

# Philosophy and the New Left

## Part 5 of 5

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Let us return to certain critical portions of the long quotation just given, noting these words:

I protested that this hypothesis, carried to its logical conclusion, would lead to an annihilating judgment upon culture. Culture would then appear as a mere farce, the morbid consequence of repressed sexuality. [And to that, Freud answered:] “Yes,” he assented, “so it is, and that is just a curse of fate against which we are powerless to contend.”<sup>1</sup>

There seems to be the implication here that the content of a cultural production has no more meaning than that of sexuality itself. Now, if the cultural production is a system of pure mathematics, how in the world is one to judge that the content of this system is no more than that of a sexual interest or activity? The actual content really is what it is immediately. Thus, in the case of the system produced by Riemann we have what is known as an extraordinary non-Euclidean geometry which, as I pointed out earlier, fit the needs of the observations of the physicist and therefore formed the basis of Einstein’s integrating General Theory of Relativity. Can this content be reduced to mere sexuality? Doesn’t it appear upon the face of it radically absurd to say that all of the significance of Einstein’s work was no more than a morbid form or sexuality? Could any statement be more completely absurd? Yet it appears from what Dr. Jung has here revealed in connection with his association with Sigmund Freud, that indeed that is what Freud thought.

Now, there is a way in interpreting the relationship between sexuality and culture that is not fraught with this denigrating implication, and that is to view the energy that manifests as sexuality as a form of psychic energy that in its own nature is still more fundamental, and that sexuality is merely the most familiar form of manifestation of this energy. This would correlate very neatly with the theory of the *Kundalini* yoga. In this system of yoga, it is stated that at the base of the spine in the subtle body, not the gross physical body, basic psychic energy, or the *Kundalini*, is rolled up at the base of the spine in the *Muladhara*; that in the process of development towards higher possibilities, this energy rises in the *Sushumna* passing through certain foci known as *chakras*. The first of these is *Svadhithana*, which is there treated as the *chakra* governing sexuality. Higher up the line, we meet *Manipura*, *Anahata*, *Visuddha*, *Ajna*, and, finally, *Sahasrara* at the top of the head. The raw energy, the energy in its purity and undifferentiated, is not sexuality but manifests as sexuality when it functions through *Svadhithana*. It takes on other

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<sup>1</sup> Carl G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (New York; Vintage Books, 1965), 150.

forms of manifestation as it rises to the higher *chakras* above *Svadhithana*. The raw energy, therefore, is not sexuality, but sexuality is the first modification of it—that form which is so necessary for the preservation of living species in the world. The character that it manifests at each *chakra* is determined by the formation principles of each *chakra*, and that which is produced is significant in terms of such form. It is not reducible or derivable from the analysis of the primary energy itself, but has a significance which is determined by its form of manifestation.

I might illustrate the principle here in the following way. Out in the wild country, such as that in which we now live, we derive our heat from a gas that is known as propane. This is used for the various heating purposes, such as for cooking and for the heating of rooms. Also, it is used for the running of phonograph, the operation of a television set, and, also, the operation of a recorder. From the phonograph we get various musical values, from the television we very largely get knowledge of what is taking place in the world, and on the recorder we have discourses upon various subjects. Now, could anyone seriously suggest that a chemical analysis of the propane itself would give us the full understanding of, say, a philosophic discourse that's put on tape? I think the suggestion is sufficiently ridiculous to render further comment unnecessary. The energy is something capable of multiform use and can activate various possibilities, but is not itself the substance of those various possibilities. That should be, I think, clear enough.

Here is an important consideration in connection with the theory of the *Kundalini* yoga. The ultimate goal in the raising of the *Kundalini* is the *Sahasrara* at the top of the head; therefore, if one is seeking this ultimate goal, there must be a more or less complete closure of the various *chakras* which intervene between *Muladhara* and *Sahasrara*. As the most active of these *chakras*, in the state of nature, is *Svadhithana*, through which operates the dynamis of sexuality, it is particularly imperative that this door should at least be restrained if not completely closed in order that the *Kundalini* may be raised to the ultimate position in the *Sahasrara*. All the other doors must be closed also, but the force of restraint must be applied peculiarly and most insistently with respect to the door of *Sahasrara*,<sup>2</sup> which has been throughout the ages so active. Therefore, restraint of sex is essential for spiritual development; not in the sense that sexuality contains within itself the meaning of spirituality—a statement which would be completely false—but rather that the modifications of the activating energy on the lower levels must be restrained and possibly completely inhibited in order that the ascent may be effectuated. That's the rationale of sexual restraint. The word repression should not be used; the word restraint, or control, is the correct term. Lower centers must be restrained or closed if higher centers are to be awakened.

Now, here is another consideration. Jung suggests, in the text which I have quoted, that sexuality may be the lower pole of spirituality. In contrast to that position, I would suggest that the lower pole is not sexuality, but is the *Muladhara* at the base of the spine; but that sexuality being in such close correlation with this lower pole, there can be something of an inclusion of sexuality as part of the lower pole. Later, when Freud speaks of the “black tide of mud,” which he calls “occultism,” something is here implied that is very strange indeed. Normally, to all of us, the high door represented by the

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<sup>2</sup> It is clear that Wolff meant to say, “. . . with respect to the door of *Svadhithana* . . .”

