

THE ORIGINS AND PROFESSIONALIZATION OF COGNITIVE PSYCHOTHERAPY IN ARGENTINA

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The growing popularity of cognitive–behavioral therapy (CBT) has helped reshape the mental health scene in the city of Buenos Aires, historically the stronghold of psychoanalysis. In the early 1980s, CBT was infrequently used and sometimes overtly resisted in the field of mental health. Almost 3 decades later, the impact of CBT has increased dramatically in Argentina, not only in independent practice but also in the health system and in everyday life. This article aims to describe the process by which Argentine psychotherapists first adopted this new theoretical framework.

Keywords: cognitive therapy, psychoanalysis, history, Argentina

One of the principal objectives of the social and cultural history of psychology is to understand how psychology has been connected to complex knowledge processes that include practices of legitimation, professional conflicts, transnational circulation of ideas, and redefinitions of the psychological field. In the case of Argentina, we need to consider the particular conditions in which this knowledge was created, reproduced, and consumed. Argentina has long been recognized as a “psychologized” country. For instance, the public health care system covers 30 sessions of psychotherapy per year, one of the highest rates of reimbursement in the world. In addition to having a high de-

mand for psychotherapy, Argentina has one of the highest rates of psychologists per capita in the world, with one psychologist per 500 citizens (Alonso, Klinar, & Gago, 2012). Psychology in Argentina is more than a scientific or clinical practice; it has become a cultural institution. Psychological language, particularly that of psychoanalysis, permeates the public sphere, the media, and everyday life (Plotkin, 2003; Plotkin & Visakovsky, 2007; Visakovsky, 2009). Terms like *trauma* and *Freudian slip* are very popular in everyday interactions.

Over the past few decades, new types of therapy have become more common in Argentina. During the 1980s, cognitive–behavioral therapy (CBT) was seldom used and sometimes resisted, but three decades later, CBT is now much more common in independent practice, in the public health care system, in everyday experience, and in international professional circles (Korman, 2010). The growing popularity of CBT has helped reshape the mental health scene and, at the same time, the broader cultural domain. Terms like *panic attack* and *depression* have gained legitimacy in everyday language and the media; at the same time, a new epistemological alliance appeared between pharmacological developments and psychotherapy. The emergence of this new psychologized language

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shows how CBT is gradually becoming a part of everyday life. As its tools and jargon circulate through the population, CBT has an increasing presence in what decades ago had been the exclusive domain of Argentinean psychoanalysis.

Structural changes in the health and educational systems have also influenced the consolidation of new therapeutic approaches in Argentina. Nowadays, the mental health system looks to evidence-based treatments to ensure “effectiveness” and “efficiency.” To meet these criteria, public and private health care providers more and more frequently endorse cognitive treatments. In the educational system, although the curricula at Argentina’s schools of psychology tend to focus mostly on psychoanalysis, there is increasingly more opportunity for cognitive training in the undergraduate and graduate levels at both private and public universities. In addition, the number of institutions dedicated to training practitioners and treating patients with CBT has increased since the 1980s, with a correspondingly larger presence in scientific activities such as seminars and conferences.

Psychoanalysis has been thoroughly studied as a key element of the psychological and cultural experience of urban middle classes and cultural elites (Klappenbach, 1990; Plotkin, 2003; Vezetti, 1989, 1996). Many have studied the institutional logic and history of psychoanalytic institutions and groups (Balan, 1991; Klappenbach, 2006; Lakoff, 2003; Visakovsky, 2001). In contrast, social scientists have seldom focused on the reception and development of CBT, which is playing an increasingly prominent role in the Argentinean version of what the English sociologist Nikolas Rose, focused on self-government techniques associated with old and new psychotherapies, called “the transformation of psychological experience” (Rose, 1989, 1996).

