

# On the routes of Social Psychology in Brazil

**Celso Pereira de Sá**

Rio de Janeiro State University

## Abstract

Considering the different paths of knowledge production that Social psychologists have run in Brazil, the text makes a distinction between a *stricto sensu* Social Psychology and the *lato sensu* one. The *stricto sensu* Social Psychology comprises the trends found in the historical development of the discipline and in scientific modernity: the mainstream “psychological” Social Psychology; the European “sociological” Social Psychology; the “micro-sociological” perspectives, since Mead. The *lato sensu* Social Psychology comprises the trends that emerged aside the subject’s history or very recently, following other epistemological guidelines: the Marxist Social Psychology, institutional analysis, socio-historical Psychology, socio-constructionism, and the philosophical Social Psychology. The eight trends listed are then submitted to evaluations regarding the two basic dimensions of Social Psychology: societal and psychological. A comparative picture of those evaluations discloses differences between the *stricto* and *lato sensu* sets of Social Psychology, as well as between the several trends in the scope of each set.

**Keywords:** Mainstream Social Psychology; European Social Psychology; critical Social Psychology.

## Resumo

*Sobre os rumos da Psicologia Social no Brasil.* Considerando os variados rumos de produção de conhecimento trilhados no Brasil pelos psicólogos sociais, o texto faz distinção entre uma Psicologia Social *stricto sensu* e outra *lato sensu*. À Psicologia Social *stricto sensu* correspondem as correntes que se situam no desenvolvimento histórico da disciplina e na modernidade científica: a Psicologia Social “psicológica” mainstream; a Psicologia Social “sociológica” europeia; as perspectivas “microsociológicas”, desde Mead. À Psicologia Social *lato sensu* correspondem as correntes surgidas à margem da história da disciplina ou muito recentemente, com outras diretrizes epistemológicas: Psicologia Social marxista, análise institucional, Psicologia sócio-histórica, sócio-construcionismo e Psicologia Social filosófica. As oito correntes listadas são em seguida submetidas a avaliações quanto a duas dimensões básicas da Psicologia Social: societal e psicológica. Um quadro comparativo dessas avaliações evidencia distinções entre os conjuntos *stricto* e *lato sensu* da Psicologia Social, bem como entre as diversas correntes no âmbito de cada conjunto.

**Palavras-chave:** Psicologia Social *mainstream*; Psicologia Social europeia; Psicologia Social crítica.

Forty years after the notorious crisis of Social Psychology – and at least as a result of it – this subject houses a wide range of currents or potential development paths. To some, this situation can be understood as an indication of the academic clout of the subject, of a no-freezing of its study affairs under given analytical formulas which would end up by being discredited due to the very nature of psychosocial phenomena. To others, the existence of such a diversity of paths shows that the subject has not yet reached maturity, nor solved basic problems to be defined, among which that of its relations with psychology on one hand, and with social sciences on the other hand. Both interpretations beacon the analyses in the field of Social Psychology in Brazil, as presented in both substantive sections of the article.

In principle, an objective description of the Brazilian situation would demand surveying the following aspects in

relation to different paths or currents: academic production, in terms of publications of articles, books, chapters, theses and dissertations; the editorial movement in Brazil in terms of books, collections and journals; theoretical-conceptual, thematic and methodological orientations in Social Psychology in the undergraduate courses and postgraduate programs in psychology delivered by the Brazilian universities; the specific orientations of research groups part of the CNPq Directory in the Social Psychology scope; preferences expressed by different associations, centers and institutional networks focused on promoting psychology, notably the Social Psychology.

As it has not been done in this paper, we present below a personal evaluation on the Social Psychology status in Brazil in terms of differentiated appropriation of currents from international centers of knowledge production, and on the paths being run by different bodies of Brazilian social psychologists.

However, this evaluation is not deprived of objectivity, since it is based on data gathered by the author for at least thirty years, while evaluating research projects for development agencies, manuscripts to be published in scientific journals, and even journals for indexation purposes, as well as psychology courses and postgraduate programs in Social Psychology, theses and dissertations and so on. Moreover, the consistent academic contact with the Brazilian social psychologists, regardless their preferred paths, has provided the author with information about the everyday practice of “doing Social Psychology” which could hardly be obtained in different ways.

### *On the academic clout of Social Psychology in Brazil*

Considering the interpretation regarding an alleged academic clout of Social Psychology in Brazil that would be translated by the diversity of paths found to the subject, this section aims at identifying and briefly characterizing these paths. A previous effort (Sá, 2011) has tracked the field of Social Psychology in two major bodies of paths or currents, named “*stricto sensu* Social Psychology” and “*lato sensu* Social Psychology.” These designations, used in the early stages of this analysis, are revised at the conclusion.

