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Toward a radical behaviorist social psychology from Celso Pereira de Sá

Por uma psicologia social comportamentalista radical a partir de Celso Pereira de Sá

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Abstract

Objective

This article aims to revisit and analyze the proposal of a Radical Behaviorist Social Psychology based on the work of Celso Pereira de Sá between 1970 and 1990.

Method

The author's work was examined using the *Iramuteq* software and analyzed through a partial adoption of the Contextual Text Interpretation Procedure.

Results

The results are discussed based on indicators of textual relevance, along with excerpts representative of the theoretical foundations constructed by the author. The author reflects on the role of the intellectual and the production of scientific knowledge in addressing distinct Brazilian social problems. Sá emphasized the anti-intellectualist role of popular political education, envisioning a scenario where the population possesses the capacity to generate knowledge about its reality and intervene in it.

Conclusion

The author proposed a Radical Behaviorist-based Social Psychology, emphasizing the necessity for constant interdisciplinary dialogues with other authors and disciplines within the Social Sciences.

Keywords: Behaviorism; History, 20th Century (Psychology); Social participation; Social psychology.

Resumo

Objetivo

Este artigo visa retomar e analisar a proposta de uma Psicologia Social Comportamentalista Radical a partir do trabalho de Celso Pereira de Sá entre 1970 e 1990.

Método

A obra do autor foi mapeada a partir do software *Iramuteq* e analisada a partir da apropriação de estratégias do Procedimento de Interpretação Contextual de Texto.

Resultados

Os resultados são debatidos a partir de indicadores de relevância textual bem como a partir de trechos representativos das amarras teóricas construídas pelo autor. Encontramos o autor refletindo sobre o papel do intelectual e da produção de conhecimento científico para a resolução de problemas sociais eminentemente brasileiros. Sá investiu na atuação anti-intelectualista da educação política popular no qual a população teria condições de produzir conhecimento sobre sua realidade e nela intervir.

Conclusão

O autor propôs uma Psicologia Social de base Comportamentalista Radical que deveria manter-se, constantemente, em diálogos interdisciplinares com outros autores e disciplinas das Ciências Humanas.

Palavras-chave: Behaviorismo; História do século XX (Psicologia); Participação social; Psicologia social.

It appears that behavior analysts consistently show interest in researching problems traditionally related to Social Psychology, such as class, race, gender, sexuality, and feminism (Flores Júnior, 2021; Guerin & Ortolan, 2017; Mizael, 2018; Mizael & De Rose, 2017; Pinheiro & Mizael, 2019). Consequently, this inclination has resulted in an engagement with various theoretical paradigms within Social Psychology, with behavior analysts often calling for a non-dogmatic stance (Alves et al., 2021; Azoubel, 2017; Flores Júnior & Córdova, 2019). In this regard, a point of convergence between the two disciplines would be the debate on themes of political commitment and social transformation.

In the Brazilian or Latin American context, it is essential for authors engaging in this objective to consider these themes in local terms. The success of this project hinges on the critical review of works that have aimed to establish a dialogue between these disciplines, particularly in their sociocultural contextualization. Consequently, we assert that the local conditions of production or appropriation of psychological knowledge and practices are determining factors in their shaping, emphasizing that “knowledge must become local to function as knowledge” (Pickren, 2012, p. 7). We also acknowledge that examining the social determinants of the production of interdisciplinary psychological knowledge is valuable for understanding the local mechanisms of production and appropriation of Psychology, particularly in cases where the theoretical affinity of approaches is not self-evident, as exemplified by the relationship between Behavior Analysis and Social Psychology (Alves & Miranda, 2022).

In this context, the work of Celso Pereira de Sá (1941-2016) is often mentioned in research of this nature (Carrara & Zilio, 2021; Nicolodi & Hunziker, 2021; Todorov et al., 2021), but it is not sufficiently explored. That is, despite the author being cited as a researcher who studied themes of Behavior Analysis, no studies were found that have dedicated themselves to these works as a research object. While works dedicated to preserving the memory of Celso Pereira de Sá describe him as a fundamental figure for Social Psychology (Castro, 2016; Jacó-Vilela, 2016; Machado, 2022), and although his research in the field of Radical Behaviorism is mentioned by these authors, it was noted that none of the research specifically delved into this theme (Alves, 2021; Alves et al., 2021).

