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## Online Resources

<http://fap.sagepub.com/content/18/3.toc> Link to *Feminism & Psychology* special issue on secrecy and silence in the research process (2008).

## Völkerpsychologie

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## Introduction

Since Herder's ideas of culture and *Volkscharakter*, the German intellectuals have

been fascinated by foreign cultures and their interest grew even more when the German Reich began to take part in colonialism in 1884. In that colonial context a new genre of scientific writing and thinking was born: ethnography (Völkskunde) or *Völkerpsychologie*. Because Germany had no colonies till 1884, going to other continents and doing ethnography were not possible. That is the reason why the very first steps in *Völkerpsychologie* are mainly linguistic studies, while the further steps deal with interpretation of artifacts that were brought over to Germany by the first German anthropologists that had been traveled on the conquerors ships. *Völkerpsychologie* therefore should be better seen as the ancestor of anthropology – and not of psychology.

## Definition

*Völkerpsychologie* or *Ethnopsychologie* is an outdated genre of anthropological research. It deals with psychic functions and expressions that go beyond the individual and can be found on a collective level, e.g., language, myth, religion, art, science, law, and custom. Its aim was to discover the rules that are valid for the origin and the development of these collective psychic functions and expressions. *Völkerpsychologie* used no special method besides comparison and was done by philosophers, linguists, sociologists, anthropologists, and psychologists. *Völkerpsychologie* was a very German project and is unknown in the history of science of the United States. Most prominent is the *Völkerpsychologie* by Wilhelm Wundt – edited in ten volumes. He was the teacher of Bronisław Malinowski and Franz Boas and therefore an ancestor of anthropology. *Völkerpsychologie* cannot be identified with cultural psychology, as Michael Cole suggests (Cole, 1996, pp. 26, 101), when he follows Stephen Toulmin's (1981) translation of *Völkerpsychologie* as cultural psychology. *Völkerpsychologie* also cannot be identified with folk psychology (*Alltagspsychologie*) – this false friend is often found in European publications.



## Keywords

Völkerpsychologie; Völkerkunde; Wilhelm Wundt; Hajim Steinthal; Moritz Lazarus

## Traditional Debates

According to Lück (1996, p. 39), the term *Völkerpsychologie* was coined by Wilhelm von Humboldt, who believed that human thinking bases on language. He argued that each *Volk*, that has his own language, has also its own view on the world. This idea was assisted by Johann Gottfried Herder's idea that each culture is a culture *sui generis*, an enclosed unity build on the "Volkscharakter" and the climate of the territory where the people of this culture live. The climate influences the senses and the thinking of the people and the people influence the landscape by cultivating. During the history this enmeshment led to a special culture that is unique, separate, and immiscible. Finally Johann Friedrich Herbart developed a cultural theory. In his *Psychologie als Wissenschaft* (1824/1825), he proposed not to investigate individuals but rather their reproduction in the nation state what he called "Volksseele."

Combining this philosophical background with elements of Hegel's philosophy of history, the Jewish philosophers and linguists Moritz Lazarus and Hajim Steinthal established the journal *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Sprachwissenschaft* in 1860. The journal wanted to find ways to retrace the development of humankind, language, and social behavior by comparative study of people; the aim of Lazarus and Steinthal was to establish a science as a pendant to individual psychology that interprets coherently the philosophical and historical knowledge collected by several disciplines. Philologists, linguists, anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, geographers, teachers of roman language, slavists, orientlists, and historians contributed to this aim, but the ambitious project failed and the journal was closed down after 20 published volumes in 1890 (see – also for reception of Lazarus

and Steinthal – Klautke, 2010). Instead Theodor Waitz also used the term *Völkerpsychologie*, he established together with Adolf Bastian a very different tradition. Both believed in the "psychic unity of mankind" and not into differences between people. Out of that perspective they founded contrary to *Völkerpsychologie* ethnology (*Völkerkunde* in contrary to *Volkskunde*) that has to be science and not hermeneutics. To highlight the difference, Bastian established the journal *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* in 1869.

One attentive reader of the *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Sprachwissenschaft* was Wilhelm Wundt, whose name is almost associated with *Völkerpsychologie*. Wundt criticizes Lazarus and Steinthal for trying to establish a new science that rejected all other sciences to a minor status. For Wundt *Völkerpsychologie* was just the other side of the medal of individual psychology: while latter investigates individual psyche, the former investigates *Volksseele* (Wundt, 1900–1920, I 1, S. 8).

