

REICH SPEAKS OF

Wilhelm Reich discusses his work and his relation

EDITED BY MARY HIGGINS AND CHESTER

WITH TRANSLATIONS FROM THE GERMAN BY THERESE POL

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FREUD

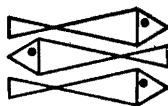
ship with Sigmund Freud

M. RAPHAEL, M.D.

“I left behind me an age which had finally got hold of a little corner of the Freudian thought system, but had completely thrown overboard Freud’s courage to stand alone, his adherence to some basic truth, his penetrating sense of what is right regardless—in other words, the complete abandonment of basic research of human emotions to petty little nuisance considerations such as career, easy money, easy recognition by institutions which owed their very existence to the evasion of the very facts of life they pretended, falsely, to disclose.”

WILHELM REICH, 1954

STRAUS AND GIROUX)



New York

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The Archives and Dr. Eissler disclaim all responsibility for the opinions and recollections of Dr. Reich contained in this book.

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EDITORS' PREFACE

The Wilhelm Reich interview, conducted by Kurt R. Eissler, M.D., representing the Sigmund Freud Archives, took place at Orgonon in Rangeley, Maine, on October 18 and 19, 1952. Reich had intended to publish it, but the decision of the editors to do so was more than mere compliance. In our opinion it is an unusually candid document and its publication supplies a long-awaited clarification of the relationship between Freud and Reich.

While Reich in many of his writings did refer to this relationship and to the conflict that developed later, the directness and informality of the interview technique has made it possible to elicit the information in a manner that is both simple and concise, and it should have the advantage of placing the reader in a favorable position to determine for himself what was at issue. Those who are unacquainted with the history of this relationship—and, regrettably, most are—have been bombarded with so

much slanderous fiction that clarification is urgently needed. It is hoped this interview will fulfill that need.

In view of recent strenuous efforts to eliminate the libido theory, the publication of this interview is unexpectedly timely. For Reich remained steadfast in viewing libido as the core of Freudian theory. His pertinacity, supported by ample clinical evidence of the existence of a sexual energy, eventually led him, unlike Freud, to the laboratory and to the discovery of “libido” *in vitro*. In so doing, he inherited the criticism and stigmatization that Freud had previously endured. And more! For with his discovery of a tangible, physical energy, Reich could not provide the same sort of appeasement that the world demanded and received from Freud. Freud capitulated (sublimation, death-instinct, and cultural theories), and gained fame; Reich died in prison.

The fact that Freud did not offer any scientific proof for the libido theory, even though he predicted it would be forthcoming, and the attenuation that resulted from his later speculations, left his disciples with little to sustain them. As a result, they have gradually abdicated, despite some idolatrical lip service in their theoretical discussions—“a formal obeisance to the past”—and they have offered little, if any, opposition to the concerted effort now being directed against the energy theory, the most viable aspect of Freudian psychoanalysis.

The untenability of their position might have been alleviated by an objective evaluation of Reich’s discovery of the Life Energy. It would have furnished them with concrete evidence of a vital force, functioning within the organism, acted upon and influenced by the numerous inner and outer stimuli which are so often improperly invested with primary importance. Instead, they have chosen to remain silent, indifferent, incredulous or

x) *Editors’ Preface*

contemptuous and, as a result, have been unable to forestall the promulgation of psychologies which have extirpated the "soul" from the living. They have made "cultural adaptation" their goal, without stopping to consider that our culture, which is so stubbornly defended, derives from the biopsychic rigidity of the human organism and the authoritarianism it fosters.

According to the adaptationists, who appear to be most determined to eliminate libido, it is not necessary "to posit an energy whose existence can *never* [italics, ed.] be demonstrated for behavior which is meaningful only in terms of motivation, psychological mechanism and ultimate action."¹ "Libido," they say, "adds nothing to our knowledge and hence should be discarded."² They use such empty phraseology as "motivating impulse" and "act of behavior" to describe the living process, and they consider this entirely sufficient for their purposes. To them, and to the Freudians, who now appear to be in agreement, libido is nothing more than a "metaphor," "tautological" and merely a "prop for the imagination." "Block That Metaphor"³ has become the rallying cry of those who labor so assiduously to relegate libido to such an ignominious status.

These critics of Freudian theory have also sought to capitalize on Freud's error in minimizing the role of society in relation to human behavior. They emphasize "sociology" and conveniently deemphasize "sexuality." Ironically, although Reich's emphasis on the magnitude of the influence of society upon the individual caused his break with Freud and his expulsion from the International Psychoanalytic Association, he saw no justification for

¹ Abram Kardiner et al., "A Methodological Study of Freudian Theory," *International Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 2, No. 5, Sept. 1966, p. 498.

² *Ibid.*, p. 497.