Given the current interest of Brazilian researchers in discussing the intersection of Behavior Analysis with Social Psychology, it seems fruitful to explore Celso Pereira de Sá as a figure who has traversed this path (Sá, 1985, 2007). Sá was a full professor of the Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ) since 1995 and held various institutional political positions, including Vice-Rector. In Social Psychology, the author is recognized for being a pioneer in introducing and systematizing the Social Representation Theory (SRT) in Brazil (Castro, 2016; Jacó-Vilela, 2016; Machado, 2022). However, the initial period of his career (master’s and doctoral studies) was marked by research addressing the concept of social countercontrol in Brazil and socially relevant aspects of B.F. Skinner’s

work. It can be observed from his Curriculum that Sá continued to publish on topics such as social transformation and social commitment from a Radical Behaviorist perspective until the mid-1990s.

In this sense, the article aims to analyze the proposal of a Radical Behaviorist Social Psychology based on Celso Pereira de Sá's work between 1970 and 1990. The author's work was examined using the Iramuteq software (Salviati, 2017) and its content was analyzed through a partial adoption of the Contextual Text Interpretation Procedure (CTIP) (Laurenti & Lopes, 2016).

Method

To achieve the proposed objective, the analyzed academic publications of Celso Pereira de Sá underwent three selection criteria: 1) Historical scope – texts published between 1970 and 1990, as the bulk of the author's publications on this subject were concentrated within this period; 2) Textual genre – only texts published as articles or book chapters; and 3) Language – only texts written in Portuguese. To guide our search for publications, we scrutinized the author's Curriculum Lattes – online curriculum utilized by Brazilian researchers to document their academic production – accessible through the Lattes Platform, a dedicated database for these curricula. The author's dissertation and thesis were excluded from the analysis based on criterion 2, with 13 texts remaining to undergo the analysis process.

After the selection stage, we analyzed the textual sources in terms of their content using strategies from the Contextual Text Interpretation Procedure (CTIP), developed by Laurenti and Lopes (2016). Focused on conceptual research, CTIP aims to identify, extract, and analyze concepts and conceptual networks, as well as philosophical commitments and affinities in a given textual source. Unlike CTIP's original four-stage proposal, only Stage 1 of the procedure was adopted and implemented as follows: (1.1) highlighting and numbering concepts and doctrines (philosophical or psychological) in the texts; (1.2) finding the definitions of concepts and doctrines in the texts themselves; and (1.3) transcribing identified definitions, using location indicators such as the publication date of the text, page, and paragraph. The completion of this stage, as well as the choice for applying CTIP in this manner, enabled the systematic identification and interpretation of the main concepts and doctrines present in the selected texts. This way, it was possible to understand the theoretical movements and dialogues that the author established with other authors and theories, as well as to uncover the conceptual definitions adopted by him.

In addition to adopting strategies from the CTIP as a methodological tool, the text analysis software Interface de R pour analyses Multidimensionnelles de Textes et de Questionnaire (Iramuteq) was employed to complement the analyses. Specifically for the objectives of this research, the same texts by Celso Pereira de Sá that underwent the CTIP were input into the software. Despite the software's wide array of tools available, only the Descending Hierarchical Classification (DHC) was utilized. DHC automatically separates text segments into classes of similar vocabularies and selects a characteristic term for each class, representing it in a larger size than the others (Salviati, 2017). DHC also generates a Cartesian plane based on the frequency of occurrence of each term (density) and the degree of connection between terms within the documents (centrality).

Results and Discussion

The Cartesian plane (Figure 1) depicts the relationship between the frequency and connection variables of vocabularies in the analyzed documents. The x and y axes facilitate

Considering these terms as representative of the most relevant class within the textual corpus, it can be interpreted that the author emphasizes the democratization of knowledge by discarding theorizations that exclusively address theoretical or systemic problems, detached from practical reality and not usable or adoptable by the masses.

