motives; reactionary rationalizations are invariably the result. Social psychology sees the problem in an entirely different light: what has to be explained is not the fact that the man who is hungry steals or the fact that the man who is exploited strikes, but why the majority of those who are hungry *don't* steal and why the majority of those who are exploited *don't* strike. Thus, social economy can give a complete explanation of a social fact that serves a rational end, i.e., when it satisfies an immediate need and reflects and magnifies the economic situation. The social economic

explanation does not hold up, on the other hand, when a man's thought and action *are inconsistent with* the economic situation, are *irrational*, in other words. The vulgar Marxist and the narrow-minded economist, who do not acknowledge psychology, are helpless in the face of such a contradiction. The more mechanistically and economically oriented a sociologist is, the less he knows about man's psychic structure, the more he is apt to fall prey to superficial psychologism in the practice of mass propaganda. Instead of probing and resolving the psychic contradictions in the individuals of the masses, he has recourse to insipid Couéism or he explains the nationalistic movement on the basis of a "mass psychosis."³ Hence, the line of questioning of mass psychology begins precisely at the point where the *immediate* socio-economic explanation hits wide of the mark. Does this mean that mass psychology and social economy serve cross purposes? No. For thinking and acting on the part of the masses contradictory to the immediate socio-economic situation, i.e., irrational thinking and acting, are themselves the result of an earlier, *older* socio-economic situation. One is wont to explain the repression of social consciousness by so-called tradition. But no investigation has been made as yet to determine just what "tradition" is, to determine which psychic elements are molded by it. Narrow-minded economy has repeatedly failed to see that the most essential question does not relate to the workers' consciousness of social responsibility (this is self-evident!) but to what it is that *inhibits the development of this consciousness of responsibility*.

Ignorance of the character structure of masses of people invariably leads to fruitless questioning. The Communists, for example, said that it was the misdirected policies of the Social Democrats that made it possible for the fascists to seize power. Actually this explanation did not explain anything, for it was precisely the Social

³ In view of the fact that the economist neither knows nor acknowledges the existence of psychic processes, the words "mass psychosis" do not mean to him what they mean to us, namely a social circumstance of enormous historical importance; to him it is a matter of no social significance whatever.

Democrats who made a point of spreading illusions. In short, it did not result in a new mode of action. That political reaction in the form of fascism had “befogged,” “corrupted,” and “hypnotized” the masses is an explanation that is as sterile as the others. This is and will continue to be the function of fascism as long as it exists. Such explanations are sterile because they fail to offer a way out. Experience teaches us that such disclosures, no matter how often they are repeated, do not convince the masses; that, in other words, social economic inquiry by itself is not enough. Wouldn't it be closer to the mark to ask *what was going on in the masses* that they could not and would not recognize the function of fascism? To say that “The workers *have* to realize . . .” or “We didn't understand . . .” does not serve any purpose. Why didn't the workers realize, and why didn't they understand? The questions that formed the basis of discussion between the Right and the Left in the workers' movements are also to be regarded as sterile. The Right contended that the workers were not predisposed to fight; the Left, on the other hand, refuted this and asserted that the workers were revolutionary and that the Right's statement was a betrayal of revolutionary thinking. Both assertions, because they failed to see the complexities of the issue, were rigidly mechanistic. A realistic appraisal would have had to point out that the average worker bears a contradiction in himself; that he, in other words, is neither a clear-cut revolutionary nor a clear-cut conservative, but stands divided. His psychic structure derives on the one hand from the social situation (which prepares the ground for revolutionary attitudes) and on the other hand from the entire atmosphere of authoritarian society—the two being at odds with one another.

It is of decisive importance to recognize such a contradiction and to learn precisely how that which is reactionary and that which is progressive-revolutionary in the workers are set off against one another. Naturally, the same applies to the middle-class man. That he rebels against the “system” in a crisis is readily understandable. However, notwithstanding the fact that he is already in an economically wretched position, the fact that he fears progress and

becomes extremely reactionary is not to be readily understood from a socio-economic point of view. In short, he too bears a contradiction in himself between rebellious feelings and reactionary aims and contents.

