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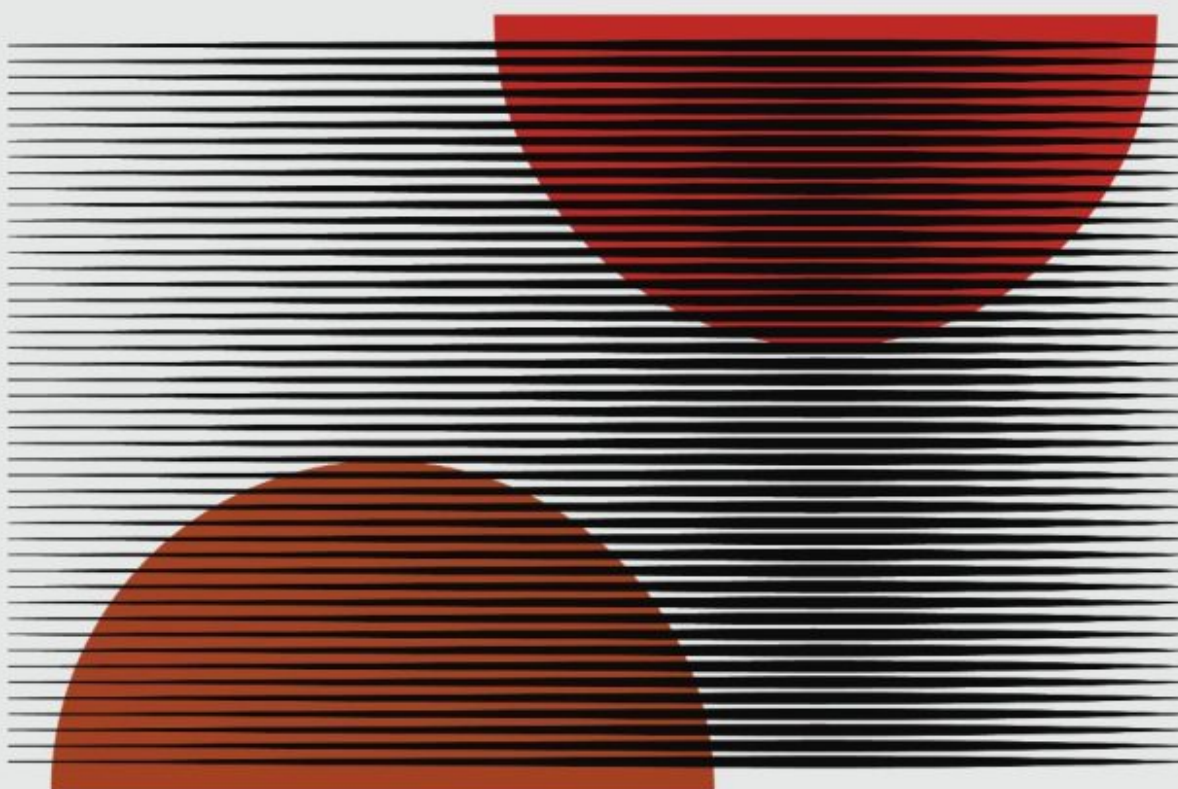
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# **The Dark Energy of Fascism: Conference on Wilhelm Reich**

Roma | 29 e 30 settembre | 2023

# L'ENERGIA OSCURA DEL FASCISMO

Conferenza su Wilhelm Reich



*venerdì 29 settembre*

*ore 16.30* | **La sovversione dell'inconscio**

Cristiana Cimino, Alex Pagliardini

*ore 18.30* | **Dimenticare Reich?**

Federico Chicchi, Gioele Cima

*sabato 30 settembre*

*ore 10.30* | **L'orgasmo anti-fascista**

Alessandra Campo, Rocco Ronchi

*ore 14.30* | **La perversione del ceto medio**

Adalgiso Amendola, Alberto De Nicola

*ore 16.30* | **Psicoanalisi e politica, oggi**

Federica Giardini, Francesco Raparelli

Marco Ferrari

**err**

**ESC**  
ATELIER AUTOGESTITO

Via dei Volsci 159 - Roma

## The Dark Energy of Fascism. Conference on Wilhelm Reich

September 19, 2023

The conference is organized by Esc, Libera Università Metropolitana, err. scritte dell'imprevisto and will be held at Esc, San Lorenzo-Rome, September 29-30, 2023.

