

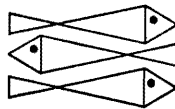
WILHELM REICH

*People in  
Trouble*

VOLUME TWO OF

The Emotional Plague of Mankind

*Translated by Philip Schmitz*



FARRAR, STRAUS AND GIROUX

NEW YORK

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*Love, work, and knowledge are the wellsprings of our life.  
They should also govern it.*

WILHELM REICH



*To the children of the future*

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*And so in the course of development all former reality becomes unreal, loses its necessity, its right to existence, its reasonableness. In place of the dying reality emerges a new, viable reality—peacefully, when the old is reasonable enough to die without struggle, violently, if it blocks the path of this necessity.*

—Friedrich Engels, in *Ludwig Feuerbach* (1888)

## *The Silent Observer*

*People in Trouble is a translation of part of a German manuscript entitled Menschen im Staat, 1937, to which other material, notes, and comments were added in 1944–45. Prior to its first publication in 1953, Reich, referring to himself as the Silent Observer, added further comments throughout the text. These comments, some signed “SO” and others unsigned, are enclosed in brackets or are preceded by the date “1952.” The role of the Silent Observer is explained by Reich himself in this introductory note. —Ed.*

The Silent Observer (SO) in this autobiographical volume sees events in retrospect as of 1950–52—that is, while the oratur experiment was running its course. This experiment, which established unequivocally the existence of the primordial cosmic orgone energy in a practical and even socially penetrating manner, demolished every criticism, doubt, and distortion uttered by the enemies of orgonomy during the Norwegian campaign (1934–38) and by a few psychoanalytic slanderers (1934–47). The Silent Observer not only views these enemies objectively; he also includes the discoverer of orgone energy, Wilhelm Reich (WR), in his merciless criticism. The errors and stupid mistakes as well as the great strides and experiences from 1927 to 1937 constitute an important lesson for anyone who in the future may try to deal with human nature in a political rather than a scientific manner. Only the factual, not the political, way will finally come to grips with the sexual revolution of our times and master the emotional plague (EP).

The Silent Observer knows very well that the discovery of the primordial cosmic energy has rendered ineffective and outdated all petty political quibbling and all thinking in terms of class or of the unconscious. It is certain that in due time this discovery will provide useful new tools of thinking and acting for mankind in its struggle against the emotional plague, which undermines its most skillful and laborious endeavors. However, it seems tragically true that for many decades, perhaps centuries, to come, the politician and the mere ideologist will dominate the public scene and try to change human nature by way of ideas, programs, platforms, speeches, promises, illusions, maneuvers, and politicking of all kinds, without taking a single practical step to change conditions and to reestablish the natural laws of life.

This account of WR's experiences in the Socialist and psychoanalytic movements is being presented in an effort to help eliminate error and unnecessary blundering in the future. It is hoped that even the skillful, hidden slanderer, inside and outside the Communist Party, will feel enough respect for human suffering and searching to come out from his hiding place in the "bushes" and to desist from acts of abuse and misuse of candidness while this historical material is being exposed on the "meadow."



# *Introduction*

This book comprises various writings from the period 1927–45.<sup>1</sup> It is not a compendium of sex-economic sociology; nor is it written in connection with a specific event. It illustrates the gradual maturing of insights over the course of nearly two decades, insights that finally fused into a composite view. Anyone who has worked in unexplored regions will realize that what is reflected in the final result is not a predetermined goal but rather the very path of the search itself.

The reader will ask why I emphasize this. The reason is simple: Natural-scientific thought bears witness to its own impartiality when it describes social events that occurred at various times and that reflect the paths both of error and of remedy. I did not write this book out of emotion or of preconceived theory. Nor did I write it as the result of an arbitrary thought process or because I envisioned a state of improved social organization. I gathered the insights summarized here just as a settler in an uninhabited wilderness must gather impressions and experiences if he wishes to survive.

Originally I was a clinician interested strictly in natural science and philosophy, not in sociology or even in politics. It was the spontaneous development of the science of organomy that led me, initially around 1919, into the area of individual and

<sup>1</sup> 1952: “1945” here refers to a plan only, conceived in 1945, to publish all historical material up to that year. Due to other commitments, only the period 1927 to 1939 was actually described extensively in a consistent manner. Other periods have been dealt with in separate papers.

social sex-economy. Sex-economy in turn was the precursor of the discovery of the orgone, i.e. cosmic life energy.