We do not, for instance, give a full sociological explanation of a war when we analyze the specific economic and political factors that are its immediate cause. In other words, it is only part of the story that the German annexation ambitions prior to 1914 were focused on the ore mines of Briey and Longy, on the Belgian industrial center, on the extension of Germany's colonial possessions in the Near East; or that Hitler's imperial interests were focused on the oil wells of Baku, on the factories of Czechoslovakia, etc. To be sure, the economic interests of German imperialism were the *immediate* decisive factors, but we also have to put into proper perspective the *mass psychological* basis of world wars; we have to ask how the *psychological structure of the masses* was capable of absorbing the imperialistic ideology, to translate the imperialistic slogans into deeds that were diametrically opposed to the peaceful, politically disinterested attitude of the German population. To say that this was due to the "defection of the leaders of the Second International" is insufficient. *Why did the myriad masses of the freedom-loving and anti-imperialistic oriented workers allow themselves to be betrayed?* The fear of the consequences involved in conscientious objection accounts only for a minority of cases. Those who went through the mobilization of 1914 know that various moods were evident among the working masses. They ranged from a conscious refusal on the part of a minority to a strange resignedness to fate (or plain apathy) on the part of very broad layers of the population, to the point of clear martial enthusiasm, not only in the middle classes but among large segments of industrial workers also. The apathy of some as well as the enthusiasm of others was undoubtedly part of the foundations of war in the structure of the masses. This function on the part of the psychology of the masses in both world wars can be understood only from the socio-economic point of view, namely that the *imperialistic ideology concretely changed the structures of*

the working masses to suit imperialism. To say that social catastrophes are caused by “war psychoses” or by “mass befogging” is merely to throw out phrases. Such explanations explain nothing. Besides it would be a very low estimation of the masses to suppose that they would be accessible to mere befogging. The point is that *every social order produces in the masses of its members that structure which it needs to achieve its main aims.*⁴ No war would be possible without this psychological structure of the masses. An essential relation exists between the economic structure of society and the mass psychological structure of its members, not only in the sense that the ruling ideology is the ideology of the ruling class, but, what is even more important for the solving of practical questions of politics, the *contradictions* of the economic structure of a society are also embedded in the psychological structure of the subjugated masses. Otherwise it would be inconceivable that the economic laws of a society could succeed in achieving concrete results solely through the activities of the masses subjected to them.

To be sure, the freedom movements of Germany knew of the so-called “subjective factor of history” (contrary to mechanistic materialism, Marx conceived of man as the subject of history, and it was precisely this side of Marxism that Lenin built upon); what was lacking was a comprehension of *irrational, seemingly purposeless actions* or, to put it another way, of *the cleavage between economy and ideology*. We have to be able to explain how it was possible for mysticism to have triumphed over scientific sociology. This task can

⁴ “In every epoch the ideas of the ruling class are the ruling ideas, i.e., the class which is the ruling material power of the society also constitutes that society’s ideological power. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal also has the means of ideological ‘production’ at its disposal, so that those who lack the means of ideological production are thereby on the average subject to those who have. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the idealistic expression of the ruling material conditions, that is to say, the ruling material conditions expressed as ideas; the conditions which enabled the one class to become the ruling class or, to put it another way, the ideas of their rulership [Marx].”

be accomplished only if our line of questioning is such that a new mode of action results spontaneously from our explanation. If the working man is neither a clear-cut reactionary nor a clear-cut revolutionary, but is caught in a contradiction between reactionary and revolutionary tendencies, then if we succeed in putting our finger on this contradiction, the result must be a mode of action that offsets the conservative psychic forces with revolutionary forces. Every form of mysticism is reactionary, and the reactionary man is mystical. To ridicule mysticism, to try to pass it off as "befogging" or as "psychosis," does not lead to a program against mysticism. If mysticism is correctly comprehended, however, an antidote must of necessity result. But to accomplish this task, the relations between social situation and structural formation, especially the *irrational* ideas that are not to be explained on a purely socio-economic basis, have to be comprehended as completely as our means of cognition allow.

THE SOCIAL FUNCTION OF SEXUAL REPRESSION

Even Lenin noted a peculiar, irrational behavior on the part of the masses before and in the process of a revolt. On the soldiers' revolt in Russia in 1905, he wrote:

The soldier had a great deal of sympathy for the cause of the peasant; at the mere mention of land, his eyes blazed with passion. Several times military power passed into the hands of the soldiers, but this power was hardly ever used resolutely. The soldiers wavered. A few hours after they had disposed of a hated superior, they released the others, entered into negotiations with the authorities, and then had themselves shot, submitted to the rod, had themselves yoked again.