³ Donald Oken, M.D., "Block That Metaphor," *International Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 2, No. 5, Sept. 1966, pp. 563-566.

discarding Freud's *libido* and remained the only one prepared to defend it.

Although he was never politically oriented, Reich was once violently condemned and, at times, even today, continues to be slandered as a communist because he attached so much importance to the impact of society and saw in Marxist doctrine some basis for hope in bringing about an improvement in the human condition. However, practical communism, as it developed in the Soviet Union, became a monster he termed "red facism"; and this fact, in addition to his own experiences as a physician among the masses, convinced him that human structure, molded by authoritarian institutions, is protoplasmically unable to change.

In another ironic twist, the psychologists of the communist countries, who had previously held Freudian theory in utter disdain, now see, in the elimination of libido, a basis for compatibility with psychoanalysis through kinship with our latter-day adaptationalists. Thus a Czechoslovakian psychiatrist cheerfully asserts, "If it is true that Freudian statements about instincts and instinctual energy are not essential to Freud's work and can be separated from his empirically based generalizations, I do not see any compelling reasons for Marxists to reject Freud."⁴

Reich never failed to appreciate and express his indebtedness to Freud. In retrospect, he viewed their conflict as a link in the chain of scientific development and, therefore, desirable and even necessary. Throughout this interview, Reich strives to show how essential Freud's formulations were for the clarification he himself sought in clinical matters. For example, Freud's formulation of the negative therapeutic reaction enabled Reich

⁴ F. Knobloch, M.D., "Marxists Reject Libido Theory," *International Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 2, No. 5, Sept. 1966, p. 559.

to focus on the problem and to arrive at a biological explanation which is fully in accord with clinical facts, instead of at the futile death-instinct hypothesis, which Freud himself acknowledged was only a speculation.

Reich's disappointment in Freud, for which there was much justification, never led to "hatred or rejection." Instead, he came to have "a better and higher estimation of Freud's achievement than in those days when I was his worshipful disciple." Even Adler, Jung and Rank are not denied Reich's indebtedness for the inadvertent assistance their theoretical positions provided in his pursuit of a natural scientific basis for the libido theory. (See Reich's letter to Ferenczi, p. 145.)

Freud, on the other hand, with his authority, tended to foster a static, finalistic condition for psychoanalysis. Anyone who opposed him was considered heretical and no longer part of psychoanalysis. This encapsulation of Freudian theory, and the desire to make it socially acceptable, has tended to deprive it of its historical importance as a foundation for the growth and development which should have been expected of psychoanalysis as a science.

It is now evident that the failure of the psychoanalysts to grasp and utilize the libido theory in a practical way, and the fear it aroused in a rigid social order, has led to its scuttling. Freud's later speculations were designed to reassure a world unprepared to accept any responsibility for its implications. The personal insufficiencies of his followers and the authority of Freud himself, who was unwilling or unable to draw the ultimate conclusions from his early remarkable intuition, created a barrier against any further progress toward an effective therapy and, more important, toward a mass prophylaxis of the neuroses.

Freud's own defection in assuming a biological foundation for

our authoritarian culture, thereby limiting the usefulness of his theory, and the lack of practical success in the use of psychoanalysis as a therapeutic instrument have simplified the task for those who now seek to eliminate Freud's influence completely. Reich, alone, did not yield. He is, therefore, *persona non grata*—to the biopsychologists because he gave emphasis to sociology; to the sociopsychologists because he emphasized biology.

Speculating and opinionating about the issues of life do not ordinarily constitute a threat to the established order. Consequently, such intellectual pastimes are usually treated with toleration or indifference. Subjecting these issues to scientific scrutiny, however, almost invariably arouses suspicion and distrust, and ridicule is not an infrequent accompaniment. Then, with the disclosure of a vital truth, all the forces of suppression are mobilized to conceal or destroy it. The discovery of the Life Energy encountered these forces in all their virulence. Every step of the process, from its beginning in the orgasm theory to its culmination in the discovery of a ubiquitous energy, met harassment and slander. These familiar instruments of suppression were finally elaborated into wanton book-burning and incarceration, terminating in the death of Reich in a federal prison.

But, as with the discovery of any fundamental truth, the demonstrable fact of the existence of a universal force cannot be shunted aside or suppressed indefinitely. There is certainly no complacency on the part of those hostile forces seeking so desperately to suppress the discovery. Harassment and calumny continue unabated ten years after Reich's death. Nevertheless, his discovery must eventually evoke a demand for a rational appraisal. It will not lend itself indefinitely to the idle exercise of incompetent or frivolous interpretation. Nor will slander much longer serve to undermine serious consideration of the

significance of the discovery. It will not be confirmed or rejected on the basis of the biased opinions of psychoanalysts who can claim authority only in matters pertaining to the psyche, nor in the legalistic maneuverings of chemical-oriented food and drug agencies. The validity of the discovery will be established on the basis of the natural scientific study of such seemingly unrelated phenomena as biogenesis, the cancer disease, gravitational attraction, the development of hurricanes and the formation of deserts in the light of the existence of a universal energy.

