

65 years of interaction with German

history of psychology

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ABSTRACT: In 1933 I was introduced to the history of psychology by the second edition of Hans Henning's Psychologie der Gegenwart (Leipzig, Kröner 1932). Historiography of Modern Psychology (Brožek & Pongratz, Eds.), prepared in Würzburg, appeared in 1980. The revised and expanded Brazilian version (Brožek & Massimi, Eds.) was published in 1998.

This communication is a supplement to an earlier (Brožek, 1987) autobiography. It refers to my participation in symposia and meetings as well as to book chapters and journal articles. The latter deal with the categorization of the fields of psychology, abstracts of German-language publications, recent developments in historiography of psychology, German-language dissertations in Prague in the years 1882-1945, combating rumors, and Czech psychology in international context.

It was in the year 1935/36 that I established personal contact with psychologists of the German University of Prague. However, my contact with the German history of psychology goes back to the year 1933 when I bought, as a pocket book (Kröners Taschenausgabe Band 89), the second edition of Hans Henning's Psychologie der Gegenwart (Henning, 1932). Importantly, the large first chapter deals with the development of modern psychology.

The book enchanted me and in 1934 I convinced Prof. J. B. Kozák to give me the opportunity to review and discuss it in the Philosophy seminar of Charles University. He did not know that it would take me full six seminar sessions to do it! In any case, Hans Henning became my "teacher at a distance" of the history of psychology.

Years later (Brožek, 1990a) I still found the work worthy of citation in an article on "Disunity versus diversity" which reproduced the list of 27 fields and topics of applied psychology that were considered in Henning's book of 1932 and were supplemented by lists of selected references.

My autobiography of 1987 dealt broadly with my involvement in psychology. The present account will be limited to the history of psychology, my specialty in the 1980s and 1990.

I began this period by spending a year (1979/1980) as a Fulbright Senior Research Fellow at the University of Würzburg in a section of the Department of Psychology directed by Prof. L. J. Pongratz, with focus on history of psychology.

Historiography of Modern Psychology

The Würzburg year was crowned by a collaborative and truly international volume on historiography of modern psychology (Brožek & Pongratz, Eds., 1980), with "Aims. Resources. Approaches" as its subtitle. Two of the authors came from Latin America (Colombia and Peru), three from Europe (and, more precisely, from Germany), and eight from North America's USA. To put a final touch on the book's internationality, it was printed in Canada and published in Toronto, be it by a Germany-based company (C.J. Hogrefe). It pleases me very much that a revised and substantially expanded Brazilian edition has appeared in print these very days (Brožek & Massimi, 1998).

The 1980 book consisted of four parts:

1. The Prolegomena, including L.J. Pongratz's chapter on "The Roots of the Growth of Science".
2. The section Historiography of Psychology around the World constitutes the book's "center of gravity". It opens with my "progress report", listing 18 countries the production of which has been covered in recent years and 9 earlier reports; contains papers on historiography of psychology in Germany (1808-1972) and the German-speaking areas of Europe (covering the years 1970-1979), Latin America, Soviet Union and Spain; and closes with a report on monographic explorations in the USA and a chapter on "Work in Progress" and "Work Planned".
3. Archival Sources, with chapters on Gestalt psychology, Wilhelm Wundt, and the Archives of the History of American Psychology.
4. The section on Approaches to Historiography deals with the biographical, descriptive-analytical, quantitative, social, and socio-psychological approach.

Symposia

Proceedings of the International Hermann Ebbinghaus Symposium (Passau, 30 May to 2 June 1985, edited by W. Traxler (1987), contain a paper (Brožek, 1987b) on "Ebbinghaus in America: His luck--good and bad" or, more precisely, bad and good. The number of unfortunate incidents was substantial and their nature has varied. On the positive side, Ebbinghaus's 1885 monograph On Memory was reviewed, enthusiastically and without delay, by William James.

I spent the Spring semesters of 1986 and 1987 at the Institute of the History of Modern Psychology, University of Passau. My primary responsibility was to organize an International Fechner Symposium

held on 12-14 June 1987. The proceedings were edited in cooperation with Horst Gundlach (Brožek & Gundlach, 1988a). We have written introductory (Brožek & Gundlach, 1988b) and closing comments (Brožek 1988a, 1988b; Gundlach & Brožek, 1988).

