

## Book Reviews

the value and scientific status of psychoanalytic interpretations. Certainly, among those who have doubts on this score, much of what Gilman has to say will seem ill-grounded in the evidence, and often no more than wildly speculative. For some, such claims as the following: "During the rise of modernism, from the fin de siècle to the collapse of the Nazi state (and beyond), the black, whether male or female, came to represent the genitalia through a series of analogies . . ." (pp. 109-110); or: "urination in the late nineteenth century mind leads to fantasy of the buttocks . . ." will seem insightful and helpful. Others, myself included, will find the assertions cavalier and the evidence adduced in their support wholly inadequate.

Andrew Scull  
University of California, San Diego

ILO KÄBIN, *Die medizinische Forschung und Lehre an der Universität Dorpat/Tartu 1802-1940*, Lüneborg, Verlag Nordostdeutsches Kulturwerk, 1986, 8vo, pp. 628, DM.40.00 (paperback).

There can be few universities still in existence with a history as turbulent as Dorpat/Tartu\*, now in the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic. It was founded in 1632 by Gustavus Adolphus when the Baltic was under Swedish control, and its history over the next two hundred years reflected the power struggle between Sweden and Russia. In 1802, Tsar Alexander I provided money for the main university building, which still stands, and created the nucleus of the modern university. During the second half of the nineteenth century it became one of the most important universities in northern Europe and a powerful symbol for the Baltic Germans. The social history of the eastern Baltic during the nineteenth century is a fascinating one; while officially administered by the Tsarist civil service, most of the real power lay in the hands of the German nobility, the Ritterschaften, with the native Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian population struggling to maintain their own culture and languages.

There have been a number of historical and biographical accounts of Dorpat/Tartu an official university history was published in 1982 to mark the 350th anniversary, and since 1975, the university has published a series of volumes biennially, treating various aspects of the development of Dorpat/Tartu. Material in these volumes is largely in Estonian and Russian. We are now very fortunate to have an account written from an independent Estonian viewpoint by Ilo Käbin, who studied medicine at Dorpat/Tartu and left shortly before the Soviet occupation of 1940. He crossed the Baltic to Sweden to pursue a career as a distinguished surgeon and, latterly, historian. His previous works include an account of the Polar and Asiatic explorations made by Estonian physicians such as Eschscholz, Parrot, von Bunge, von Baer, and others.\*\*

In this present work of over 600 pages, he gives us a detailed and critical account of the fortunes of the Medical Faculty from 1802 until 1940. It begins with a short account of the complex history of the Baltic region with an emphasis on Estonia. This is followed by a very detailed account of each department in the faculty from 1802 until 1918. In many ways, this was the golden age of the university with people like Parrot, Alexander Schmidt, and von Bunge in physiology, Bidder in anatomy, Claus and Dragendorff in pharmacy, von Oettingen in ophthalmology, Kraepelin in psychiatry, and Struve, Oesterlin, and Naunyn in internal medicine. The contributions of these and many others are recorded and examined.

Following this is a comparison of the work of Dorpat/Tartu with Göttingen and Berlin and then a very interesting section on "russification", a turbulent period during which many German professors were forced to leave. The fortunes of the faculty are reviewed during Estonia's brief independence from 1919 to 1940, and this section is particularly valuable since it contains

\* Dorpat was the German name for both the university and town, Tartu the Estonian, and for a short time the Russian name, Yur'ev, was also used.

\*\* Published originally in Estonian (*Maal ja merel*) in 1972 and two years later in Swedish (*Till lands och till sjöss*).

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material not readily available elsewhere. Kābin's personal knowledge makes this a very interesting account indeed.

The work ends with a detailed bibliography and reference list and there is also an appendix which reproduces a number of important pictures and documents. The book is well illustrated throughout and contains many useful maps and tables. It is a valuable document, and should be consulted by anyone with a serious interest in the history of medicine in the Baltic. Its strength lies in the skill and conviction which Ilo Kābin brings to this difficult task, and he is to be congratulated on his scholarship. It is a pleasure to be able to recommend it highly.

D. B. Jack  
The Medical School, Birmingham University

MIRI RUBIN, *Charity and community in medieval Cambridge*, Cambridge University Press, 1987, 8vo, pp. xiv, 364, £30.00.

This excellent book marks a definite break with the traditional historiography of English hospitals. Although it is largely concerned with the hospitals of medieval Cambridge, and in particular with the Hospital of St John, its range of interests and ideas goes far beyond the traditional emphasis on a hospital as an institution or group of buildings. It endeavours to set it within a context, of the economic life of medieval Cambridge (a hazardous and not always successful undertaking), of religious and popular ideas of charity, and, most important, of the variety of measures, both formal and informal, for relieving weaker members of the community from some of their misfortunes, especially sickness and poverty. Hence Dr Rubin looks at the charitable role of Guilds, funeral bequests, and feasts, in addition to the more obvious role of the hospital.

But even when examining the hospital, she is alert to the multiplicity of aims involved. Religious motives of charity are aligned with the religious obligations of the inmates of the College Hospital at Newton to pray for the souls of the founder and his family. St John's hospital not only sheltered and fed the weak, but also, at times, served as a provider of cheap loans, in direct opposition to the Jews across the road. Cambridge also had its specific charities, within and without the Colleges, for aiding poor students, and Dr Rubin charts the complicated way in which the Hospital of St John was used to accommodate not only the sick but also favoured students of the Bishop of Ely, as well as a religious community and paying guests. One can see how its transformation to a fully academic College in 1509 could be easily represented as causing no harm to the townsfolk of Cambridge, who had been earlier strong supporters of the hospital as a place for sheltering the sick and needy. This multiplicity of function for some hospitals can be traced back to St Basil in the fourth century, and helps to explain why in the mid-sixteenth century Henry VIII's Commissioners could equivocate over whether the "spittle house" at Sittingbourne was not also a fraternity, and describe the St James' Guild at Tong as a fraternity or hospital (J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English people*, p. 26.) One can see dimly also the dislocation of the whole system of charity in Cambridge and its surrounding villages brought about by the Reformation, and, equally, the way in which Parish relief could be made a substitute.

Dr Rubin has read widely, and makes sound use of parallels from the Continent, where the common English identification of a hospital solely with medical care is less apparent. But it would be going too far to see the general absence of any care from a physician in a medieval hospital solely as the result of an overriding belief that God alone can cure. Even in a prosperous city like Cambridge, there may have been few learned *medici*, and even fewer who treated gratis. And, as was also realized, nursing and a good diet might be at least as effective as expensive potions. The phenomenon of a medieval hospital without a physician becomes much more intelligible when set in the broader context so ably sketched in this book.

Vivian Nutton  
Wellcome Institute