devastating. It is a Düsseldorf-style event, not a Toggenburg event. What bothered me on many pages of Kury's book was the feeling that stress, a cultural concept, was being conflated with biologically driven illness.

In chapter 5, Kury considers the diagnosis "neurasthenia" to be an early predecessor of stress. Yet for most physicians, "neurasthenia" was a convenient term for mixed anxiety-depression of a non-melancholic nature. Mixed anxiety-depression, like mumps, is a disease. It is not a cultural concept, however much the culture may mold the expression of illness.

In chapter 7, Kury sees the cultural concept of stress seeping into much of psychiatry, for example, into the diagnosis "vegetative dystonia", a term that never really crossed the English Channel or the Atlantic. Yet "vegetative dystonia" corresponded to what the Americans and British were calling "reactive depression", a term for mild depression; it was a diagnosis that did not really entail "reactions", in contrast to the more serious "endogenous depression", but meant mild event. Yet "vegetative dystonia" is basically a medical not a cultural concept – though used preferentially in Europe rather than in the Anglo-Saxon world; the diagnosis owes little to the presence or absence of stress. There are historians of psychiatry who, in this manner, seek to relativize many diagnoses, seeing in them the hand of culture rather than of nature. Kury runs this risk. In its extreme form, this school reduces all mental symptoms somehow to expressions of "labeling", or "cultural moulding", or – as once was in vogue – to the "bourgeoisie".

Kury traces the medical discussion of stress quite well, and the post-1945 sections ring true. Yet, as a footnote, this reviewer must protest Kury's overvaluation of the role of Montreal physiologist Hans Selye, who was largely a publicist and self-promoter, and Kury's underplaying of the fundamental contribution of Harvard physiologist Walter Cannon, who preferred the language of "fight vs flight" to "stress", although he did use the latter term. (Of Selye's "general adaptation syndrome", nothing remains in endocrinology.)

"Hysteria" is not even listed in the index. Yet what has really happened is that "stress" has come to occupy the cultural niche that such concepts as "hysteria" once filled. It is almost certain that in the future something that Kury does not anticipate will occur: That "stress" will go the way of "hysteria" and some new codeword that lets us medicalize our distress will take its place.

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Langlitz, Nicolas: **Neuropsychedelia.** The Revival of Hallucinogen Research since the Decade of the Brain. Berkeley, Los Angeles; London, University of California Press, 2013. IX, 316 p. Ill. $ 29.95. ISBN 978-0-520-95490-8

Anthropologist Nicolas Langlitz's *Neuropsychedelia* is an ethnographic and philosophical investigation into the revival of psychedelic research during the 1990s. The "Decade of the Brain", he argues, created novel, if somewhat transitory, forms of "mystic materialism". This mystic materialism, considered as a whole, demonstrates a perennial predisposition to religious thought that, he contends, "can no longer be dismissed as a remnant of primitive culture, but must be acknowledged as part of

human nature" (p. 254). Langlitz illuminates time and again that nature, whether human or animal, will not be so easily solved by the microscope or MRI. Nevertheless, he affirms that neuropsychedelic research, by probing into states of consciousness, may provide a worldview of "bare life" that escapes from the dichotomous split between science and spirituality.

Part historical survey and part contemporary anthropological study, Langlitz's work consists of six chapters and a conclusion, each thematically organized. The first chapter discusses the rise and decline of psychedelic research during the 1960s amidst tighter drug regulations and a subsequent association of psychedelic drugs with the counterculture movement. It also traces how a new generation of scientists in the 1990s utilized scientific disenchantment and the spiritualization surrounding psychedelic drugs to bring these substances back into mainstream modern neuroscience. Langlitz combines oral interviews and secondary source material to show how psychedelic researchers capitalized on the ability of psychedelics to evoke seemingly mystical states of mind to demonstrate its value in research aimed at understanding cognition and states of consciousness. Chapter two uses a similar source base to describe the historical contingencies that allowed such a revival to take place at all: namely a combination of comparatively liberal Swiss regulatory drug legislation, a lack of ideological fissures among Swiss legislators themselves, and American philanthropy financed by the dot-com bubble. This is a particularly strong chapter because it helps to reinforce Langlitz's contention that *space* and *place* – whether the internal milieu of the laboratory or the external milieu of culture and society – matter greatly when trying to create an "objective" research site.