This interpretation aligns with accounts and memories of individuals close to Celso Pereira de Sá who were interviewed by Machado (2022). One of these interviewed individuals, R. C. Möller, recounted that⁴ Sá would have never abandoned his anti-intellectualist ethics:

This is another aspect of his life. He always aimed to provide social relevance, and his concern for the social integration of his knowledge was evident from that point, right? [...] That was the first time I truly saw someone with such a clear concern. Everyone talked about it. I remember. It was something that needed to be addressed – the social relevance. However, Celso indeed practiced this without being an activist. He wasn't an academic activist. By activist, I mean in a negative sense, he wasn't the person who prioritizes non-academic questions over social transformation. He was genuinely an academic with these concerns. The fact that he cared so much about the social integration of the knowledge he produced did not compromise the quality of his work. So, it was one of the most visible, clearest examples of a balance between these two. He never gave that up, you know? His lifelong work always revolved around attempting to reconcile these two purposes. (R. C. Möller, Personal communication, August 30, 2022)

Upon interpreting the chosen texts for analysis, it is apparent that the author defends an anti-intellectualist stance. This position is marked by the rejection of detached, uncommitted theorizing that lacks a connection to the practical issues faced by the popular masses. This means that science should be susceptible to advantageous appropriation by such masses, should be aligned with their practical reality, and that academic production should occur in a manner that subjects knowledge to the scrutiny of its potential for popular appropriation and use in their everyday practical activities. According to Sá (1982, p. 81):

This is certainly a maximum expression of what we have called "intellectualism": a thought that exclusively feeds on the theoretical problems it creates and engages in continuous sterile debate with alternative interpretations of a prior [...] explanatory discourse; ultimately, a thought that probably serves no one except its own thinkers.

It is important to emphasize that the anti-intellectualist stance adopted by the author is not to be interpreted as an indiscriminate attack on science and its derivatives. As per Sá, this term advocates an ethical-political stance for the scientist, involving their connection with society and the production of socially relevant knowledge. This implies an ethic of subordinating academic work to the task of educating the masses, something explicitly advised by Sá (1982, p. 84):

To subordinate one's own work to the criterion of the possibility (even if limited or remote) of its use in the education of the masses; suppressing in oneself the desire for variety and accumulation of knowledge that would allow one to stay up-to-date with the achievements of their intellectual subculture, in favor of the much less esteemed repetitions of socially useful knowledge; consciously accepting the anonymity to which the masses often relegate their potential allies, in contrast to what they almost always do with "leaders" or "heroes" who mystify or oppress them.

Within these prescriptions, we observe how the author appropriated J. Ziman (1923-2005) and A. Gramsci (1891-1937) to define what he understands as socially relevant production:

⁴ Raw data collected for the research "The Intellectual Trajectory of Celso Pereira de Sá in Social Representation Theory" by J. F. V. Machado, published in dissertation format by the Graduate Program in Social Psychology at UERJ in the year 2022.

Intellectual production that aims to be socially relevant, that is, susceptible to advantageous appropriation (and not distorting the original propositions) by the popular masses, must: firstly, be *scientific* - that is, characterized as “public knowledge”, in the sense established by Ziman; secondly, be *simple* - that is, have its theoretical terms as directly articulable as possible with factual reality; thirdly, be *tirelessly repeated* - as prescribed by Gramsci - by its developers and disseminators. (Sá, 1982, p. 84)

Based on the content belonging to this class (the blue class in Figure 1), we classify it as representative of the author’s political commitment, which seems inseparable from his academic goals. This aligns with the fact that this class holds greater significance in the DHC analysis conducted by the Iramuteq software.

This data also resonates with Sá’s aspiration for popular political education as a means of better preparing the masses for social transformation. The anti-intellectualist and pro-social transformation ethics of Sá are evident in the *Social Countercontrol Booklet*, an instrument of popular political education generated in his doctoral thesis with the aim of guiding and empowering the people for the effective exercise of social countercontrol (Sá, 1985). This concept worked for the author as a synonym for the development of strategies for resistance and changes in situations of social inequality stemming from the period of Civil-Military Dictatorship that Brazil underwent at the time (Alves et al., 2021).

Verbal Behavior and Social Representations

In the red class (Figure 1), we observe the emergence of “control” and “to control”. The appearance of both provides indications that the author may have been less concerned with the spelling of “social control” and “social countercontrol” – inherently behavioral-analytic terms – and more focused on the explanatory relevance that “control” has over “behavior”. This also coincides with the low density and reasonably central position that the red class and its terms occupy, indicating that, despite being infrequent, play a reasonable degree of connective function to other terms.