There have been instances in which the brilliance of a work has been entrusted to banal statements: it is the case of *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* (1933) by Wilhelm Reich, a work that was mistreated, in part, by its very author, who went back to work on it more than once in an attempt to remove all traces of "communism". Michel Foucault "archived" it, the enemies of 1968 condemned it to oblivion. However, in the first pages of *Anti-Oedipus* by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Die Massenpsychologie des Faschismus* takes center stage. How come? Because in this book Reich boldly addressed a problem posed almost three centuries earlier by Spinoza in his *Theological-Political Treatise* (1670): why is it that, under certain conditions, human beings desire their oppression as if it were their freedom?

An assistant and then deputy director of a free of charge psychoanalytic clinic (from 1922 to 1930), first in Vienna and later in Berlin (from 1930), Reich joined the Communist party in 1927 and was a psychoanalyst among the workers. However, he was kicked out of the Psychoanalytic Society and the communist parties: too communist for the former; too much of a psychoanalyst for the latter. Like no one else he grasped the link between the patriarchal family, sexual repression of children and young people and the spread of fascism on an international scale. In open contrast to economicism and vulgar Marxism, he understood that the masses had not only suffered fascism, they had also, and above all, desired it.

This is the outrageous Reich: he exposed the cancerous double of desire, the intrinsic perversion, that of the petty bourgeoisie. The insufferable Reich: he shed light on the unconscious nature of fascism, and the unconscious belongs to everyone. The mad Reich, finally: fighting sexual repression he celebrated, contra Freud, the "pure" and naturally loving and vital drives, trusting that it was enough to free them to build a better community. Insightful and naive at the same time.

Yet, in the world of Trump and Orbán, of Meloni and Putin, of Zelensky and Modi, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* still speaks to us. Not only does it shed valuable light on the nexus between libido and mode of production, sexuality and exploitation, on the one hand, and techno-scientist progressivism and 'mystical' populism, on the other. It also lays the groundwork for thinking, in a revolutionary way, about the double bind between patriarchy and racism, repression and militarism, 'emotional plague' and ideology. Reich's insightful 'diagnoses', his intuitions and his original inventions are still relevant today. By daring, Reich in fact attempted to combine politics and psychoanalysis, while reminding us that it is impossible to be anti-fascist without fighting the authoritarianism of psychic life. It is necessary to investigate the nazi who is lurking in each one of us even before focusing on social compulsions if we are to give life to what another psychoanalyst, Elvio Fachinelli, called (reading Benjamin, critic of Fourier) "new institutions of love".

Today, on the edge of the abyss, perhaps one step away from World War III, at a time when the West seems to have exhausted itself, we propose to reread and discuss Reich, the genius and the madman, the doctor and the visionary. The future is never already written: despite the many dangers and the signs of 'decadence' in our democracies, we must try to pull the emergency brake, get off the train that is headed towards catastrophe, step into the "mass sexual matter" and together strive to think and build communities never seen before.

September 29, 4:30pm

The subversion of the unconscious. Cristiana Cimino and Alex Pagliardini

September 29, 6:30pm

Forgetting Reich? Federico Chicchi and Gioele Cima

September 30, 10:30am

The Anti-Fascist Orgasm. Alessandra Campo and Rocco Ronchi

September 30, 2:30pm

The perversion of the middle class. Adalgiso Amendola and Alberto De Nicola

September 30, 4:30pm

Psychoanalysis and politics today. Federica Giardini, Francesco Raparelli and Marco Ferrari