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# PSYCHOLOGY IN GERMANY AND THE CONTRIBUTION OF GERMAN-JAPANESE COOPERATION TO MORE UNIVERSAL THEORIES

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The paper starts with the development of psychology during the first 100 years in Germany, beginning with the basic ideas and concepts of W. Wundt, and his roots until the decline in the 30's and 40's and the period of Americanization after WW II. The second part describes the recovery in the last 15-20 years and the recent achievements of German psychology in fields where it has reached again or surpassed international standards. The third part shows that psychology in general is bound to the Western culture. The development of psychological theories is influenced by the *Zeitgeist* in Western cultures. Even basic concepts seem to be bound to the Western way of thinking, missing others. The assumed universality of psychological laws has to be doubted. A closer Japanese-German cooperation is suggested in order to make Japanese psychologists more aware of differences within Western cultures and to encourage them to make use of their own cultural heritage. In this way it can contribute to more universal theoretical concepts.

## *Overview*

The present paper consists of three parts, which lead to two main conclusions.

The first part will deal with the development of German psychology from its beginning up to the post war period; that is, about until 1970 or 1975.

The second part will describe the current status and point out some areas where German psychology has developed its own, genuine approach and produced particularly interesting results and/or gained an international reputation. The message of these two parts is that, after the early rise and then a decline, German psychology has once more reached a standard that should make it attractive for study by Japanese Psychologists—not only as a fossil, an object of historical interest, but also as a stimulating partner of exchange of ideas and cooperation in research.

But such a descriptive report would be too superficial. It would be an insufficient argument for what we need: namely, con-

structive cooperation between western and eastern psychologists in order to achieve a really universal science of the human mind and behavior.

Therefore, in the third section, I will present arguments to support the thesis that psychology itself is a product of western culture, rooted in the western way of thinking, of constructing, and coping with the inner and outer world. In order to overcome the one-sidedness and shortcomings of this development we need the contribution of psychology from other cultures.

My second message will therefore be: Since Japanese psychologists are the most advanced and best trained in a non-western culture, they should become confident enough to make use of the rich psychological heritage of their own culture. Also, closer contact and cooperation with German psychology would help to illustrate the differences existing even within Western psychology and further an awareness of cultural factors in general. In this way Japanese psychologists by using indigenous ideas could make a most valuable contribution to the scientific understanding of human mind and behavior.

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## I. Rise and decline of psychology in Germany from its beginning until the 70's

### 1. W. Wundt's foundation of the new science

In order to lay the foundations for my second message, the discussion of the development of psychology in Germany has to go back to its first beginnings, which is also the beginning of the science itself. As it is well known, the founding of psychology as a modern science is credited to W. WUNDT. He started 1873 to establish the first psychological laboratory at the University of Leipzig. It was 1879 formally opened, and therefore 1879 became the official year of birth of the new experimental science, although Wundt's fundamental work, "Grundzüge der physiologischen Psychologie", published in 1873, was begun 10 years earlier.

Wundt's formulation of scientific problems and his experimental approach immediately attracted other scholars. From all over the world they went to Leipzig, studied under him, became fascinated and, when they returned home, founded similar laboratories. Thus, the new experimental science spread very quickly throughout the academic world of that time, as if intellectuals were waiting for it. Within three decades more than 40 famous students of Wundt were working in 12 different countries. There were institutes of psychology at 17 universities in the USA alone; Germany and Switzerland together had 12 institutes, three of which were founded by scholars who, although not directly students of Wundt, were fascinated by his ideas.

As Berlyne (1968) pointed out, England was astonishingly resistant, one or two of the long-established universities had no psychology departments until the early 60's. In 1936 an Institute of Experimental Psychology was finally founded in Oxford, but there was no Professor of Psychology until 1947, and that seemingly rather by accident.

Japan, on the other hand, was among the more progressive countries. As early as 1889

Motora became the first Professor of Psychology at the Tokyo Imperial University, and in 1908 Matsumoto, also one of Wundt's Leipzig students, founded the first psychological laboratory in Kyoto and later in Tokyo-University. Also at an early date, namely in 1888, a Society for Child Study was established by Motora.

It is amazing that it took about 30 years before the first serious opposition to Wundt was formulated within psychology. These first opposing ideas were expressed by KÜLPE, a former student and assistant of Wundt and the founder of the famous Würzburger Schule.

Despite all Wundt's merits one should not forget that there were other scholars in Germany who contributed much to the founding of psychology. These were Franz von Brentano, 1838-1917 (Würzburg; Vienna), Hermann Ebbinghaus, 1850-1900 (Breslau; Halle), Oswald Külpe, 1862-1915 (Leipzig; Würzburg; München) and Georg Elias Müller, 1850-1934 (Göttingen), Carl Stumpf, 1848-1936 (Göttingen; Prague; Halle; Berlin). However, I do not want go into too much detail here.

Later, in the 20's, further opposition was expressed by the Gestalt Movement and the "Geisteswissenschaftliche" Psychology (loosely translated as hermeneutic or cultural science psychology). Then, in the 30's the slow decline in productivity began. But before moving on to a later period, let us take a closer look at the immediate roots of modern psychology. This is necessary for the last part of my paper, and it will correct some misinterpretation which are occasionally to be found in American books on the history of psychology, such as that by Misiak and Sexton (1966).

In order to understand Wundt's achievement fully we have to look at his primary mentor and his forerunner and also to talk about his central ideas.

Before Wundt accepted the Chair at Leipzig, he was, for 16 years, assistant to the famous physiologist Hermann von HELMHOLTZ (1821-1894) in Heidelberg. Von Helmholtz quite clearly molded Wundt's intellectual

development. Wundt's direct forerunner was Georg Theodor FECHNER (1801-1887), the father of psycho-physics. Fechner took seriously the idea of the German philosopher HERBART (1776-1841), that psychology could be established by combining metaphysics, observation and mathematics. Using his psycho-physics Fechner gave the first demonstration to prove that an "exact psychology" is possible with the use of observation and mathematics.