*Sahasrara* is the place of supernal light, beauty, and joy—that which is, in fact, the diametric opposite of any “black tide of mud.” Yet, to Freud this celestial beauty and wonder seemed like a “black tide of mud.”

This is a consideration that has made me wonder and reflect a great deal. It has caused my memory to go back to a certain story written by Talbot Mundy under the title *The Devil’s Guard*.<sup>3</sup> In this story there are representatives of both the black and the white Brotherhood. The black Brotherhood consisted of those who were oriented to the path that led into darkness, and for them the use of murder was a normal means for effecting their ends; while for the representatives of the white Brotherhood, murder, lying, theft, or any of the other violations of the Buddha’s moral code, were simply unthinkable. Now, Talbot Mundy, at a certain point, had one of these black Brothers puts on the clothes of one known as Jimgrim, who was an aspirant and an able person oriented to the white Brotherhood. And then, this dark one complained of the odor of righteousness that was in that clothing. He reacted to it in the same way that one belonging to the white path would have reacted to sewage. Here is a radical inversion. And the question occurs to me, how can a person get that way? It evidently does happen; and this brings up a problem of grave importance in connection with the evaluation of different movements in the world. To those of us who may be oriented to the code of the Buddha and the Christ, it would seem that the Satanic way is obviously dark and evil and to be avoided. Even though we often fail in doing that which we would do and in refraining from that which we would not do, nonetheless, in our orientation we would hold these things to be good and desirable. So that, when one appears who views these higher values as a “black tide of mud,” it makes one pause. How is it possible that there should be individuals so oriented? How is it possible that there should be those who prefer darkness to light? There are bugs that do prefer darkness—those that are negatively phototropic. But it appears that there are humans who are so oriented. And if they are so oriented, it is impossible to convince them by a line of argument; for, in all of our discourse, in all of our dialectic, there are certain insights, which technically in the logical sense are assumptions that form the base from which we argue. And in the case of these who are oriented to the way of darkness, of matter, of perverse sexuality, the values that seem good and desirable are the diametric opposite. All of this leads one to recall the statement of Swedenborg, that those who dwell in hell like it that way. Since there can be no convincing by dialectic treatment, the only lines of influence which can be used to meet these who are oriented to darkness and think of it as good, would be by factors that are irrational essentially. There can be conversion, as was the case with St. Paul of old, and that is an irrational factor. One may meet such opposition on the level of battle or on the level of seduction, but he cannot meet it on the dignified level of dialectic because the fundamental assumptions with which the two groups start their orientation, namely, those who are oriented to light and those who are oriented to darkness because they prefer it that way, are extra-rational. And there can only be a difference in direction effected by factors that are essentially irrational. Hence, we cannot dispense with the need of conversion.

And now there’s another consideration that has a vital bearing here. Those who have followed, for instance, the way of coercive socialism such as the German National

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<sup>3</sup> Talbot Mundy, *The Devil’s Guard* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1926).

Socialism and Marxist Socialism—not voluntary socialism, note, which is something very different and not coercively applied—those who follow this line, logically must use force or coercion in order to make the different peoples conform; for socialistic thinking is the normal expression of those who are oriented more strongly to feeling than to thinking and are typically extraverted; whereas, for the introverted type, who thinks more acutely than he feels, the primary appeal is to individualism. Coercive socialism denies to the other psychological types the expression that is normal to them and therefore requires for its maintenance the principle of coercion and of cruelty, or, perhaps, psychological or hypnotic conditioning.

Now, I have met people who are oriented towards such coercive socialism who, nonetheless, in their own proper persons are gentle and humane and anything but the kind of person that could employ the methods of a Joseph Stalin, or a Mao Tse-tung, or the other dictators of socialistic forms. They are decent in their personal lives, yet espouse positions that involve such violent coercion. One thing that is obvious, they have not thought their thoughts through; they have not seen the implications. And why? I think we get our key from the quotation made much earlier from the writing of Koestler in the book entitled *The Yogi and the Commissar*.<sup>4</sup> The fact that would explain this contradiction lies in that schizophrenic division which is so characteristic of all of us—not necessarily in equal degree, but, nonetheless, present in some degree in all of us. And as a result of this schizophrenic division, there's a failure to see the contradiction. Coercive socialism is totally incompatible with humaneness. This critique does not apply to voluntary or group socialism, but only to the coercive kinds which insist on organizing a whole nation or a whole world upon this one pattern which fits the needs of only certain psychological types, but is highly repressive and exploitive of other psychological types, and therefore can be maintained only by cruelty. How can humane people take such a position except for the fact that there is a schizophrenic division in their consciousness so that they do not realize what they are doing?

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<sup>4</sup> See the audio recording “Philosophy and the New Left,” part 3.