In English-speaking countries, CBT plays a prominent role, not only in theoretical debates but also in public treatment centers as well. It is therefore necessary to study how knowledge circulates internationally, the role of Argentina in this circuit, and the conditions that make this circulation possible in the field of mental health. This pursuit involves analyzing the specific forms of circulation of psychological knowledge in local contexts. The history of psychological knowledge and practices is understood

in terms of a productive and positive construction of the modern self, viewed in the cultural, social, and institutional milieus in which different psychological theories have been developed (Gergen & Graumann, 1996; Rose, 1989, 1996). As we understand it, the history of psychology goes beyond institutional and professional practices and lies, above all, on the reconfiguration of modern subjectivity and knowledge legitimation practices.

With this perspective, we seek to map the emergence of CBT in the broader context of Argentina’s recent historical transformation, with its last four decades of political, social, and cultural mutations. During the 1970s, Argentina endured one of the cruelest dictatorships in Latin America. The “Dirty War” (1976–1983), as it was called, was a period of censorship and state violence focused on the abduction, torture, arrest, and execution of political dissidents, as well as on the strict control of everyday life. The return of democracy in 1983 ushered in a period of political and cultural openness characterized by the reconstruction of democratic institutions and increased freedom to associate in civil society, even in intellectual networks. As one analyst said, the 1980s were characterized by “cultural modernization, full participation, and above all pluralism and the rejection of all dogmatism” (Romero, 2013, p. 257), coinciding with society’s desire for the exercise of free speech, which had been long repressed. It was in that context that alternative perspectives emerged in psychology and psychiatry, although the hegemonic dominance of psychoanalysis was still strong. During the 1990s, Argentina suffered a massive process of transformation. New developments in communications technology, globalization, and neoliberal policies had deep consequences in the cultural and intellectual milieu.

The novelty of CBT has caused all sorts of reactions, both positive and critical. The growing presence of CBT in health systems and the increased demand are undeniable facts that need to be understood. But CBT did not appear from a void, it emerged within an institutional and symbolic framework inherited from psychoanalysis, which shows both continuities and changes with the Argentine psychological culture. The current article is a part of a broader research project that, in its initial stage, seeks to study popular science magazines, the archives

of the Argentine Cognitive Therapy Association (ACTA) and other institutions, as well as articles written by cognitive therapists to show how the emergence of this body of knowledge is in fact a product of the complex interplay among people, scientific events, formal and informal institutions, and knowledge.

Most of the information used in this study was collected through lengthy interviews with members of the ACTA, which has been a member of the International Association of Cognitive Psychotherapy since 1992. We also did interviews with experts in psychology and psychiatry who follow the CBT model but do not belong to the ACTA, and with other experts who reject CBT. Secondary data were also used to complement and contrast the information gathered from the interviews.

Personal interviews were chosen to reconstruct the narratives of the past according to the interpersonal lived experience, taking into account that those narratives say much more about present interpretations and “biographical illusion” than a realistic description of the past (Denzin, 1989). Those narratives, which have the value of documenting dimensions that do not appear in textual records, are a useful source when written records are limited or nonexistent. In this case, three sources were examined for written records: the psychological history archives of Argentina at the National University of Cordoba and the University of Buenos Aires (UBA), the records of the ACTA, and the psychological journals of the time. None yielded much information of value. There is little critical or historical literature about CBT in Argentina. As Rosner wrote (1999, p. 5) the consolidation of CBT still remains a relatively contemporary phenomenon. For that reason, there is little historical data or attention from social scientists. This article aims to fill this cognitive gap.

Our purpose is to describe and understand the conditions in which CBT has developed in the Argentine context as a part of a wider process of transnationalization of psychological knowledge (Damousi & Plotkin, 2009), but also as part of a process of local negotiation between psychoanalysis and new forms of expertise on “psychological suffering.” To accomplish this, we will first analyze the different historical perspectives about the development of CBT. Second, we will describe the emergence of cogni-

tive therapy in Argentina. We will focus on the introduction of cognitive models among local therapists, the construction of an international network, the impact and controversies around the visit of Hans Eysenck in the early 1980s, and the institutionalization and professionalization of CBT in the 1990s.

