

HISTORICAL DICTIONARY OF PSYCHOLOGY INSTITUTIONS IN BRAZIL/*DICIONÁRIO HISTÓRICO DE INSTITUICOES DE PSICOLOGIA NO BRASIL*

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Lhe compilation of encyclopaedias and dictionaries has a long tradition in Europe, and especially in Germany, a country which seems to lend itself to lexicographical work, not only in psychology but also in other sciences. Dictionaries bring together all the relevant information in a particular field, and their internal coherence makes them important works of reference, given that their content is free of ambiguities and subjective viewpoints. Indeed, dictionaries represent a democratic form of disseminating information.

In the field of psycholexicography, the compilation of dictionaries is certainly not common in Latin America. Hence the importance of this *Dicionário Histórico de Instituições de Psicologia no Brasil* (Historical Dictionary of Psychology Institutions in Brazil), a work coordinated by Dr. Ana Maria Jacó-Vilela. Written in Portuguese, it is notable not only for the fact of being compiled and published in Latin America, but also for being coordinated by a woman. Given Dr. Jacó-Vilela's prestige among psychologists and students alike, it is guaranteed a wide readership.

The author's name is well known throughout Latin America. Born in Brazil, she studied first at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG) and the University of Sao Paulo, and later at the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona in Spain, where she took post-doctoral courses in the History and Historiography of Psychology. She currently holds the position of Senior Professor at the *Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro* (UERJ; Rio de Janeiro State University), working within the Postgraduate Social Psychology Programme and coordinating the work of the Laboratory for Research in the History of Psychology. Moreover, she is the Coordinator of the

Ibero-American Network of Researchers in the History of Psychology, which brings together more than a hundred researchers from various countries. She has published numerous research papers and books, mainly in the field of the history of psychology, including *Clio-Psyché Hoje: Fazeres e dizeres psi na história do Brasil*, *Clio-Psyché - Gênero, Psicologia, História*, and *História da Psicologia - rumos e percursos*. Dr. Jacó-Vilela's research within the history of psychology focuses essentially on the emergence, development, empowerment and institutionalization of psychology in Brazil, highlighting the historical conditions that favoured these aspects. And she is arguably as qualified as anyone in this field for undertaking such a colossal task as that of tracing the history of a discipline like psychology, open as it is to so much debate and discussion.

In Peru, very little is known about psychology in Brazil. It is not a question of geography, nor is it one of language, since with a little effort a Spanish speaker can read a book in Portuguese; in general, Latin American countries do not know much about one another. A Peruvian psychologist knows more about what is happening in psychology in the US than what is going on in Chile or in Brazil.

This *Dicionário* is a substantial and impressive work that provides the reader with a description of 265 public and private institutions, associations and organizations for education, research and service provision in Brazil, a country with a long tradition of psychology and psychiatry. It is the result of a project carried out by the Working Group on the History of Psychology under the auspices of both the National Association for Research and Postgraduate Education in Psychology (ANPEPP) and The Federal Council of Psychology. But despite the enormous number of institutions included in the *Dicionário*, the authors themselves still consider it

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unfinished, a work in progress, since many institutions are omitted for lack of information or because the existing information is incomplete.

Particular criteria were employed for the inclusion of institutions or associations in the *Dicionário*. First of all, only institutions founded prior to 1980 were included. The 1980s saw the beginning of an explosion in the creation of institutions of psychology and psychoanalysis, so that the search for information on this and subsequent periods would have been overwhelming; moreover, it would have thrown up many cases of institutions with very short lives. Likewise, the focus is on institutions which were, in some way, pioneering with regard to professional training, publications, the creation of new knowledge areas, and so on. Finally, the institutions were listed by region, and the aim was to make the final list as representative as possible of Brazil as a whole.

The *Dicionário*, then, is an exhaustive work, with contributions from more than 200 authors, and with its 265 institutions ordered alphabetically, among the most notable being the Psychology Institute of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (*Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro*, UFRJ), the Brazilian Association of Social Psychology (ABRAPSO) or the Brazilian Association of Applied Psychology (ABRAPA), to name just three examples. However, among its pages we find entries not only for institutions and associations directly related to psychology, but also for other types of institution that have had some

relevant influence on Brazilian psychology. The entries are comprehensive, and presented in the same depth and format throughout. First we find the current full name of the institution and the acronym by which it is best known. The texts themselves provide information on the founding of the entity in question – and its dissolution in cases where it no longer exists – followed by a historical description of its activities. The entries always conclude with the authors' names and the corresponding bibliographical references.

The indexes of names and of institutions make consulting this dictionary quick and effective, and the name index is particularly comprehensive, with references to all the most relevant figures.

In sum, this is a valuable book, written in a direct, objective and unfettered style. It is a work of high quality which not only highlights the extensive development of the history of psychology as a specialist subject in Brazil, but also reflects the rich tradition of the discipline in that country. Its very title suggests the ambition of its scope: all the institutions and associations that have contributed to the advancement of psychology in Brazil are represented, and presented within a historical perspective. Like all lexicographical works, the *Dicionário* is not for reading in its entirety, but rather for keeping close at hand as a work of reference, in this case an essential one that merits regular consultation. To judge from current trends, its value is likely to grow with the years, as the historiographical movement itself gains momentum.



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