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# The Palgrave Biographical Encyclopedia of Psychology in Latin America

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## Introduction

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Editors

The history of psychology in Latin America seems to be in good health. Far away are the times of isolated studies on the development of psychology in the region, such as those of Beebe-Center & McFarland (1941), Margaret Hall (1946), Carl Hereford (1966), or Morton Bertin (1974) or locally the efforts of Lourenço Filho (1939) or Foradori (1938, 1954), and the later ones by Rubén Ardila (1968, 1971a, 1986), Rogelio Diaz Guerrero (1986, 1994), Reynaldo Alarcon (1994, 2000), Ramon Leon (1981, 1982, 1993), or Antonio Gomes Penna (1981, 1992) between the late 1960s and the turn of the century. On the contrary, in the last three decades, historical research in the region has multiplied, solid teams have been formed, and archives and documentation centers have been opened, demonstrating a sustained effort to maintain high standards of research in the field of the history of psychology. Although a significant part of the historiographical production has been published mainly in Spanish or Portuguese and for this reason is little known outside the region and outside Spain and Portugal, there has also been a significant increase in publications in English. Among them, only in the last 3 years, both in books (Ardila, 2018; Massimi, 2020a; Ossa et al., 2021), in encyclopedia articles (Campos, 2021; Miranda et al., 2020; Klappenbach et al., 2021; Massimi, 2020b), and of course in articles in refereed publications (Araujo & Jacó-Vilela, 2018; Campos & Lourenço, 2019; Capella-Palacios, & Jadhav, 2020; Dadico, 2021; Dagfal, 2018; Facchinetti & Jacó-Vilela, 2019, Fierro, 2018; Fierro & Araujo, 2021; Fierro et al., 2018; Lambe, 2018; Lopez et al., 2021; Salas et al., 2019; Sant’Anna et al., 2018; Veto, 2019).

There is a distinctive characteristic in the approach to the history of psychology in Latin America in this Encyclopedia. It is precisely a *biographical* encyclopedia. The use of the biographical genre has been a constant in historiography. In the past, it could be questioned because of the wide range of perspectives that dominated it, from the almost literary story, the hagiography until the rigorous social inquiry based on diverse sources (Loaiza Cano, 2004). It could also be argued whether or not biography implies a return to individuality in history (Romero, 1945). However, the biographical genre has been recognized as one of the privileged forms of historical analysis. Indeed, at least five possible types of historiographical approaches have been pointed out, considering five differentiated objects of study:

- “a) a history of the *scientific theories* considered psychological;
- b) a history of the *individuals* who have contributed to the development of psychology;
- c) a history of psychological *techniques* (from the history of mental tests to the history of listening and interpretation, or more broadly, the history of the psychoanalytical technique);
- d) a history of psychological *practices* (from the history of applied psychology to the various interventions in the most varied fields of the discipline);
- e) a history of psychological *institutions* (understanding as such not only scientific or professional societies, but also the history of university programs, the history of journals or publishing houses, etc.)” (Klappenbach, 2006, p. 111; translation is ours).

The history or biography of relevant individuals in psychology, then, has been a common approach since at least 100 years ago. In 1912, Benjamin Rand from Harvard University published *The Classical Psychologists*. Of the 43 authors included, the vast majority were part of the philosophical “long past” of psychology. Only three authors were related to the new psychology: Wundt, James, and Stumpf (Rand, 1912).

In 1932, Carl Murchison published the famous third volume of the *Psychological Register*. In fact, it did not include biographies; its purpose was only to provide an index of the “complete academic and bibliographic records of the individual” (Murchison, 1932, p. ix). For this purpose, he selected 2,400 psychology individuals from at least 40 countries. Interestingly, he listed at least 4 Latin American countries and 32 authors: 7 from Argentina, 14 from Brazil, 4 from Ecuador, and 7 from Uruguay.

Also Robert Watson, in his well-known work *Great Psychologists: From Aristotle to Freud*, like Benjamin Rand, began with Thales, Hippocrates, Plato, and Aristotle. However, his selection of biographies already exceeded 50 individuals and it can be verified that it included the most relevant individuals of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: Brentano, Wundt, Ebbinghaus, Muller, Külpe, Galton, Spencer, Morgan, Charcot, Bernheim, Ribot, Janet, Binet, William James, Titchener, Stanley Hall, McKeen Cattell, Pavlov, Watson, Kohler, Wertheimer, Koffka, Freud, Adler, and Jung (Watson, 1963).