Wundt, however, went much further than Fechner. Wundt's ambitious goal was to establish a psychology which was to be the science of immediate experience and of the content of consciousness. Therefore he pursued a threefold purpose:

(1) to analyze mental contents into elements, of which there are three classes: sensations, images and feelings;

(2) to find how these elements are connected; and

(3) to discover the laws that determine their connection" (Misiak & Sexton, 1966, p. 79).

The best method to achieve this goal was, in his opinion, experimentation. But despite "...his enthusiasm for experimentation, Wundt felt that only mental phenomena directly accessible to physical influence could be made the subject of experiment. In his opinion, the higher mental processes, such as thinking and willing, demanded the use of historical methods. These historical methods included an analysis of man's language, laws, customs, art and institutions—in short, man's 'cultural products'" (Misiak & Sexton, 1966, p. 79).

Thus, between 1910 and 1920, he wrote ten volumes of "Völkerpsychologie" (to be translated as "ethnic" or "culture" psychology rather than "folk" psychology), an extensive and comprehensive psychology of culture as "an attempt to understand man's higher thought processes by a study of the history of mankind...Because of its psychogenetic approach to the total development of mental life, Wundt regarded his folk psychology as genetic psychology..." (Misiak & Sexton, 1966, p. 82).

Unfortunately this formidable work by Wundt and his underlying conception of psychology has mostly been forgotten, and only his experimental work is regarded as an important contribution.

The reader should keep this fact in mind since I will refer to it in the last part of my paper.

In order to become fully aware of what this first and most influential kind of psychology was, we should permit ourselves a short look behind the curtain of the meaningful world of studying the laws of the mind. If we put ourselves in the position of one of the subjects in the laboratory, then "...we are having sharp points poked into our arms, ...we are learning rows of syllables purposely deprived of all ulterior use or meaning, or we are exerting ourselves, as though our lives depended on it, to depress a key the moment that a certain color is exposed" (Flugel & West, 1964, p. 153). It seems difficult to retain a due sense of our own dignity.

It is therefore even more amazing how quickly the new science was accepted and spread. Obviously the *Zeitgeist* found just those ideas fascinating and western cultures were ready, maybe even ripe, for that sort of endeavor.

## 2. *Criticism and further development*

But finally, more than 30 or 40 years later, when Wundt was about 70 years of age, serious opposition arose. These arguments resulted, however, in new and fruitful developments in psychology, particularly in Germany where they again originated.

This criticism took two different approaches. One was inherent in the concept of experimental psychology, and was an extension of the same line of thinking. The other was a radical critique of experimental psychology in general.

The first challenge came from Wundt's former student, Oswald Külpe. He did not accept Wundt's statement that higher mental processes cannot become objects of experimentation. In trying to disprove Wundt's statement, he extended the field of experi-

mental psychology and so established the famous Würzburger Schule. Experimental studies of higher thought processes were conducted, such as: thoughts in relation to judgments, to volition, language and images. The school produced such famous scholars as MARBE, WATT, ACH, MESSER and Karl BÜHLER.

The next opposition movement was directed against one of the fundamental assumptions of Wundt. His basic idea was a kind of mental chemistry. Following the model of the natural sciences he intended to find the basic elements of the conscience and the laws of their connection. He was an elementarist and an associationist. New ideas contrary to this position originated in 1912 in Frankfurt University where Max WERTHEIMER had discovered the perception of apparent movements from the rapid projection of still stimuli called "phi phenomenon". "The historic importance of the discovery of the phi phenomenon lay in the fact that this phenomenon was an experimentally verifiable case of a dynamic whole which could neither be reduced to simple sensory elements—for it was as elementary as sensation—nor be explained as a sum or succession of sensations. The phi phenomenon thus constituted a challenge to the 'old' atomistic psychology" (Misiak & Sexton, 1966, pp. 350-351).

This formed the basis for the development of Gestalt psychology which became extremely influential with such famous names as VAN EHRENFELS, Karl KOFFKA, Wolfgang KÖHLER, Kurt LEWIN and Kurt GOLDSTEIN.

The concept "Gestalt" was soon extended beyond the mere perception of form to mean "any integrated organized whole or totality, in contrast to a mere summation of units or parts. Gestalt possesses properties of its own not derived from individual parts or their relation. Gestalt can be experimental or behavioral, static or dynamic. A pattern of dots or lines is a Gestalt, so is a melody, a particular taste, a sentence spoken or heard" (Misiak & Sexton, 1966, p. 353). A similar concept used by Lewin was "Feld" (English

field).

In contrast to Wundt's elementarism both of the concepts Gestalt and field were by their nature holistic conceptions of the functions of the mind.

Lewin was an extremely influential and independent researcher. In America he is well known as the author of "Dynamic Theory of Personality" and is regarded as one of the fathers of empirical social psychology. It is, however, often forgotten that he took his psychology Ph. D. in Berlin with Stumpf (like Koffka and Köhler) and his major contributions are experiments which were carried out in Berlin. He conducted very important studies of the dynamics of action, published between 1920 and 1934 as "Untersuchungen zur Handlungs- und Affekt-psychologie" in the then famous Journal "Psychologische Forschung" which included studies by students of his, such as DEMBO, HOPPE, KARSTEN, OVSJANKINA, SCHWARZ, and ZEIGARNIK.

A radical objection to all methods of experimental psychology was the extreme form of opposition. It was the conception of a "verstehende" (cultural science), Geisteswissenschaftliche Psychology. This dated back to the 1880's when DILTHEY, a German philosopher, criticized the concept of experimental psychology as inadequate for understanding man as a whole. He argued that a valid psychology could never be established by methods such as those used in the natural sciences. Only single and simple elements could be studied in this way. An image of the totality of full mental life, of the relation of parts to a whole, can only be achieved through the process of description and understanding or insightful interpretation.

Dilthey elaborated a theory stressing a sharp distinction between analytic natural sciences and "Geisteswissenschaften" (cultural sciences) like history, art, ethics and even mathematics. While the object of natural sciences can be seen as following causal relationships, which can be "explained" ("erklären"), the object of Geisteswissenschaften is constructed according to a purpose-mean

relationship. Such a meaningful system, where intentions play an important role, has to be an object of "understandingly, hermeneutic interpretation" ("verstehen").