—*Ueber Religion* p. 65

Any mystic will explain such behavior on the basis of man's eternal moral nature, which, he would contend, prohibits a rebellion against the divine scheme and the "authority of the state" and its

representatives. The vulgar Marxist simply disregards such phenomena, and he would have neither an understanding nor an explanation for them because they are not to be explained from a purely economic point of view. The Freudian conception comes considerably closer to the facts of the case, for it recognizes such behavior as the effect of infantile guilt-feelings toward the father figure. Yet it fails to give us any insight into the sociological origin and function of this behavior, and for that reason does not lead to a practical solution. It also overlooks the connection between this behavior and the repression and distortion of the sexual life of the broad masses.

To help clarify our approach to the investigation of such irrational *mass* psychological phenomena, it is necessary to take a cursory glance at the line of questioning of *sex-economy*, which is treated in detail elsewhere.

Sex-economy is a field of research that grew out of the sociology of human sexual life many years ago, through the application of functionalism in this sphere, and has acquired a number of new insights. It proceeds from the following presuppositions:

Marx found social life to be governed by the conditions of economic production and by the class conflict that resulted from these conditions at a definite point of history. It is only seldom that brute force is resorted to in the domination of the oppressed classes by the owners of the social means of production; its main weapon is its ideological power over the oppressed, for it is this ideology that is the mainstay of the state apparatus. We have already mentioned that for Marx it is the living, productive man, with his psychic and physical disposition, who is the first presupposition of history and of politics. The character structure of active man, the so-called "subjective factor of history" in Marx's sense, remained uninvestigated because Marx was a sociologist and not a psychologist, and because at that time scientific psychology did not exist. Why man had allowed himself to be exploited and morally humiliated, why, in short, he had submitted to slavery for thousands of years, remained

unanswered; what had been ascertained was only the economic process of society and the mechanism of economic exploitation.

Just about half a century later, using a special method he called *psychoanalysis*, Freud discovered the process that governs psychic life. His most important discoveries, which had a devastating and revolutionary effect upon a large number of existing ideas (a fact that garnered him the hate of the world in the beginning), are as follows:

Consciousness is only a small part of the psychic life; it itself is governed by psychic processes that take place unconsciously and are therefore not accessible to conscious control. Every psychic experience (no matter how meaningless it appears to be), such as a dream, a useless performance, the absurd utterances of the psychically sick and mentally deranged, etc., has a function and a "meaning" and can be completely understood if one can succeed in tracing its etiology. Thus psychology, which had been steadily deteriorating into a kind of physics of the brain ("brain mythology") or into a theory of a mysterious objective *Geist*, entered the domain of natural science.

Freud's *second* great discovery was that even the small child develops a lively sexuality, which has nothing to do with procreation; that, in other words, *sexuality* and *procreation*, and *sexual* and *genital*, are not the same. The analytic dissection of psychic processes further proved that sexuality, or rather its energy, the *libido*, which is of the body, is the prime motor of psychic life. Hence, the biologic presuppositions and social conditions of life overlap in the mind.

The *third* great discovery was that childhood sexuality, of which what is most crucial in the child-parent relationship ("the Oedipus complex") is a part, is usually repressed out of fear of punishment for sexual acts and thoughts (basically a "fear of castration"); the child's sexual activity is blocked and extinguished from memory. Thus, while repression of childhood sexuality withdraws it from the influence of consciousness, it does not weaken its force. On the contrary, the repression intensifies it and enables it to manifest itself

in various pathological disturbances of the mind. As there is hardly an exception to this rule among "civilized man," Freud could say that he had all of humanity as his patient.

The *fourth* important discovery in this connection was that, far from being of divine origin, man's moral code was derived from the educational measures used by the parents and parental surrogates in earliest childhood. At bottom, those educational measures opposed to childhood sexuality are most effective. The conflict that originally takes place between the child's desires and the parent's suppression of these desires later becomes the conflict between instinct and morality *within* the person. In adults the moral code, which itself is unconscious, operates against the comprehension of the laws of sexuality and of unconscious psychic life; it supports sexual repression ("sexual resistance") and accounts for the widespread resistance to the "uncovering" of childhood sexuality.

Through their very existence, each one of these discoveries (we named only those that were most important for our subject) constitutes a severe blow to reactionary moral philosophy and especially to religious metaphysics, both of which uphold eternal moral values, conceive of the world as being under the rulership of an objective "power," and deny childhood sexuality, in addition to confining sexuality to the function of procreation. However, these discoveries could not exercise a significant influence because the psychoanalytic sociology that was based on them retarded most of what they had given in the way of progressive and revolutionary impetus. This is not the place to prove this. Psychoanalytic sociology tried to analyze society as it would analyze an individual, set up an absolute antithesis between the process of civilization and sexual gratification, conceived of destructive instincts as primary biological facts governing human destiny immutably, denied the existence of a matriarchal primeval period, and ended in a crippling skepticism, because it recoiled from the consequences of its own discoveries. Its hostility toward efforts proceeding on the basis of these discoveries goes back many years, and its representatives are unswerving in their opposition to such efforts. All of this has not the slightest effect on our

determination to defend Freud's great discoveries against every attack, regardless of origin or source.