Based on the relationship of the term “verbal behavior” with its class, we observe that its tendency is to become denser and approach the blue and green classes, while also positioning itself closer to the top (indicating centrality). The author himself is quite explicit about the importance of this concept, not only for his work but also for the intersection he perceived between Radical Behaviorism and the Social Representation Theory (SRT). When interviewed by Trzan and Degani-Carneiro (2014, p. 313), he stated:

My interest in social representations directly derives from the importance I attributed to behaviorism linked to human issues. Skinner’s emphasis there was on verbal behavior and behavior governed by rules. However, the nuances and more complex situations of social, personal, institutional, or political relationships made the articulation with this behavioral foundation difficult, whereas it could easily be done with social representations.

Another indicative element of this interpretation arises from the appearance of both the term “verbal behavior”, in the red class, and the terms “to say”, “idea”, and “theory”, in the blue class.

The connection that Sá envisioned between verbal behavior and social representations is not unprecedented in Social Psychology. In “Language, Thought, and Social Representations”, Silvia Lane (1933-2006) recalled the contribution of this Skinnerian concept to the study of language by revisiting the first sentence of Skinner’s *Verbal Behavior*. In the author’s interpretation:

We can say that men, through speech, transform others, and, in turn, are transformed by the consequences of their speech. [...] Language, as a product of a collectivity, reproduces through the meanings of words in sentences the knowledge – whether false or true – and the values associated with social practices that have crystallized; in other words, language reproduces a worldview, a product of relationships that have developed from productive work for the survival of the social group. (Lane, 1984, p. 32)

Looking at the content of the red class shown in Figure 1, we see that Sá (1990, p. 2) seems to adopt a similar thesis to Lane's: "what people say about something in their environment is commonly considered as expressing the representation they have of that thing, be it an institution, a social group, a process, etc." Furthermore, the significance of the concept of verbal behavior for Sá (1985, p. 51) also becomes apparent in the primary role assigned to it in the project of the *Social Countercontrol Booklet*: "In this project of popular education, [...] verbal behavior constitutes not only the main focus of intervention but also its exclusive tool". That is, the possibilities for social transformation lie in the manipulation of verbal behavior. Based on this premise, the *Social Countercontrol Booklet* would be capable of mobilizing people so that they could organize themselves institutionally to bring about social changes.

In this sense, it would then be up to the population "to reinterpret these social representations theoretically as socially fixed typical verbal repertoires, produced by objective relations of social control and countercontrol, and that function as factors in the perpetuation of these relations [of power]" (Sá, 1990, p. 4). Once again, Sá seems to be in line with Lane (1981):

Only when we confront our social representations with our experiences and actions, and with those of others in our social group, will we be able to perceive what is ideological in our representations and consequent actions. In other words, thinking about reality and the meanings attributed to it, questioning them in a way that develops differentiated actions – new ways of acting, which in turn will be the object of our thinking – is what will allow us to develop awareness of ourselves, our social group, and our class as historical products of our society. It also leaves it up to us – agents of our personal and social history – to decide whether we maintain or transform our society. (p. 36)

While we emphasize the similarity between the theses of Sá and Lane, it is not meant to assert a direct influence of Lane's work on Sá, as the author does not explicitly reference her in his work. However, the comparative exercise demonstrates how Sá remained attentive to the movements of renewal in Brazilian Social Psychology, of which Lane was recognized as a part (Sawaia & Purin, 2018). It also presents that this renewal movement involved establishing a dialogue with Skinner's work, especially concerning verbal behavior. Finally, presently, connections between Lane and Behavior Analysis in terms of their objects and study methods, as well as the theme of social transformation, can be noted (see more in Angelo & Bissoli, 2016).

Interdisciplinary Ambition

The class that appears to represent the intellectual profile of the author is the green one, as shown in Figure 1 (highly dense and reasonably central). Focusing on this grouping, we perceive the author's interdisciplinary approach and have indications that Sá drew from various authors in his theoretical production, as we see the names of M. Foucault (1926-1984), B.F. Skinner (1904-1990), E. Schneider (1916-1998), G. C. Homans (1910-1989), K. J. Gergen, and J. Maisonneuve (1918-2017). Although Foucault appears denser and more centralized than the others, B.F. Skinner is the one that appears most frequently through the variants "skinnerian" and "b_f_skinner". However, the

articulation between authors of Radical Behaviorism and Social Psychology carried out by Sá does not seem to have been an isolated case. Torres et al. (2020) show us that in the *Cadernos de Análise do Comportamento* (Journals of Behavior Analysis), a publication that operated between 1981 and 1986, there were analytical-behavioral proposals interested in themes linked to Social Psychology and, more particularly, proposals for social transformations.