The symposium was to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Fechner's death. Fechner's early writings covered a broad range of subjects, from translating voluminous treatises on physics and chemistry through editing of journals and compiling encyclopedias to the writing of humorous prose. When he received, in 1834, a university chair, it was not a chair of psychology or physiology but of physics. Following a prolonged, severe disease, he developed novel interests for which he is now remembered, particularly by psychologists, including psychophysics and experimental esthetics. The centenary symposium was devoted to these topics.

The international character of the symposium is documented by the countries of origin of the speakers: 9 lived in the Federal Republic of Germany; 3 came both from the USA and Canada; Brazil, Holland, and Spain sent 2 speakers each while single speakers represented Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Scotland, and Yugoslavia. From the German Democratic Republic a paper was sent by Helga and Lothar Sprung.

Meetings

I have welcomed the formation of the Fachgruppe Geschichte der Psychologie der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Psychologie (Brožek, 1990b), commenting on four points: Teaching, the Hogrefe mammoth encyclopedia of psychology, archival materials, and the Passau Institut für Geschichte der neueren Psychologie.

At an earlier meeting I reviewed (Brožek, 1987c) a series of projects I regarded as "aktuell", in the sense that they were currently in the center of interest, were necessary or useful.

At a meeting held in 1991 in Passau (Gundlach, Ed., 1994), we presented a paper on J.E. Purkinje's relation to psychology (Hoskovec & Brožek, 1994) and on Prague's German-speaking psychologists (Uhlein, Hoskovec, & Brožek, 1994).

At the 38th congress of the German Psychological Society, held in Trier in 1992, we reported on psychology in post-Communist Czechoslovakia (Hoskovec & Brožek, 1992), with emphasis on the contemporary situation (Hoskovec, Kováč, & Brožek, 1993).

A chapter of psychology in the Czech Republic appeared in Germany (Brožek & Hoskovec, 1995a) in a volume on Psychology in Europe (Schorr & Saari, Eds., 1995).

Book chapters

An early communication, published in the Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie (Brožek, 1965) and omitted in the earlier report (Brožek, 1987), dealt with the objective, non-introspective psychology. An extensive account (Brožek & Diamond, 1976) appeared in the first volume of the encyclopedic Psychologie des 20. Jahrhunderts (Balmer, Ed., 1976) and was reprinted in the second volume of a treatise on Geschichte der Psychologie (Balmer, Ed., 1982).

The volume entitled Illustrierte Geschichte der Psychologie (Lück & Miller, Hg., 1993) contains a chapter on German-speaking psychologists in Prague (Brožek & Hoskovec, 1993), a topic with which we dealt in earlier communications (e. g., Uhlein, Hoskovec, & Brožek, 1989). An English version of the 1993 chapter (Brožek & Hoskovec, 1997a) was included in A Pictorial History of Psychology, edited by Bringmann et al. In addition, the 1997 volume contains a chapter on J.E. Purkinje (Brožek & Hoskovec, 1997b). Purkinje's career in psychology began in 1819 with the printed version of his doctoral dissertation of 1818 (Purkinje, 1819).

On several occasions we wondered about Purkinje's relationship to psychology. An unfinished manuscript, with a French title (*Précis chronologique de travaux anatomo-physiologique*; transcribed by Brožek & Hoskovec, 1987, pp. 102-107) tells us that "from his early youth" he was inclined to observe sensory, especially visual phenomena. At the age of 19 he became fascinated with J.K. Wetzel's scheme for the classification of mental faculties (Wetzel, 1800, 1805). At the age of 32 and 36 he published extensive observations on vision (Purkinje, 1819, 1825).

The catalogues of the University of Breslau, published in German (*Vorlesungsverzeichnisse der Universität Breslau*) and in Latin (*Indices lectionum in Viadrina Vratislaviensi*) attest that Purkyně, associated with the University of Breslau from 1823 to 1850, had given four psychology courses at the Medical Faculty of the University. Two of them, given in 1827 and 1836 dealt with Empirical Psychology; the other two, offered in 1840 and 1842, covered Physiological Psychology.

Manuscripts of the lectures, now held in Prague in the Literary Archives of the Museum of Czech Literature, were transcribed and published (Brožek & Hoskovec, 1987): *Psychologie*, 1, pp. 20-48 and 2, pp. 49-76; *Physiologische Psychologie*, 1, pp. 77-91 and 2, 92-99.