In 1979, Raymond Fancher published his *Pioneers of Psychology*. Each chapter included one or two authors, starting from Descartes to the figures of Watson, Piaget, and Skinner (Fancher, 1979). In 2016, he had published his fifth edition, which already included a new chapter, number 13, with biographies specific to cognitive psychology (Fancher & Rutherford, 2016).

In the same direction, but with a much broader scope, was the *Portraits of Pioneers in Psychology* series. Over the course of a dozen years, it compiled almost 120 biographies, from classical figures such as Leibniz, Wundt, Watson, or Bartlett to more contemporary individuals. The first volume included 22 biographies (Kimble et al., 1991); the second, 21 (Kimble et al., 1996); the third, 20 (Kimble & Wertheimer, 1998); the fourth, 21 (Kimble & Wertheimer, 2000); the fifth, again 20 (Kimble & Wertheimer, 2003); and the sixth,

17 (Dewsbury et al., 2006). Under the same premises, soon after, *Portraits of Pioneers in Developmental Psychology* was published (Pickren et al., 2012). Just like the previous series it was promoted by the Society for General Psychology, that is, the Division 1 of the American Psychological Association. A distinctive feature of all these works is that it was heavily biased towards Anglo-Saxon authors, especially from the United States. The absence of Latin American biographies is striking, with the exception of Helena Antipoff, included in the last of the aforementioned books, in which there was also a concern to include more European biographies (Pickren et al., 2012).

Interestingly, an earlier survey of pioneers in psychology took place precisely in Latin America. In 1971, one of the Editors-in-Chief of this Encyclopedia, Rubén Ardila, published *Los Pioneros de la Psicología* (Pioneers in Psychology). The work included 13 biographies, all of them corresponding to twentieth-century individuals besides Wundt (Pavlov, Freud, Watson, Claparède, Myers, Piaget, Thrustone, Hull, Piéron, and Skinner). In addition, the work included two biographies corresponding to Latin America, José Ingenieros and Mira y Lopez. The last one, although living in Spain since he was 2 years old (he was born in Cuba of Spanish parents), developed the final part of his work in Brazil (Ardila, 1971b). Biographies of both authors, of course, are also included in our Encyclopedia.

Leonard Zusne, of the University of Tulsa, published three books that included some kind of biography. In 1975, he published *Names in the History of Psychology: A Biographical Sourcebook*, a work that included biographical sketches of 526 persons who had contributed to the development of psychology since antiquity (Zusne, 1975). In 1984, he published *Biographical Dictionary of Psychology*, which the same author considered to be a second edition of the previous one (Zusne, 1984). The criteria for the selection of the individuals who deserved a biography were similar and were based on the study previously carried out by Annin, Boring, and Watson (1968). All those names that in that study had obtained a certain score (11 points out of a total of 27) were included, in addition to some very old additions and others who died after 1967. The Latin American presence was limited to Mira y Lopez (Zusne, 1984). Finally, in 1987, Zusne published *Eponyms in Psychology: A Dictionary and Biographical Sourcebook*. The work incorporated 852 eponyms from the field of psychology and related disciplines, 60% of which were not found in other psychology dictionaries. In incorporating these terms “it presents a short biography of each eponym, the name giver, with a list of sources of additional biographical information” (Zusne, 1987, p. vii). No less than 520 biographical traces were presented.

After the second volume of the *Portraits of Pioneers in Psychology* series was published, another book was published under the title *Biographical Dictionary of Psychology*. The dictionary included more than 510 biographies, which emerged from a highly complex methodology that combined names drawn from books on the history of psychology or introductory psychology, encyclopedias, and even citation indexes (Sheehy et al., 1997). Although the encyclopedia explicitly intended to “represent the practice of psychology worldwide and includes entries on psychologists whose influence may not be particularly well-known to North American and European psychologists”

(Sheehy et al., 1997, p. ix), once again the lack of psychologists from Latin America can be seen. A couple of names can be found from Spain, Japan, France, Belgium, Italy, Greece, but not from Latin America. Not even those who were forced to leave Europe and found refuge in countries of the region (Mercedes Rodrigo, Antipof, Mira y Lopez, Waclaw Radecki, Blumenfedl, Szekely, among others, all of them included in our Encyclopedia). Naturally, this does not discredit the scope of a work that had the merit of standardizing the model of each biography and of adding some particularly useful indexes. Shortly afterwards, Noel Sheey published *Fifty Key Thinkers in Psychology*. Three important differences can be noted in relation to the biographical dictionary. First, the work was limited to only 50 authors, all of them from North America or Europe. Second, the biographies were longer. And third, the criteria by which these 50 authors were included were not made explicit (Sheehy, 2004).