Sex-economic sociology's line of questioning, which is based on these discoveries, is not one of the typical attempts to supplement, replace, or confuse Marx with Freud or Freud with Marx. In an earlier passage we mentioned the area in historical materialism where psychoanalysis has to fulfill a scientific function, which social economy is not in a position to accomplish: the comprehension of the structure and dynamics of ideology, not of its historical basis. By incorporating the insights afforded by psychoanalysis, sociology attains a higher standard and is in a much better position to master reality; the nature of man's structure is finally grasped. It is only the narrow-minded politician who will reproach character-analytic structure-psychology for not being able to make immediate practical suggestions. And it is only a political loudmouth who will feel called upon to condemn it in total because it is afflicted with all the distortions of a conservative view of life. But it is the genuine sociologist who will reckon psychoanalysis' comprehension of childhood sexuality as a highly significant revolutionary act.

It follows of itself that the science of sex-economic sociology, which builds upon the *sociological* groundwork of Marx and the *psychological* groundwork of Freud, is essentially a mass psychological and sex-sociological science at the same time. Having rejected Freud's philosophy of civilization,⁵ it begins where the clinical psychological line of questioning of psychoanalysis ends.

Psychoanalysis discloses the effects and mechanisms of sexual suppression and repression and of their pathological consequences in the individual. Sex-economic sociology goes further and asks: *For what sociological reasons is sexuality suppressed by the society and repressed by the individual?* The church says it is for the sake of salvation beyond the grave; mystical moral philosophy says that it is a direct result of man's eternal ethical and moral nature; the

⁵ In which, despite all its idealism, more truth is found about living life than in all sociologies and some Marxist psychologies taken together.

Freudian philosophy of civilization contends that this takes place in the interest of "culture." One becomes a bit skeptical and asks how is it possible for the masturbation of small children and the sexual intercourse of adolescents to disrupt the building of gas stations and the manufacturing of airplanes. It becomes apparent that it is not cultural activity itself which demands suppression and repression of sexuality, but only the present *forms* of this activity, and so one is willing to sacrifice these forms if by so doing the terrible wretchedness of children and adolescents could be eliminated. The question, then, is no longer one relating to culture, but one relating to social order. If one studies the history of sexual suppression and the etiology of sexual repression, one finds that it cannot be traced back to the beginnings of cultural development; suppression and repression, in other words, are not the presuppositions of cultural development. It was not until relatively late, with the establishment of an authoritarian patriarchy and the beginning of the division of the classes, that suppression of sexuality begins to make its appearance. It is at this stage that sexual interests in general begin to enter the service of a minority's interest in material profit; in the patriarchal marriage and family this state of affairs assumes a solid organizational form. With the restriction and suppression of sexuality, the nature of human feeling changes; a sex-negating religion comes into being and gradually develops its own sex-political organization, the church with all its predecessors, the aim of which is nothing other than the eradication of man's sexual desires and consequently of what little happiness there is on earth. There is good reason for all this when seen from the perspective of the now-thriving exploitation of human labor.

To comprehend the relation between sexual suppression and human exploitation, it is necessary to get an insight into the basic social institution in which the economic and sex-economic situation of patriarchal authoritarian society are interwoven. Without the inclusion of this institution, it is not possible to understand the sexual economy and the ideological process of a patriarchal society. The psychoanalysis of men and women of all ages, all countries, and

every social class shows that: *The interlacing of the socio economic structure with the sexual structure of society and the structural reproduction of society take place in the first four or five years and in the authoritarian family.* The church only continues this function later. Thus, the authoritarian state gains an enormous interest in the authoritarian family: *It becomes the factory in which the state's structure and ideology are molded.*

