



Guest lecture

## Some Ethical Questions on Voelkerpsychologie and Its Revenants – From Lazarus and Steinthal to Questioning Identity

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In current, not only European debates on democratic coexistence, questions of belonging and so-called identities are high on the agenda. A philology such as German studies should ask itself which options for positioning with respect to currently discussed concepts of identity can arise from dealing with one's own disciplinary history. The project of Voelkerpsychologie—which is important in linguistics, among other fields, as it emerged in the 19th century and which has already met with resistance—can be an instructive case for the reflection of scholarly cognitive interests against the background of national, nationalistic, and ideological points of view, especially where belonging is understood as a paradigm of orders of knowledge. In the lecture, a founding document of Voelkerpsychologie will be subjected to close reading:

*Lazarus, Moritz, and Heymann Steinthal. 1860. Einleitende Gedanken über Völkerpsychologie, als Einladung zu einer Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Sprachwissenschaft. Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Sprachwissenschaft 1, 1–73.*

Texts of the nineteenth century possess far more ambivalence than this could perhaps be expected. On the basis of this observation, Lazarus and Steinthal's founding document will be placed in relation to current debates on identity which I view critically and, last but not least, will historically deepen the reflections on the ethics of discourse that I develop during my course at Åbo Akademi.

Monday, October 1<sup>st</sup> 2018, 13.15-14.15 in Arken, Voltaire (M127)