In chapter three Langlitz shifts to a microlevel focus, relating his experiences as both ethnographer and participant in psychedelic experiments at Franz Vollenweider's laboratory in Zurich. Here he shows that the "wild and overly complex" neurochemistry of psychedelic drugs reveals the limits of an "objective" neuroscience that attempts to neatly cleave the "cultural" and the "natural". Sitting somewhere at the intersection between the two poles, psychedelic neurochemistry confounds both cultural and scientific attempts to evoke its essence, but in doing so, also lays bare some of the inherent problems of scientific research that makes assumption about controlling settings. Such findings, Langlitz argues, have clear ramifications for any future transnational and universalizing scientific discourses, particularly within the neurosciences, since they suggest that true objectivity may not be possible (nor desirable). The fourth chapter moves from experimental mysticism to experimental psychosis research, demonstrating how the hallucinogenic induced model of psychosis, while unable to truly mimic schizophrenia, nonetheless creates "an experience that serves as the model of another experience" (p. 162) – pointing the way forward for future articulations of the neurobiology of schizophrenia and, relatedly or consequently, better antipsychotic drugs.

Chapter five takes the reader from central Europe to Mark Geyer's animal laboratory in California, where experimental psychosis research in rats and mice exposes the problem of how to control the "set and setting" of research when dealing with nonhuman subjects. As Langlitz demonstrates through anecdotal evidence of laboratory assistants engaging in activities such as petting mice to make them feel more "comfortable" prior to an experiment, researchers encountered difficult ethical and epistemological questions when attempting to use human understandings to foster a

truly "controlled" research site. Nevertheless, molecular research and an increased understanding of animal and human DNA points to "something significant [...] happening in the borderland of humanity, animality, and the divine" (p. 202). The utilization of animals as stand-ins for human beings illuminates what he calls two "anthropological machines" (a term borrowed from philosopher Giorgio Agamben), one aiming to assimilate the notion of the human to animal life, while the other attempts to acculturate animals to human life by making them model organisms that serve as substitutes for human beings. This "transvaluing" of "bare life", Langlitz states, carries profound implications for both scientific research and future understandings of "natural" and "divine" – not the least of which calls into question the special place of humanity and acknowledges an ephemeral but extant consciousness of all life.

Langlitz's book is erudite and provocative. He deftly combines thorough ethnographic fieldwork with a plethora of secondary and archival material to highlight both the scientific and philosophic questions raised by contemporary neuropsychedelic research. He convincingly shows that psychedelic researchers have not only moved beyond (Aldous) "Huxleyan frameworks", but have also created various forms of mystic materialism that, by illuminating the wonder of "life itself", may provide philosophical tools to "remediate some of the spiritual ills of late modern life" (p. 265). Langlitz's work demonstrates that the age-old incommensurability between science and spirituality may be solved by a "new form of perennialism that reconciles biology and spirituality", though he admits that this is a new and ongoing process. His narrative is a tour of the macro and micro, leading the reader through both existential questions and his own interesting, thought-provoking, and sometimes comical experiences within the laboratories in Zurich and San Diego.

If one minor criticism could be leveled against *Neuropsychedelia*, it is that the book is written in an extremely esoteric manner. At times, Langlitz's prose is heavily laden with neologisms, and while he usually introduces terms, there are many occasions when assumed knowledge is a must to follow his train of thought. Nonetheless, this does not significantly detract from what is a deeply reflective meditation on the perennial struggle of humanity to preserve a mystical view of life during a time of materialist scientific discourses. Exactly what form(s) this mystic materialism will take remains to be seen. Thus, when Langlitz states that the story is "far from over" (p. 266), one can only hope he will continue to follow and assess developments in his future work.