*Völkerpsychologie* is part of general as well as comparative psychology (Wundt, 1887, I 5, 6). Instead investigating feelings, behavior, and thinking of individuals, *Völkerpsychologie* should investigate psychic functions and expressions, like culture, religion, language, mythos, *Sitte* (custom), and art. Like a boy grows up to a man, *Völkerpsychologie* describes the genesis of concept development in four steps from the very beginning of the primitive to totemism, heroism, and as climax humanity. Wundt's opus magnum *Völkerpsychologie. Eine Untersuchung von Sprache, Mythos und Sitte* was published in ten volumes that he reworked partially several times between 1900 and 1920. Unlike Lazarus and Steinthal, Wundt's perspective is deeply rooted in teleology that means he considers history to be evolution. To prove this development, he identifies "central mental motives" that can be found on each level – the lower motives transformed into the higher. But Wundt's method of analyzing cultures is very problematic, because it is limited to second and third analysis of cultural artifacts that had been brought over by ethno-psychologists or



anthropologists as well as expedition reports, correspondence, and Wundt's own experience; he was the Malinowski of psychology: an "arm-chair anthropologist" (Zitterbarth, 2006, p. 108f.). His method was association rather than comparison; the outcome was fiction rather than understanding and it was at least literature not scientific report. Important and necessary to emphasize is that neither Lazarus and Steinthal nor Wundt had the idea that the primitive is inferior in regard of intelligence and other psychic capacities (Wundt, 1912, S. 114).

Following Wundt only two other psychologists wrote a Völkerpsychologie or similar: Richard Thurnwald and Willy Hellpach (1938). Thurnwald was a member and – beside William Stern and Otto Lipmann – director of the *Institut für angewandte Psychologie und Psychologische Sammelforschung* in Berlin. Thurnwald developed a diagnostic manual called *Vorschläge zur psychologischen Untersuchung primitiver Menschen* for expeditions and "colonial use" to explore foreign cultures and categorize them into hierarchies. He oriented himself on the first anthropological expedition with psychological engagement, the *Cambridge Anthropological Expedition* (1898–1899) to the Torres Strait Islands. The manual contents a variety of diagnostic tools for psychic functioning; he gained these tools from his own expeditions by observation and measurement as well as from Stern's *Differentielle Psychologie* (1911).

The main tenor of his work is the hierarchy of cultures – on top the white German. The indigenous worker is individually in focus, only his lifeless "valuably manpower" (Thurnwald, 1910, p. 128 – my translation) was of interest. "The effective exploitation of indigenous manpower results in employment of each race appropriate to its performance, to a hierarchy according to its activity, and to an arrayed symbiosis. Out of the chaos of side by side an array arises – one upon the other, according to one's disposition and qualification. This is the array that results from the European economy. The European uses the muscles of the indigenous and their efficiency for his own purpose. In such a way the South Seas

islanders will become effective wheels into the household of humankind" (Thurnwald, p. 632 – my translation). In this concept of utilization originates his ideas of *Rassenhygiene* and breeding of new types of people originate, e.g., that have a better adaptability to climates. Since this obvious use of science for colonial purpose, the project of Völkerpsychologie was finally discredited and abolished in psychology.

But the idea of Völkerpsychologie did not disappear; it changed the continent as well as the scientific discipline. It was Franz Boas, a student of Wundt and Adolf Bastian, who brought Völkerpsychologie – in sense of the non-hierarchical version of Lazarus and Steinthal – and ethnology to America and introduced it to cultural anthropology that he defines as "a combination of Völkerpsychologie, ethnology, and physical anthropology" (Klautke, 2010, p. 11; also see Stocking, 1968). In that sense Völkerpsychologie has to be seen as an ancestor of cultural anthropology – and not psychology (Wolfradt, 2011). But from anthropology it came back into psychology in the 1980s, when cultural psychology arose.

### Critical Debates

Kurt Danziger (1979) pointed out that Wundt's Völkerpsychologie was neglected in North America; the same did Jüttemann (2006) for the German context. This neglect led to a complete misunderstanding of Wundt's work and thus the nature of psychology, its theories, and its methodology (Danziger, 1985). In 2012 Gerd Jüttemann proposed the revitalization of the idea of Völkerpsychologie; he intends to publish an anthology of *Developmental Psychology of Humankind* in 2013, (Jüttemann, 2013).

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## Volunteerism

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## Introduction

In recent years, the study of prosocial behavior has transitioned from focusing on bystander intervention to more long-term prosocial behavior such as volunteering. This long-term prosocial behavior is often a response to persistent or widespread need (Penner, 2004). Early research on prosocial behavior did not find a strong relationship between personality attributes, personality characteristics, and the likelihood of prosocial behavior. It should be noted, however, that this early research focused on emergency helping or bystander intervention, and not long-term prosocial behavior such as volunteering. The study of volunteerism has generated a growing interest due, in part, to the large number of people who volunteer themselves. In the United States alone, 64.3 million people (26.8 % of the population) volunteered in 2011. Additionally, a large number of people in the United States participate in informal volunteering (unpaid volunteering outside of a formal organization). Recent estimates state that approximately 8.2 million Americans volunteered informally within the past year (Volunteering in the United States, 2011).

## Definition

Volunteering is defined as deliberately engaging in helping activities for those who are in need of assistance, typically with a formal organization over time and without having the intention of receiving any form of a reward for their behavior (Snyder & Omoto, 2008). Snyder and Omoto discuss six factors that further define