

Magaly Tornay

Zugriffe auf das Ich

Psychoaktive Stoffe und Personenkonzepte in der Schweiz, 1945 bis 1980

[Accessing the Self. Psychotropic Substances and Personhood in Switzerland from 1945–1980.]

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How has the advent of modern psychotropic drugs affected our understanding of ourselves? Has our thinking about our psyche changed since and how did this impact the conceptual contours of health and illness? Taking a lead from these questions, Magaly Tornay charts the history of psychotropic drugs in Switzerland starting with the emergence of LSD. The range of psychotropic drugs has since widened to include among others antidepressants, antipsychotics, tranquilizers and stimulants. The gaze of the psychiatrist, previously focused on the individual patient, gave way to an epidemiological view which brought psychological functions and disorders into the realm of experiments, statistical analysis and chemical modifiability. The author argues that a new object has emerged from this clinical and industrial setting: a psychopharmacological grammar that has changed the ways we see ourselves.

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