However, his ideas became effective only in the early 20's, when the opposition to the elementarists increased. He paved the way for Gestalt psychology and even more for Kruegers Ganzheits-Psychology. He also had direct successors within non-empirical psychology, such as Eduard SPRANGER.

The Ganzheits-Psychology developed by Felix KRUEGER remained basically experimentally or empirically oriented, though it was partly influenced by Dilthey's critique. Krueger accepted Dilthey's idea of starting with an integrated whole as the basis. But in addition he saw the necessity of including the developmental aspect and social and cultural factors. He also emphasized the importance of affective processes. It seems understandable that through this aspiration to deal with such a complex totality, exact studies, especially experimental testing of hypotheses, become extremely difficult and more intuitive ways of thinking become more likely.

Spranger intended to study the whole individual by using intuitive methods of understanding. He published the well-known book "Lebensformen" (1914), which contains a typology of men according to their leading values. In accordance with the methods of "Geisteswissenschaftliche" psychology, these types are intuitively constructed as ideal types.

I have been describing the development of German psychology up to the beginning of the 30's, pointing out the progression from Wundt's strictly experimental approach, his genetic *Völkerpsychologie* (ethnic psychology), followed by a growing tendency to replace his elementarism and associationism with a more holistic view and with the acceptance of weaker methods, resulting finally in the development of a purely intuitive approach to psychology.

I have not touched upon the behaviorism of Watson or Pavlov because it played no important role in Germany. But before pro-

ceeding to the decades of decline in the 30's and 40's one most important development must be mentioned briefly, that is FREUD and the rise of depth psychology, which is also of German origin.<sup>1</sup>

In Vienna Freud developed his own unique psychological therapy for functional mental disorders and, based on his intensive case-study experience, he gradually evolved a very elaborate theory of the function, structure and development of personality. His central idea was that there are important mental forces in the subconscious which are not directly accessible to introspection or behavioristic methods. They can be inferred from their specific effects such as errors, obsessions, anxieties or dreams. According to Freud, the origin of these powerful forces could be found in intolerable, suppressed wishes, mostly sexual or aggressive.

Freud not only discovered a complicated structure and internal dynamic of the human mind, he also drew attention to the development of the personality and its relation to the social environment.

Freud's work, published since 1895, was poorly received by German academic psychology, partly, because of the nature of his concepts and partly because of the emphasis on "Sexualtrieb" or "libido" as the basic driving force (whereas "drive" is not a completely exact translation of the German "Trieb").

The same fate of being ignored was also experienced by two of his most important students, ADLER and JUNG, who broke away from Freud and founded their own schools. Only minor parts of Jung's work were taken up by academic psychology. One

<sup>1</sup> The term "German" is used here in the traditional, purely cultural sense, regardless of political borders which changed too frequently, sometimes for arbitrary reasons. I am referring to a cultural sphere united by the German language, a common cultural heritage and history (The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation; the German Confederation), and a frequent migration and exchange of person between the various regions, mainly Germany, Austria and German-speaking Switzerland.

is his word association method and another his typology of extroverts and introverts which is still in use today and which stimulated an uncountable number of studies.

### 3. *German Psychology in the late 30 and 40's*

The next period of decline in German psychology is a rather depressing story. About one third of all German psychology professors emigrated during the Nazi-time, mostly to the USA, some to England including Freud, some to other countries. This was, of course, an incredibly large brain drain of the best, and especially the most experimentally oriented psychologists. This created an unexpectedly large number of professorial Chairs to be filled. Thus the growing tendency, already observed in the late 20's, to replace experimental psychology with *Ganzheits- or Geisteswissenschaftliche* psychology, was no longer resisted.

Of those psychologists who gained in the late 30's and 40's an international reputation or who were influential in this period, I would like to mention just a few.

Ernst KRETSCHMER (Marburg), a psychiatrist, formed another well-known typology which is based on the statistical correspondence of physical form and types of mental insanity. Kretschmer concluded that some basic temperamental features should in general—according to underlying biological factors—correspond to physical types (1925).

KLAGES developed a characterology using intuitive methods. He emphasized the importance of verbal and facial expression, body movement, and handwriting.

Finally, I would like to mention JAENSCH from Marburg, since his research about eidetic imagery became well known in Japan.

However, in the 30's and 40's German psychology lost its pioneering drive; it lacked the great men of the first and second generation and lost its self-confidence as a new, productive and promising experimental or at least empirical science.

### 4. *Relationship to Japan*

And the relationship to Japan? This was still strong, the German influence great. Krueger and Kretschmer were well known, studies on eidetic imagery were carried out, even some theories of "Geisteswissenschaftliche" psychology, as well as psychoanalysis and the Rorschach Test were well received in Japan. American influences, such as behaviorism, animal studies and mental testing, were equally strong. But none of these can be compared to the dominant role played by Gestalt psychology. A great number of original experiments on Gestalt perception were carried out, and Gestalt psychology was probably taught and investigated in nearly all universities. At that time I might have written this paper in German, and not in English.

Despite all this western-oriented activity there is another aspect worth mentioning. Japanese psychologists obviously tried from the beginning to incorporate genuine eastern cultural elements into the developing science of the human mind. This was the case with MOTORA who strongly criticized the British associational concept of mind from a Zen-Buddhist point of view, and this tendency obviously continued. As Hoshino pointed out, there were "...others, probing into the intuitive perceptual functions called "Kan" or "the sixth sense" and "basic consciousness", which may be considered to be the origin of all kinds of concrete consciousness, made an inquiry into the fundamental thinking patterns that are typically indigenous in the Orient or at least in Japan" (Hoshino, 1979, p. 2).

### 5. *After World War II*

Thereafter the similarities between Japan and Germany became overwhelming in a negative sense: World War II began and academic studies had no priority at all; then our cities and institutes were destroyed and there was a lack of everything from food and paper to self-confidence.