Society and Psychological Knowledge: Historical Perspectives About CBT

Clinicians who have written about the history of psychology focus on the development of the literature itself or on the field of psychotherapy as a whole. They describe several narratives to explain the origins of what is now called CBT. On the one hand, some authors inspired by a positivist perspective believe that behavioral therapies provide the roots of the cognitive model’s success and see cognitive therapy as a byproduct of research in basic psychology (Fishman, Rego, & Muller, 2013; Rachman, 1997). Other authors focus on the continuities and changes emerging from the psychoanalytical tradition. They suggest that the origins of CBT are rooted in the popularization of effectiveness criteria in the United States and a subsequent crisis in psychoanalysis (Plas, 2008; Semerari, 2002). Others still interested in an institutional conception of psychology focus on the psychoanalytical background of the founders of CBT, Aaron T. Beck and Albert Ellis (Hollon & DiGiuseppe, 2013). Rosner, for example, has written a historical analysis of the origins of CBT showing Beck’s deep roots in psychoanalysis (Rosner, 1999, 2012).

The development of cognitive therapy can be understood both from within the field, focusing on innovation in knowledge, personal histories, and controversies, and from a broader perspective, considering its relationship with psychoanalysis, scientific policies, and institutional transformations. In addition, it is important to consider broader social and cultural transformations over a longer period of time, in the context of sociological studies of subjectivity, conceptions of efficacy, and the cultural definition of therapy. The emergence and consolidation of CBT can be seen in the broader context of social transformation and the circulation of psychological knowledge among contemporary Western societies.

The roots of CBT can be studied with a social and cultural perspective that goes beyond the field of psychology itself. A group of authors that focused on a broader understanding of knowledge, subjectivity, and changes in lifestyles to understand psychotherapy described the emergence of a new psychological culture, originating in the United States, which was centered in self-responsibility and critical of the psychoanalytical tradition (Castel, 1991; Ehrenberg, 2010; Rose, 1989).

Considering the emergence of psychotherapies centered in a behaviorist perspective, Rose (1989) wrote of the development of a new field of “self-control,” embodying a new form of subjectivity, consonant with an ethic of the technical enhancement of lifestyle by an autonomous and responsible self. Experts instruct and educate the client in self-inspection, leading to “self-analysis” and “self-help” to cope with disorders such as anxiety, depression, and panic attacks. According to Rose, these experts focus on

systematic self-monitoring and record keeping, showing the occasions on which desired and undesired behavior occur, and the construction of a detailed plan program for transforming conduct, not through airy and overambitious hopes, but through little steps, with achievable goals, each followed by rewards. (p. 241)

In a similar perspective, the French sociologist Robert Castel considers the emergence of new psychotherapies as a transformation of contemporary subjectivity itself, including new forms of relationships between expert and patient/client and new management of social and personal risk (Castel, 1991, p. 281). Those conceptions, which originated in U.S. psychological culture after 1960, later became more dominant in French psychotherapy and also in everyday life, redefining the place of suffering and well-being (Ehrenberg, 2010). As a result of the emergence of the new psychotherapies, some authors even talk about a new ontology focused on a particular conception of autonomy and a new conception of psychic suffering and well-being centered in “evidence” (Dodier & Rabeharisoa, 2006, p. 73).

This brief survey of the emergence of a new field of knowledge about contemporary subjectivity leads us to a series of questions: In which ways has this therapeutic culture been received in Argentina? How has CBT emerged in an

eminently psychoanalytical field? Through which networks does this body of knowledge circulate and institutionalize itself? What consequences does this have on the local scene?

