

heim the first and original stage of social development because the Australians have a division into two phratries which is logically the most simple form of organization. For Durkheim the origin of totemism is social and not individual, as Wundt believes.⁷ If its origin were individual, totemism could not be more than a fabric of magical superstitions. Wundt does not see that facts which seem to support his thesis may yet indicate a social origin. Practices which seem to aim only at physical goals exercise a moral action on the consciousness of the collectivity and of individuals. Wundt sees the conjugal couple as the basis of the kinship system of Australian societies. But there kinship has at least partly a mythic character, and is therefore independent of marriage.

Durkheim's criticism of the other stages which Wundt discerns is much less detailed. Of course, what Wundt calls the totemistic phase is for Durkheim a misnomer. He would have preferred to use the term tribal. The transition from this stage to the next, the heroic age, takes place when the emphasis on the value of the individual personality makes real religion with proper Gods possible. Durkheim does not see a sharp break and misses an explanation of the rise of individualism. Finally, the fourth phase which is characterized by the self-conscious development of humankind as a unity, is as much a matter of the future as of the present. Wundt selects only those phenomena which support his view for more detailed attention: Buddhism, Christianity, and the Renaissance.

That the difference of opinion between Durkheim and Wundt was recognized by both sides is clear from comments made by Wundt on "*Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse*." He characterized Durkheim's book as distinguished through its original concept and ingenious combinations. But, he added, Durkheim falls victim to the tendency, often shown in the field of totemism, to derive all phenomena from one and only one aim. Although it is his merit that he has emphasized the relations be-

tween totemism and tribal organization, which have often been neglected, these relations are not one-sided, but interact and therefore totemic cults equally determine social organization, as social organization determines totemistic cults (Wundt 1914: 322-323).

A much more critical attitude is expressed in the relevant volume of Wundt's "*Völkerpsychologie*" where Durkheim's theory of the origin of religion is called "a drastic example of the forced constructions which characterize this so called empirical sociology" (1917: 25-26). It consists partly of a number of extremely speculative assertions, partly of reasons for the postulated facts which originate apparently in the author's own reflections. Wundt concludes his review:

Thus the attempt to deduce all single products of the community, customary behaviour, religion, law, etc., of man from the original forms of human society proves to be an enterprise which transforms this sociology which bases itself on the idea of a pure society into an artificial philosophy of history. It differs only from the analogical theories of Comte and Spencer in a negative way, as the hypotheses on which it is based, even if they were acceptable, would fail to explain the various forms of society, which they should do first of all. As it is, it remains unclear for what reasons these forms, accepted as given facts, have come into existence (Wundt 1917: 27).⁸

It is ironical that Wundt repeats the very charge which Durkheim levelled against his "*Elemente der Völkerpsychologie*." He called Wundt's postulate of the unilineal evolution of humankind most contestable and a heritage of the old philosophy of history. Comte had been influenced strongly by this philosophy, but since Spencer every effort of sociology had been directed at showing its naivety (Durkheim 1913: 60).

⁷ In his book on Australian totemism Durkheim criticized especially Wundt's ideas on the origin of totemism as a special case of animal worship (Durkheim 1912: 243).

⁸ The outbreak of the war may explain partly Wundt's extremely negative attitude. Wundt was very patriotic during the First World War and supported wholeheartedly the idea that the goal of the war should be peace only after a total German victory (Fischer 1969: 748-749; Schwabe 1969: 95-96).