Also in Latin America, a *Diccionario Biográfico de Psicología Contemporánea* (Biographical Dictionary of Contemporary Psychology) prepared by two prominent academics from the Ricardo Palma University of Peru was published. The work included biographical details and the work of more than 160 personalities related to psychology. Among them, there were 11 personalities from Peru, 8 of whom are also part of our Encyclopedia (Alarcón, Amorós Terán, Chiappo Galli, Honorio Delgado, Estrada de los Ríos, González Moreyra, Pollit Burga, and Thorne León) (Sanchez Carlessi & Reyes Romero, 2002). And once again in Latin America, the academic from the University of Nueva León in Mexico, Cirilo García Cadena compiled in 2017 the work *Great Psychologists of the World*. It included 21 outstanding international psychologists, among them 8 Latin Americans: 5 from Mexico, 2 from Argentina and 1 from Colombia. 7 of them are part of the *Palgrave Biographical Encyclopedia*: Ardila, Chavez, Cortada de Kohan, Diaz-Guerrero, Lafarga-Corona, Ribes Iñesta and Rimoldi (García-Cadena, 2017).

Well-known psychology encyclopedias have also included short biographies of people who have contributed to psychology. Thus, in 1985, the *Encyclopedia of Psychology*, edited by Raymond Corsini, included in the 4th volume, edited by William Sahakian and Robert Lundin, approximately 650 brief biographical entries. The South American authors were really very limited; only Mira y Lopez from Brazil, Plácido Horas from Argentina, and Rubén Ardila from Colombia. And even when biographies of authors from Mexico increased significantly, there were less than ten (Eduardo Almeida, Enrique Aragón, Castaño Asmitia, Ezequiel Chávez, Díaz Guerrero, Dávila García, Mercado Domenech, Ribes-Iñesta, Rafael Nuñez) (Corsini et al., 1984). With the exception of the last mentioned, all the others have entries in our Encyclopedia.

For its turn, Kazdin's *Encyclopedia of Psychology* included about 400 short biographies in its 8 volumes. Once again, the Latin American presence was reduced to small entries for Ingenieros and Mouchet, both from Argentina, and Varona from Cuba (Kazdin, 2000). Separately, in 2012 Robert Rieber edited his *Encyclopedia of the History of Psychological Theories*, which included 325 entries of approximately three different types. First, it included "subject matter entries" which "cover practically all the important theories." Second,

institutions that contributed to the development of psychology. And third, no fewer than 250 biographies. Once again, only one Latin American author can be found, Enerio Rodriguez Arias from Dominican Republic, who is of course part of our encyclopedia (Rieber, 2012).

On the other hand, we will not examine the many autobiographical histories in psychology, since the criteria for the selection and elaboration of the contributions are quite different. For this reason, we will not analyze the series initiated by Carl Murchison in 1930, *History of Psychology in Autobiography* (Murchison, 1930), which in 2002 had already published nine volumes. Nor of that series begun by Theophile Stanley Krawiec in 1972, *The Psychologists* (Krawiec, 1972), which amounted to three volumes until 1978. Not even the only volume of *Historia de la Psicología Iberoamericana en Autobiografías* (History of Ibero-American Psychology in Autobiographies) (Klappenbach & León, 2012).

It has been pointed out, in the case of a dictionary on pioneers of psychoanalysis in South America, that “their research and hypotheses were ignored by English-speaking colleagues because they wrote in Spanish and were rarely translated” (Steiner, 2015, p. xxix). The six parts into which Steiner divided his work included biographies of some of the pioneers in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay, many of whom are also part of our Encyclopedia: Arminda Aberatury, Virginia Bicudo, José Bleger, Angel Garma, Adelheid Koch, Marie Langer, David Liberman, Durval Marcondes, Matte Blanco, Pichon Rivière (Steiner, 2015).