Looking backward from 1945, I must confess that my discovery of the orgone would not have occurred without the experiences described herein. It owes its very existence to the obstacles placed in its path by the irrational framework of human society and the character structure of the human animal in the twentieth century. Being compelled to recognize these obstacles as biopathic manifestations of life and not as coincidental strokes of fate, and being constrained to find means to overcome them, equipped me with the methods for orgone research. I suspected the existence of the orgone as little as did any psychoanalyst involved with drive psychology or any physicist or biologist involved with the earth's magnetism or cell division. As I have often stressed, what was remarkable was not the discovery of the orgone, but, rather, its *non-discovery* over a period of roughly 2,500 years, which was an achievement of repression. Two decades of clinical work with the human tendency to repress vital processes stimulated the quest for the cause of human irrationalism. Why, I asked, does man resist nothing so much as the realization of his own nature, his biological origin and constitution? I knew nothing of the biological degeneration of the human animal which has for thousands of years endangered his personal and social existence, chronically and in periodic catastrophes.

With this question, doubts arose in my mind as to the rationality of the human thought process, doubts that were never again to be quieted. As long as peace prevailed, my doubts received little nourishment. The neuroses Freud had learned to comprehend in a natural-scientific manner, although only psychologically, appeared to me and to everyone else as illnesses in otherwise healthy organisms. Had anyone proposed, prior to 1927, that so many human institutions had been essentially irrational, i.e. biopathic, for thousands of years, I would have been among the most vehement opponents. Meanwhile social developments throughout the world, emanating from Europe, have made a platitude of the fact that man and his society are mentally ill in the strictest psychiatric sense of the word. I was fortunate, or one

might say unfortunate, in discovering this fact not in 1942, as did most people, but as early as 1927, when I began my research. The first encounter with human irrationality was an immense shock. I can't imagine how I bore it without going mad. Consider that when I underwent this experience I was comfortably adjusted to conventional modes of thinking. Unaware of what I was dealing with, I landed in the "meat grinder," a situation with which every sex-economist or vegetotherapist who has entered the field in the past ten years is well acquainted. It may be best described as follows: As if struck by a blow, one suddenly recognizes the scientific futility, the biological senselessness, and the social noxiousness of views and institutions which until that moment had seemed altogether natural and self-evident. It is a kind of eschatological experience so frequently encountered in a pathological form in schizophrenics. I might even voice the belief that the schizophrenic form of psychic illness is regularly accompanied by illuminating insight into the irrationalism of social and political mores, primarily in regard to the rearing of small children. What we term genuine "cultural progress" is nothing but the result of such insight. Pestalozzi, Rousseau, Voltaire, Nietzsche, and many others are its representatives. The difference between the experience of a schizophrenic and the insight of a strong creative mind lies in the fact that revolutionary insight develops, in practice, over long periods of time, often over centuries. Such rational insight floods the general perspective of the masses in social revolutions such as the American Revolution of 1776, the French in 1789, and the Russian in 1917. In time the "radical truths" become as self-evident as the irrational views and institutions were previously. Whether rational insight will lead to individual mental illness or to rational transformation of the social situation depends upon numerous factors. In the individual it involves above all the capacity for genital satisfaction and the rational organization of thought. On the broad scale of the masses, it depends upon the integration of natural-scientific knowledge with social necessity. However, it is a well-known fact that correct insight may arise prematurely in an individual, i.e. before social processes have achieved the same level of understanding.

The history of the natural sciences and of cultural development is full of examples to prove this contention.