### *Stricto sensu Social Psychology*

This set comprises the currents making up the “internal” history of the subject throughout most of the last century and the first decade of this century. It necessarily refers back to the consideration of the oldest current to be analyzed herein, commonly known as “mainstream”, as the background to appreciate the remainder paths of this set, which have tried to renew it, overcome it, or be established in parallel to it. Despite the huge differences between the currents comprised by this set - which sometimes are even opposite - these are primarily identified as Social Psychology and are aware that they share the same academic room with the remainder Psychologies. Finally, each of these comprises several theoretical-conceptual perspectives, like a “school” as it used to be called in the past.

In principle, the four currents described below could be pooled under the name of *stricto sensu* Social Psychology; however, only the first two ones leave no doubts regarding their inclusion in the set. The next two ones bear characteristics that are opposite to such inclusion or disclose greater affinity to the *lato sensu* Social Psychology.

The mainstream “psychological” Social Psychology corresponds to the Social Psychology tradition developed in the United States that is now hegemonic not only in North America, but also in Latin America, Oceania and Asia and, probably, in Africa. It embraces a large diversity of topics, conceptual constructions, and theoretical perspectives that originated countless “micro-theories.” On the other hand, it is lesser plural in methodological terms, being almost exclusively used for experiments. In Brazil, it started in the 1980’s and is broadly disseminated in undergraduate psychology courses, thanks to the publication of translated handbooks and to a sound national production, where Aroldo Rodrigues’ handbook stands out. That handbook was firstly published in 1972, and reviewed from the 18th edition onwards (Rodrigues, Assmar, & Jablonski, 2000).

Its characterization as “psychological”, implying the preference of analysis at intra- and inter-individual levels (Doise, 1986), seems to be free of remarks from producers and followers.

The European “sociological” Social Psychology corresponds to the conceptual and thematic re-orientation promoted from the 1960’s onwards by authors like Henry Tajfel in Great Britain, Serge Moscovici in France, and Willem Doise in Switzerland (Jesuino, 1993) Although it is herein referred to as European due to its origin and continuous development, what is done in Social Psychology in Europe is strongly based on the aforementioned paradigm. This current is also found in all continents, but to a lesser degree than the mainstream Social Psychology. Its characterization as “sociological” (Farr, 1996) is due to the links established between the psychosocial facts it explores and the pertinent propositions of other human and social sciences. It comprises a wide range of topics of study – social thinking, minority influence, cross-group identity and processes, socio-cognitive development, etc. – and of theoretical-conceptual perspectives that have entailed supplementary approaches. In methodological terms, it employs virtually all research methods and techniques. It came to Brazil in the 1980’s, initially privileging the Moscovici’s theory of social representations; since then, it has been increasingly disseminated.

The “socio-constructionist” and “discursive” perspectives were respectively originated in the United States – since the subject crisis in the 1970’s with the movement of “social constructionism” headed by Kenneth Gergen – and in England, with the advent of the “discourse analysis” or “discursive psychology” thanks to Potter and Wetherell, among others. Despite the geographic distance and differences between both perspectives, these can be considered to build a block due to their post-modern epistemological orientation. In this sense, they differ from previous currents in this set that have adopted the epistemological and methodological methods of modern science. In fact, the two perspectives that build up this current make criticisms to both mainstream Social Psychology and the European Social Psychology. Thus, their authors and followers might prefer to be fit into the *lato sensu* Social Psychology, since they share the refusal to whatever had been previously produced on the subject. In Brazil, this option seems to be evident at least in the initiatives toward disseminating the current promoted by the “nucleus of Sao Paulo” that, after all, have proved to be successful.

The “micro-sociological” perspectives, differently from the previous paths promoted by academics holding basic education in psychology, derive from sociology, or rather from a sociology that privileged the interpersonal and positional levels of analysis of facts (Doise, 1986) and, therefore, was called “micro-sociology.” This sociological direction is found in the psychosocial field since 1902, when Charles H. Cooley said that “individual and society are two sides of the same coin”, and has been successively reinforced by the psychological perspective of George H. Mead, by the systematization of the symbolic interactionism undertaken by Herbert Blumer, and by the efforts towards articulating it with the theory of roles that, ultimately, resulted in the structural version by Sheldon Stryker. As this long-lasting development is not part of the “internal history”

of Social Psychology, this current might have been included in the “*lato sensu*” set; however, its peculiar contribution to Social Psychology does not imply criticisms to the mainstream Social Psychology and, moreover, this latter has already recognized and assimilated the former. In fact, although in Brazil and worldwide it is a path run by few researchers, it seems to be respected by all, including by “*lato sensu*” currents that, sometimes, resort to Mead’s work to supply the psychological dimension of their own understanding on Social Psychology.