The relationship of Reich to Freud and psychoanalysis was the vital first step which led to the discovery of the cosmic orgone energy. To capture the historical significance of this relationship is the purpose of this volume.

The interview was originally recorded on magnetic tape and transcribed shortly thereafter. For the purpose of publication, it was deemed necessary at times to relieve the German style of sentence structure and to delete some redundancies and repetitions. The editors are responsible for such minor changes and are confident that, in making them, no interference with meaning has resulted. We have also provided the footnotes and appended a supplement consisting of correspondence with Freud and others, as well as miscellaneous documents pertinent to the material of the interview.

Unfortunately, the expectation that permission to publish Freud's letters to Reich would be granted was shortlived. Ernst Freud, managing director of the Sigmund Freud Copyrights, Ltd., initially expressed interest only in the payment of a royalty, but negotiations were abruptly terminated and permission refused *on the advice of unnamed psychoanalysts*. The editors had

anticipated the possibility of such a response, but the publisher's previous experience with the Freud estate had been positive and there was always the hope that the truth would not be tampered with, nor history denied. Although orgonomy had its historical origin in psychoanalysis, it no longer bears any factual relationship to it. Nevertheless, the irrational, unrelenting hostility of the psychoanalysts continues to impede every effort to achieve a scientific evaluation of Reich's work.

Wherever there is a specific reference to the Freud correspondence in the text, we have undertaken to paraphrase briefly the contents of the letters. Others have been deleted.

MARY HIGGINS

CHESTER M. RAPHAEL, M.D.
New York, 1967

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Biographies are usually written long after the issues involved have become meaningless, when nobody can do anything about them, when they have become historical, i.e., ossified. Biographies of important men should be written when everybody responsible for good or bad is still alive and responsive. Why should we be so full of regard for privacy in important matters when our newspapers drown us in small scandals every day?

The developments in science and education within the next one hundred years will be decisive in establishing whether this interview will have any meaning whatsoever, or whether the evasion of the issues of babyhood and motherhood will continue to mess up more centuries of human destiny. It is of crucial importance, therefore, that the major, factual parts of the Wilhelm Reich interview on Freud be published now.¹

Wilhelm Reich, 1954

¹ In the negotiations which preceded the interview and his acceptance of the documents contributed by the Orgone Institute, Dr. Eissler indicated that the Sigmund Freud Archives intended, wherever possible, to prohibit the use of all material deposited therein for at least one hundred years.

1) OCTOBER 18, 1952

DR. EISSLER

Dr. Reich, the question I want to ask you is a very simple one. It is a very comprehensive question, but it is a simple one. I would like to know everything you know about Freud, everything you observed and everything you thought. Even if it is not based on a correct observation, the mere fact that you thought it about Freud would be so important for us to know.

DR. REICH

Well, that is quite a big order. I know a lot about Freud. I would like to start with a basic theoretical difference in the approach of psychoanalysis and my work, not to propagate my work, but to explain how I saw Freud.

Psychoanalysis, as you well know, works with words and unconscious ideas. These are its tools. According to Freud, as I understood him, as he published it, the unconscious can only be brought out as far back as the Wortvorstellungen [verbal ideas]

when the "word images" were formed. In other words, psychoanalysis cannot penetrate beneath or beyond the second or third year of life. Psychoanalysis is bound down by its method. It has to stick to that method which is the handling of associations and word images. Now, character analysis¹ developed the reading of emotional expression. Whereas Freud opened up the world of the unconscious mind, thoughts, desires, and so on, I succeeded in reading emotional expressions. Until then, we couldn't "read the mind." We could only connect verbal associations.² Is what I'm saying perfectly clear?

¹ Character analysis was originally a modification of the customary psychoanalytic technique of symptom analysis by the inclusion of the *character* and *character resistance* in the therapeutic process. However, the discovery of the *muscular armor* necessitated the development of a new technique designed to liberate the bound-up vegetative energies and, thereby, to restore to the patient his vegetative motility. The later discovery of *organismic orgone energy* ("bio-energy") and the concentration of atmospheric orgone energy within an orgone energy accumulator led to the further development of character-analytic vegetotherapy into an inclusive, biophysical *orgone* therapy.

² The usual Freudian indifference to the total expression of the patient, "his look, manner of speech, facial expression, dress, hand clasp, etc.," tends to eliminate essential areas of exposure and to place excessive reliance upon verbal communication. "The overestimation of the content of the material usually goes with an underestimation if not with a complete neglect of the manner in which the patient tells these things." *Character Analysis* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1961), p. 29.

