A Note on Translations

Unless otherwise noted in the text or the footnotes, translations are mine. I have attempted to remain very close to the original German, allowing the nuances of the text to shine through, while making the texts as stylistically and grammatically accessible as possible. In the case of the protocol contained in chapter 4, which presented significant difficulties of translation both because of the type of text and the archaic locutions contained in the case-history, I have tried to render the core meanings, style, and rhetoric of the interrogation as accurately as possible, but I have modernized the text in many instances in order to increase its intelligibility to a contemporary audience. Where a term or phrase in Latin or German has a very specific historical purport and use that might have been lost in English translation, I have left them in the original language.

The German term *Erfahrungsseelenkunde*, usually rendered as “empirical psychology,” poses a special problem of translation. I have decided upon *empirical-experiential psychology* in order to emphasize both the rejection of top-down, rationalist *a priori* models, and the strong reliance on direct human observation and experience, both one’s own and that of others. As there are various types of empiricism, some concerned with statistics and mere facts, while the new discipline in eighteenth-century Germany prized above all else narratives of lived-experience, I believe this manner of phrasing *Erfahrungsseelenkunde* is most appropriate.

German has a number of terms for “case history.” In the eighteenth century, the term *Krankengeschichte*, essentially a transcription of the *historia morbi* of early modern Europe, appears in Adelung’s *Grammatisch-kritisches Wörterbuch der Hochdeutschen Mundart* (1774–1786): “bey den Ärzten, die Erzählung von dem Ursprunge und den Abwechselungen einer Krankheit, so wohl überhaupt, als bey einzelnen Kranken.” It is used widely in texts of the eighteenth century. And while variants containing the root *Fall* in the sense of *casus* (*Fallgeschichte, Fallstudie, Fallbeschreibung, Fallbeispiel, Fallerzählung*) only appear in the twentieth century,1 short texts concerning an individual “case” utilizing the term *Fall*, as in “the strange case,” “a case of child murder,” “a criminal case,” “a noteworthy case,” and “description of a case” proliferate.


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in the second half of the eighteenth century. My choice of “case history” with the qualifiers “narrative” and “psychological” to denote the narrative texts – medical-psychological and literary – of the second half of the eighteenth century seems to me justified in light of their attempt to excavate and document the deeper forces at work in the narrative construction of the individual.