### *Lato sensu Social Psychology*

This set comprises the currents built aside the “internal history” of the subject, deriving from other perspectives on which it remains dependent, and bears more similarities than with Social Psychology. In this sense, these are institutionally housed in the academic field of Social Psychology, but do not try to meet the conceptual, theoretical and methodological requirements consolidated therein. Differently from the “*stricto sensu*” set, where each path itself is a network of similar analyses or explanations, each path developed in the “*lato sensu*” set seems to embrace one single descriptive or explicative direction for the phenomena, which is typically shared with other paths of the same set.

Observing the potential existence of other paths, below we briefly characterize four paths that surely belong to the “*lato sensu*” set.

The “social-historical” perspective seems to derive from the reevaluation of Lev Vygotski’s work which started in the psychology of cognitive development, with his thesis about the social grounds of psychological processes, and that then became appropriated to cope with other phenomena of psychosocial order. Therefore, this is a path somehow new in Social Psychology that, additionally to other characteristics, seems to involve a critical trend regarding the capitalist western political-economic *statu quo*, which might have been favored by the consideration of Vygotski’s work as a product of the Soviet psychology. In principle, the author’s specific theoretic contributions regarding the “formation of mind” are not appropriated by this Social Psychology that prefers a more generic approach to the social-historical genesis of the phenomena it studies. Nowadays it is intensively disseminated in Brazil.

The “Marxist” perspective seems to be found in different ways in the appropriation of Social Psychology, being even confused with the “social-historical” current when the Vygotski’s psychological matrix of the latter is not explored. It comprises other variables that range from strict adherence to the notion of “new Soviet man” – developed under the extinguished “actual socialism” – to a generic adoption of Marxist principles, which is capable of even dialoguing with the mainstream Social Psychology, as shown by Doise (2012a). In Brazil, the latter direction seems to have led the incorporation of this perspective into the Social Psychology realm, by Silvia Lane who, disagreeing with the neutral scientific direction adopted by the subject, assigns to it the duty of changing society. The Latin-American societies serve as privileged scene to the analysis. In the context of those societies, the main reference is the work by Martin Baró who, familiar to the basic Marxist direction,

seems to incorporate other contributions, including from the “*stricto sensu*” set.

The “institutional” perspective was launched in France, under the name of “institutional analysis”, through the work by G. Lapassade and R. Lorau in the 1970’s. Short after it came to Brazil, in translations to Portuguese and Spanish, and was very successful here. In some academic instances it has even been associated to the name of the subject, in other terms than the “social”, like in the expression “social and institutional psychology.” In fact, this current seems to have always endeavored to be distinguished from Social Psychology, disregarding the potential contribution of the later to its topics of study – social groups and institutions – and accepting its own conceptual and theoretical constructions as enough. Today it seems to be declining, with followers associating to other paths or absorbing propositions that were strange in principle, like the Marxist criticism.

Undoubtedly, the “philosophical perspective” is not known by that name by those considered to practice it in Brazil. Several and important philosophical reflections arose in the second half of the 20th Century dealing with psychosocial issues like those of Michel Foucault’s and Giles Deleuze’s and Feliz Guattari’s, among others – broadly disseminated in Europe and soon after in Brazil, through the massive translation of their works. This set comprises the social psychologists that seem to privilege only these reflections in their analyses, disregarding the theoretical-conceptual perspectives developed by Psychology and constituted social sciences. Thus, they move away from others – including members of the “*stricto sensu*” set – who employ those valuable reflections to introduce their research issues, but who also understand these are not enough to cope with the specific psychosocial phenomena they deal with.

### *On the social and psychological dimensions of Social Psychology in Brazil*

Now considering the understanding that Social Psychology has not yet been satisfactorily defined in terms of its links to Psychology and social sciences, this section aims at placing the several paths of Social Psychology in Brazil in the two dimensions of the subject: social and psychological. This analysis is in opposition to a saying by Freud which is commonly used by the Brazilian psychologists: “Every psychology is Social Psychology.” This belief serves both to social psychologists who believe they can disregard the contributions of the remainder human and social sciences – since “social” would be present in the “psychological”-, and to those who despise the formulations inherent to psychology, since “social” would be naturally impregnated with “psychological.”