I do not exactly know how long this lasted in Japan. In Germany psychology began to recover in the early 50's. Psychologists

then became aware of the developments in the USA and started—hesitatingly at first—to learn from them. At that time I was a psychology student in Marburg, about 23 years old, and I remember well how the first selected books arrived from the re-education office of the American occupational forces. Maybe things were not so different in Japan.

I call this first post-war period in Germany the period of Americanization and imitation, but that rather simplifies the matter. I should at least mention that at this time a struggle started between the supporters of Krueger's Ganzheits-psychology and other more Geisteswissenschaftlich-oriented psychologists and a small group of experimentalists. The experimentalists finally won and only then were the doors fully open to the American influence.

The experimental group was headed by Heinrich DÜKER in Marburg, where I happened to be his student. Düker was supported by a few others, namely Gestalt psychologists like METZGER (Münster) and RAUSCH (Frankfurt) or experimentalists like MIERKE (Kiel) and ROHRACHER (Vienna) (Traxel, 1985).

Düker himself was a former student of Narciss Ach in Göttingen, who in turn was a student and successor of Georg Elias Müller, Göttingen, who belonged to the first generation of pioneers. Düker had studied volition processes with Ach. Düker had also been active in one of the anti-Nazi opposition groups. Therefore the Nazis forbade him to teach, he even spent some time in jail and, during the war, was held for a period in a concentration camp. After the war, when he took the Chair at Marburg, his goal was to set forth the good old German experimental tradition.

In the 50's a period of studying and adopting American psychology began. Many young German psychologists went to the States. They brought back new developments, methods and orientation in "international psychology" and tried to establish it in our institutes. What was it in detail that they brought back?

In the USA this was a period when there

was considerable growth in empirical research. But it was also a period, which later on was criticised as a time when faith in empiricism and the quantitative emphasis, together with Skinner's neo-behaviorism, produced "an increase in highly positivistic and empirical types of scientific research which is, at worst, antitheoretical and, at best, atheoretical" (Marx, 1963, p. V).

Accordingly, it was mostly behavioristic thinking and methods, learning theories such as those of Hull and Skinner which were adapted in Germany together with statistical methods. This was the new orientation which was prevalent everywhere in the 60's. There were also new impulses in developmental and social psychology, in intelligence testing and for such applied fields as clinical psychology. In addition, psychoanalysis expanded, supported by returning emigrants.

All in all, this period, until 1970 or 1975, was in Germany a time of learning, imitating and trying to excel again: that is, one wanted to become as good as the Americans and, if possible, to publish in their journals. It was a time when the relationship between America and the rest of the world be proudly described by Berlyne as follows:

"...in fact, a western European psychologist is not held to have completed his studies or to have won the right to speak authoritatively on psychological matters until he has spent some time at an American university. How advanced psychology is in a particular country depends more than anything else on how quickly that country's psychologists have been able to swallow their patriotic pride and settle down humbly and diligently to learn as much as possible of what American psychologists have to teach" (Berlyne, 1968, p. 447).

However, as time passed this became less true for the re-awakened state of German psychology. After a while disappointment set in. We felt we had reached in some fields international standards but that this was not being acknowledged. Some felt that this was due to the language barrier, as modern Americans no longer read German.

A heated debate arose as to whether we



should convert all our journals into English language journals (Traxel 1975, 1979; Lienert, 1977, Marx, 1989). For example, the famous "Psychologische Forschung", in which Lewin published his important works in German, then became "Psychological Research" and was promptly almost forgotten by German psychologists and became nevertheless not much influential in the English-speaking scientific community.

Of course, in dealing with the period after World War II, I am only referring to West German psychology, including Austria and Switzerland. *East Germany*, the DDR, independent and communist, became Moscow-oriented. With the erection of the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain within Germany, the DDR and its psychology isolated itself from Western influences for more than a third of a century. Its own psychological association was founded separately from the "Deutsche Gesellschaft für Psychologie" (German Psychological Association).<sup>2</sup>

In Japan the development was—as far as I know—the same. Japanese psychology became very America-oriented: their new ideas, methods, techniques and tests were learnt and adapted. Behaviorism and operationalism, statistics and learning theories and new applied fields were introduced. All of which contributed immensely to the growth of psychology in general.

Up until this time the development of Japanese psychology had much in common with that of Germany, including the post-war orientation towards America. But unfortunately the latter fact also caused a weakening of the formerly close relations between Japan and Germany. Today there are only a few Japanese psychologists who understand German and/or have personal contacts, or have even studied or worked at a German university or vice versa.

<sup>2</sup> After the reunification of Germany we are facing the difficult task to reintegrate the East German psychology. And East German psychologists are facing a similar problem as the West German psychologists in the 50's—to learn and adopt the international development from which they were isolated.

For many reasons I consider this to be a pity. I propose to demonstrate that, once again, German psychology has much to offer, and it would be worthwhile to reactivate our earlier Japanese-German relationship.

## II. Current state and recent achievements of German psychology

It would, of course, be impossible to give a complete description of the current state and all activities. As a general orientation I can only give my impression: that psychology in the last 15 years or so has been active in nearly all fields of the science and that the teaching and research meet, and sometimes even surpass, international standards.

Internationally-acknowledged research is carried out, especially in the fields of experimental, social, motivational, cognitive or the new physiological psychology, as well as in applied fields such as artificial intelligence, text comprehension or educational testing. This seemingly amazing recovery is certainly connected with some indirect encouragement from the States caused by a change in some basic orientation of American psychology. This was initiated by the acceptance of PIAGET, the late adoption of the Lewin-school and its basic way of thinking, as exemplified by HEIDER, and the trend towards a cognitive psychology and the fact that behaviorism became more and more outdated. This led to a turning away from the behavioristic paradigm. In other words, American psychology itself became more and more open towards "European", if not German, ideas.

This new movement was quickly taken up by German psychologists—it was as if they felt freed from the restriction of thinking in behavioristic terms, and that they were now able to pursue their own ideas. There had always been scholars, such as Boesch, Saarbrücken, Thomae, Bonn and Graumann, Heidelberg, whose ideas did not conform with behaviorism and who were successful in developing their own concepts. They did not change the mainstream before, but now

they became more and more influential. All this stimulated a boom of theoretical thinking and serious empirical research.

