

Charles Hubbard Judd: A Wundtian Social Psychologist in the United States

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Zusammenfassung: Das Schicksal von Wundts Völkerpsychologie bleibt eines der größten Mysterien in der Geschichte der Psychologie. Wundt wird oft als der „Begründer“ der modernen Psychologie bezeichnet, und dennoch wurden seine Arbeiten zu diesem Thema praktisch ignoriert. Die Geschichte von Wundts amerikanischen Studenten und ihrer Versuche, Laboratorien in den Vereinigten Staaten einzurichten, ist eine der am häufigsten erzählten in der Geschichte der Psychologie. Es gibt jedoch eine Seite, die noch erzählt werden muß. Von allen amerikanischen Studenten Wundts ist Charles Hubbard Judd derjenige, dem es am ehesten zusteht, als sein Hauptanhänger in den USA betrachtet zu werden. Judd akzeptierte Wundts Voluntarismus und die Doktrin der schöpferischen Synthese. Er übernahm auch den Standpunkt, daß es notwendig sei, die Experimentelle Psychologie durch eine nicht experimentelle Völkerpsychologie zu ergänzen. Der Aufsatz untersucht Judds Arbeiten zu diesem Thema und die Rezeption in den USA.

Summary: The fate of Wundt's Völkerpsychologie remains one of the great mysteries of psychology's history. Wundt is often described as the 'founder' of modern psychology and yet his work on this subject has been virtually ignored. The story of Wundt's American students and their attempts to establish laboratories in the United States is one of the most frequently told in the history of psychology. There is a side to it, however, which has yet to be told. Of all Wundt's American students, the one who has the strongest claim to be regarded as his chief disciple in the United States is Charles Hubbard Judd. Judd accepted Wundt's voluntarism and the doctrine of creative synthesis. He also accepted the view that experimental psychology needed to be completed by a non-experimental Völkerpsychologie. The article examines Judd's work on this subject and its reception in the United States.

„I learned from Wundt what he calls the historical method in psychology. His contribution of a new method and a new body of material in his *Völkerpsychologie* does not seem to have exerted in America an influence at all comparable to the influence which was exerted by his earlier work in physiological and experimental psychology. The explanation of American neglect of his monumental work seems to me to be that the physiological psychology preceded James and preceded the development of an independent American psychology. Wundtian social psychology came at a stage of the maturity of American psychology in which American workers were far less open to foreign impressions than they had been in the eighties and early nineties. For my own part, I became absorbed in social psychology“ (Judd, 1932).

The fate of Wundt's Völkerpsychologie remains one of the great mysteries of psychology's history. Wundt is often described as the

'founder' of modern psychology and yet his work on this subject has been virtually ignored. Underlying this work was Wundt's conviction that experimental psychology (or *individual* psychology as he often called it) needed to be completed by an examination of the collective aspects of mental life (Wundt, 1900). Völkerpsychologie was hardly a minor interest. Wundt's main work on the subject - entitled, *Völkerpsychologie: An Investigation into the Laws of Language, Myth and Custom* (1900-1920) - consists of ten large volumes which were published over a period of twenty years. There were also two smaller works - *Problems of Völkerpsychologie* (1911) and *Elements of Völkerpsychologie* (1912) - as well as numerous journal articles. Although most of his work on this subject was published towards the end of his life, Wundt's interest in Völkerpsychologie had been present from the

start of his career. His earliest publications outlined the need for a non-experimental *Völkerpsychologie* to supplement the findings of experimental psychology and contain a great deal of discussion of this subject (Wundt, 1862; 1863). Wundt set up a section for *Völkerpsychologie* in his psychological institute shortly after arriving in Leipzig and he regularly offered lectures on this subject in the 1880's and 1890's.¹ Wundt made several statements to the effect that he considered *Völkerpsychologie* to be the most important and interesting area of psychology (Wundt, 1900). In the preface to his main work on methodology, he predicted that experimental psychology would gradually recede into the background as the importance of *Völkerpsychologie* came to be increasingly recognised (Wundt, 1908).