*The axis about which this book revolves is the impeding of the functions of simple and natural life processes by social irrationalism, which, once engendered by biopathic human animals, becomes biophysically anchored in the character of the masses and thus assumes social relevance. What is remarkable is that political irrationalism has been maintained instead of a rational organization of social life. [It is truly a devilish problem.] The biological energy expended irrationally in a lifetime of biopathic functioning would solve the towering mysteries of human existence if it were rationally channeled. No one active in biopsychiatry can deny this allegation. The dream of a better social existence remains a dream only because the thoughts and feelings of the human animal are blocked off from the simple and obvious. This fact became clear spontaneously in the course of events.*

I myself participated in the social irrationalism in Central Europe for many years. Later I was a target of it in my capacity as a physician and research scientist. For years I was both a political man [i.e. a man vitally interested in social affairs] and a working man without ever realizing the incompatibility of work and politics. The politician in me perished but the working physician, research scientist, and sociologist not only endured but, so far, actually survived the social chaos. I had the opportunity to follow numerous political catastrophes at close range and experienced several of them personally: the collapse of the Austrian monarchy, the council dictatorship in Hungary and in Munich, the fall of Austrian social democracy and the Austrian Republic, the birth and fall of the German Republic. I experienced the Hungarian, Austrian, and German emigrations. Then followed in succession the fall of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, and France. Personal and professional interests connected me with all of these countries. One fact stood out prominently in all this political ruination: once a politician crossed the borders of his own country, he became useless and unable to establish himself socially. If, on the other hand, a work-

ing individual crossed the boundaries of his homeland, he was sooner or later able to establish himself financially and vocationally in another country insofar as he was not hindered by politicians. This one fact embodies an enormous truth. Politics is restricted inherently by national boundaries. *Work is essentially international and free from the constraint of any borders.* We shall be able to evaluate this fact in all its social implications only at the end of this book.

At present, there exist a number of groups in Europe and elsewhere which have based their new social orientation on my sociological writings from the period 1927–38. It is therefore imperative at this time to clarify my position: I still bear the entire responsibility for every natural-scientific, medical, or socio-pedagogic claim made during that period, to the extent that corrections have not been made in later works or may be made in the future. The theoretical structure of sex-economy stands essentially unchanged, on firm ground; it has withstood the test of decisive social events. Since approximately 1934 orgone research has laid the experimental foundation for this structure, although it is by no means complete. Today, sex-economy is a recognized branch of natural-scientific research. However, none of the old political concepts found in my early sociological writings remain justified. They were discarded along with the organizations under whose influence they found their way into my writings. An extensive revision of the social concepts of my political psychology may be found in the preface to the third edition of *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*.<sup>2</sup>

The exclusion of the concept of political parties does not represent a regression to academic, socially disinterested natural science. Quite to the contrary, it is an immense step *forward*—leading away from the realm of political irrationalism into the rational thought system of natural work democracy. I do not and cannot know which of my old friends and colleagues have gone through this same process and which of them are still operating with outdated political concepts. Anyone who is acquainted

<sup>2</sup> Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1970.

with my shorter essays on work democracy—for the most part published illegally between 1936 and 1940—will also be informed on the process of my own detachment from politics. Hence I would like to reject any attempts made to exploit my party commitments of more than fourteen years ago by calling them party politics. I would feel constrained to protest immediately and publicly if anyone ventured to exploit my name or my writings in support of socialistic, communistic, parliamentarian, or any other type of power politics. The danger of such exploitation is small, however; it could only be implemented through distortion of my findings. Experience shows that ordinary party politics and organic biophysics react to each other like fire to water.

I am not and I have never been involved with power politics. I joined the Socialist and Communist cultural and medical organizations in 1927 in order to supplement, with mass psychology, the purely economic view of society contained in Socialist theory. Technically, I was a Socialist and a Communist between 1927 and 1932. Factually, functionally, I have never been a Socialist or a Communist and I was never accepted as such by the party bureaucrats. I never believed in the ability of the Socialists and Communists really to solve human emotional problems. Accordingly, I never held any party position. I knew well their dry, economic orientation and I wanted to help them since they played the role of “progressives” in Europe in the 1920’s. I was never duped by politics, but I was slow in distinguishing “social” from “political” processes. I had a high regard for Karl Marx as a nineteenth-century thinker in economics. Today, I deem his theory far surpassed and outdated by the discovery of the cosmic life energy. Of Marx’s teaching, I believe only the *living* character of human productivity will remain. This is an aspect of his work that is utterly neglected and was forgotten long ago in the Socialist and Communist movements, which fell victim to mechanistic economy and mystical mass psychology—a mistake one does not commit so consistently without forfeiting one’s place in the book of history.