At the same time, however, there was another interesting change taking place: Europeans became more independent, and the overwhelming dominance of the Americans lessened. European Psychological Societies were founded; for example, "The European Association of Personality Psychology", "European Association of Behavior Therapy", "European Society for Experimental Social Psychology". Also European journals were founded, for example, "The European Journal of Psychology of Education", "The European Journal of Experimental Social Psychology", "European Journal of Personality".

A lot of good European regional conferences were held; e.g.:

—European Regional Conference of the International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development

—European Regional Conference of the International Association of Cross-Cultural Psychology (see Bleichrodt & Drenth, 1991)

and already two general "European Congresses of Psychology" were held in 1989 and 1991.

For the purpose of my argumentation it is more important that despite this European development in some fields German psychology has even recovered its former level of originality and productivity by developing genuine theoretical approaches and research programmes. I would like to briefly describe a few of these.

1. *The Theory of Action*. This is the most comprehensive and extensive approach and it has stimulated numerous studies. The basic theoretical position sees man as active; that is, actively constructing his view of the world, actively following intentions and being in interactive relation to his environment. The model of man is no longer a passive, initially empty organism that reacts to external stimuli and whose behaviour is controlled by them. Theoretical and empirical work therefore concentrates on internal processes within the flow of action. There are, for example, the interpretation of events, emotions and evaluations, evoked behavioural

tendencies, the anticipation of the consequences of possible actions, decisions and so on.

An especially stimulating idea is that the individual is actively constructing his world, that the same objective stimulus can be subjectively interpreted in different ways, therefore individual differences in behaviour and development became theoretically interesting in themselves and not only as a source of error variance.

This theoretical position is also important for explaining individual differences in, for example, intellectual abilities or motivation, abandoning the old and too simple nature-nurture controversy. Likewise it is relevant for the explanation of similarities within and dissimilarities between cultures.

It is not surprising that the action theory acquired quite an international reputation; among others, that of VON CRANACH (von Cranach *et al.*, 1980; von Cranach, 1991), and in a broader sense, also BOESCH (1980; 1991) and ECKENSBERGER (1990).

Two specific branches are worth mentioning. One is environmental psychology. It is easy to see that environmental effects can be adequately studied within this framework (Graumann, 1978; Kruse *et al.*, 1990). Noise or living space are partly subjective phenomena. Therefore these studies are of interest to those involved in the construction of artificial environments; such as those in city planning. From the action theory it is clear that there can be neither one optimal constructed environment for humans in general, nor is the individual limited in his adaptability.

The other branch is the so-called "Critical Psychology" according to Klaus HOLZKAMP (West Berlin) which is based on Marxist ideology. Following a Marxist line of thinking, Holzkamp criticized the usual academic psychology, which he calls "bourgeois", for taking many cognitions, motives, conflicts, and etc. for granted and as "natural and unconditioned" facts. He maintains that these "facts" have instead to be seen as products of the interaction between social-historical processes and individual living conditions in the capitalistic society; in order to

understand this interaction even basic categories and general laws of psychology have to be revised (Holzkamp, 1983).

Although this theory is mostly ignored in Germany, this is not true of the States. Leading scholars such as HERRMANN (1987a) recommend viewing Holzkamp's approach—despite its political impact—as a possible productive research programme.

2. Another recent concept is an *ethology-derived motivation theory* by BISCHOF. He is a former assistant of LORENZ, but in contrast to other ethologists Bischof has developed a real psychological theory. His basic idea is that man is equipped with a set of differentiated motives, complex behavior patterns, etc., the basic tendencies of which are innate. They were selected during phylogenesis because they have proved to have survival values over the last 2 million years. Today these inherited factors are sometimes dysfunctional because recent, mostly man-made living conditions have drastically changed.

So far he is basically in line with the viewpoint of Lorenz; but his unique contribution is that he has not stopped at those speculations. His research is devoted to studying this complex of heredity and testing his conclusions about modern man using sophisticated experiments. One of his recent books deals with the universality of the incest taboo which he demonstrates to be biologically rooted (Bischof, 1989). His animal and human laboratories greatly impress everyone who visits them (von Cranach and Bischof, both are genuine German psychologists, now respectively in Bern and Zürich in Switzerland).

3. The third example of the new theoretical approaches that I would like to present had its origin in the USA, albeit the work of a German psychologist. This is the study of *development as a life-long process*. It has reached a new stage in Germany, concentrating on the study of aging people and their possible wisdom. Everybody knows from intelligence tests that after 20 or 25 years of age mental abilities begin to decline—a depressing fact for everyone over 30, not to speak of those of 50 or even older than 60.

However, experience contradicts this premise in that certain people of 60 or 70 years of age seem to have other qualities, which sometimes give them superiority over younger colleagues. It would therefore appear not always unjustified that leading positions in management or politics (or universities) are given to older persons (for instance: Adenauer who was German chancellor between the age of 73 and 87 or Reagan who was US-president in his 70's).

The questions being investigated concentrate on specific experiences, how they are accumulated, what their nature is and how this is influenced by ongoing activities. As far as our aging population is concerned this is even a question for applied psychology.

These problems are being studied extensively by Paul BALTES in Berlin. He graduated and got his PhD from Saarbrücken University, went to the States where he worked with Schaie. His work on the cohort problem and on life long development acquired a high reputation in USA (Baltes, 1968; Baltes & Schaie, 1973). Then he was appointed director of the Max-Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin.

4. Another important and unique development, the psychology of volition, probably the most typical of the German approaches, is also taking place in a Max-Planck Institute, namely that for Psychological Research in Munich. Here a most productive and ingenious extension of the motivation theory was developed by Heinz HECKHAUSEN who had gained before a high international reputation for his motivation research (Heckhausen, 1980).

Heckhausen discovered that the motivation theory had dealt nearly only with the first part of the whole motivational process: namely the type of motive and the activation thereof, how expectations and incentives influence the setting of goals, etc.. But it was ignored how an intention is set into action, when actions are initiated, and how single steps and their outcome in relation to the intention are controlled.