Returning to Sá's text (1984), we see an active appropriation of the work of his advisor – Eliezer Schneider – regarding the status of Psychology as a basic social science, as it deals with the study of phenomena of a dual nature (biological and social):

By characterizing Psychology, therefore, as a basic social science – instead of a separate domain, distant from the natural sciences and indistinguishable from the social sciences [...] – we are emphasizing the role of a unifying link in the science of conduct and the need for its greater participation and integration in the field of theoretical and practical social, economic, and political studies. (Schneider, 1978, p. 38, as cited in Sá, 1984, p. 30)

Considering Schneider's guidelines to emphasize a greater integration of Psychology into the fields of social, economic, and political studies, the emergence on the Density-Centrality graph of names of authors who have robust contributions to the areas mentioned by Schneider becomes increasingly justifiable.

For example, in a review of *Ciência e Comportamento Humano* (Science and Human Behavior), one of Sá's personal notes is an observation about Homans' work:

Reflect on the question of whether the naturalistic approach to social behavior as proposed by Skinner presupposes (or implies) the existence of a total incompatibility with the typical formulations of the social sciences. (See pages 171, 178, 179). Note: An article by G.C. Homans titled "The Relevance of Psychology to the Explanation of Social Phenomena" may be discussed in connection with this question. (Sá, c.1980, para. 4)

The author's note indicates that part of his academic objective was to analyze the compatibility of Skinner's Radical Behaviorism with the disciplinary field of the Social Sciences, which can ultimately extend to Social Psychology if the latter is considered the disciplinary field of Psychology concerned with the social aspects of human behavior. Years later, Sá seems to have already reflected on this issue:

The basic nature of behavioral Psychology and the possibility of its direct articulation with socio-historical interpretations of human life are affirmed, as Homans did in distinguishing various types of explanation in the social sciences, *privileging behavioral psychology* [emphasis added]. (Sá, 1984, p. 37)

It becomes evident that Sá's movement involves engaging authors from other fields in the Social Sciences in a dialogue with Skinner's Radical Behaviorism, aiming for a better integration of these fields into Social Psychology. In this direction, we observe which aspects of these authors' theories were embraced by Sá, such as the "basic nature of behavioral Psychology". Another author is now brought into the discussion, with the thesis that:

The historical non-permanence of human social behavior patterns, as denounced by Gergen, is not in itself a sufficient observation to discredit the permanence of those basic behavioral processes; it merely indicates that factors or circumstances not apprehensible by Psychology (in its strict dimension as an extension of biology) interact with such behavioral foundations, producing unstable and changing patterns of social interaction (Sá, 1984).

Additionally, reaffirming the basic nature of radical behaviorist propositions also meant exploring them as a foundation on which to begin analyses of complex behaviors and social interactions. However, this did not imply the pretense of epistemologically extrapolating or invalidating extra-psychological abstractions from the Social Sciences about such phenomena.

Proposing a New Field: Radical Behaviorist Social Psychology

Both in the excerpt from his personal notes and in passages where he delineates his appropriations from Gergen and Homans, Sá characterizes Radical Behaviorism as a science of basic behaviors. To occupy this status, however, does not signify a lesser achievement or convey a sense of incompleteness. On the contrary, it seems to delineate which psychological school would form the basis of his work in Social Psychology. This interpretation aligns with a proposition made by the author when interviewed by Trzan and Degani-Carneiro (2014, p. 313):

Social Psychology, as I practiced then and endeavored to continue practicing, aimed to combine knowledge from Psychology and other Human and Social Sciences. Although I agree with colleagues who argue that it is not possible to conduct Social Psychology solely with Psychology, I believe it is also impossible to do it without Psychology, as seen in some contemporary forays that seek to dispense with this psychological dimension.