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Lieb, Kathrin: **Split-Brain-Forschung und ihre Folgen.** Medizin – Geschichte – Populärwissenschaft. Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 2012. 191 S. (Geschichte und Philosophie der Medizin, Bd. 11). € 40.–. ISBN 978-3-515-09937-0

Sous le titre *Split-Brain-Forschung und ihre Folgen. Medizin – Geschichte – Populärwissenschaft*, Kathrin Lieb présente une monographie qui ne se contente pas de fournir l'histoire des commissurotomies. Ces dernières figuraient dans le titre de sa thèse doctorale *Die zerebralen Kommissurotomien*, défendue en 2008 à la Medizinische Hochschule d'Hanovre, version augmentée pour la publication chez l'éditeur Franz

Steiner à Stuttgart. Ayant remplacé la notion de la «commissurotomie cérébrale» par celle de la «recherche autour du split brain» l'auteure pose un cadre de référence anglo-américain plus large. Elle souligne «les suites» de la recherche autour du «split brain», et elle traite autant des conséquences liées aux opérations type «split brain» que de l'histoire de leur réception dans la culture populaire. Dans les trois chapitres principaux, Lieb expose l'itération du débat autour de la latéralité cérébrale.

Dans le chapitre intitulé «Contextes historique et philosophique», le lecteur découvre une courte histoire de la dichotomie occidentale entre corps et âme de l'Antiquité à Descartes. De plus, Lieb donne également un aperçu de la littérature sur l'histoire de la latéralité et de la psychochirurgie. C'est là une problématique qu'elle développe abondamment et qu'elle reprend à la fin du livre après avoir détaillé l'expérimentation animale menée par Roger W. Sperry (1913–1994) ainsi que les recherches qui s'inspiraient des travaux de ce dernier. L'histoire de la «Commissurotomie en tant que thérapie anti-épileptique» est au centre du chapitre suivant, le plus systématique de l'ouvrage.

Lieb prend comme point de départ les travaux de Roger W. Sperry.[10] C'est grâce aux abrégés de diverses biographies que Lieb met en avant les objectifs développés par Sperry. Les mystères de la cognition humaine appréhendés à travers des questions telles que «Where does behavior come from? What is the purpose of consciousness?» l'ont intéressé tout au long de sa carrière. Dans l'article *Action Current Study in Movement Coordination*, paru en 1939 dans le *Journal of General Psychology*, Sperry jugeait la méthode kymographique pertinente pour explorer le comportement de l'être humain et les différents modes de sa cognition. Dans les années 1960 et 1970, ce sont les résultats de toute une batterie de tests cognitifs appliquée aux épileptiques qui étaient au centre de l'intérêt des médecins prescripteurs de commissurotomies.

Dans le chapitre central du livre intitulé «‹Split brain›. Recherche – enseignement – réception», on cherche en vain l'analyse critique du fonctionnement interne des cultures des laboratoires, que ce soit celle de l'expérimentation animale de Sperry ou celle des commissurotomies paradigmatiques réalisées au White Memorial Hospital à Los Angeles et au Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center. Les lecteurs se trouvent en effet privés de toute référence tant à l'histoire sociale des sciences qu'aux travaux donnant un aperçu de l'histoire culturelle des gauchers comme l'*Histoire des gauchers* (3e édition en 2008) et le *Nouveau dictionnaire des gauchers* (2001) de Pierre-Michel Bertrand. La barrière linguistique est-elle seule responsable de cette lacune? Sans doute non. Compte tenu des orientations prises par Lieb, les recherches de Julian Jaynes autour de la psyché bicamérale n'ont à son avis de signification que lorsqu'elles sont replacées dans un contexte très général dans lequel se manifestent certaines convictions spirituelles et ésotériques; une analyse qui minimise les différences régionales du «mouvement New-Age». Enfin, vu le changement initial de titre entre la thèse et l'ouvrage publié, une différentiation plus marquée des sources venant des Etats-Unis de l'analyse de la réception des médias allemands aurait été bienvenue.

L'analyse de Lieb des appropriations à la fois scientifiques et populaires de la recherche sur la latéralité met en lumière des sources et un matériel qui intéressent aussi les études sur les «neurocultures». Lieb mène une revue de presse du quotidien

10 Signalons que la plupart des articles de Roger W. Sperry ont été mis à disposition de l'internaute par Antonio E. Puente: http://rogersperry.org.