In short, he re-discovered problems which had been studied within the context of classic

German "Willenspsychologie" (volition research) by Lewin and Ach 60 years before, but which had remained unsolved, partly because concepts like volition or intention had no place in behavioristic theorizing.

In the meantime, important discoveries were made; e.g. that cognitive processes are different before and after an intention is formed. He observed a kind of open-mindedness for new information, since it could help find the best decision, and a kind of closed-mindedness after the decision, seemingly in order to be able to act out the set intention without the distraction of any new ideas (Heckhausen & Beckmann, 1990).

To our deep regret German psychology has lost Heinz Heckhausen who died in November 1988 at the age of 62 years, but his work is being continued in Munich. It has already received considerable international attention and acquired a fine reputation.

In addition, there are other German endeavors worth mentioning:

- such as *phenomenology*, which again became of interest from the point of view of action theory,
- or *psycho-linguistics*, for the study of which there is a special Max-Planck Institute in Nijmegen and a newly founded research centre in Mannheim/Heidelberg,
- or, in *cognitive psychology*, a unique approach to the solving of highly structured and complex problems (DÖRNER); this work was awarded recognition in 1988 with the foundation of another Max-Planck research group for Cognitive Anthropology in Berlin.
- in *developmental psychology*, where especially in the Max-Planck-Institute for Psychological Research in Munich two most extended and carefully designed longitudinal studies are conducted. They are planned in order to describe individual differences in the development of the personality and of a set of personality characteristics (knowledge, academic skills, expertise) and the analysis of possible influences of environmental conditions, particularly of school and teaching styles.
- and finally, *cross-cultural* and, especially,

*culture psychology*, emphasizing the psychological peculiarities within one cultural system, the specific interaction between the developing human mind and behavior and the culture, including the study of culture-specific functional systems within the personality (Boesch, 1991; see Cole, 1990; Eckensberger, 1990; Kornadt, 1991; Kornadt & Trommsdorff, 1990; Trommsdorff, 1989).

Consequently, I would like to invite Japanese scholars to study more those areas of German psychology, more deeply than I am able to report here. In particular, I would very much like you to join us in studying these promising fields, and for young psychologists to come to Germany in order that we may carry out joint research. In this way we will be able to contribute to our discipline as well as improve the mutual ties between Japanese and German psychology which were fruitful for so many decades.

But in so doing I also feel obliged to point out the differences between the German and Japanese university systems. One important difference seems to be that, from their first semester, our psychology students have to devote all their time entirely to psychology. All kinds of general education or "Studium generale" are carried out in the college grades of our Gymnasium. University studies in psychology therefore provide a broad and intensive training in all parts of the whole discipline. In addition these studies are research orientated. Moreover, a bright student always has the chance to participate in a research project as a student worker.

My impression is that, our students already have a broad and solid knowledge, when entering a Ph. D. program and therefore the specialization which is then necessary presents no problems.

An additional advantage to our system is, in my opinion, that young scientists have worked and studied at different universities before they are offered a Chair. Quite often after receiving his Ph. D. the young scientist will have to move, and then, after his Habilitation (specific qualification for teaching in a university), a Chair will only be offered by yet another university. I believe

this makes it easier for a productive young scientist to broaden his knowledge and scope and to develop and pursue his own ideas.

### III. The necessity to study concepts about man in non-Western cultures

The human personality, social behavior, values and language are imprinted by the culture in which the person has grown up and lives. Even seemingly universal and biologically-based processes like perception turned out to be partly social perception.

In general, psychologists have not taken this problem seriously enough. On the whole Wundt's model of natural sciences using experimental and empirical procedures in search for universal laws was easily adopted, but we forgot his "Völkerpsychologie". Developmental and cognitive psychology can tell us how deeply cultural influences are rooted in the construction of concepts. The human mind, especially as viewed by the action theory, is deeply entangled with its respective culture—not only values, but also feelings, motives and the cognitive systems which we construct in order to understand the world around us, are culture-bound.

If this is so, what about science, especially the science of the human mind and behavior?

Science is no more than a systematic, controlled endeavor to understand the laws of a particular part of our world. Whatever the case, as a starting point some basic categories and assumptions are the prerequisites; in the case of psychology, a model of man. Such a naive model is not culture unspecific.

My thesis is: The basic categories and assumptions of psychology originated in western culture and the overwhelming majority of empirical support also stems from western culture. Phenomena which do not fall into these categories are lost or ignored. Therefore the claim made for the universality of psychological laws still has to be proved (see Azuma, 1984a). It is as if one would develop a global theory on the weather and climate of the northern hemisphere between 40 and 60 degrees latitude based only on observations in Europe, without taking into account the

exceptional properties of the Gulf Stream as an intercontinental heating system.

#### 1. *Psychological theories and the Zeitgeist*

A critical look at the development of psychology demonstrates that the thesis "psychology is a culture-bound science" is true, even within the western culture. It was in order to illustrate this point that I began by describing the pioneers in some detail.

The largest difference between the various camps or schools of psychology was that between the associationists and Gestalt psychologists in earlier times, and behaviorists and cognitivists or action theorists in recent years. As Berlyne has already pointed out, this is just the modern version of the long battle between European philosophers: the English empiristic school and the continental, mainly German, rationalistic school; or, as Allport sees it, between the Lockian tradition of the Anglo-Americans which holds that man's mind is passive, and the Leibniz-Kant tradition of the Germans which conceives of man's mind as essentially active.

Both viewpoints are deeply embedded in the English and continental cultural tradition. A comparable distinction can also be seen in their respective legal systems.

In other words, fundamental assumptions which form the basis of psychological theories and from which experiments are designed, are culture-dependent.

It might even be true to say that the current progress in Germany is partly due to the same factor: nowadays, the predominant way of thinking is more in line with the cultural habits of the Germans than was the case in the first three decades after World War II.