Even though Freud came to realize that these communications could not be taken at face value and, thus, necessitated theoretical and technical modifications, the verbal productions remain the raw material of the psychoanalytic therapy. The attempts to alleviate the difficulty in verbal communication, utilizing free association, produced some improvement, but the ability of the patient to communicate verbally remained an essential feature of the technique. It tended to exclude the uncooperative psychotic, for example, or the patient whose ability to communicate verbally was impaired by the concealed spasm of the glottis. The attempt to relieve such spasm by initiating the gag reflex, as utilized in orgone therapy, would not be a recognized means of eliminating the difficulty in psychoanalysis.

See also letter from Reich to Lotte Liebeck in which he describes the reading of emotional expression and its value in the therapeutic process (p. 209).

4) REICH SPEAKS OF FREUD

DR. EISSLER

Sure.

DR. REICH

When it becomes possible through character analysis to read emotional expressions, the patient does not have to talk. If we know the patient well enough, we know what's going on without words being spoken. You tell me what you are by way of your expression. Freud told me what he was through his facial expression. Would you look at this picture of Freud. Please go there and look at it.³ I don't know whether you will see what's in that picture. I didn't see it when I received it from him in 1925. Can you see what's in that picture?

DR. EISSLER

Well, a little bit.

DR. REICH

It's a very sad expression, true despair. I began to see the despair in Freud's face some time around 1940. Although he was dead,⁴ he had a great influence upon the direction of my further search in the realm of human emotions. *What was his despair about?* Now, if I am right, if I read the emotional expression correctly, the problem is why he was in such despair. And why didn't I see it before, in 1925 or 1930?

When I met Freud in 1919, he was a very alive person. I described him a bit in the first volume of *The Discovery of the Orgone*.⁵ He was alive. He was outgoing. He was hopeful. He was full of zest and zeal. Then, around 1924, something hap-

³ See photograph, following p. 142. This picture hangs on the wall in Reich's library at Orgonon, where the interview took place.

⁴ Freud died on September 23, 1939.

⁵ *The Function of the Orgasm* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1961), p. 15.

5) *The Interview*

pened. I don't know whether you know that he withdrew from all meetings and congresses in 1924. And he developed his cancer of the jaw at that time. Are you following me?

DR. EISSLER

Sure, yes, yes.

DR. REICH

Now, cancer, in my research—you know that I worked on it—is a disease following emotional resignation—a bio-energetic shrinking, a giving up of hope.⁶

DR. EISSLER

Yes?

DR. REICH

Now that hooks on to Freud: Why did he develop cancer just at that time? Freud began to resign. (If you don't follow, if anything is unclear, please just ask me. Interrupt me and ask freely.) I didn't see it then, and, peculiarly enough, the conflict between us also began about that time.

Now, I want you to believe that it is not my intention to accuse anybody. I no longer have any interest whatsoever in the psychoanalytic movement. I've been completely on my own since about 1930. Some of the people who were involved at that time are now dead. Some are still alive. Some of their misdeeds still go on, are still active in one form or another. I want to add that whatever happened between the International Psychoana-

⁶ *The Cancer Biopathy* (New York: Orgone Institute Press, 1948). "Carcinomatous shrinking biopathy" is the term Reich has applied to the process underlying the disease known as cancer, in which he discovered the functional unity of psychic resignation and biopathic shrinking which precede, often by many years, and accompany the appearance of the malignant tumor.

6) REICH SPEAKS OF FREUD

lytic Association (IPA) and myself, I ascribed, at first, to this person or that person, to the psychoanalytic association, to a betrayal of Freud and psychoanalysis, etc. And all that turned out to be wrong. Do you know what happened at that time?

DR. EISLER

Only the gross—

DR. REICH

I shall tell you the details. What happened at that time not only happened in the IPA from 1926 to 1934. It has happened all through the ages. It happened in the Christian Church fifteen hundred years ago. It happened in every home on this planet. Now that sounds peculiar, doesn't it? What happened? Do you know the term "pestilent character"?

DR. EISLER

Yes.

DR. REICH

That means, briefly, the following: There is a peaceful community—whether it be of psychoanalysts or sociologists, or just a community of people like this town of Rangeley.⁷ There are two or three people who are sick, emotionally sick, and they begin to stir up trouble.⁸ You still follow me?

DR. EISLER

Yes.

⁷ Rangeley, Maine—the location of Reich's home and laboratories from 1945 to 1957.

⁸ *The Children of the South*, by Margaret Anderson (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1966), contains a moving description of a recent example of this phenomenon occurring in connection with the sincere efforts of a community in the South to integrate its school.

7) *The Interview*

DR. REICH

Now, these people are very small and insignificant, historically. But, at that time, they weren't insignificant to me or to other psychoanalysts. At that time, they were important because the fight against the development from understanding human nature on the basis of words or associations or unconscious ideas to understanding human nature on the basis of bio-energetic expression, movement, motion, emotion—in essence, the development from symptom analysis to character analysis and to orgone therapy—was fought, not by argument, not by counterevidence, but by slander. By slander, I say!