These views were largely ignored by a younger generation of psychologists who trained with Wundt in Leipzig.² Prominent among these was E.B. Titchener who liked to portray himself as Wundt's chief disciple in the United States, even though he had no interest at all in *Völkerpsychologie*. His embarrassment at some of Wundt's statements on this subject can be seen in his obituary to Wundt:

„I wish to linger a little over the *Völkerpsychologie* in order to protest against a belief, current in recent years and in some measure encouraged by Wundt himself, which I take to be grounded at best in a half-truth. A legend has grown up - I cannot call it anything else - to the effect that social psychology was Wundt's first and fondest love, and that all his life, up to about 1890, was spent in clearing intruders out of the way so that he might ultimately return to it. I should not accept this legend if it came with Wundt's own subscription. I should mistrust an old man's memory“ (1921; p. 169).

None of this would have mattered had it not been for the fact that one of Titchener's most loyal and devoted students was E.G. Boring whose *History of Experimental Psychology* (1929/1950) came to be regarded as the orthodox version of psychology's history.³ Boring wrote:

„Wundt did not write another, more mature system of psychology: he modified, improved and expanded the original. It was called a 'physiological psychology' and it was his great argument for an experimental psychology“ (1950; p. 323).

Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie* was briefly mentioned in Boring's work but it was portrayed as an unimportant afterthought and this provided the pattern for later works on the history of psychology. Wundt came to be celebrated as the 'founder' of experimental psychology and his *Völkerpsychologie* remained untranslated and largely unread.⁴

The story of Wundt's American students and their attempts to establish laboratories in the United States is one of the most frequently told in the history of psychology. There is a side to it, however, which has yet to be told. Of all Wundt's American students, the one who has the strongest claim to be regarded as his chief disciple in the United States is Charles Hubbard Judd. Judd studied with Wundt in Leipzig from 1894 to 1896, earning his Ph.D. with a dissertation on space perception (Judd, 1896). He stayed on during the summer of 1896 to work on an English translation of Wundt's *Grundriß der Psychologie* (1896) which had recently appeared. Judd (1921) mentions that Wundt had been particularly upset by a French translation of his „Physiological Psychology“ and would only agree to a translation on condition that he could supervise the work. The final result was Wundt's *Outlines of Psychology* (1897) which carries on its title page: „Translated with the co-operation of the author by Charles Hubbard Judd, Ph.D. (Leipzig)“. It was this work which brought Judd into unusually close contact with Wundt as they met regularly to discuss the translation. Judd had been orphaned at an early age and it is tempting to suggest that he adopted Wundt as a father-figure.⁵ Whatever the reason, Judd always spoke highly of Wundt and remained a loyal supporter of Wundt's ideas for the rest of his life.⁶

On returning to the United States, Judd published an article in which he berated his

fellow Americans for taking an interest only in Wundt's laboratory techniques and ignoring his philosophical works. Wundt's psychology, he argued, could not be understood without a knowledge of the philosophical views on which it was based (Judd, 1897). Judd accepted Wundt's voluntarism and the doctrine of creative synthesis.⁷ He also accepted the view that experimental psychology needed to be completed by a non-experimental *Völkerpsychologie*:

„That branch of psychology by which we extend our knowledge of human nature beyond what we can learn through a study of the nervous structures is called 'experimental psychology'. In addition to experimental methods, psychology uses also the methods of anthropology and history, thus developing what is known as 'social psychology' „ (1931; p. 532).

Judd's interest in this subject began when he attended Wundt's lectures in Leipzig. Judd mentions in his autobiography that he was also influenced by a series of lectures on „Kulturgeschichte“ which were given by the historian, Karl Lamprecht.⁸ In later years, he described it as „a field in which I am interested more than in any other“ (1932; p. 232).

The early part of Judd's career was devoted mainly to experimental psychology. From 1902 to 1909, he taught psychology and pedagogy at Yale University, eventually becoming director of the psychological laboratory. During these years, he edited the monograph supplements of the *Psychological Review*, wrote a widely-used textbook on psychology (Judd, 1907)⁹ and was elected President of the American Psychological Association. 1909 was to mark an important turning point in Judd's career. It was in this year that he left Yale in order to succeed John Dewey as Director of the School of Education at the University of Chicago.¹⁰ Judd had long been interested in education. He had studied pedagogy as a minor subject with Johannes Volkelt in Leipzig. His first book was entitled, *Genetic Psychology for Teachers* (1903). It was this interest which led him to social psychology.