Similarly, as T. Herrmann pointed out, the actual process of changing dominant ideas does not fit the ideal of how empirical sciences should progress: that theories are only rejected on the basis of results. For example, for 15 years Skinner's theory of reinforcement and shaping was the leading theory to explain the acquisition of first language in children. After Chomsky's critique in 1959 the learning theory approach quickly disappeared. But there was not one experiment to show that

Skinner's theory was incorrect. Other dominant theories also seem to change like fashions: "theories of process are 'in' at the moment, classical learning theories are 'out' ... theories of personality, disposition or traits are nearly out now, after having been dominant before, and so on" (Herrmann, 1987b).

Theories and research programmes are obviously a part of broader cultural currents. This notion is in accordance with Ash's description of "the social history of ideas" in psychology and the general result. Hilgard *et al.* (1991) arrived at the same conclusion after discussing "the Great Men" vs. *Zeitgeist* and the Internalism vs. Externalism controversy in the historiography of Psychology. This does not mean that all research is useless; on the contrary, persistent research is needed just because of those external influences.

## 2. Culture as source of basic concepts

However, I would like to go one step further and look at the roots and foundations of psychology in general in order to ask for the extent to which it is western-based.

Psychology originated from three main sources: *natural science and physiology*, *philosophy* and *medicine*. Wundt borrowed his idea to establish psychology as a new experimental discipline from the natural sciences. He was impressed by their advances. I wonder if the same developments could imaginably have originated in the eastern cultures? Even in the west there was much opposition as I have shown, although Fechner and Wundt demonstrated that it is basically possible. However, could the idea "to study the human mind by experimentation" also have originated in the eastern cultures? In China, so I have heard, natural science did not develop because research using the Galilean type of experimentation, which is the prerequisite of scientific progress in the west, would have entailed the manipulation of nature. Such manipulation would have been contrary to the Chinese belief in the importance of harmony between man and nature.

Could therefore the idea to found an experimental psychology arise at all under these

cultural conditions in the East? Looked at from the perspective of an ideal of progress in human knowledge, this may be seen as a cultural barrier. However, let us go still one step further.

Another and even more important source is *philosophy*, namely the source of ideas about human nature. I have already mentioned Herbart, but he is only a late link in a long, long chain of philosophers, dating back to the Ancient Greek philosophers of the 5th century B.C., especially such as Plato and Aristotle. At that time the dominant concepts of western thinking were classified and coined, including the basic ideas about the nature and model of man, later to be additionally influenced by the Jewish-Christian tradition. For instance, the concepts of elementarism and associationism have such a long tradition.

One aspect that I would like to mention is that of rationality in contrast to, or in dominance of, emotion. In my opinion, this is a fundamental conception of the western model of man. It was clearly expressed by Plato whose great influence has been reinforced throughout the centuries, namely in his paradigm of the human mind as a chariot: It is drawn by two horses,

- one malevolent black horse, called desire;
- one noble white horse, called courage;
- and controlled and directed by a driver, called reason.

Plato describes the concept of three forces or functions of the mind and their hierarchy:

- the force of drives and affects
- the force of volition, and
- the force and dominant, controlling function of reason.

A similar idea is found in Aristotle's writings, which have had an immense impact throughout the centuries.

Aristotle also described three parts of the human mind:

- one has physiological functions (this part is also found in plants);
- the next consists of sensory and basic drive functions (also found in animals);
- and the last, and again highest-ranking part called reason or "nous" in Greek (Vernunft

in German)—which is the locus of eternal forms and part of the divine mind.

What I would like to underline is

1. the clear dichotomy between dynamic and forming principles or functions—the former is perceived more on a purely physical or animal level; while the latter, the spiritual and rational principle, is seen as more human, if not divine.

2. This is completed by the clear dominance in value and function held by rational principle over emotion.

The most radical formulation of such a dichotomy was composed about 2000 years later by Descartes according to his extreme body-mind dualism. “Man is a composite of a material body and a spiritual soul. The body is like a machine... governed by the laws of mechanics” (Misiak & Sexton, 1966, p. 13). The philosophical roots of behaviorism can also be seen here.

The dominance of reason was also supposed—though less directly—by Kant. He concentrated mainly on a “ruthless penetration and analysis... (of) the problems of perception and understanding”, but did not really deal with desire, affect or will (Flugel, 1964, pp. 14-15) and their relation to reason. Particularly his ethics were built on the power of reason which was directed against, or was at least in contrast to, natural feelings of love and sympathy. It was not even in accordance with them, as F.v. Schiller has criticized. One must stress that Kant's influence on western thinking can hardly be over-estimated.

Finally, many Christian teachings may have followed a similar direction. I suppose that affective processes and drives were basically seen as dangerous forces, something to be controlled. They could be controlled, of course, not only by pure reason, but also by pure faith. Nevertheless, with the help of rational thinking they could also be controlled, if not suppressed.

To conclude: A more careful and unbiased analysis of modern theories of psychology and related empirical studies would, I suppose, reveal that within the context of our (Western) psychology emotions and other

dynamic functions (drive, instinct)

—are basically seen as being clearly distinct from intellect and cognition;

—and are of minor value in the function of the mind, in social behavior and line of conduct.

In psychology research emotions were neglected for a long time. For example, we constructed sophisticated cognitive theories of motivation—why no emotional theories? For quite a time even the Schachter and Singer theory was dominant, that emotions do not have specific qualities in themselves, that they consist of pure activation, and that the quality of sadness, anger, joy or anxiety only stems from added cognitions which are exchangeable.

I would like to ask my Japanese colleagues if this is not another example of a basic difference between the eastern and western way of thinking? Would a genuine eastern or Japanese psychologist have placed the same emphasis and dominance on reason, or on cognition?

Although I am certainly no expert in Eastern thinking and personality, I think I should nevertheless venture to give a few examples: As far as I know there are conceptions of human nature and mind deeply rooted in (East)-Asian cultures, which are fundamentally different from the western tradition:

—the ideal of achieving inner harmony and calm

—the idea that reaching those goals is possible by certain mental techniques and inner discipline, and

—the goal of achieving mastery in them

—the ideal of maintaining harmony between Man and Nature

—the concept of Nirwana as the Buddhist ultimate goal

—the concept of Tao (Dō).