As regards the “social” dimension, additionally to studies on spontaneous interpersonal and intergroup relations, one can basically find in the subject the phenomena taking place “in society”, and that depend on the organization and work of that society. These have been called “societal” rather than been generically named as “social.”

A. G. Keller, who created the term “societary” or “societal” in 1903, stated that “the development of a society’s science would need an adjective corresponding to the noun-society,

meaning something much better-defined than social” (Keller, 1931; quoted in FGV, 1987, p. 1146). In fact, the adjective “social” derives from *socius* that refers to any form of relation between individuals, while the adjective “societal” derives from *societas* that refers to the “social action of individuals and groups, engaged in the structural and functional aspects of the organization and working of a human community or society” (Hertzler, 1954; quoted in FGV, 1987, p. 1146). Specifically regarding Social Psychology, Valentim (2012, p.1) believes that societal approaches focus on “the core role of socio-historical benchmarks, ideologies, normative systems and meanings in psychosocial research.”

In this sense, it seems to be valid placing – although in a rough way – the different current paths of Social Psychology in a dimension that stretches from generic “social” to the “societal.”

As regards the “psychological” dimension, what is basically on the bet in Social Psychology as a scientific subject is not the generic and obvious recognition that psychological processes are part of the psychosocial phenomena, but the explicit

considerations on how they participate in such phenomena. In this sense, the several existing paths for the Social Psychology development range from the merely observing the presence of “psychological” in the “social”, to the use of scientific resources (conceptual, theoretical, methodological) pertaining to psychology, to cope with the role played by specific psychological processes and mechanisms in the production of psychosocial phenomena, as well as on the implications of these phenomena on the psychological functioning of individuals.

Therefore, it is worthwhile analyzing the several paths according to their location in a dimension ranging from belittlement for the contributions provided by psychology to the situation, to a completely opposite dimension where it is believed that these are enough to study the psychosocial phenomena.

To summarize these considerations, the chart below discloses the location of different paths of Social Psychology in the “social” dimension (from less to more engaged to societal analysis) and “psychological” dimension (from less to more committed to the psychological subject).

	Less societal	More or less societal	More societal
More Psychological	<i>Mainstream</i>		European
More or less Psychological		Micro-sociological	
Less Psychological		Constructionists Philosophic	Social-historic Marxist Institutional

Figure 1

Chart of location of current Social Psychology in social and psychological dimensions of the discipline.

The location of the mainstream Social Psychology seems to be unchallengeable, as it corresponds not only to what critics say about it, but it is also taken on by constructors themselves. In fact, G. Allport (1968, p.3) defines Social Psychology as “an attempt of understanding and explaining how the thoughts, feelings and behaviors of individuals are influenced by the real, imaginary or implicit presence of other individuals”, thus evidencing its approximation to the notion of *socius* rather than of *societas*. Moreover, being considered as a branch of Psychology is a sufficient indicator of its exclusive commitment to the conceptual, theoretical and methodological resources of that subject. In the field of social cognition the difference between of what Social Psychology does and what is done by the cognitive psychology is not so strong.

The European Social Psychology, for its origin – where it took advantage of the remainder social sciences –, for the topics to which it has been applied since then, and for its purpose of making Social Psychology “more sociable”, is characterized as being a “more societal” path. Doise (2012b, p. 28) has inclusively replaced, *en passant*, the expression “more social” - employed by Tajfel – for “more societal.” Here, the use of Psychology – including the mainstream Social Psychology – is also evident and could be illustrated when Moscovici appropriates the work by J. Piaget to study social representations, introducing the notion of active minorities, based on the research by S.

Asch on conformity, and on the advances reached by Tajfel regarding intergroup relations, anchored in the work by M. Sheriff. The appropriation of the investigation fields – like minority’s influence and intergroup processes – originated by the mainstream set cannot be attributed to a deeper study on its psychological dimension; rather, it is due to the societal stripping of the problems arising out and about it.

The location of micro-sociological perspectives in an intermediary position (“more or less”) both in the social and psychological dimensions should be attributed to its unique participation in the “*stricto sensu*” Social Psychology. In fact, these currents are not more familiar to the psychological science; however, it does not mean they have not used it to build their psychosocial perspectives. Berger and Luckmann (1974) consider that when they emphasize the articulation of knowledge sociology to Mead’s thought that, in their view, suggested “an interesting possibility to what could be called as sociological psychology, i.e., a psychology that derives its core perspectives from the sociological understanding of the human condition.” (p. 243).