And finally, no trace of a distinction was made between a scientific view of society and the bestial, ignorant, despicable

cruelties perpetrated upon working people by biopaths who knew how to attain power by way of intrigue. To confuse a Duncker or Kautsky or Engels with criminal murderers of the Moscow Modju type is the surest sign of a degenerate, scientifically incompetent, and confused mind. If anyone today claims to fight Communism he must prove that in addition to chopping off heads he knows what it is all about.

[1952: It is impossible to master functions of life if one does not live them fully. No miner can mine coal while avoiding coal mining. No engineer can build a bridge over a chasm without the actual risk of falling into it. No physician can cure an infectious disease without the risk of acquiring it himself. One who has never been married knows nothing about marriage, and no one who has never given birth to a child or at least assisted practically in the birth of an infant knows what it is like. This is the meaning of work democracy. When Malinowski decided to study ancient cultures, he went to the Trobriand Islands, where he lived with the people in their huts, sharing their lives and loves. In this way he discovered functionalism in ethnology. *To think functionally, you must live functionally.*

Similarly, when I decided to do work in preventive mental hygiene (today called "social psychiatry"), I had to—and I gladly, even enthusiastically did so—join the people at the very roots of society wherever and however they lived, loved, hated, suffered, and dreamed into an uncertain future. At that time in Europe, the so-called lower classes were organized under Socialist and Communist leadership. There were four to five million Communist and seven million Socialist voters in Germany alone, and those twelve million leftist votes were significant among Germany's approximately thirty million votes. One must have lived these facts to know what "leftists" are; one cannot possibly judge Europe from the American continent without having done so. It is also essential to know that in the late 1920's the orientation of the Communist Party in Austria and Germany was still predominantly democratic. It had not yet fallen prey to the red Fascists, as was the case in the 1930's.

This, then, was my field of work in social psychiatry, and my

first steps soon met with the full evil force of the emotional plague of man. It was not long before I began to realize that *I was the first physician and psychiatrist to discover the emotional plague on the social scene and to find himself entangled in a deadly struggle with the worst epidemic disease which has ever ravaged mankind*, a struggle which continues to this day. This realization was a crucial prerequisite to mustering the skill and will to learn, which was indispensable if I was to survive.]

The concept of a natural work-democratic life process in society precludes political activity in the old sense. *We advocate factual processes, not ideologies*. The serious worker persists in his task under all circumstances and pleads its cause as valiantly as possible. This holds true for every vitally necessary work process. We inform the world how our work is organized. The participants in all other work processes are just as responsible as we for the outcome of this human society. We cannot dictate to the mining or food industries how they are to organize their specific tasks in a work-democratic fashion. Our task is to prevent cancer and other biopathies, and thus to foster the sex-economic principle in rearing small children and to administer the utilization of cosmic life (orgone) energy. We are doing pioneer work with our psychiatric and biophysical knowledge and uncovering the basic principles of the life process.

Numerous, age-old experiences tell us that at every decisive step toward social hygiene some powerful policy maker will obstruct our path. Here I must mention that through many years of patient effort, and supported by the practical success of our scientific endeavors, we have attempted to cooperate with responsible politicians of every stamp. We have, however, encountered only difficulty and have had to overcome the hazards and calumny for which they were regularly responsible. Every catastrophe which sex-economy was forced to overcome in its development was brought about by politicians: Communist and Socialist politicians, politicians in psychoanalytic and medical organizations, Christian government politicians, fascistic state politicians, dictatorial police politicians, and many others. The representatives of sex-economy have proven they are willing to



cooperate. The politicians have proven they are enemies, not so much due to personal motives, but rather because of the fundamental motives of their existence. Hence the fault lies with them if representatives of sex-economy, political psychology, and orgone biophysics no longer take cognizance of them. Because we are working for the implementation of our social tasks we have no alternative but to automatically oppose politics of every sort.