We have found the social institution in which the sexual and the economic interests of the authoritarian system converge. Now we have to ask *how* this convergence takes place and *how* it operates. Needless to say, the analysis of the typical character structure of reactionary man (the worker included) can yield an answer only if one is at all conscious of the necessity of posing such a question. The moral inhibition of the child's natural sexuality, the last stage of which is the severe impairment of the child's *genital* sexuality, makes the child afraid, shy, fearful of authority, obedient, "good," and "docile" in the authoritarian sense of the words. It has a crippling effect on man's rebellious forces because every vital life-impulse is now burdened with severe fear; and since sex is a forbidden subject, thought in general and man's critical faculty also become inhibited. In short, morality's aim is to produce acquiescent subjects who, despite distress and humiliation, are adjusted to the authoritarian order. Thus, the family is the authoritarian state in miniature, to which the child must learn to adapt himself as a preparation for the general social adjustment required of him later. *Man's authoritarian structure*—this must be clearly established—is *basically produced by the embedding of sexual inhibitions and fear in the living substance of sexual impulses.*

We will readily grasp why sex-economy views the family as the most important source for the reproduction of the authoritarian social system when we consider the situation of the average conservative worker's wife. Economically she is just as distressed as a liberated working woman, is subject to the same economic situation, but *she* votes for the Fascist party; if we further clarify the actual difference between the sexual ideology of the average liberated

woman and that of the average reactionary woman, then we recognize the decisive importance of sexual structure. Her anti-sexual, moral inhibitions prevent the conservative woman from gaining a consciousness of her social situation and bind her just as firmly to the church as they make her fear "sexual Bolshevism." Theoretically, the state of affairs is as follows: The vulgar Marxist who thinks in mechanistic terms assumes that discernment of the social situation would have to be especially keen when sexual distress is added to economic distress. If this assumption were true, the majority of adolescents and the majority of women would have to be far more rebellious than the majority of men. Reality reveals an entirely different picture, and the economist is at a complete loss to know how to deal with it. He will find it incomprehensible that the reactionary woman is not even interested in hearing his economic program. The explanation is: The suppression of one's primitive material needs compasses a different result than the suppression of one's sexual needs. The former incites to rebellion, whereas the latter—inasmuch as it causes sexual needs to be repressed, withdraws them from consciousness and anchors itself as a moral defense—prevents rebellion against *both* forms of suppression. Indeed, the inhibition of rebellion itself is unconscious. In the consciousness of the average nonpolitical man there is not even a trace of it.

The result is conservatism, fear of freedom, in a word, reactionary thinking.

It is not only by means of this process that sexual repression strengthens political reaction and makes the individual in the masses passive and nonpolitical; it creates a secondary force in man's structure—an artificial interest, which actively supports the authoritarian order. When sexuality is prevented from attaining natural gratification, owing to the process of sexual repression, what happens is that it seeks various kinds of substitute gratifications. Thus, for instance, natural aggression is distorted into brutal sadism, which constitutes an essential part of the mass-psychological basis of those imperialistic wars that are instigated by a few. To give another

instance: From the point of view of mass psychology, the effect of militarism is based essentially on a libidinous mechanism. The sexual effect of a uniform, the erotically provocative effect of rhythmically executed goose-stepping, the exhibitionistic nature of militaristic procedures, have been more practically comprehended by a salesgirl or an average secretary than by our most erudite politicians. On the other hand it is political reaction that consciously exploits these sexual interests. It not only designs flashy uniforms for the men, it puts the recruiting into the hands of attractive women. In conclusion, let us but recall the recruiting posters of war-thirsty powers, which ran something as follows: "Travel to foreign countries—join the Royal Navy!" and the foreign countries were portrayed by exotic women. And why are these posters effective? Because our youth has become sexually starved owing to sexual suppression.

The sexual morality that inhibits the will to freedom, as well as those forces that comply with authoritarian interests, derive their energy from repressed sexuality. Now we have a better comprehension of an essential part of the process of the "repercussion of ideology on the economic basis": *sexual inhibition changes the structure of economically suppressed man in such a way that he acts, feels, and thinks contrary to his own material interests.*

Thus, mass psychology enables us to substantiate and interpret Lenin's observation. In their officers the soldiers of 1905 unconsciously perceived their childhood fathers (condensed in the conception of God), who denied sexuality and whom one could neither kill nor want to kill, though they shattered one's joy of life. Both their repentance and their irresolution subsequent to the seizure of power were an expression of its opposite, hate transformed into pity, which as such could not be translated into action.

Thus, the practical problem of mass psychology is to activate the passive majority of the population, which always helps political reaction to achieve victory, and to eliminate those inhibitions that run counter to the development of the will to freedom born of the socio-economic situation. Freed of its bonds and directed into the

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channels of the freedom movement's rational goals, the psychic energy of the average mass of people excited over a football game or laughing over a cheap musical would no longer be capable of being fettered. The sex-economic investigation that follows is conducted from this point of view.