As regards the “social” dimension, although the symbolic interactionism has privileged the spontaneous development of social roles, its articulation with the sociological theory of roles (Álvaro & Garrido, 2006) gives rise to a psychosocial perspective that considers both the society that defines and rules

the exercise of social roles in the several levels of its structure, and the individuals that are socialized when playing such roles, who adjust or conform to them, or rise up against and change them, gradually innovating them, and so on.

The constructionist perspectives counterpoint the three paths of Social Psychology under analysis, as these are decisively positioned in the “less psychological” portion of the analytical chart. In fact, the “deconstruction” of the constructs that explain its psychological order, results from its post-modern nature, despite the argument that it is committed to building a Social Psychology. In principle, this claim of being participating in the “internal history” of the subject is what keeps them in the “*stricto sensu*” set. As regards social dimension, the efforts toward replacing the psychological explanations for interactional processes (the narrative practices, for example), of *socius* order, may have done it away with greater concern about the societal aspects.

The philosophical perspective of the “*lato sensu*” set holds the same classification as “less psychological and more or less societal” in the analytical chart, virtually for the same reasons: the post-modern epistemological trend that disqualifies the psychological explanation, and such a broad conceptual systematization of the society that typically fails in apprehending subtle variations in the ways how individuals and different groups live in a “societal” way, and those happening in the “fringes” of the society.

The social-historical, Marxist and institutional perspectives that are also comprised as a “*lato sensu* Social Psychology”, are all placed in the “less psychological” portion of the analytical chart. In fact, although these are academically comprised by the Social Psychology, all of them present clear recklessness – sometimes even disregard – to the psychological dimension of the subject. Even the social-historical perspective that appraises the figure of Vygotski’s fails in making deeper use of his psychological contributions.

On the other hand, all these schools are placed on the “more societal” portion of the analytical chart. Undoubtedly, their concerns are basically focused on understanding more the *societas* than the *socius* – even because these interpenetrate or appropriate from the others’ propositions. Their respective origins – in philosophy, political science, sociology and some more refined and/or applied details of these – account for their common location. However, one should note that these adopt different approaches to handle with psychosocial phenomena taking place in the Western social-economic-cultural contexts – which, in current and factual terms comprise Brazil – dividing these among some understood as legitimate objects of study, and others that are understood as “historical anomalies”, thus undeserving this classification. For example, “social movements” include the “landless movement”, but the “ruralist opposition” will be hardly considered to be a social movement; or, in the community psychology, the “slum communities” would be considered a social movement, while a “medium-class condominium” will not be considered as worthy of being studied.

Considering that the maxim that “every Psychology is Social Psychology” has been overcome by the analysis of different trends in the social and psychological dimensions of

the subject, it is worth mentioning two additional maxims that, when combined, summarize the advocacy for the articulation of psychology and social sciences to build Social Psychology. According to one of these maxims, “Social Psychology cannot be done exclusively with Psychology”, while the other says that “neither Social Psychology can be done without Psychology.”

The idea here is that when one of these maxims is neglected, no fully satisfactory path can be found to Social Psychology. That could be illustrated by analyzing the trends on the “more psychological and less societal” – the mainstream – end and on the “more societal and less psychological” – the social-historical, the Marxist and the institutional ones – on the other end. In principle, both the first and latter ones, regardless the reasons, make a minimum investment in the dimensions less valued by them, evidencing how insufficient such investment could be.

The most explored investment of mainstream Social Psychology’s in the societal dimension is the distinction between collective and individualist societies, studied by H. C. Triandis. Such distinction is conceptually consistent to and supported by rigorous empirical demonstrations, but leaves apart the characterization of human societies developed by social sciences, which could contribute to the study of psychosocial phenomena in ways that are not comprised by the individualism-collectivism polarization. These contributions are evidenced, among others, by Émile Durkheim’s distinction between mechanical-solidarity and organic-solidarity societies in terms of the historical process of labor division. Moreover, the complex stratifications of contemporaneous societies do not seem to be dully approached by that model, except for the statistical handling that certifies the significant prevalence of one of such categorizations. However, it leaves aside the minority populations segments as legitimate objects of study of Social Psychology.

