THE GERMAN TRADITION OF PSYCHOLOGY
IN LITERATURE AND THOUGHT, 1700–1840

The beginnings of psychology are usually dated from experimental psychology and Freudian psychoanalysis in the late nineteenth century. Yet the period from 1700 to 1840 produced some highly sophisticated psychological theorising that became central to German intellectual and cultural life, well in advance of similar developments in the English-speaking world. Matthew Bell explores how this happened, by analysing the expressions of psychological theory in Goethe’s Faust, Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason, and in the works of Lessing, Schiller, Kleist, and E. T. A. Hoffmann. This study pays special attention to the role of the German literary renaissance of the last third of the eighteenth century in bringing psychological theory into popular consciousness and shaping its transmission to the nineteenth century. All German texts are translated into English, making this fascinating area of European thought fully accessible to English readers for the first time.

MATTHEW BELL is Senior Lecturer in German and Director of the Comparative Literature Programme at King’s College London. He is Honorary Secretary and Treasurer of the English Goethe Society and author of Goethe’s Naturalistic Anthropology: Man and Other Plants (1994).
THE GERMAN TRADITION OF PSYCHOLOGY IN LITERATURE AND THOUGHT, 1700–1840

MATTHEW BELL
King's College London
For
Lou
my light
Neu

Genieß ich nun durch dich das weite Licht
Des Tages.
facilis descensus Averno:
octes atque dies patet atri ianua Ditis;
sed revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras,
hoc opus, hic labor est.

Virgil, Aeneid, vi, 126–9
## Contents

1. Acknowledgements
2. List of abbreviations
3. Introduction
   1. The ‘long past’: psychology before 1700
   2. The Enlightenment: Rationalism and Sensibility
   3. Melancholy Titans and suffering women in Storm and Stress drama
   4. Empirical psychology and classicism: Moritz, Schiller, Goethe
   5. Idealism’s campaign against psychology
   6. Romanticism and animal magnetism
   7. After Romanticism: the physiological unconscious
4. Notes
5. Bibliography
6. Index of names and places
7. Subject index
Acknowledgements


Help comes in many shapes and sizes. The library staff at the Institute of Germanic Studies in London and the Schiller-Nationalmuseum/Deutsches Literaturarchiv in Marbach gave generously of their time and expertise. The professionalism and patience of staff in the Humanities and Rare Books Reading Rooms at the British Library, where most of the research for this book was done, never cease to amaze. The Arts and Humanities Research Board (AHRB) provided funds for a period of research in Marbach. The project was begun, many years ago, while I was a Septcentenary Junior Research Fellow at Balliol College, Oxford. Since then I have been privileged to work with inspiring colleagues and students in the Department of German at King’s College London. To the following I am grateful for providing the stimuli to ask questions and the means to answer them: Jeremy Adler, Nick Boyle, Jörg Drews, Howard Gaskill, Simon Glendinning, David Hill, Roger Paulin, Ritchie Robertson, John Whaley, and John Williams. Derek Glass sharpened my ideas on Kleist and E. T. A. Hoffmann: he is sorely missed. John White stopped the project going off the rails at an early stage. It was expertly steered through the Press by Linda Bree, Maartje Schelten, and Joanna Breeze. Robert Whitelock has been as thorough and scholarly a copy-editor as one could hope for, dispensing order, intelligibility, and good sense. To the editors of the series, Barry Nisbet and Martin Swales, I owe profound thanks for their support and critical judgement. To friends and...
family I owe deep debts of a more or less tangible nature: thanks to my mother and Pete, my father and Christine, Sarah, Simon, John, and Meg. I hope that Florence and Cecily will not begrudge their mother her proper place as dedicatee of this book and are not too disappointed when they discover what sort of book I have been writing.
Abbreviations


DVji Deutsche Vierteljahresschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte.


List of abbreviations