Unable to conduct Social Psychology without Psychology, Sá made it quite clear with which psychological foundation he was operating at that time: that of Skinner's Radical Behaviorism.

This premise appears explicit in the Density-Centrality graph, as the green class (Figure 1), with "Social Psychology" as its most characteristic entry, representing the author's intellectual profile. Additionally, very close to it are terms like "discipline", "behaviorist", "radical behaviorism", and "behaviorism". According Sá (1984, p. 82):

It is thus a question of adhering to Maïsonneuve's global conception of Social Psychology (or psychosociology) as a "hinge science", with the only difference being a preference to particularize one pole of the articulation process and generalize the other. In other words, instead of thinking of the discipline as a "hinge" between Psychology and sociology, the first of these terms is circumscribed to "Behavioral Psychology", or more specifically to Skinner's "Radical Behaviorism", and the second term is expanded to encompass all social and/or human sciences.

The author's choice of a Social Psychology based on radical behaviorism seems to be based, initially, on the intention to establish a maximum continuous development of possible articulations between Radical Behaviorism and sociological, historical, and political formulations. For the author, Social Psychology should be conceptualized in terms of broad and flexible dialectical encounters between the domains of the individual and the collective, the subjective and objective (Sá, 1984). This would allow the conceptualization of behavioral phenomena in universal and transhistorical terms, contrasting them at the same time with particularism and non-permanence, which are characteristically sociological and historical. The author contends that the laws determining behavior should articulate between its social and biological dimensions.

In this sense, Sá (1984, p. 37) proposes a "triple orientation of psychological Social Psychology" in which, based on Skinner's work, Social/Human Sciences' autonomy is acknowledged, admitting the validity and convenience of their propositions. Drawing on F. R. Le Ny's (1924-2006) premise of denying Social Psychology's autonomy, he positions it as a function of articulation between autonomous sciences (e.g., History, Sociology, etc.). That is, first, Sá appropriates Skinner's

thesis that psychological analyses would be analyses of organism behavior, specifically, interactions among individuals composing different human social groups. Next, he draws on Le Ny's work to position Social Psychology as a dependent field, both psychologically and in articulation with other Human Sciences. Finally, based on the appropriation of Homans' work, Sá affirms the basic nature of Behavioral Psychology and its contribution to the direct articulation with socio-historical interpretations of human life. Consequently,

a Social Psychology of education grounded in "radical behaviorism" will always be committed to analyzing formulations about institutions, classes, social groups, etc., in terms of interactions among the individuals who compose them. Such articulation between higher-order socio-historical-cultural categories and the basic psychological category of individual behavior can only have a tonic, stimulating effect on the study of education, especially popular education, as it provides an expansion of theoretical horizons. (Sá, 1984, p. 41)

Years later, after his proposal for Radical Behaviorist-based Social Psychology, Sá assessed that (1987a, p. 63):

Currently, radical behaviorists seem to invest less in the ambitious purpose of providing a unified explanation for all psychological phenomena (i.e., any and every form of behavior), preferring to concentrate their efforts on the rigorous exploration of more narrowly delimited fields, both in terms of practical elaborations of such scientific knowledge. Nevertheless, some areas of human social activity – such as literature and political behavior, for example – seem, due to the very scope and diversity of the actions and representations they encompass, compatible with (or, strictly speaking, demand) a radical behaviorist treatment at its most flexible and speculative level.

Not by chance, this excerpt, in which Sá analyzes the status of radical behaviorist discussions at that time, appears in *Verbal Behavior and Literature*, a book chapter in which the author discusses aspects of literary practice based on Skinnerian formulations of verbal behavior (Sá, 1987a). In this sense, we see how the author chose the path of exploring less strict or delimited fields of discussion in Radical Behaviorism in favor of more comprehensive analyses.