There are, for instance, elaborate techniques of meditation in Zen-Buddhism which have amazing measurable physiological effects (Akishige, 1977). One of the goals of these meditation techniques is to experience logical contradictions as non-existent or unified—if these terms of Western language are at all

able to describe the Eastern concepts adequately.

Are these aims and ideas not based on conceptions of the human mind and its function which are indeed fundamentally different from the West? Of course, in Asian thinking there also exists the concept of a dichotomy within the mind or of an internal dynamic between opposing forces, like Yin and Yang. It would seem, however, that these principles have a different content to the western differentiation between drive and form, or dynamic forces and reason.

The common idea in both cultures seems to be based on the experience of inner tensions and conflicts. The factors and forces, however, and the whole system in which they are conceived to be functioning, are obviously conceptualised and categorised differently. Those concepts, of course, should have numerous, important consequences in constructing a science of human mind and behavior.

In order to refer to some less fundamental (and therefore "exotic" sounding) and more tangible phenomena, closer to everyday topics of psychology:

It also seems doubtful whether the regulation of action in the Japanese or eastern peoples can be adequately described by our western categories. Is the process involved in reaching a decision not, to some extent, different? Is it not, perhaps, more important for the Japanese to reach an inner harmony between conflicting emotional tendencies than to conduct a rational analysis of the problem? Or, to take another example, when reading Kanji, is not the emotional tuning and connotation more important than when reading Romaji or when Westerners are reading texts written in Latin letters?

There are many more questions that could be posed, all stemming from the basic problem of whether our western concepts are sufficient in describing all human phenomena and can therefore be accepted as universally valid.

Could one not assume that mankind has during tens or hundreds of centuries in different parts of the world created different

cultural systems, with different interpretations of the nature of man, his mind and his relationship to the outside world. Is it then not very likely that persons who had to live in, to adapt themselves to, and to understand and to become productive in those different socio-cultural worlds might have developed functional systems, e.g. in cognition or motivation that are partly different from each other? In our cross-cultural studies, for instance, we found that the sequence: frustration—anger—aggression, which is typical for Western cultures, was not nearly as frequent in Japan, rather it was an exception (Kornadt, 1991).

These considerations have nothing to do with mystifying Japan or the East. On the contrary, it reflects the basic attitude of any empirical scientist which is to have an open mind for all the results of unbiased observation, regardless of whether they fit into his expectations or not, or whether they are wanted or unwanted.

### 3. Conclusion

I believe my thesis to be confirmed, that

1. Psychology today is still a science bound to Western culture
2. The claimed universality of its results and laws has to be doubted.
3. In order to overcome these shortcomings we must acquire information from non-Western cultures and indigenous contributions from trained psychologists within those cultures
4. This is, in my view, a challenge aimed at Japanese psychologists, who are the best trained psychologists in the most advanced of the Eastern cultures.

To underline this challenge I would like to quote a Japanese psychologist:

As Japan "is now keeping up with fairly high standards of learning" and "given the size of the psychologist population, we should seriously consider how far or how much we have been able to contribute to the development of psychology in the world or at least in Asia" and he concludes "Should we not contribute more to the rest of the world by all kinds of ways and means? I think we



should" (Hoshino, 1979, p. 17).

Of course those contributions would be useless for the purpose of broadening the scope of, and achieving a real universal science, if the research and results would once again be pressed into Procrustes' bed of western categories and theories.

What we need is the courage to build new conceptions "upon the existing indigenous (non-Western) psychological heritage" (Shapiro, 1986, p. 13).

I know that this idea is an unfashionable or even disliked one for many Japanese. The present generation of Japanese psychologists is trained completely in the western tradition, and is proud of having mastered this difficult task. The same thing happened with German psychologists 15 years ago.

Some American psychologists themselves complain about the one-sidedness of their psychology and argue along the same lines as I have been doing.

Once again I would like to quote Berlyne who described the superiority of American psychology in 1968: "There is a danger that particular lines of research, having once become rooted, will acquire a momentum that keeps them going to the exclusion of others that are equally worthy. ...ideas may be distrusted because they are unfamiliar, and they may thus be unable to compete with others that lack this impediment" (p. 452).

That this is not mere speculation but reality may be seen from a quotation from Shapiro who argues that indigenous Asian psychology should be studied seriously. The 3rd edition of Hall and Lindzey's classic textbook, published in 1978, contains theories of personality including a chapter entitled "Eastern Psychology". The book was given a favorable review, but the Asian chapter was sharply criticized. As a result a new version of the text was published in 1985, where this chapter was not revised but completely eliminated.

My final message and demand is therefore two-fold:

*Japanese psychology should develop much more self-confidence in the independent study of typical culture-related phenomena and try to build their own concepts, theories and even*

*basic categories based on their findings.*

They might follow the example of earlier Japanese researchers like Matora or Sato or Akishige who studied Zen, or others who dealt with indigenous Japanese concepts such as On, Giri-ninjo, Amae or Ittaikan, or of Azuma who has successfully studied the concept of One-ness (Azuma, 1984b). In addition, possible peculiarities of the Japanese and the Chinese self-concept are being studied by Doi (1985) and Hsu (Marsella, de Vos & Hsu 1985). All these endeavors seem to be very promising and worth to be carefully discussed by the international scientific community.

My second suggestion is that *Japanese psychology should tackle this difficult but necessary exercise in cooperation with German psychology*. As I have already reported, German psychology has recovered and has a lot to offer from its own, independent work.

Therefore, Japanese psychologists should come to Germany, visit and study at our universities and the world-famous Max-Planck Institutes and vice versa, and, at the same time, re-establish old ties between our countries. Joint research groups should be established and I myself would be glad to participate in one, studying concepts or functions that are specific to Japan.

I am certain that the critical support of someone from a western culture would make the early stages easier. One should also take into account that, as Shapiro states, "modern Asian psychology appears to have become largely westernized" (1986, p. 13) and for the Japanese this means Americanized. I consider the re-establishment of closer cooperation with German psychology to be a counterbalance, which would be fruitful for both of us and for psychology in general.

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