Social psychology was the term which Judd had used for *Völkerpsychologie* in his translation of Wundt's *Grundriß*. His entry on „Social Psychology“ in the *Cyclopedia of Education* leaves little doubt as to what he understood by the term:

„The general term social psychology is here used as the translation of the German word *Volkspsychologie* or *Völkerpsychologie*. The most elaborate work on this subject is from the pen of Wilhelm Wundt“ (1913; p. 347).

Judd's main work on the subject was his *Psychology of Social Institutions* (1926). The central message of the book is that „collective mental activity“ has given rise to institutions which could not have been created by individuals. These included language, tools, number, weights and measures, art, music, religion and government. This „accumulated social capital“ had developed over long periods of history and was transmitted to each new generation by a process of socialization. The individual was forced to adapt to the institutions of society in order to survive. It was because of this that Judd stressed the importance of education. The last chapter of the book is entitled, „Education as Socialization of the Individual“. Judd's social psychology provided the basis for his whole approach to education (Judd, 1924; 1927). He was particularly critical of 'progressive' approaches which emphasised the spontaneous development of the child, arguing that it was the duty of the school to provide guidance and instruction.¹¹

Though it differed from Wundt's work in some respects - most notably in the emphasis it placed on education¹² - Judd's *Psychology of Social Institutions* is unmistakably 'Wundtian' in spirit and content. Judd (1926) wrote in the preface:

„The author of this book became convinced of the necessity of studying the social contributions to mental life when preparing a volume on psychology for teachers in 1903. The foundation for his thinking was undoubtedly laid by the teachings of Wilhelm Wundt, whose lectures and volumes on social psychology constitute

the most elaborate contributions which have ever been made in this field" (p.v).

Judd's indebtedness to Wundt is acknowledged in several places in the book and many of his examples are taken directly from Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie*. What both works have in common is their strident opposition to all attempts to explain social-psychological phenomena in terms of the properties of individuals.

The background to the book can be seen in an article - „The Psychology of Social Institutions“ - which Judd had published in the previous year (Judd, 1925a). This opened with the statement that social psychology had „never established itself in method or content as distinct from individual psychology“ (p. 151). McDougall's earlier work had been nothing more than a description of individual instincts. The influence of this work had been so great that contemporary writers had been equally content to look upon society as nothing more than an aggregation of individuals held together by the instinct of gregariousness. The concept of suggestion used by Ross was simply a name for the fact that individuals are in some way affected by their fellow beings.¹³ Judd's sharpest criticisms were reserved for F.H. Allport whose *Social Psychology* (1924) had recently appeared. Allport had written:

„The standpoint of this book may be concisely stated as follows. There is no psychology of groups which is not essentially and entirely a psychology of individuals. Social psychology must not be placed in contradistinction to the psychology of the individual; it is a part of the psychology of the individual“ (p. 4).

Judd quoted these lines and wrote:

„How anyone who has given even superficial attention to the facts of civilization can hold with Professor Allport that social psychology is nothing but a subdivision of individual psychology, I confess I do not understand ... If there is any order of importance in this world, the social group with its possessions must surely be thought of as enormously more significant than the individual“ (pp. 154-5).

Judd went on to propose that social psychology be renamed: „the psychology of social institutions“. This would clearly define its subject-matter and help it to overcome its obsession with individuals. It was in the following year that Judd's book of that title appeared. On one level, it can be seen as a polemical attack on the individualistic social psychology of the time.¹⁴

Judd's views on social psychology ran counter to the individualistic assumptions of his contemporaries. In his review of *Psychology of Social Institutions*, Jordan (1926) writes:

„This book is well written, logical and brilliant. Judd's felicity of expression is well known but in no other place has it reached quite to such heights as here. In spite of these excellencies, however, the book is not entirely convincing. It leaves almost no place for individual differences Surely not all individuals are institutionalized Robots“ (p. 229).