Varia

In principle, the topics will be taken up in chronological order of the publications

Categorizing book reviews, 1949-1982

The book reviews that were the subject of our analysis (Brožek & Rust, 1987) appeared in the journal *Psychologische Rundschau*, prior to the year in which it became the official organ of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Psychologie. To facilitate perception of the changes, the data were presented in the form of a graph. Two periods of time were critical: Around 1950 (Vol. 6) and 1974 (Vol. 23).

In 1950 the category "Angewandte Psychologie" split from "Psychagogik" and "Psychotherapie" and continued as a separate category. A major change was adding the category "Tiefenpsychologie" and combining it into a new triad together with "Psychagogik" and "Psychotherapie".

In 1974, the category "Charakterologie-Typologie" was dropped and replaced by "Differentielle Psychologie"; of the category "Kultur-, Völker, and Sozialpsychologie" only the last link remained; "Tiefenpsychologie" became a separate category; and "Medizinische Psychologie" was replaced by "Klinische Psychologie".

"Sprachenstreit" and Abstracts

Problems with with abstracts of German-language publications led to a plea for "International Psychological Abstracts" (Brožek & Geuter, 1989), followed by a larger article (Brožek, 1991) on the subject.

Historiography of Psychology: An overview

The article (Brožek, 1990 c), entitled "A brief look into the past", registered a volume on Historiography of Modern Psychology (Brožek & Pongratz, Eds., 1980) and three international meetings: The Passau symposium of 1987 on "G.T. Fechner and Psychology"; the Prague Symposium of 1987 on "Jan Evangelista Purkyně in Science and Culture"; and a 1988 symposium, held in Rio de Janeiro, on History of Psychology in Latin America. At the first symposium on the history of psychology, organized by the recently established Spanish Society for the History of Psychology and held in 1988 in Madrid, papers were reported on history of psychology in Great Britain, Argentina, Soviet Union and Cuba.

German-language dissertations in Prague, 1882-1945

In 1882 the Prague University (Carolo-Ferdinanda) was split into a German-language and Czech-language university. The dissertations presented at the German university were listed by Brožek & Hoskovec (1992).

Combatting rumors

The rumor-mongering plaguing post-Communists Czechoslovakia sensitized me to the phenomenon, its destabilizing impact on human lives and professional careers, and to related socio-pathological phenomena, including epidemics of anonymous letters.

According to a rumor "launched" in the fall of 1992, my colleague was alledged to have collaborated with the former Ministry for State Security (Ministerium fur Staatssicherheit). I shall limit myself to one specific allegation, about which I had a first-hand information: The allegation that he was "rewarded" for his services to STASI by a journey to America.

The journey did, in fact, take place in 1985. It involved not a pleasure trip but several weeks of reseach in the Archives of the History of American Psychology, at the University of Akron, Akron, Ohio. The costs were covered by a grant from a small foundation, established from the proceeds of the sale of a part of my professional library. Its very aim was to facilitate just such visits by foreign historians of psychology.

I was pleased, personally, that the grant had been awarded to him: As an 11-year old "soldier", drafted in Berlin into Hitler's dwindling armed forces, in the early days of May 1945 he was "captured" in Prague's Old Town and spent a year in a Russian military prison located in North East Bohemia, learning Czech "in free time". He is most probably the only German historian of psychology who could read--be it with the help of a Czech-German dictionary--texts written in Czech. Strangely enough, the very last entry deals with this subject.

Czech psychology in international context

In the journal *Psychologie und Geschichte*, we have analyzed (Brozek & Hoskovec, 1995b) data bearing on the language of foreign works cited in three Czech sources: 1) J.E. Purkinje's brief outline on the history of psychology, written in hand around 1860; 2) T.G.Masaryk's psychological publications of the years 1880-1900; and 3) Three books dealing with applied psychology, published in the period 1927-1934.

All three sources confirm an active interaction of the Czech authors with English, French, and German psychological literature.

Dedication of the 1998 book to Ludwig J.Pongratz

It is a special pleasure to dedicate to the memory of L.J. Pongratz the revised and expanded Brazilian version (Brozek & Massimi, Eds., 1998) of *Historiography of Modern Psychology*, for which Prof. Pongratz had served as coeditor and coauthor (Brozek & Pongratz, Eds., 1980).

This is a particularly appropriate way to close a note on 65 years of the author's interaction with German historiographers of psychology.

With sadness I must record that Hans Henning, my "teacher at distance", did not escape Hitler's persecution.

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