Cognitive Therapy in Argentina

The importance of psychoanalysis in Argentina is essential to understanding the nation’s original responses to CBT. Almost all of the therapists interested in cognitive models were professionals with a thorough background in psychoanalysis. Cognitive psychotherapy was at first discussed in informal settings in the late 1970s by psychologists, mostly with psychoanalytical backgrounds, who were curious about diverse and heterogeneous theoretical models and had traveled abroad. During this time in Argentina, because of the dictatorship, communication among intellectuals was limited and knowledge circulated slowly through informal networks (Sábato, 1996). Cognitive models were perceived as an alternative to what some of our interviewers referred to as “orthodox psychoanalysis.” In this context, other “new therapies” were considered “unorthodox,” such as systemic, Reichian therapies and foggier criticisms of mentalism that advocated for experimenting with the body (Carozzi, 2001). In what follows, we will describe the first contacts between local professionals and cognitive psychotherapy, the construction of an international network, the impact of Eysenck’s visit in the early 1980s, and the institutionalization and professionalization of CBT at the end of the 20th century.

The psychologists Héctor Fernández Álvarez and Sara Baringoltz played an essential role in this process. Both came from a psychoanalytical background and taught in the School of Psychology at UBA. Fernández Álvarez had worked under José Itzigsohn at UBA, who introduced a reflexological outlook inspired by Russian behaviorism and headed the teams teaching Introduction to Psychology and General Psychology. Baringoltz also worked under Itzigsohn, and taught Projective Techniques I and II, under María Siquier de Ocampo. This is relevant because it shows that the School of Psychology was not exclusively psychoanalytical at that time.

Military dictatorship was a critical episode in recent Argentine history. A great number of

intellectuals and academics left public universities, and the psychological field as a whole was not an exception. Fernández Álvarez described how he had to leave UBA during the dictatorship, stressing the importance of privately training small groups:

On March 24th, 1976, the Military expelled me from the University . . . A Military Board running the University of Buenos Aires, at that time it was the Faculty of Philosophy, investigated every teacher and came to the conclusion that I was incompetent, so I was kicked out of the University for academic incompetence. I never came back. My last day there was March 23rd. I always say that this terrible situation we lived in Argentina created two types of exiles. Many people who had no other choice had to leave the country. And the rest of us went to a sort of internal exile, in the sense that our situation wasn't serious enough to threaten our lives, but at the same time it was best for us to stay off the radars. So we took shelter in more "internal" spaces.

Once Fernández Álvarez was expelled from UBA, he continued his academics activities at the University of Belgrano, a new private university that received some professors from UBA. When the career of psychology was closed at UBA, small and informal groups of study become very important during the dictatorship among intellectuals and academics. As [Sábato \(1996\)](#) stressed, informal study groups and some private institutions were a safe haven for discussion in an otherwise intellectually repressive context. Private groups were also important in training and debate in the psychoanalytical field. These types of groups were soon adapted to these new theoretical and clinical interests, probably because most of the participants shared a common background and experience with study groups. In addition, the interest in alternatives to "orthodox psychoanalysis" seemed to promote experimentation. But the interest in new psychological theories was also important in this process. Baringoltz also left UBA for the University of Belgrano, teaching both Psychodiagnostics and Assessment with the Rorschach. She wrote,

I met Héctor Fernández Álvarez at the University of Belgrano. I guess it was in the late 70s, I don't know, 1975, 1980. At that time we started working at the Research Institute of the University of Belgrano, and we started meeting, just the two of us, to study these new theories . . . At the same time, all through the 1970s, I started experimenting with other models. I tried out Systemic and Gestalt therapy, and I also studied Psychodrama, among other models.

The theoretical interests of Fernández Álvarez and Baringoltz were broad and eclectic, as was typical at that time. If they had anything in common, it was mostly their rejection of what they considered "orthodox psychoanalytic models."

Gabriel Brarda, a member of the group that Baringoltz assembled to study cognitive therapy, talked about his first impression of the group in the mid-1980s:

When I first arrived at the group I realized I was the one who was the closest to being a traditional psychoanalyst. There were people who were into Psychodrama; others studied Systemic Therapy; there was someone who was studying the Palo Alto School; another one was into the Systemic-Structural School. There were even people who were working with corporal techniques.