Another example of his interdisciplinary ambition is the text *Memory and Behavior* (Sá, 1987b), in which he dedicates to analyzing issues dear to Social Psychology and History, such as memory, time, historical memory, the past, historical fact, etc. In his words:

Considering that behaviorism is often criticized – not entirely unjustly, admittedly – for dealing preferably with extremely simplified psychological issues; not daring, for example, to engage in greater speculation about the imaginary dimension of human culture, perhaps it is fitting here [...] to dare a bit. The aim is to illustrate the behavioral-based psychosociological thesis about memory through a succinct examination of pertinent issues in two literary works [...]. (Sá, 1987b, p. 4)

The boldness the author refers to is the thesis that "past events have no objective existence" (Sá, 1987b, p. 4), dissociating from cognitivist theses in which memory is a storage system of retrievable experiences whose locus is the human cognitive apparatus. The author's defended thesis on this topic appears to align with the theses that collectively constitute what we define as the notions of world and subject in Sá's framework (1987b, p. 5):

The historical memory that is thus preserved through personal memory, placing it beyond the reach of the material destruction of records, clearly configures itself as a social product. Men produce it, not through an inherent psychological faculty to remember the texts/records read but rather – and this is didactically evident in this fictional situation – through the effort of their manifest verbal behavior of constant recitation, for different 'audiences' and for themselves.

And thus, setting into operation his logic of subject and world, constructed from various processes of theoretical appropriations, Sá demonstrates that his theoretical system indeed achieves its goal of not remaining introverted and alienated from practical needs of Brazilian daily life. Moreover, he shows us how to conduct a Radical Behaviorist-based Social Psychology, discussing traditional themes and objects of the field in ways that are anything but traditional.

Conclusion

Based on the discussed results, our research demonstrated that Celso Pereira de Sá constructed a mosaic of appropriations and dialogues with authors from the Social Sciences, History, and Psychology to produce a “hinge” Social Psychology, that is, a dependent discipline whose chosen psychological basis was that of Radical Behaviorism, in continuous interaction with possible contributions from other Human Sciences. Building an interdisciplinary mosaic among these fields, Sá aligned with the framework of political commitment contextualized to the Brazilian and Latin American reality. Within this formulation, the author advocated the need for a theoretical-political commitment of psychologists in the analysis and resolution of Brazilian social problems, adopting an anti-intellectualist stance and the appropriation/production of knowledge by and for the masses.

Starting from Sá’s consideration of the impossibility of doing Social Psychology without Psychology, what would then be the implications of a Radical Behaviorist-based Social Psychology directed by the author? The first may be theoretical-institutional, considering that Sá’s proposal would be for a new branch of Social Psychology that demands a disciplinary dependence between the Radical Behaviorist position and the position of Human Sciences. Given that both Social Psychology and Radical Behaviorism (and its development in Behavior Analysis) are considered distinct fields of action, with scientific communities operating in different associations and graduate programs, what would be the theoretical-institutional place of this new branch?

Answers to these questions must take into account the theoretical-institutional core of both Behavior Analysis and Social Psychology, especially in terms of identity-related activities in each of them. Although we are raising this question at present, it is also necessary to consider how this trajectory unfolded in the past. Recognizing ourselves as subjects of the present, we know for a fact that this proposal by the author did not receive adherence from his peers, as there are no indications of its debate in the scientific communities of Behavior Analysis and Social Psychology in presentations, books, or scientific articles. We also do not witness the existence of a field of knowledge with this established name, researchers who identify themselves as scholars of this branch, and who research from this perspective.

In light of this scenario, we believe that there are other developments and implications of the proposal for a Radical Behaviorist Social Psychology made by Celso Pereira de Sá that can be explored in new research, especially considering the recent interest of behavior analysts in this theme. If this movement continues to establish itself, a historical recovery of Sá’s role as the proposer of this branch and the updating of his proposal to current issues will be necessary. Consequently, it will be essential for new research to aim at further substantiating its theoretical-methodological framework, especially regarding the interdisciplinary nature of this task.

Furthermore, it will be necessary to elaborate on the theoretical-institutional place of this proposal, considering Sá’s characterization that this would be a “hinge” discipline. Inhabiting this borderland between Radical Behaviorism and Social Psychology, what would be the impact of the proposal on areas of both Behavior Analysis and Social Psychology? For instance, how to

differentiate Radical Behaviorist Social Psychology from intervention works within the scope of Behavior Analysis? After all, if researchers develop behavioral strategies with a practical impact to favor certain social minorities, are they engaged in intervention work, or are they radical behaviorist social psychologists? Questions like these can be addressed through conceptual research helping to define differences and similarities between both terms and through historiographical research seeking to characterize the historical trajectory of intervention works conducted from the behavior-analytic perspective in Brazil.

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