There was one man, and I have to point him out. He's dead now. He shot himself. That's Paul Federn.⁹ There is evidence that in 1924 this man began to "dig" at Freud about me. I didn't know it then. Freud didn't know it. It became clear later on.¹ He was jealous of my success. And the result was that mess in Lucerne. I don't know what has been deposited in the Freud Archives about me—what slander or defamation. But I know it's around. I know who was involved in it. Jones was in it.² I

⁹ Paul Federn, M.D. (1871-1950), Viennese psychoanalyst and vice president of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society from 1924 until its dissolution by the Nazis in 1938.

¹ Evidence of Federn's efforts to disturb the relationship between Freud and Reich was clearly revealed by Freud himself in a letter to Reich dated November 22, 1928, in which he told him that Federn had requested Reich's removal as director of the technical seminar. In a later letter from Freud to Reich, October 10, 1930, Federn's malevolent "digging" was again in evidence.

² Ernest Jones, M.D. (1879-1958), English psychoanalyst and official biographer of Freud. In his work *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. 111, p. 191, Jones referred to the International Congress held in Lucerne in August, 1934. "It was on this occasion that Wilhelm Reich *resigned* from the Association. Freud had thought highly of him in his early days, but Reich's *political fanaticism* had led to both personal and scientific estrangement" (Italics: ed.). Jones knew intimately the circumstances of Reich's *expulsion* from the IPA. Yet, in a work of historical importance we can assume that he deliberately falsified the facts when he stated that Reich

8) REICH SPEAKS OF FREUD

know that. And it is evident from the letters which I wrote to Freud³ and Freud wrote to me. I don't know if you went through them. Did you read them?

DR. EISSLER

Yes.

DR. REICH

Then you saw it was a great worry. In one letter, Freud expressed his assurance that no matter what people said about me, he would protect me. I don't know if you remember. That was about 1928 or so.⁴

Now, this whole horrible thing burst out at the Lucerne Congress. Do you want to hear about that?

DR. EISSLER

Yes.

DR. REICH

That I seduced all my patients. I was a psychopath. I was this. I was that. Then, finally, I had gone schizophrenic. That went on for years. You know that?

DR. EISSLER

No, I did not know that.

resigned. Involved, of course, was the desire to minimize the importance of this event and to absolve the IPA of all responsibility. See Documentary Supplement, p. 255.

Concerning Reich's "political fanaticism," it should be made clear to the reader that the IPA, in order to avoid the implications of the psychoanalytic therapy of the neuroses, sought to discredit Reich's effort to establish the significance of society in the etiology of the neuroses by referring to it as "political fanaticism."

³ See letter from Reich to Freud, p. 153.

⁴ In a letter dated July 27, 1927, Freud assured Reich that, while he was aware of personal differences and hostilities in the psychoanalytic organization, they could not influence his high regard for Reich's competence which, he added, was shared by many others.

9) *The Interview*

DR. REICH

You don't know that rumor of schizophrenia? Oh, yes. That was spread by Fenichel.⁵ Oh, yes. Now, today, nobody believes it.⁶ It was quite a thing, quite a thing. I doubt that you never heard that I'm paranoiac, schizophrenic.

DR. EISSLER

No, I didn't.

DR. REICH

Sure?

DR. EISSLER

Sure, I didn't.

DR. REICH

You want to see the documents? ⁷ Shall I give them to you?

DR. EISSLER

Well, I mean, if you would—

DR. REICH

All right, yes! Now listen! I can explain how they came to invent such a rumor, or to set such a rumor into motion about me. In 1929—I think it was then—I began to work in character analysis with physiological emotions, with physiological feelings in the patients. You are acquainted with character analysis?

⁵ Otto Fenichel, M.D., psychoanalyst and author of *The Psychoanalytic Theory of the Neurosis*.

⁶ Unfortunately, Reich's confidence that the rumor had subsided was ill-founded. It persists. As recently as February, 1966, the science editor of the *New York Herald Tribune* stated that "Dr. Reich was mentally ill." Also, Silvano Arieti, a prominent psychoanalyst, in his review of a book by Philip Rieff, suggested that the author may have been unfairly critical of Reich in not taking "into consideration at all the hypothesis that illness may have adversely affected Reich in the last part of his life." *American Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 123, No. 2, August 1966, p. 235.

⁷ See footnote 6, p. 57, and p. 230.

10) REICH SPEAKS OF FREUD

DR. EISSLER

Yes.

DR. REICH

You are. You know what I call preorgastic streamings? Orgo-
notic current? ⁸

DR. EISSLER

I know a little about that.

DR. REICH

You know something about it? Otherwise, there's no use.

DR. EISSLER

Well, I know your literature pretty well up to the time you left
the psychoanalytic movement.