At the time, the focus was less on CBT per se and more on the search for therapeutic models that could be an alternative to "orthodox psychoanalysis." Claudia Bregman, a member of the initial group that followed Fernández Álvarez, talked about her experience with the Aiglé Foundation during the 1980s:

We had a study group on Laing and Cooper . . . What I mean to say is that we didn't favor any specific model or theory . . . In 1983 or 1984, maybe even a year later, we assembled at Aiglé the first group of people who started specifically studying Short-Term Psychotherapy . . . and with the people in that group we started our training in CBT.

In the early 1980s, Eysenck's visit to Buenos Aires seemed to be a defining moment in the formation of a new intellectual climate, perceived by most interviewees as a turning point in the field of psychology. The controversy surrounding his visit provides a perspective on the intellectual community of the time, the values at stake, and the role of some therapists who were active in disseminating new models of psychotherapy.

The Eysenck Affair

In 1981, Hans Eysenck gave a lecture at the first Argentine Psychotherapies Conference, organized by the University of Belgrano, for an audience of mostly psychoanalysts. It is worth noting that the name of the conference referred to psychotherapies and not to psychoanalysis, a sign of a transformation that placed psychoanal-

ysis within an integrative framework mostly oriented toward clinical practice.

It is important to understand the general context in which this conference took place. In 1980, the Health Ministry issued a ruling that psychologists could not practice psychoanalysis or psychotherapy, and could not prescribe psychiatric drugs (Klappenbach, 2000). At the same time, a number of scientific conferences, explicitly and with a critical attitude, helped spread the use of the term “psychotherapy” within the country, to show that there was an alternative to psychoanalysis.

In his lecture, Eysenck, who was at that time the world-renowned director of the Department of Psychology of the University of London’s Institute of Psychiatry, stressed the importance of psychotherapy and its connection with empirical clinical research, creating a controversy with the eminently psychoanalytic audience. Fernández Álvarez remembers Eysenck’s final conference as violent and unpleasant. According to Fernández Álvarez, Eysenck said that he “couldn’t believe he was before an audience of people who claimed to be scientists but who were actually ignorant of things that could help improve the health of their patients.” The psychoanalysts in the audience responded to this accusation by saying that they “didn’t care about this behavioral therapy he was talking about, because it was ‘a clockwork orange,’” referring to state-sponsored aversion therapy in the novel by Anthony Burgess that inspired Stanley Kubrick’s film of the same name.

According to Baringoltz, the debate became extremely heated, mostly between Eysenck and well-known psychoanalysts such as Mauricio Abadi, who was at the time the president of the Argentine Psychoanalytical Association. According to observers, the psychoanalysts may have felt their own place in the field was being threatened, but also had legitimate concerns based on their professional honor and theoretical and clinical convictions.

Most of our interviewees claim not to have picked sides at the time of the controversy. Baringoltz, for example, said, “When the conference was over, I thought: I’m not convinced by either of them. This is plain madness!” Nevertheless, after the visit, there was a greater breach with the psychoanalytic tradition. Fernández Álvarez mentioned that there were seminars on such topics as transference and

guilt at the Aiglé Foundation before Eysenck’s talk, but after the conference, the group stopped studying psychoanalytic concepts. Both Baringoltz’s group and the Aiglé Foundation were focused on an empirical clinical research model, partially because of the novelty of the English-speaking tradition and partially because of the search for an eclectic approach to well-being.

Eysenck’s strong personality and the debate he initiated left a lasting memory in most of the people interviewed for this research. These future champions of the cognitive model in Argentina stated that his visit was pivotal in the search for a theoretical identity that would later be defined with the creation of the ACTA.

Building an International Network

The Aiglé Foundation, founded in 1977, was the first Argentine institution studying cognitive therapy in a broader context of integration and eclecticism. In 1987, the Center for Cognitive Therapy (CCT) was founded by a group of psychologists and psychiatrists led by Sara Baringoltz, specifically to focus on cognitive therapy. According to Ruth Wilner, one of the founding members of the CCT, the group “ended up being like the seed of what nowadays is the CCT, which was a private group created to study CBT for those who were specifically interested in that model.” Eclecticism was a central feature. At the beginning, their view was more integrative than cognitive, although they used the term “cognitive” in their name.