F.H. Allport's response came in his *Institutional Behavior* (1933) where he sought to „reinterpret both institutions and society in terms of the behavior of individuals“ (p. vii). In the final chapter - entitled „The Hope of a New Individualism“ - Allport expresses his dislike of „institutional ideology“ and calls for a renewal of faith in individual initiative and enterprise.

These views should be seen in their cultural and historical context. In his study of *Individualism*, Lukes (1973) writes:

„It was primarily in the United States that 'individualism' came to celebrate capitalism and liberal democracy. It became a symbolic catchword of immense ideological significance expressing all that has been at various times implied in the philosophy of natural rights, the belief in free enterprise, and the American dream“ (p. 26).

Though it went through a temporary crisis during the years of the New Deal, 'individualism' has continued to exert a powerful ideological force.¹⁵ In the 1920's, it reigned supreme. The term was used favourably by Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. It was in

1928 that Herbert Hoover made his famous speech on „the American system of rugged individualism“ (in Van Doren and McHenry, 1971). Hoover had already outlined his political philosophy in a book entitled, *American Individualism* (Hoover, 1922). These were years of American isolationism and collectivist ideas were widely seen as ‘un-American’ (Arieli, 1964).¹⁶

In such a climate, it is hardly surprising that Judd’s work was not well received. His social psychology seems to have been regarded as an alien German import. Karpf’s *American Social Psychology* (1932) contains no discussion of his work. In the chapter on „Social-Psychological Thought in Germany“, Karpf writes:

„Folk psychology as a social-psychological movement never struck root here ... the historical approach of folk psychology tended to link this field of endeavor chiefly with anthropology rather than social psychology as specialized fields of investigation ... distinct tendencies of social-psychological thought were already in the process of formation here so that such German influences as were being introduced were necessarily reinterpreted in the light of the local situation and the previously organized background of American psychological and social thought“ (p. 65).

This is qualified by a brief footnote:

„A notable example of the more direct influence of German and especially Wundt’s folk psychology in this field of thought is to be had in Judd *Psychology of Social Institutions*“ (p. 65).

This tendency to ignore Judd’s work was extremely common. The various authors in the *Handbook of Social Psychology* (1935) make no reference to it at all. Judd’s work was subsequently written out of the history of psychology. G.W. Allport (1954) briefly mentions that Judd opposed the views of F.H. Allport and goes on to suggest that „social institutions are ... abstractions from the behavior and consciousness of individuals“ (p. 39). This seems to be a rare exception. An extensive survey of more recent works could find no

mention of Judd’s *Psychology of Social Institutions*.

In his autobiography, Judd (1932) tried to explain the neglect of Völkerpsychologie in the United States. He suggested that Wundt’s work had been ignored because it came at a time when American psychology was already well-established and no longer looked to Germany for new ideas. This explanation is unsatisfactory if only because of the fact that Wundt’s interest in this subject had been present from the start of his career. It seems more plausible to suggest that the collectivist nature of this work made it unacceptable to American psychologists. Ironically, Judd’s own work was to suffer a similar fate.¹⁷

Anmerkungen

1. The section for Völkerpsychologie is described in Wundt’s autobiography (Wundt, 1920). A list of Wundt’s lectures was compiled by his daughter, Eleonore, in 1927. I am indebted to Anneros Meischner-Meige for supplying me with a photocopy.
2. For an account of this, see Danziger (1979).
3. Boring dedicated the book to his mentor: „In experimental psychology Titchener was the historian *par excellence*. He should have written this book and it is with great diffidence that I offer a poor substitute“ (1950; p.xii).
4. Wundt’s *Elemente der Völkerpsychologie* was translated as *Elements of Folk Psychology* (Wundt, 1916). A common mistake in English-language histories of psychology has been to confuse this work with the ten-volume *Völkerpsychologie*. Several writers have claimed that *Elements of Folk Psychology* is a translation of *Völkerpsychologie* (e.g. Allport, 1954; Miller, 1966; Sahakian, 1982). It should be noted that these are entirely separate works. One chapter from the first volume of *Völkerpsychologie* is now available in English (Wundt, 1973). This is the work on ‘gesture’ which G.H. Mead discussed in his *Mind, Self and Society* (Mead, 1934).
5. Judd was born in Bareilly, India where his father was an American missionary. He was brought to the United States at the age of 6 on account of the poor health of his parents. His father died in the following year and his mother died four years later (Judd, 1932).
6. This can be seen in an article - „In Memory of Wilhelm Wundt by his American Students“ - which appeared in the *Psychological Review* shortly after Wundt’s death. Many of these students were obviously bitter over the pro-German stance which Wundt had taken during the First World War. Judd’s entry is notable for its attempt to defend Wundt from criticism (Judd, 1921).