DR. REICH

It was already in by then. You didn't read the third edition of
Character Analysis?

DR. EISSLER

No, not the third edition.⁹

DR. REICH

Well, in schizophrenics, the bio-energetic emotions or excita-
tions break through into consciousness. In the so-called normal

⁸ The sensations of current appearing with the mobilization of vegetative (biological, sexual, orgone) energy are frequently described as "streamings" by persons in orgone therapy.

⁹ Students of the various schools of psychoanalysis are required to read *Character Analysis* but are often specifically warned not to read the contents of the third edition beyond the chapter on "The Masochistic Character," to mark their separation from Reich's later work. This separation is, of course, correct, but the admonition to ignore the later work is given with defamatory emphasis.

Also, since Reich's death, there has been considerable pressure from foreign publishers, particularly the German, to republish the original edition of this work, but stubborn refusal to publish the third edition.

human beings, these excitations are more or less shut off. This is particularly the case in the affect-blocked compulsion neurotic. In investigating the difference between the typical neurotic and the schizophrenic, I learned that the neurotic recognizes the excitations which may break through spontaneously, or in the course of treatment, as biological, as arising from within. The schizophrenic fails to recognize these primary, biophysical sensations and plasmatic streamings as an *inner process* and, thus, comes to misinterpret and distort them. That is, he believes the excitations—the sensations, the crawlings, the stirrings in him—are due to *outside* influences, for example, to persecutors trying to electrocute him. He does perceive his bio-energetic emotion, but he misinterprets it. This explanation of the schizophrenic process was viewed as distorted and even delusional by psychoanalysts such as Jones, Federn, Fenichel. And out of such things grew the slander of calling me a paranoid schizophrenic. I want you to read that third edition. You have it?

DR. EISSLER

That was not published in 1930.

DR. REICH

No, no, that was published in 1948.

DR. EISSLER

But that played already a role?

DR. REICH

Oh, yes, 1934. Now, how far do you want to go into the secrets of psychoanalysis? Do you want it all?

DR. EISSLER

Sure, I mean—

12) REICH SPEAKS OF FREUD

DR. REICH

You think there should be no limitations?

DR. EISSLER

No limitations.

DR. REICH

I think the same thing.

DR. EISSLER

I think it may be better understandable if you start with 1919 when you met Freud.

DR. REICH

Now, wait a minute. It goes from 1919 right up to 1950. It's all one piece.

DR. EISSLER

But you should start with 1919.

DR. REICH

Yes. I start with his despair.

DR. EISSLER

But that was 1940.

DR. REICH

I became aware of his despair in 1940, but the picture was given to me in 1925.

DR. EISSLER

Yes, but we are in 1919, and that period from 1919 to 1925 is quite important.

DR. REICH

Exactly. That's why I come back now. I jumped forward to tell you about that schizophrenic rumor and the rumors about my

13) *The Interview*

seducing patients—the defamation, sexual defamation, and so on. Now, I have to go back to where Freud was in despair.

At that time, about 1925, the psychoanalysts in the technical seminar didn't like my work on genitality, on orgasmic potency, on the actual stasis neurosis which underlies the whole dynamic structure of the energy source of the neurosis.¹ And their dislike showed itself in many ways.² It would be petty to go into it here and to try to describe these petty ways, petty annoyances, and so on, but I have to say the following: The psychoanalysts didn't like it, and they still don't like it. They don't mention it. It is mentioned nowhere. Genitality, to this day, is not handled as a basic problem of adolescence, as a basic problem of the first puberty. To my knowledge, nobody dares touch it.³ You'll have to agree with me on that. Nobody dared to touch it then, either. I touched it fully. I went into it critically, as I described it in my *Funktion des Orgasmus*.⁴ Do you know that book?

DR. EISLER

Yes, sure.

¹ "I must repeat what I have said in other publications, that these psychoneuroses, as far as my experience goes, are based on sexual-instinct motive powers. I do not mean that the energy of the sexual impulse merely contributes to the forces supporting the morbid manifestations (symptoms), but I wish distinctly to maintain that this supplies the only constant and the most important source of energy in the neurosis . . ." Sigmund Freud, *Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1962), pp. 26-7. Originally published as *Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexualtheorie* (Leipzig and Vienna: Verlag Franz Deuticke, 1905).

² See letter from Reich to Federn, p. 148.

³ See statement regarding "Freud, Reich, Kinsey," p. 283.

⁴ This book, published in 1927 by the Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag, is not to be confused with Reich's later work of the same title. The early work was dedicated to Freud, and in a letter to Reich dated July 9, 1926, he acknowledged its value, particularly because it dealt with the subject of the actual neurosis.