In any case, a salient feature of all these encyclopedias and dictionaries is that they have hardly considered biographies of Latin American authors. In that sense, our Encyclopedia fills a gap in the international literature.

Of course, in Spanish and Portuguese there have been some outstanding antecedents to this *Biographical Encyclopedia*. In Argentina, Italo Américo Foradori (1944) had published a book that included 11 biographies of the first individuals devoted to psychology in Argentina: four belonging to what he called the “School of La Plata,” six corresponding to the so-called “School of Buenos Aires,” plus the biography of Amadeo Jacques (1813–1865), author of an early work entitled *Psychology in the Mid-19th Century* (Jacques, 1923). In fact, that work constituted the first part of the *Manuel de Philosophie à l’usage des Collèges* (Handbook of Philosophy for the use at Colleges), published in Paris in 1846 for school use. Jacques had written the Introduction and the Psychology (Jacques et al., 1846/1847). Most of those 11 names are part of our Encyclopedia (Ingenieros, Piñero, Mercante, Senet, Calcagno, Mouchet, and Korn).

Undoubtedly the most important antecedent was the *Diccionario Biográfico da Psicologia no Brasil: Pioneiros* (Biographical Dictionary of Psychology in Brazil: Pioneers), edited by Regina de Freitas Campos. The work included 200 biographies that were relevant to the history of psychology for one of the following reasons:

- “a) publications of impact in the area;
- b) pioneering activity in education and training;
- c) outstanding activity in the organization and development of important institutions in the area;

- d) importance in opening new fields for psychologists' practice;
- e) consistent and original activity in research and intellectual production, giving preference to people who meet more than one of these criteria.” (Campos, 2001, p. 21; translation is ours)

For its part, in 2018, in Puerto Rico *Psicólogos Destacados: Trayectoria Profesional y Visión de la Psicología Puertorriqueña* (Outstanding Psychologists: Professional Trajectory and Vision of Puerto Rican Psychology) was published. Only senior colleagues were included, meaning people at least 60 years old. The outstanding psychologists had to meet one of four criteria: (1) To have received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Puerto Rican Psychological Association (APPR). (2) To have been president of APPR with a recognized trajectory in research. (3) To have received the Psychologist of the Year Award. (4) “Be internationally recognized for their research or publications in their area” (Martínez-Taboas et al., 2018, p. x). Thirty names were selected and asked themselves to write their biographical note based on a guide covering six topics. Only a small number of those 30 outstanding psychologists are included in our Encyclopedia: Bauermeister, Cangiano-Rivera, Cirino-Gerena, Herrans-Pérez, Roca de Torres, and Santiago -Negrón. This is precisely because the criteria of the two works differed.

An interesting case was the work of María Inés Winkler, *Pioneras sin Monumentos: Mujeres en Psicología* (Pioneers without Monuments: Women in Psychology), which analyzed the history of women in psychology in three countries, the United States, Argentina, and Chile. The work included biographies of 15 women, 5 from each country. The Chilean and Argentinean women included several who were born in European countries but worked in Argentina or Chile (Helena Jacoby, Fernanda Monasterio, Marie Langer, Bondiek de Guzmán, and Susana Bloch). Six of the ten Latin American women are part of our Encyclopedia, five from Argentina and one from Chile (Aberastury, Cortada de Kohan, Labarca, Langer, Monasterio, and Tobar García).

For its part, the *Diccionario de Psicoanálisis Argentino* (Dictionary of Argentine Psychoanalysis), even though it was not exclusively a biographical dictionary, but also a dictionary of terms and concepts, included numerous short biographies of psychoanalysts (Borensztein, 2014). And in a coincident direction, in 2019 Alejandra Taborda and Elena Toranzo began publishing the series *Biografías, Historia de Relaciones Significativas* (Biographies, History of Significant Relationships), which reached six volumes the following year. While the first volumes were devoted to international psychoanalysts, the last two volumes included biographies of four Argentine psychoanalysts, all of them included in our Encyclopedia: Marie Langer, Arminda Aberastury, David Liberman, and Silvia Bleichmar (Moreira & Winograd, 2020; Ostrovsky & Herrando, 2020).