7. Judd wrote: „My Leipzig training gave me a number of points of view which have been influential in all my later work. In the first place, I adopted without reservations Wundt's voluntarism I accepted also, and still accept today, the doctrine of creative synthesis“ (1932; p. 219). It is only in recent years that historians of psychology in English-speaking countries have come to realise that Wundt was not a Titcherian 'structuralist'. Greater attention to Judd's work would have prevented this mistake: „Wundt never oversimplified. He recognized the fact that mental life is a process and not a collection of items. His teaching was functional and synthetic, never atomistic and structural“ (1932; p. 219).
8. Lamprecht saw a close relationship between history and social psychology (Lamprecht, 1900). Judd wrote: „as readers of his writings will readily understand, it was for me a course in social psychology“ (1932; p. 220).
9. The influence of Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie* can be seen in the chapter on language. Judd wrote: „Wundt's two volumes on *Die Sprache* will, I believe, come to be regarded as his most important single contribution to psychology“ (1932; p. 219).
10. Judd never broke his ties to psychology. In addition to being Director of the School of Education, he was also Chairman of the Department of Psychology from 1920 to 1925 (Buswell, 1947).
11. Judd was critical of Dewey's approach to education and remained apart from the 'Chicago School' (Rucker, 1969). One of its most prominent representatives, G.H. Mead, also took a serious interest in Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie* (Mead, 1904; 1906; 1919). Mead adopted a much more critical stance towards Wundt's work and its influence was less direct (Joas, 1985). Although Judd and Mead were contemporaries at the University of Chicago for over 20 years, I have seen no evidence of any contact between them. Neither refer to the other's work in their publications.
12. Wundt himself was very skeptical about 'applied' psychology (Bringmann and Ungerer, 1980).
13. McDougall and Ross both published works on social psychology in 1908 (McDougall, 1908; Ross, 1908). These are often described as the first English-language textbooks on the subject.
14. Judd's educational psychology was no less strident in its opposition to individualism: „It is a general requirement in all teacher-training institutions that the student shall take a course in psychology In the midst of all the variety which appears in these courses in psychology for teachers, there is one characteristic which is conspicuously common to all: they all center around the individual. It is the individual's instincts and the individual's learning curve and the individual's rank in reading and arithmetic that are set forth as psychological facts which the teacher must understand and accept as guides in directing school practice. The products of collective mental activity, such as language and social customs, get scant recognition in the books on educational psychology“ (1925b; p. 102).
15. A thoughtful account of the role of individualism in American life can be found in Bellah et al. (1985). This

work became a national best-seller and sparked off a major debate on the individualistic assumptions of American psychology (Spence, 1985; Perloff, 1987; Sampson, 1988).

16. Arieli writes: „There was a conscious effort to create through individualism an ideological identification between the nation, democracy and industrial enterprise. Individualism made competitive private enterprise and American identity parts of one pattern This accounts for the fact that not only the Republican party but also the Democrats under Bryan and Wilson, the Rooseveltian Progressives, and even the Populists, Single Taxers and labor leaders were committed to the concept of individualism as a national ideal“ (1964; p. 364).
17. Judd wrote: „We are, as a nation, committed, in practice and in theory, to the individualistic point of view“ (1925c; p. 422). He devoted his retirement years to what he regarded as the most urgent task of American education: the teaching of social studies in high schools. His last book - *Teaching the Evolution of Civilization* - outlined a curriculum for this purpose (Judd, 1946). Brief sketches of Judd's career can be found in Buswell (1947) and Freeman (1947).

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