

were Nordic racists. The chapter on nudism and medicine confuses homeopathy with naturopathy (*Naturheilkunde*). Such a mistake could easily have been avoided by consulting the historiography on alternative medicine in Germany. *Naturheilkunde* was based on various systems of water cures and dietetic life style prescriptions that included nude exercises in the open air and sun bathing. It provided nudists with aetiological models and justifications for their own practices that aimed at stimulating metabolic exchange in order to prevent auto-intoxication.

These criticisms should not detract from the strengths of the book. Ross's visits to over a dozen federal, state, and local archives in Germany, have not only uncovered a wealth of new material on the history of German nudism. In the sections dealing with the Nazi period, he has developed a fairly nuanced account of the ambiguous and contradictory attitudes that informed Nazi policies on nudism. But since the study pays insufficient attention to changing cultural, social and political circumstances it does not fully capture the diverging motivations and complex attitudes of people who practised *Freikörperkultur*.

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Rhodri Hayward, *Resisting history: religious transcendence and the invention of the unconscious*, Manchester University Press, 2007, pp. xi, 147, £40.00 (hardback 978-0-7190-7414-1).

Over the last three decades, a number of studies have appeared (for example, Janet Oppenheim's *The other world* (1985), Alex Owen's *The darkened room* (1989) and *The place of enchantment* (2004)) that investigate the links between nineteenth-century British spiritualism, occultism and psychology. With his new book Rhodri Hayward makes a significant contribution to this field. The author traces how modern notions of history

and selfhood emerged out of nineteenth-century religious and scientific debates about the boundaries of human personality. Hayward opposes Freud and an eminent line of historiography, which depicts the discovery of the unconscious as a revolutionary event that threatened nineteenth-century assumptions of personal and historical identity as well as bourgeois morality. In contrast, Hayward sets out to reveal that "the new rhetoric of the unconscious served a conservative purpose, being used to police the subversive mystical experiences of spiritualism and revivalism" (p. 6).

The book is divided into four chapters which tackle the subject from different but interconnected angles. In the first chapter, Hayward concentrates on developments of nineteenth-century history and theology which led to fundamental changes in the concept of selfhood. Historicists, such as the German David Strauss, declared supernatural and mystical accounts of the Bible as unhistorical since they did not fit into the newly established laws of historical and psychological unity. Hayward provides further evidence that in the wake of historicism transcendental aspects of the human self were more and more replaced by social concerns.

The second chapter is not only the longest but perhaps also the most illuminating part of the book. Here, Hayward gives a detailed account of how spiritualists and their opponents argued about the boundaries of personality and death, and how these conflicts gave rise to a new model of selfhood, namely the subliminal self, which anticipated the Freudian unconscious. As Hayward shows, the idea of the subliminal self was first developed within the works of Frederic W H Myers, a leading member of the Society for Psychical Research, who strove to provide intrapersonal explanation for mediumistic phenomena. Apparent supernatural phenomena, such as clairvoyance, second sight, automatic writing, trance speech and spirit possession, were thus made subject to the rhetoric of psychology. Although the definition of the subliminal self

remained unspecified, Hayward further demonstrates that early psychologists employed the concept in their works with a similar target. They aimed at explaining disruptive sides of the human personality, such as hysteria or spirit possession, as an internal process. Hayward's initial claim that the subconscious or unconscious was introduced for conservative reasons is convincingly proved. What needs to be investigated in more detail is, however, how the concept of the subconscious self developed by Myers evolved into the Freudian unconscious.

In chapter three, Hayward examines ways in which the concept of the subliminal self was employed in the works of early American psychologists of religion. He points out that although research interests and methods of its practitioners such as Edwin Diller Starbuck, James Henry Leuba and William James differed, they nevertheless drew on the subliminal self to domesticate spiritual experiences which threatened the envisioned psychological unity of the subject. The chapter also provides relevant insight into the political and religious agendas that shaped the psychology of religion at the time.

The focus of the fourth chapter is on two figures of the Welsh Revival (an early twentieth-century Pentecostal movement) namely Evan Roberts and Sarah Jones. Both figures serve as case studies backing up Hayward's general argument that in the course of the nineteenth century religious authority was superseded by psychology.

In sum, Hayward's book is a tour de force in the history of nineteenth-century religion, psychology and historiography. Its comprehensive analysis of the birth and subsequent career of the idea of the subconscious self, indeed, challenges contemporary psychological assumptions and prompts today's historians to question conceptions of historiography.

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A Lloyd Moote and Dorothy C Moote, *The great plague: the story of London's most deadly year*, Baltimore and London, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004, pp. xxi, 357, illus., £19.95 (hardback 0-8018-7783-0), £12.50 (paperback 0-8018-8493-4).

The London plague epidemic of 1665 occupies an unusually prominent place in disease history, and for that reason alone the revisiting of its sources undertaken by A Lloyd Moote and Dorothy C Moote is welcome. The authors hope to recreate a narrative picture of individual experiences and responses to a cataclysm that may have taken 100,000 lives, and they have produced a readable and reasonable account that should now be the first choice of readers who want to know the story.

The narrative is structured around several individuals who left extensive accounts of their own experiences: the apothecary William Boghurst, the physician Nathaniel Hodges, the clergyman Symon Patrick, the bureaucrat Samuel Pepys, and the merchant William Turner. Also contributing are the gentleman John Evelyn, the Southwark medical practitioner and preacher John Allin, the Essex clergyman Ralph Josselin, Lucy Hastings (Lady Huntingdon), and her London agent Gervase Jacques. The authors, well aware that such testimony represents only the successful minority, must allow poorer London to speak collectively, relying particularly on records from such stricken parishes as St Giles' Cripplegate, St Margaret's Westminster, and St Botolph's Bishopsgate. Vivid details from the sources bring home the realities of the epidemic: powdered unicorn horns as a cure-all, church bell ropes breaking under the strain of constant tolls for the dead, the treasure chest of the abandoned College of Physicians looted by thieves, the main London post office "thick with smoke from constant fumigation" (p. 162), the emergency expenses incurred by parishes building new walls around extended burial grounds. An important thesis of the book grows out of such narrative details: the efforts of individuals (many nameless) should be celebrated, for in the face of staggering