In Argentina, we should also must mention as a precedent the *Enciclopedia Argentina de Salud Mental* (Argentine Encyclopedia of Mental Health), an online initiative of the Aiglé Foundation, which has now reached its ninth edition. Although most of its around 500 entries are related to concepts in the field, they have included around 15 biographies, some of them also included in our Encyclopedia: Bermann, Cortada, Krapf, Pichon-Riviére, Piñero and Reca (Fernandez Alvarez & Bregman, 2022).

There is a precedent that cannot go unmentioned even though it is not a biographical dictionary, but a dictionary of institutions, the *Diccionario Histórico de Instituições de Psicologia no Brasil* (Historical Dictionary of Psychology Institutions in Brazil). First, because the work evidenced, once again, the remarkable level of the historiography of psychology in Brazil (Jacó-Vilela, 2011). And second, because the elaboration of the entries for the 265 institutions included involved a collective work of more than 200 authors, at the same time that the writing of each entry followed common guidelines, characteristics that, as we will develop below, were analogous in our Encyclopedia.

Taking into account all these prestigious antecedents, we can proudly affirm that *The Palgrave Biographical Encyclopedia of Psychology in Latin America* constitutes a unique work of its kind, considering some of its characteristics.

First of all, its *quantitative* aspect, as there are 589 biographies in the Encyclopedia. Among the editors-in-chief, we established three central criteria for an individual to be included in the Encyclopedia. First of all, we set a *time criterion*, since we considered personalities who were deceased or who, exceptionally, were born in 1945 or earlier. A second criterion was to include individuals who had contributed to the *field of psychology*, even if they came from related fields, such as education, medicine, law, anthropology, sociology, philosophy, theology, or religion. This was quite frequent the further back in time we went, especially prominent figures from the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century. And although from the 1960s and 1970s onwards it became increasingly common for contributors to the field of psychology to have a university degree in psychology, it was also not uncommon to find people from related fields. And a third criterion, of course, related to the *relevance* of the individual. We know that relevance could be estimated by different criteria. In the Encyclopedia, we considered at least some of the following: (a) having been an individual with *relevant scientific work*, through publications in books or journals; (b) having developed recognized psychological *tests* or *techniques*; (c) having been prominent in the *teaching* of psychology, whether in university or other settings; (d) having been prominent in the *organization and development of institutions* of psychology, whether they were journals, scientific societies, professional organizations, training or assistance institutions, or others. The difficulties inherent in such a consideration were not lost on us. For one thing, the criteria of relevance in these four dimensions are indeed incomparable. For this reason, the editors-in-chief, together with the section editors, drew up possible lists which, in many countries, we submitted for evaluation to external judges. And it was interesting to note that those theoretical difficulties about the scope of relevance gradually gave way as we selected the names to be included. It was possible to see that, even among judges from different backgrounds, there was a reasonable consensus on relevant individuals from very different practices.

In several countries, some of the first psychology graduates were recognized as relevant for the paths they opened in the profession, even though many of them did not seem to exhibit a significant scientific work. In any case, it is necessary to make it clear that the list of 589 individuals included in this work, even though it seems very extensive, is by no means complete. We are



aware that the list is limited and numerous relevant individuals would deserve to have been present in the Encyclopedia. This limitation was due to three main reasons. The first, that we had to manage an encyclopedia that, when printed, had a reasonable number of pages. The second, that in the case of some initially selected individuals, it was not possible to find the author able to write his or her biography. Or even having found him or her, finally the invited author could not write the biography, in some cases due to the limitations of access to libraries, archives, and documentation centers generated by the Covid-19 pandemic. And the third, that research in the history of psychology is not yet sufficiently widespread in all the countries of the region.

A second characteristic that makes this work unique is related to the *geographical scope* of these biographies, which cover individuals from 20 countries in the region, since of the 21 countries in the region, only we have not been able to find a Section Editor for Haiti. It is often the case that many works devoted to Latin America actually focus on the study of the larger countries in the region, such as Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, or Argentina. In our Encyclopedia, there are biographies of relevant individuals from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Uruguay, and Venezuela. This grants an enormous diversity and, if the term is allowed, a representativeness of the contributions of great individuals to the development of psychology in the region. On the other hand, the book also includes some biographies of individuals from outside the region who, even if they had not settled in the region, contributed decisively to the development of psychology in Latin America through their visits.