Our social position is clearly and unmistakably set forth in this book, as in other writings. We want the world of party politics to be aware of this position so that no one may claim afterward that he "did not know." The experiences of these last terrible twelve years have taught us that politicians like to use the fruits of other people's honest work to solicit the vote. Once they have secured a sufficient number of votes and thus gained social leverage, they throw overboard the issue on which they rode to power, without principle or scruple. It is characteristic of them to dispose of the worker through calumny or the firing squad once they have appropriated the fruit of his labor. No lengthy consideration is necessary to see that a Lenin or an Engels could not have survived the Russia of 1930. An American Freud would have had equally poor chances of survival had an American Hitler risen to power on his ideas. Today these issues are banalities.

We do not know who the politicians of Europe, America, or Asia will be in 1960 or 1984. Our attitude has been determined by the political machinations which we experienced in the years between 1914 and 1944. It is in the nature of every brand of politics to jeopardize natural science when it puts the politicians' promises into practice. Those in power are not interested in eliminating the individual worker but rather in eliminating the ruling principle of work. They wish to exploit work, but they do not wish to grant it the right to control the direction of society.

These statements have no personal implications, as we do not know the politicians of future decades. However, I do not hesitate to warn against them: Overt enmity is preferable to treacherous friendship.

We are better armed against the irrational attacks of politi-

cians today than we were years ago. Time is now also on our side rather than against us. Actually the attacks of the emotional plague on sex-economy usually boomeranged, but they still required a great deal of effort and money and repeatedly jeopardized our lives. Hence it is essential to continually expose the irrational nature of politics so that it is well defined and publicized should ever an individual suffering from the emotional plague again feel provoked by the presentation of facts. Of course, one cannot defend oneself against a shot in the back. But perhaps politicians will be content to refrain from murder if we assure them we do not intend to compete with them for power, and that we shall cede the field of demagoguery to them completely, limiting ourselves to our work with hapless human victims. Incidentally, assassinations would be of no avail; they would only create martyrs. The searching, the helping, the striving for truth and happiness would reappear a thousandfold. I hope I have made myself sufficiently clear.

# I

## *Wrong Directions*

Following the First World War (1918–27), there was no mention of a psychological interpretation of sociological processes. Social economists either were strictly oriented toward a Marxist economy or based their contentions, in the struggle against the Marxist value theory, on a type of economic psychologism as advanced, for example, by Max Weber or similar schools. In the nineteenth century Marx had traced the sociological and ideological processes of society to the development of economic-technical productive forces. His successors as well as his opponents, during and after his time, were correct in seeking the psychological factors underlying these forces. But the Freudian natural-scientific concept of depth psychology was, in essence, individualistically oriented. It had made little sociological headway and even that was in the wrong direction. (Cf. my sociological criticism of psychoanalytic attempts at sociology in *Der Einbruch der Sexualmoral*, 1932.<sup>1</sup>) Non-Freudian psychology dealt with surface manifestations and was merely a branch of philosophy or of the so-called ethical sciences. It could not yet be designated a natural science. It knew nothing of the unconscious instinctual life of the human organism and remained focused upon surface phenomena to the extent that it did not degenerate into ethics. Because of these historical developments the “psychological” schools of economics and sociology moved in wrong directions. They were unable to penetrate to the eco-

<sup>1</sup> *The Invasion of Compulsory Sex-Morality* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1971).

conomic core of sociology or the biological [bioenergetic] core of human structure. Obviously, as a result, no trace could be found of a relationship between the biological sexual process and socioeconomic processes. Ethical conviction, a substitute for a natural-scientific explanation of the human striving for freedom, was also mentioned in Marxist circles; the gap in Marx's economic theory was already felt at the time but it could not be filled. Questions were raised about the role of man in the social process, his "essence" or "nature" [human character structure]. In this context we must mention the Belgian Socialist Hendrik de Man, who contrasted Marx's "materialistic socialism" with his own "ethical socialism." Thus the psychological gap in Marxist sociology was acutely felt but no one was able to name the missing factor in the comprehension of social processes. It was obvious to everyone that in addition to socioeconomic processes independent of man, there somehow also existed man's own decisive intervention through thoughts and feelings. Ethical views and demands intervened only where concrete knowledge about human nature was lacking. Strictly speaking, the concept of classes was sociological, not psychological, even though every "class" had its own interests, desires, needs, etc.