As regards the perspectives of the “more societal and less psychological” hub, its main incursion in the psychological dimension – conditioned by social dimension – seems to be the so-called “constructing of subjectivity” that results from the different forms of “subjectivation.” In the first sight, it is a condensation of Vygotski’s thesis on the historical-social bases of conscience and higher psychological processes, but it has been broadly appropriated by the remainder currents of the “*lato sensu*” set. In anyway, it is an economic and flexible resource to approach the “forgotten dimension” in these currents. Therefore, it waives the pertinent contributions of psychology, differently from what is done, for example, Keller by the European current when studying social identity – a rich and complex notion that “*lato sensu*” paths simplify as a case of “subjectivity building.”

### Findings

Although the eight paths or currents of the Social Psychology development in Brazil identified herein are clearly different, these could be pooled in terms of some basic affinities. The allocation of four paths to a “*stricto sensu* Social Psychology” and the remainder four ones to a “*lato sensu* Social Psychology” was followed by an analysis in terms of the location of each of them in the social and psychological dimensions of Social Psychology. A comparison between the first and the second categorization raises interesting issues that should be considered in this conclusion.

Starting by the apparent easier situation, the four currents of the “*lato sensu*” set, added with the constructionist perspectives, were categorized as “less (and more or less) psychological” and as “more (and more or less) societal.” These five paths or currents are thus oriented by the maxim that “Social Psychology cannot be done exclusively with Psychology”- and actively seek for other disciplinary contributions (including in philosophies that are supposedly supra-disciplinary) – but fail in regarding the maxim that “Social Psychology cannot be done without Psychology.”

Thus, such paths that used to be characterized as having been developed aside the “internal history” of Social Psychology, keep other common characteristics or mutual affinities. The affinities end up by placing the constructionist current closer to these than to the “*stricto sensu*” where these have been allocated in principle. Technically, all these paths seem to share active solidarity where the word of order emphasized, including by them, is “criticism.”

In fact, the approximation of its studies to the societal hub usually takes place in terms of criticism to the structure and working of the political-economic-institutional spheres that contextualize its objects of research. Similarly, the separation in relation to the psychological hub uses to involve criticism to the alignment of psychology – as science and profession – to the purposes of the societal spheres being criticized. This picture is supplemented by a critical refutation to the academic production of knowledge – not only the psychological one – that is oriented by the epistemological, theoretical and methodological requirements of our contemporary science.

The three remainder currents of the “*stricto sensu*” set seem, in the first sight, to compel to more complex conclusive considerations, since each of these are located in a different box of the dimensional analysis: the mainstream (more psychological / less societal), the European (more societal / more psychological), the micro-sociological ones (more or less psychological / more or less societal). Strictly speaking, the “*stricto sensu* Social Psychology” is a body of three different emphases of the psychosocial study. The first emphasis is on the intra- and inter-personal aspects of psychosocial phenomena; the second one is on interactions relevant to the participants’ social insertions; the third one is on the social building of knowledge and its mobilization in the life of the society.

These emphases were not mutually excluded during the historical constitution of Social Psychology; rather, these use to interpenetrate or supplement one another. Aware about the discussions held between social psychologists from several “*stricto sensu*” currents, there are also manifestations of mutual recognition, and efforts to articulate propositions of different

origins, as well. What seems to respond for solidarity in this set is what is criticized by the “*lato sensu*” currents, i.e., the valuation of the psychology contributions to the subject, and the current scientific treatment delivered to the phenomena. Here, the highlights are the theorization – with a broad production of general and supplementary theories –, and the methodological scope that ranges from observation to experimentation, from quantitative to qualitative techniques, abiding by the basic requirement of objectivity.

Finally, “criticism” is what gathers the “*lato sensu*” currents and the constructionist perspective, while the remainder “*stricto sensu*” set is characterized by “plurality.” As the composition of these two sets is ultimately reconfigured, it would be wise replacing those designations for other ones. In this sense, one set could be named “critical Social Psychology”, as claimed by the currents that make it up. The other set would be called “Social Psychology”, which comprises the plurality that characterizes it and, simultaneously, corresponds to how its currents prefer to be identified.

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*Celso Pereira de Sá*, doctor’s degree in Psychology from Getúlio Vargas Foundation (1985) He served as titular professor of Social Psychology at the University of Rio de Janeiro State (1995); remains working as professor of the Post-Graduation Program in Social Psychology. He wrote three books, and articles and chapters of books about Social Psychology, notably on the fields of social behavior, social representations and social memory. Address: Rua General Ribeiro da Costa, 178 - Bl.1 / 1201; 22010-050 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ. E-mail: sa.celso@gmail.com