A third characteristic of the originality of the Encyclopedia lies in the collective and plural work with which the biographies were first conceived and then produced. In the 20 countries mentioned, we had the advice, collaboration, and follow-up of associated editors (Section Editors). Generally one per country, although there were two in Ecuador and Argentina and three in Brazil. In turn, together with these 23 associate editors, we have called on 442 authors from many different countries and regions. A couple of authors published 14 biographies each, a few 4, 5, or 6, and the vast majority only 1 biography. And of course, some biographies were written by two or more authors, in one case by six authors.

This plurality, too, helped to delineate a fourth characteristic of the work. The editors-in-chief prepared a guide for the authors that established *a set of standards common to all the biographies*. Of course, this was not intended to limit the creativity or personal bias that each author was likely to bring to each biography. Rather, we wanted all the biographies to have a few common features beyond other differences. Among these common guidelines for all the biographies, we established a common format that included the following parts:

1. Last name and then the first name of the biographed individual.
2. First name, last name, and institutional affiliation of the author(s) of the biography.

3. At the beginning, date and place of birth and date and place of death of the biographer, as precisely as possible.
4. Key words. With the indication that at least the following criteria should be taken into account: (a) country or countries to which the individual contributed; (b) area or field of activity or theoretical approach (e.g., child psychology, organizational psychology, psychoanalysis, etc.); and (c) other specificities (e.g., foundation of publications; founding of professional or scientific organizations; leading role in professional or scientific organizations; participation in the planning, organization, or management of undergraduate or graduate psychology programs in university settings; establishment of training programs outside university; creation of tests; and so forth).
5. The biography itself, for which at least the following aspects were suggested: (a) summary information on studies and academic degrees achieved, if possible with an indication of the years and institution in which he/she studied and an indication of the academic degrees and distinctions achieved; (b) paragraphs devoted to presenting his or her professional or academic career, mentioning institutions, places, written productions (books, journal articles of which the main ones may be included in the Selected Works section), and other types of achievements (founding institutions, founding societies and journals, editing them, coordinating study groups, and so forth); and (c) if possible, a final paragraph devoted to clearly indicating the contribution of the individual to psychology of his or her country or of Latin America as a whole. This paragraph should be essentially expository and avoid as far as possible the presence of excessive superlative adjectives.
6. Selected Works of the individual in APA style, up to a maximum of 10 works, as it was not possible to include complete bibliographies. Selected Works include the main books or journal articles.
7. References. Up to a maximum of 10, in APA style, which could include both references to works by the biographed individual and any other relevant secondary bibliography.
8. We also agreed on a maximum length of 1000 words, excluding keywords, main works, and references. Individuals of notable relevance could be up to 2000 words in length.
9. Considering the need to avoid misunderstandings in the appropriate names of institutions when translated into English, we agreed that the first time the biography mentions names of institutions (e.g., institution where he studied, institutions where he worked, names of journals) they should appear in the original language and immediately, in brackets, the names translated into English.

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internal systems of cognition in the Institute of Fundamental Investigations of the Brain, which was exposed in his book *Cerebro Cognoscente: un modelo para su estudio* (Cognitive Brain: a research model), where his great interest by the theory of systems and its adhesion to this approach are evidenced (González, 1975).

This research activity had international repercussions. In 1966, it was the object of a reference – in the form of a paper with his signature – in the special edition of the journal *Nauka Chelovistchesvo* (edited by the administration of the Soviet Union), dedicated to the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Revolution of October that was only granted to scientists of international merits. He was a member of the International Brain Research Organization (IBRO) and of other international scientific societies. In 1982, in Moscow, as a recognition to his scientific work in neurophysiology, the Ministry of Public Health of the Soviet Union and the Institute Sechenov granted him the Medal “Sechenov.” On February 24, 1984, he received the Doctor’s scientific degree in Psychological Sciences in the Republic of Cuba.

His contribution to Cuban Psychology consists in his theoretical, academic, experimental, and professional work. He was one of the first who initiated the Marxist and historical cultural approaches in psychiatry, neurophysiology, and psychology.

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## González Rey, Fernando Luis

Born *Havana, Cuba, June 27, 1949*

Died *São Paulo, Brazil, March 26, 2019*

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### Keywords

Cuba · Brazil · Cultural-historical psychology · Educational psychology · Health psychology · Social psychology

Fernando González Rey was a Cuban psychologist, scholar, and educator, whose legacy contributes to a new, complex, and influential theorization of subjectivity from a cultural-historical perspective. His academic legacy comprises 29 books, 10 edited or coedited books, 90 book chapters, and 132 scientific articles published in 5 languages: Spanish, Portuguese, English, Russian, and French. His work is characterized by its creativity, breadth, and depth. It contributes mainly to the fields of cultural-historical psychology, critical psychology, psychological research, education, psychotherapy, human health, and social psychology.