As became apparent later, the [biopsychological] gap in social science was, in fact, the absence of a well-founded, natural-scientific theory of sexuality. A sociology of sex could only gradually develop from such a theory. Not only was this insight intellectually distant, but if anyone had advanced the theory he would merely have encountered a gaping void. There were neither writings nor the experience that could have claimed to constitute a theory of sexuality exactly suited to fill the gap in understanding left open by Marx's social economy. There were indeed numerous thorough examinations of the "history of the family," but in these the family—which is merely the form in which human sexual life occurs—was erroneously assumed to be the basis of the biological sexual process per se. The question of "the family" is, in itself, full of irrational, emotional elements and leads back to ethics once again instead of to natural science. Thus neither the "problem of the family" nor the "question of

procreation" (as "eugenics" or "population politics") was integrated into social economy. Today, after the experience of Fascism, we know that the age-old mystical and unscientific version of eugenics and population politics formed the basis for the development of the Hitlerian theories of *Lebensraum* and race. We now understand that Hitler's race theory developed precisely within the gap of sociology which could not be filled by purely economically oriented sociology. I attempted to substantiate this fact fully in my books *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* and *The Sexual Revolution*.<sup>2</sup> My interpretation of the gap is generally accepted today, to the extent that it is known: The issue was not the form of the family or the question of procreation but rather that which family and procreation had obscured from the very beginning, i.e. the biological pleasure function in the human animal and the social institutions in which this function has to take place.

However, during that time, around the First World War and for many years thereafter, the biosexual process was completely shrouded in darkness. Sexology, represented by great names such as Bloch, Forel, Ellis, Krafft-Ebing, Hirschfeld, and others, dealt with (and could only deal with) the biopathic sexuality of the time, that is to say, the perversions and procreation of the biologically degenerate human animal. Orgastic potency, the core of later sex-economic sociology, was discovered and described only between 1920 and 1927. I had as little to contribute to filling the biopsychological gap in sociology as anyone else. Only one thing became clear to me at the beginning of my studies of Marxist and non-Marxist sociology: the lack of concrete insight into human structure had been replaced and obscured in the conservative camp by ethical demands and in Marxist sociology by an "economistic," i.e. rigidly mechanistic, view of the societal process which, as I learned only much later, had already been vehemently opposed by Lenin during the time of preparation for the Russian Revolution. In economism, dead machines and technology are the only decisive factors. Man, as representative and

<sup>2</sup> Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1974.

object of this mechanistic social process, drops out of the picture. This will be demonstrated later with concrete examples.

In short, *all endeavors to comprehend and reorganize society operated with no knowledge at all of the central biosexual problem of the human animal*. Fascist irrationalism has since forced the question of irrational human structure upon us. At the time, however, it lay entirely outside the domain of sociology. I became involved with these problems through a remarkable concatenation of my activities as a sexologist with important social events.

When I wrote my book *Die Funktion des Orgasmus*<sup>3</sup> between 1925 and 1927, I was already trying to utilize the question of genitality in a sociopolitical<sup>4</sup> way. This turned out badly. The entire chapter on "the social significance of genital strivings" was later deleted.<sup>5</sup> Under the influence of the psychoanalytic theory of culture, I had attempted to use unusable theories.

I also produced my "Contributions to the Understanding of . . .," harmless trifles which only through their accumulation become dangerous. They contained the usual mixture of half-truths and complete falsities. For example:

The war signified a collective lifting of repressions, particularly of cruel impulses, with the permission of an idealized father image, the Kaiser . . .

Thus I followed Freud's reflections on war and death: the war as an expression of the sadism of the masses! In 1805 it was a corporal and in 1933 again a corporal whom the multitudes made their "Kaiser." Today we know that it is not "the sadism of the masses," but the sadism of small groups to whom the masses, who have become biologically rigid, helpless, and authority-craving, fall prey.

<sup>3</sup> This work is not to be confused with Reich's later work published under the same title as Vol. I of *The Discovery of the Orgone-Ed.*

<sup>4</sup> 1952: The terms "social" and "political," which today I consider opposites, were still united in my thinking at that time.

