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Abstracts

Esther Fischer-Homberger, Portrait and Case History – Relationality and Historiography. Pierre Janet's case history of 'Madeleine', c. 1900

Pierre Janet, head of Charcot's psychological laboratory, developed and refined his medical psychology through the interplay of observation and hypothesis. This process can be traced through a sequence of descriptions and case histories concerning the religious ecstatic 'Madeleine' from 1897 to 1926. In subsequent theoretical writings (1932–1936) he described this process as the act of portraiture. Given the background of contemporary tensions between church and state, Janet notably refused to frame Madeleine's visions either as revelations or pathological hallucinations. Instead he seized on his working relationship with her – he treated her from 1896 to 1904 – to develop a psychology of belief and feelings. In his paradigmatic and innovative case history ("De l'angoisse à l'extase". Vol. I, 1926), Janet not only presented his medical and psychiatric findings, but also Madeleine's extensive self-observations, her paintings which also reflect her image of him, his conversations with her and his own disposition towards her. What emerges through Janet's method is a case history that – like any good portrayal – is cut from a rich fabric fashioned from interwoven strands of history and individual relational narratives.

Lucia Aschauer, From Portrait to Diagnosis: The Case of Louise-Adélaïde (1803)

Medical portrait narratives play a crucial role in the production and circulation of medical knowledge on the threshold of the nineteenth century. Thanks to their formal and epistemic characteristics – that is both the focus on the individual and the tendency to form types – portrait narratives can transform individual pathologies into medical cases. In doing so, they contribute to a system of medical classification that is consubstantial with the emerging "clinic", a system in which every single aspect of a disease is subsumable under an abstract clinical concept. In the case of the 13-year-old girl Louise-Adélaïde, whose medical history was published in the scientific periodical "Journal de Médecine, Chirurgie, Pharmacie" in 1803, the narrative associates an individual clinical case with the stereotype of the masturbating child. By referring to two other elements of the contemporary discourse on masturbation – the stunningly illustrated "Livre sans titre" and a letter signed by Heinrich von Kleist – this article shows how the different portrait narratives participate in creating and perpetuating a powerful cultural stereotype of medical and social deviance.

Stephanie Sera, An Unfinished Portrait. The Hermaphrodite Maria Derrier/Karl Dürrge in Early Nineteenth Century Medical Case Reports

In 1801, the patient Maria Dorothea Derrier was discovered to be a female hermaphrodite following the discovery of “an unusual formation of the birthing parts” at the Charité hospital in Berlin. In the same year, she was announced to be of male sex, propelling a decade-long dispute about Derrier’s ‘true sex’. The diverging diagnoses not only affected the portrayal of Derrier but also her decision to travel henceforth under the name of Karl Dürrge and present himself to the medical profession for money. Why were the diagnoses so disparate from each other even though the physicians had examined the very same person? How did this affect not only the portrayal of Derrier/Dürrge but also the epistemological purpose of the portrait itself? This article reconstructs the case reports on Derrier’s/Dürrge’s ‘true sex’ through the lens of a chronological and comparative analysis focusing on three narratives: discovery, uncertainty and autopsy. Furthermore, it shows that Derrier/Dürrge participated as an “invisible technician” in the production of knowledge on true hermaphroditism in humans.

Regina Schulte, “divided, right in the middle”. The Impossible Homecoming of Else Terra Flex, Daughter of a Missionary

The psychiatric clinics of the universities of Jena and Bonn possess in their archives bundles of documents which contain the fragments of a medical case history gathered over the course of thirty-five years from 1888 to 1923. They refer to the painter Else Terra Flex (born in 1872), daughter of a missionary, who grew up in India. This article throws light on Flex’s biographical trail by relating it to everyday hospital life and to the archival reports on practices and forms of action. This case history can also be explored as a testimony of intercultural overpowering.

Ayşe Durakbaşa, Historical Insights into the Women’s Agenda under AKP Rule in Turkey from a Feminist Perspective

Turkey, which according to its constitution is still a secular state, has increasingly been subject of Islamisation by the Islamist Justice and Development Party AKP, who have governed the country since 2002. This article examines the development of an Islamist discourse about women’s issues in line with the ideology of the AKP and its continuing social hegemony. For that purpose, it will give an overview of different currents of secular feminisms, mainly Kemalist feminism and the second wave feminist movement, which are in opposition to the AKP. The article also aims to convey the women’s agenda and the debates on women’s issues to feminists of Western societies from an insider’s feminist perspective. It explains how Kemalism has been under attack not only from Islamists but also from Kurdish nationalists and Kurdish feminists due to its affinity to Turkish nationalism. Therefore, feminists in Turkey are able to define their position from a critical distance to nationalist feminisms of all kinds and to the Islamist discourse on women developed and propagated by AKP from its neoliberal perspective. The article tries to show how AKP has built its hegemony by mobilising women’s efforts as members of women’s NGOs in support of AKP governments.