González Rey was born in Havana, Cuba, in 1949. His lower-middle-class family was constituted, both from his mother's and father's sides, by Spanish immigrants. An only child, he was the first member of the family to become an academic (Goulart et al., 2020).

In his youth, González Rey was integrated, like the majority of his generation, into the Cuban revolutionary process, actively participating in several tasks. During his students years in Psychology at the University of Havana, he was part of the Communist Youth and of the University Student Federation. After that, he entered the ranks of the Communist Party of Cuba. During his militancy in these political organizations, he was characterized by the capacity to reflect critically on what he considered to be dogmatic and bureaucratic (Goulart et al., 2020). Indeed, he maintained this critical capacity throughout his career as a researcher and a teacher.

González Rey carried out his PhD in Psychology (1977–1979) at the Moscow Institute of General and Pedagogical Psychology. Later, he concluded a degree of Doctor in Sciences (1987) at the Institute of Psychology of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Importantly, González Rey was, and still is, the only Latin American to obtain this science degree (Goulart et al., 2020).

In Cuba, from late 1970s until mid-1990s, González Rey contributed significantly with teaching and research the topic of personality from a cultural-historical perspective, which generated a new interest in this topic in Cuban psychology. He also advanced the articulation between personality and communication, highlighting the active role of the subject, and the contradictory character of human development, mainly through his research projects in education and human health. In the 1980s, González Rey published dozens of scientific articles in the *Revista Cubana de Psicología*, as well as published different books edited in Cuba (e.g., González Rey, 1983a, 1983b, 1985).

González Rey was president of the *Sociedad Cubana de Psicología* (Cuban Psychology Society) (1986–1995), dean of the Facultad de Psicología (Faculty of Psychology) at the

Universidad de la Habana (University of Havana) (1985–1990) and vice rector of *Universidad de la Habana* (1990–1995), which sometimes caused friction with higher levels of institutional management. As explained elsewhere:

In 2000, as a result of political tensions with more orthodox wings of the Ministry of Higher Education and the Communist Party, González Rey and Albertina Mitjás Martínez, his academic and life partner, were not allowed to return to Cuba, after working in Brazil as visiting professors from 1995 to 1999. This would mark the beginning of a new chapter in his life and in his career. (Goulart et al., 2020, p. 12)

In Brazil, González Rey worked in different universities, such as *Universidade de Brasília*, *Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Goiás*, *Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Campinas*, and *Universidade Federal do Ceará*. From 2000 until his passing, he chose *Centro Universitário de Brasília* as his main workplace. Throughout his academic career, González Rey was Visiting Professor in several institutions in different parts of the world, such as the *The London School of Economy* (London, UK, 1995), *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales* (Paris, France, 1995, 2004), *Monash University* (Melbourne, Australia, 2013), *City University of New York* (New York, USA, 1993), *Universidad Autónoma de Madrid* (Madrid, Spain, 1996, 2006–2007), *Universidad Autónoma de México* (Mexico City, Mexico, 1991–1994, 2000–2003), *Universidad Central de Venezuela* (Caracas, Venezuela, 1982, 1987, 1990, 1993, 1999), *Universidad San Carlos de Guatemala* (Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala, 2004–2006), *Universidad de Buenos Aires* (Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2003), *Universidad de Puerto Rico* (Puerto Rico, 1988, 1999, 2012), and *Universidade de São Paulo* (Ribeirão Preto, Brazil, 2010).