<sup>5</sup> At the same time, it was enthusiastically published by Swedish Socialists.

Economic interests brought external limitations which were added to the individually conditioned [!] genital inhibitions. The proletariat is not burdened with such economic limitations of genitality [!], and since the pressure of cultural demands is also lower than in the property-owning classes, neuroses appear relatively less often. Genitality is freer, the worse the material conditions of life.

I was a naïve and harmless academician: There are “individually conditioned” genital inhibitions; the proletariat is unburdened by economic brakes on genitality; it has fewer cultural needs; the poorer the material conditions of life, the freer is genitality.

Neither Marxists nor Freudians criticized me. They were in agreement. Later, in their struggle against me, the Marxists attributed the “free sexuality of the proletariat” to poor living conditions. The psychoanalysts were satisfied because I did not remove the boundaries of morality between those human beings with and those without cultural needs. A leading Hungarian analyst once told me that the proletariat corresponded to the unconscious since it was without instinctual inhibitions, whereas the bourgeoisie corresponded to the ego and superego, for it had to keep the id in check. This statement was in complete accord with the psychoanalytic theory of culture which maintained that society was structured psychologically exactly like an individual. Everything was in proper order!

There were also obscure sentences having a core of truth falsely expressed:

Whoever has learned to know the inner readiness to accept and to increase economic necessity as a way out of inner conflicts, cannot believe in a thoroughgoing solution of social problems with the usual methods.

Neurosis was an “individual” psychic conflict. It had nothing to do with the social order, except for “a few hardships and injustices.”

Freud’s psychology began to penetrate Socialist circles through the influence of persons such as the Viennese counselor

and pediatrician Dr. Karl Friedjung. He explained to the Social Democratic physicians in charge of public hygiene in Vienna that the child has a sexuality. The famous Freud had discovered this; it was a great finding. With this knowledge, one could further "sublimation of the instincts." The Social Democrats supported Freud. On his seventieth birthday, they made him a "citizen" (note: not an *honored* citizen) of the city of Vienna. Prior to Freud's discovery, one had not known where the devil, sexuality, had its dwelling place and therefore it could not be adequately fought. Now one knew and rejoiced that it could be fought better, more scientifically, and hence more successfully. Such slogans as "Sexual enlightenment on a scientific basis" and "Healthy sex education" appeared, representing the demand for instinctual sublimation and the scientific prevention of "living out." Psychoanalysts began to write books on sexual hygiene. They advocated the "education of the instincts," a term anyone could interpret as he pleased. Federn and Meng, both members of Socialist parties, wrote: "Under our social and economic living conditions, sexual abstinence may be necessary for valid general and personal reasons. *For the majority of human beings, abstinence is not injurious to health*" (*Das psychoanalytische Volksbuch*, 1927, p. 237). "Accordingly, the utmost avoidance of outer stimuli [!] is necessary for the carrying out of true abstinence. . . . Sexual excitation can be decreased by cold baths and swimming. . . . Spontaneous erections which give rise to masturbation and cause sleeplessness stop if one holds one's breath as long as possible and repeats this several times . . ." (*ibid.*, p. 240) (italics mine, WR). When in 1929 I wrote my critique of bourgeois sexual reform<sup>6</sup> I refrained from criticizing these ethical Socialists. I had no answer myself, and to criticize without being able to do better is easy. I still wrote in the name of psychoanalysis.

Why do "the world," "culture," and "society" not allow young men the natural satisfaction of genitality? Why are there such masses of psychically ill people? Why has Freud been so mercilessly opposed? Why do medical students hear nothing of

<sup>6</sup> *The Sexual Revolution*, Part I.



the overridingly important processes of sexuality? In analytic treatment, the social barrier against natural sexuality emerges clearly and distinctly. Where is the sense in this nonsense? I knew no answer and the literature on the subject offered only stereotyped information: Culture demands morality—chastity in girls, sexual asceticism until marriage, and abstinence during puberty. Otherwise there would be no systematic work and therefore chaos.

I began to study ethnology and sociology: Whence do sexual suppression and repression stem? What is their function?<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Cf. my examination of this question in *The Sexual Revolution* and *The Invasion of Compulsory Sex-Morality*.