Professionals from both institutions stayed in touch with new models of psychotherapy via self-financed travel abroad, encouraged by the exchange rate policy of the dictatorship in the late 1970s. A shift took place among this group of Argentine psychologists at this time, from an intellectual focus on French psychotherapy, particularly Lacanian psychoanalysis, to the intellectual debates rooted in North American psychotherapies. Baringoltz, for example, studied in Palo Alto at her own expense. Ruth Wilner stressed that in a travel to United States, she “brought back a giant suitcase full of books, and at that time I was getting together with Sarita [Baringoltz], who was putting together a study group.”

Fernández Álvarez said that being in touch with what was happening abroad was a key element of this initial experience:

From my (internal) exile, I started to contact people from abroad. Fortunately, the mail wasn't forbidden, and once in a while one could make a trip abroad. I started to see that Cognitivism, as a theoretical model, was starting to gain momentum in the world as a concrete form of clinical practice, related to mental health and to psychotherapy in particular.

The professionals from abroad who came to Argentina to give lectures and workshops were very important in education and in building international networks. In the mid-1980s, Baringoltz traveled to Beck's CCT at the University of Pennsylvania with Wilner and Lydia Tineo. There, they became more acquainted with a style of working than with a particular model or technique, establishing links with American professionals. They then traveled to the West Coast to attend a conference on depression organized by cognitive therapists and met Christine Padesky at her center. Training sessions were set up at the Aiglé Foundation and Baringoltz's independent study group. Specialists from abroad taught in Argentina as well, including Michael Mahoney, Vittorio Guidano, Leslie Greenberg, Jeremy Safran, and Jeffrey Young.

Institutionalization of Cognitive Therapy

The 1980s, with the return of democracy, proved to be an excellent time for experimenting (Landi, 1984). Postdictatorship Argentina was a hotbed of cultural innovation and intellectual connection, so scholars who sought out foreign literature or traveled abroad found many like-minded peers. There was also an intellectual effervescence caused by the return of many exiles who had different experiences in Europe and the United States with "new therapies." The return of the exiles and the impact of scholars who studied abroad created a new culture of self-cultivation. The echoes of the European and American counterculture favored spontaneity, personal autonomy, and well-being among some sectors of the middle classes. The broader community was more and more suspicious of long-term analytical treatment, demanding efficient and concrete solutions to the problems of everyday life (Carozzi, 2001; Plotkin, 2003).

This atmosphere of experimentation, the increased access to international literature, and the development of groups devoted to the discussion of theoretical and clinical cognitive models formed the background of what would later become the ACTA, through a discontinu-

ous and complex process. Cognitive models were studied as part of a series of different coexisting theoretical traditions. Therapists were interested in eclecticism, uniting different traditions to enhance patient well-being. Out of this multiplicity and environment of free choice, an intellectual current emerged that focused on empirical research and "evidence-based treatment" (Dodier & Rabeharisoa, 2006; Rose, 1989).

In the late 1980s, psychiatrist Herbert Chappa founded the *Instituto de Terapias Cognitivas e Integrativas* (Cognitive and Integrative Therapies Institute) in the city of La Plata. In 1992, Juan Balbi founded the *Centro de Terapia Cognitiva Postracionalista* (Post-Rationalist Cognitive Therapy Center) in Buenos Aires, inspired by the Italian psychiatrist and cognitive psychotherapist Vittorio Guidano. These research and training centers bear witness to the significant expansion and institutionalization of CBT, which would increasingly consolidate and professionalize during the 1990s.

