



American Odyssey: Letters & Journals, 1940-1947

Wilhelm Reich

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American Odyssey: Letters & Journals, 1940-1947 Wilhelm Reich

A new autobiographical work by one of the most original and controversial thinkers of our time.

"I looked up every day from behind the bars to the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor. Her light shone brightly into a dark night." With these words, Wilhelm Reich described his experience as an "enemy alien" imprisoned on Ellis Island in the aftermath of the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor.

American Odyssey, compiled from his correspondence and journals, chronicles Reich's first years in America. They were years of prodigious accomplishment in which he developed the orgone energy accumulator—the so-called orgone box; published his first books in English; made breakthroughs in his investigation of orgone energy in social pathology, physics, astronomy, and cancer; and interested none other than Albert Einstein in testing his theories. America brought a new marriage, a new son, a new group of students, and a new laboratory. But these were years of fierce struggle as well: the denial of an American medical license, the refusal of a patent on the orgone accumulator, and, finally, a slanderous article that would incite the Food and Drug Administration to the dogged attack on Reich that would continue until his death in another prison cell ten years later.

American Odyssey reveals more than a period in the life of an embattled scientist. It discloses the social and intellectual life of a country in a tumultuous time in history.

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