González Rey was especially influenced by Lev Semionovitch Vygotsky (1896–1934), Sergei Leonidovich Rubinstein (1889–1960), Lidiia Il'inichna Bozhovich (1908–1981), and Vil Emanuilovich Chudnovski (1924–2016) in terms of his theoretical focus on personality from a cultural-historical perspective. His PhD thesis was supervised by Chudnovski in the laboratory

led by Bozhovich at the Moscow Institute of General and Pedagogical Psychology. Gradually, González Rey started to advance the concept of communication and to criticize the limits of the dominant concept of activity in Soviet psychology (González Rey, 1983a, 1983b, 1985). The link between communication and personality was developed in his thesis for the degree of Doctor in Sciences in 1987 in the Institute of Psychology at the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union, whose director was Boris Fedorovich Lomov (1927–1989). The concept of communication was also an important bridge between his work on personality and social psychology, which was developed in this Institute by then, following the integration of two traditions: (1) the research project led by Rubinstein, whose main disciples and colleagues were Ksenia Alexandrovna Abulkhanova (born in 1932), Lyudmila Ivanovna Antsyferova (1924–2013), and Andrey Vladimirovich Bruschkinsky (1933–2002) and (2) the research project developed by Boris Gerasimovich Ananiev (1907–1972) and Vladimir Nikolaevich Myasishchev (1893–1973) in Leningrad (Lomov was a disciple of Ananiev).

González Rey's orientation toward social psychology, which began in Moscow, continued its development as a result of his active participation in the Critical Social Psychology Movement in Latin America from the mid-1980s. He began to highlight the importance of the concepts of subject, personality, and social subjectivity for social psychology (Goulart, 2019). González Rey worked collectively on Latin American social and political psychology alongside other well-known Latin American authors, such as Ignacio Martín-Baró, Silvia Lane Maritza Montero, José Miguel Salazar, and Bernardo Jiménez. This group claimed the importance of advancing a critical social psychology that takes issues specific to Latin America seriously, instead of the traditional mimetic reproduction of North American and European models that characterized psychology in the continent. In 1991, the recognition of González Rey's significant contribution led to his award of the Interamerican Psychology Prize of the Interamerican Society of Psychology.

With his book *Epistemología Cualitativa y Subjetividad* [Qualitative Epistemology and Subjectivity] (González Rey, 1997), González Rey started a new moment in his work by emphasizing the consequences of his previous works for the development of a theory of subjectivity within a cultural-historical approach. This study of subjectivity implied a new set of research lines and publications in which the unity between theory, epistemology, and methodology became central (González Rey, 2019a). His research fields expanded, as well as his dialogue with other theoretical perspectives, such as social representations theory, psychoanalysis, and social constructionism (González Rey, 2017b).

González Rey started to discuss the topic of subjectivity on the basis of a new ontological definition that represents it as a symbolic-emotional system (González Rey, 2014, 2016, 2019b). The symbolic-emotional unity, represented by the concept of subjective sense, transcends the traditional intrapsychic and individual reductionism that has characterized the use of the concept "subjectivity" in psychology and other social sciences (González Rey, 2017b). At the same time, this unity overcomes the social reductionism that has prevailed within cultural-historical psychology, which has historically associated psychological processes with reflections or internalized social operations. His definition of subjectivity emphasizes the idea that individual and social spheres can be integrated as "realities" that share a subjective character, in a contradictory way, without one being reduced to the other (González Rey, 2016).

From this point of view, subjectivity has a culturally, socially, and historically located genesis. However, it represents a generative system, rather than an epiphenomenon of other dimensions. This aspect allows the emergence of individuals, groups, and institutions as subjects of human practices (González Rey, 2019b). The concept of subject is defined as a proper path of subjectivation that implies the generation of alternatives to certain normative social spaces, exerting creative options in a life path (González Rey, 2017b). In this sense, this concept does not imply individualism and the assumption of

rational control, but the permanent capacity for unpredictable options, rupture and creative action. González Rey's theory of subjectivity is a critical theoretical framework in relation to dominant psychology, because it opens a new avenue to explain singular individual and social human creations as inseparable from broader social dynamics.

In Latin America, González Rey gradually became the leader of different research groups elaborating and advancing his theory of subjectivity and a close collaborator with dozens of others in different countries. His effort to consolidate a research team with multiple research lines and frequent joint activities has contributed to the training of dozens of PhDs, who gradually started to occupy important academic positions in Latin America, as well as in other continents (Goulart, 2019).

González Rey's work is an expression of the potential of Latin American psychology in creating new approaches to contemporary topics and theoretical challenges, contributing to the global debate. This is in line with his call for an authorial positioning in face of the frequent mimetic reproduction of northern science by Latin America.

## Cross-References

- ▶ Lane, Sílvia Tatiana Maurer
- ▶ Martín-Baró, José Ignacio
- ▶ Montero Rivas, Maritza
- ▶ Salazar Jiménez, José Miguel

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