14) REICH SPEAKS OF FREUD

At first, I didn't understand why that animosity arose. I was regarded very highly from 1920 up to about 1925 or 1926. And then I felt that animosity. I had touched on something painful—genitality. They didn't like it. They didn't want it. Hitschmann⁵ was the only one who said, "You hit the nail on the head." (He was the director of the Psychoanalytic Polyclinic. We built it up together.) It is very unpleasant to bring this forth, but I must. It has to do with my plight, and it has to do with Freud's despair.

Basically, Freud discovered the principle of energy functioning of the psychic apparatus. *The energy-functioning principle*. This was what distinguished him from all other psychologists. Not so much the discovery of the unconscious. The unconscious, the theory of the unconscious, was, to my mind, a consequence of a principle he introduced into psychology. That was the principle, the natural scientific principle, of energy—the "libido theory."⁶ You know that today very little is left of it.⁷ I

⁵ Eduard Hitschmann, M.D., joined the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society in 1905 and was the director of the psychoanalytic clinic in Vienna from 1923 until its dissolution by the Nazis. He "always advocated searching for 'organic factors' as a background of the neurosis"—quotation from *Minutes of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society*, Vol. 1: 1906-1908, edited by Herman Nunberg and Ernst Federn (New York: International Universities Press, Inc., 1962), p. 42.

⁶ "We have laid down the concept of *libido* as that of a force of variable quantity which has the capacity of measuring processes and transformations in the spheres of sexual excitement. This libido we distinguished from the energy which is to be generally adjudged to the psychic processes with reference to its special origin, and thus we attribute to it also a qualitative character. In separating libidinous from other psychic energy we give expression to the assumption that the sexual processes of the organism are differentiated from the nutritional processes through a special chemism." Sigmund Freud, *Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex*, pp. 74-75.

⁷ None of the present-day schools of psychology utilize the libido theory. Any attempt to revive it is considered naïve and is ridiculed. "Bieber is of

consider my bio-energetic work with the emotions to be a *direct continuation* of that energy principle in psychology. By the way, you should read that third edition.

DR. EISSLER

I will do it.

DR. REICH

Now, if an organism is to work with libido functions, with the genitality of children or adolescents, I do not believe he can do so unless he is functioning well himself. Do I make myself quite clear? ⁸

DR. EISSLER

Yes.

DR. REICH

If you feel that I am not quite clear, please interrupt me and tell

the opinion that the libido theory remains permanently confused and concludes that 'the entire libido theory can be discarded . . .' He sees no positive value in the concept of 'psychic energy' or, for that matter, in the entire libido theory." Percival Bailey, *Sigmund, the Unserene, A Tragedy in Three Acts* (Springfield, Ill.: Charles Thomas Co., 1965), p. 66. The reference is to I. Bieber: "A critique of the libido theory," *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, Vol. 18 (1958), pp. 52-69.

Also, Erich Fromm, Ph.D., in a recent interview in *McCalls*, October, 1965, is quoted as saying, "Early in my practice, I found that certain things in Freudian theory—especially the libido theory—really were not right."

⁸ "The *unarmored living* feels and understands the expressive movements of other unarmored organisms clearly and simply by means of its own instinctive empathetic movements and organ sensations. The *armored living*, on the other hand, can perceive no organ sensations, or it can feel them only in a distorted way; thus it loses contact with the living, and the understanding of its functions." Reich, *Ether, God and Devil* (New York: Orange Institute Press, 1949), p. 49.

The term "armor" is applied to the sum total of the character and muscular attitudes which an individual develops as a defense against the breakthrough of vegetative sensations and emotions, in particular anxiety, rage and sexual excitation. According to this definition, character armor and muscular armor are functionally identical.

16) REICH SPEAKS OF FREUD

me because I feel it's a very grave obligation to have that stated clearly.

Freud introduced the energy principle into psychology, and, in doing so, he broke the barrier which separated the science of that day from that of today. I don't know why I hesitate, but I hesitate to say this: *Most psychoanalysts were genitally disturbed, and that is why they hated it.* That's it. I assure you that I don't say that in order to do damage to anybody.

DR. EISSLER

You think that extends to Freud, too?

DR. REICH

No, I don't. That's the point. When I met Freud, I saw that he was a very alive, strong-willed person. He couldn't possibly have been disturbed.⁹ But here comes the first tragedy in connection with his despair. His despair was a double one. To my mind, as I felt it then, and as I later began to read it in his face, it was this: First, when he discovered infantile sexuality, he was furiously attacked, in a horrible way, by Modju. Do you know who Modju is?

DR. EISSLER

I met him in one of the bulletins.¹

DR. REICH

You did? Then you knew that "Modju" is a synonym for the emotional plague or pestilent character who uses underhanded slander and defamation in his fight against life and truth. That

⁹ See unsent letter from Reich to Eissler, p. 129.

¹ Orgone Energy Bulletin. A publication of the Wilhelm Reich Foundation from January, 1949, to March, 1953—ordered destroyed by the Food and Drug Administration in 1954.

name “Modju” will stick to him for the rest of this century and far beyond. Modju is a scoundrel and—

DR. EISSLER

From where did you derive the name?

