Primary antithesis of Vegetative Life." In this chapter, he reports that by 1933 he recognized a unity between psychic and somatic functioning. He makes it a cardinal point that the primary biological opposites of contraction and expansion are identical in both the somatic and psychic realms. He goes on to present tables of comparisons, such as the antithesis between potassium (parasympathetic) and calcium (sympathetic) in the autonomic nervous system as variants of expansion and contraction. He notes that parasympathetic innervations are accompanied by dilatation, turgor, pleasure, etc. whereas sympathetic nerves come into play whenever there is contraction, blood is withdrawn from the periphery, pallor and pain appear. He concludes from this that life itself is a continuous process of expansion and contraction, pleasure and joy in moving out of self toward the world, and sadness and contraction in moving away from it, into the self (9, p. 125-6).

In later books, *Ether, God and Devil* and *Cosmic Superimposition* (in 9, p. 299 for quote), Reich subsumes these oppositions in a basic principle, pulsation. Pulsation, he says, is the fundamental characteristic of orgone energy, itself, which can be then be subdivided into two opposite and antagonistic part-functions--expansion and contraction. One can also synthesize orgone energy from them, he says, most interestingly.

We can readily see that Reich, like Jung, was very much impressed by the polarities in nature and the psyche, but, with his biological bent (even bias?), he saw these as expressions of the autonomic nervous system and the pulsation of life itself. I think this is a useful extension of Jung's polarities and may suggest some research of a physiological nature into Jung's introversion-extraversion typology. Reich's partial bias, I think, can be seen in his equation of displeasure with the introverting aspect of the polarity, although I do not think that he was an extravert. If so, how did he manage to get himself into such terrible difficulty with the world around him? His biological reductionism, however, also shows itself in his rejection of meaning, purpose or goal. In several places (e.g. 9, p. 104) he says, that life merely functions; it has no goal or meaning. And again (p. 106), he says that biology knows only functioning and development, follows a natural course without any other significance. Such a view fits better with traditional biology than with psychology, where the archetype of meaning is already supplied with the archetype of the spirit. It seems to me that, later in life, Reich came closer to the meaningful perspective with his conception of bio-psychological unity, as we shall see.

We may now look at Reich's extension of his bio-psychological polarities into what one might call his "basic symbol." This symbol crops up in several different books and with different pairs of opposites. In it, he formulates a process of initial unity, followed by differentiation and opposition, followed by a tendency toward another, higher level of unity. This Hegelian variation of thesis-antithesis-synthesis was also a basis of Jung's thought, as we know. The diagram that Reich used for depicting psychosomatic identity and antithesis can be visualized as a basic dot, considered the source of biological energy, out of which rises an arrow, representing this same identity, which then separates into a

pair of opposites, psyche and soma, carrying the opposition (e.g. 9, p.106). Later on, he uses a similar diagram in connection with the autonomic nervous system (9, p. 132). The lower arrow is now vegetative life itself and the opposites are the sympathetic and parasympathetic systems.

In a later book, *The Cancer Biopathy* (9, p. 260), Reich again uses his schema to describe his orgone therapy as neither a psychological nor a physiological-chemical therapy. Instead he sees it as a strictly biological therapy having to do with disturbances of pulsation in the autonomic system. In this diagram, the opposites are mechanical lesion and chemical-physical therapy on the somatic side, with psychotherapy and neurosis on the side of the psyche.

Reich uses this diagram not only in the opposition psyche-soma, the nervous system and in healing, he continues to employ it in a distinction between "good" and "evil"—in the sense of good and bad energy (9, p. 456). "Dor" is the evil energy. Reich is here referring to the antagonism inherent in life energy functions themselves. Evil, he feels arises out of stalemated or immobilized life energy.

Reich's trinitarian symbol--if one can use such a term for his intensely biological imagery--leads over into a four-fold formulation as he discusses the phases of his "orgasm formula": mechanical tension--electrical charge--electrical discharge--mechanical relaxation (p. 114). It is this four-fold system that leads him into using images of union, of circles and spheres.

There are remarkable statements, even in his early and classic *Character Analysis* (9, pp. 148-150) which only too clearly present a representation of the image of the uroborous, of the organism as snake biting its own tail!He describes the organism, particularly in the experience of the orgasm, as striving to unite together head and tail, the embryologically important mouth and anus. This is so fundamental as to be basis of the orgasm reflex. He presents a drawing which resembles a worm with head and tail trying to come close together and calls this the emotional expression of the orgasm reflex. When the organism surrenders itself to its sensations of flowing, it can also surrender itself completely to the partner in the sexual embrace.

Reich then asks what function is served by this moving together of the two ends of the trunk, making for this orgasmic pulsation? He then asserts that the answer goes deeper than the individual biological organism. He sees this as suprapersonal, but not metaphysical nor spiritual. All the same, Reich's denial does not stop him from calling that yearning for surrender and union, "cosmic." He goes on to say that if these two ends of the trunk bend backward, away from each other, instead forward and toward one another, the organism will not be capable of surrendering itself to any experience, whether love or work. Muscular armor, the result of this lack of surrender, essentially prevents this orgasm reflex.

That the symbol of the snake biting its own tail, the uroborous, so dear to alchemy and to Jung, should also be at the base of Reich's work, is remarkable. But since he, too, is struggling to get a grasp of the psyche in matter and its biology, it may not be so surprising after all.