DR. REICH

Pardon?

DR. EISSLER

From where did you get the name?

DR. REICH

It was derived from Mocenigo, a nincompoop, a nobody, who delivered a very great scientist, in the sixteenth century, to the Inquisition. That scientist was Giordano Bruno. He was imprisoned for eight years and then burned at the stake. This Mocenigo was a nobody who knew nothing, learned nothing, couldn't learn anything. He wanted to get a good memory function from Bruno, who had a marvelous memory. But he couldn't do it. Bruno couldn't give it to him. So what did he do? He went out and killed Bruno. You see? That's MO-cenigo. And DJU is Djugashvili. That's Stalin.² So I put it together to make “Modju.” And that is going to stick. They will never get rid of it. Never! That has to do with our present plight in sociology, you understand.³

Now, to get back to Freud's despair. As I said, there was this first despair after he discovered infantile sexuality. He was moving quite logically in the direction of the genitality problem, where I found myself so much later, about fifteen years later. But he couldn't get at it. He tried to get at it in the *Three*

² Stalin's real name was Josef Vissarionovich Djugashvili, or Dzhugashvili.

³ See excerpt from “Truth versus Modju,” p. 276.

18) REICH SPEAKS OF FREUD

Contributions. But there, already, something came in which was no good. That was that genitality was “in the service of procreation.” That’s in the *Three Contributions*.⁴ It’s not true, you see. He knew it somewhere. In our discussions, it was quite clear that he was hampered by the world, which did not want him to get at the genitality of infants and children and adolescents because that would turn the whole world upside down. Yes, Freud knew that. But he couldn’t get at it socially. The sublimation theory,⁵ which he developed as an absolute, was a consequence of that. It was an evasion.⁶ He had to. He was tragically caught. You know with whom? With the many students, many pupils, many followers. And what did they do? They took what he had and got the money out of it. I’m sorry to have to state that. I stated it publicly before. They hampered Freud. He was hampered so that he couldn’t develop further. And from there, he went right into the death-instinct theory.⁷ I don’t know if you want to go into such detail.

DR. EISSLER

Sure.

DR. REICH

You want it?

⁴ “The sexual impulse now [with the beginning of puberty] enters into the service of the function of propagation; it becomes, so to say, altruistic.” Sigmund Freud, *Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex*, p. 66.

⁵ “The third issue in normal constitutional dispositions is made possible by the process of ‘sublimation,’ through which the powerful excitations from individual sources of sexuality are discharged and utilized in other spheres, so that a considerable increase of psychic capacity results from an in itself dangerous predisposition.” Ibid., p. 94.

⁶ “Sublimation, as the essential cultural achievement of the psychic apparatus, is possible only in the absence of sexual repression; in the adult it applies only to the *pregenital*, but not to the *genital* impulses.” Reich, *The Sexual Revolution* (New York: The Noonday Press, 1962), p. 19.

⁷ See excerpt from *The Function of the Orgasm*, p. 248.

DR. EISSLER

I think so.

DR. REICH

Okay. Freud and I never spoke to each other about personal things. But he was very unhappily married. You know that?

DR. EISSLER

No, I didn't.

DR. REICH

You didn't know that? I don't think his life was happy. He lived a very calm, quiet, decent family life, but there is little doubt that he was very much dissatisfied genitally. Both his resignation and his cancer were evidence of that. Freud had to give up, as a person. He had to give up his personal pleasures, his personal delights, in his middle years. Before that, I don't know. While he had great understanding for what youth is and for what people lived, he, himself, had to give up.⁸ Now, if my theory is correct, if my view of cancer is correct, you just give up, you resign—and, then, you shrink. It is quite understandable why he developed his epulis.⁹ He smoked very much, very much.¹ I al-

⁸ "In a manuscript accompanying a letter to Fliess dated May 31, 1897, he laid down the formula: 'Civilization consists in progressive renunciation. Contrariwise the superman.' This is a theme that plays a central part in his later writings on sociology. It probably dates from early life when he was impelled by deep inner motives to renounce personal (sexual) pleasure, and compelled for economic reasons to renounce other enjoyments, with the compensation of achieving thereby intellectual development and interests." Ernest Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. 3 (New York: Basic Books, 1957), p. 335.

⁹ The term "epulis" is used here by Reich as synonymous with cancer of the jaw. Technically speaking, Freud's cancer was a malignant epithelioma which developed from a leukoplakia, whereas an epulis is actually an inflammatory granuloma and is not malignant.

¹ "All day, from breakfast until he went to sleep, Freud smoked practically without pause . . . usual quantum was twenty cigars a day. . . . He was so fond of smoking that he was somewhat irritated when men

20) REICH SPEAKS OF FREUD