Professionalization and Institutional Consolidation

The 1990s were a period of expansion of CBT in Argentina, with a "cognitive revolution" in independent practice as well as in the health system. At the same time, CBT was increasingly important in university training as links strengthened with American and European professionals. The ACTA was created in 1992, 2 years after the International Association for Cognitive Psychotherapy was founded. As Baringoltz said, "At some point Vittorio Guidano said to us: Why don't you create an Argentine Association of Cognitive Therapy? I think it would be good, it would help your connections abroad."

The creation of the ACTA was part of a global movement, prompted by a local socio-economical situation. Along with neoliberal policies, trade liberalization, social deregulation and the privatization of public life, during the 1990s there was an increased circulation of new psychological ideas and practices. The increased interest in Anglo-Saxon psychological literature and the extension of international professional networks paved the way for the relative success of CBT during the decade. The success of cognitive therapy in the United States

and in some European countries legitimized the Argentine professionals. As Fernández Álvarez put it, "What gave us strength? What was happening abroad. Psychotherapy was becoming more and more cognitive. And sooner or later, that also started to happen in Argentina."

CBT was increasingly taught in institutions of higher education. Around 1992, the Aiglé Foundation organized a series of postgraduate courses at the National University of Mar del Plata. Also in 1992, the foundation created the *Argentine Journal of Clinical Psychology*, designed to disseminate information about "empirical research" in clinical psychology. The first postgraduate course in psychology to gain recognition from the Ministry of Education was the master's program in Clinical Psychology with a Cognitive Orientation at the National University of San Luis in 1993. In 1995, psychologist Eduardo Keegan created a postgraduate course in cognitive therapy at the School of Psychology at UBA, and in 2000, the same university introduced a course in Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapies, the first mandatory course that included CBT. UBA now plays an important role in the institutionalization of CBT in the training of new generations of cognitive psychologists, a space traditionally dominated by psychoanalysis. In fact, 60% of Argentine psychologists graduated from the UBA have a psychoanalytic background (Plotkin, 2006). As Keegan noted,

The thing was that in the year 2000 we started having an immense number of students, like it usually is at UBA. We have 200, 300, 400 students every semester. This meant that after a year, 400, 500, 700 people found out about cognitive therapy. Nowadays, seven years later, you have to add the word-of-mouth effect to those actual figures, which makes it much more widespread, especially with people who are presently graduating and entering the professional market.

Today, cognitive therapists are more and more important in Argentine psychology, and there are more and more training opportunities in both public and private institutions. Many institutions of cognitive therapy exist, most affiliated with the ACTA. In addition, CBT is more and more popular among the public. Considerations such as "effectiveness," "brevity of treatment," and "specificity of diagnosis," based on the DSM IVR (2000) model, are now important in Argentine psychology, so the prior dominance of psychoanalysis is lessening. As

Dodier and Rabeharisoa (2006) explain, the model of "evidence based" psychotherapy is part of a new way to understand subjectivity, focusing on an autonomous life that is coherent with the contemporary Western urban lifestyle.

Conclusions

CBT first appeared on the international scene in the late 1960s, but did not become prevalent in Argentina until the 1980s. There are now a number of cognitive institutions in Argentina, most of which started as private study groups. Studying the formation of the institutions that today form the ACTA has allowed us to describe the emergence of cognitive therapy in Buenos Aires, as well as to identify a growing importance that is connected to social and cultural transformations.

The development of CBT in Buenos Aires has been associated with the ups and downs of the local professional world during the last three decades, as well as the personal biographies of its main characters. Early experimentation with the model has developed into professionalism, associated with postgraduate studies and an increased number of scholars and clinicians. Many of the early exponents of cognitive therapy had a background in psychoanalysis and sought training in cognitive therapy among various alternatives to the traditional emphasis in Argentina on this type of treatment.

The focus on CBT has reconfigured the professional world of psychology in Argentina, redefining the criteria for the classification and treatment of disorders and establishing a new language of psychological well-being. The emphasis in CBT on "effective treatments" and "clinical research" has drawn clinical psychology closer to psychiatry and pharmacology.

The transnationalization of ideas is one factor in its growth, but CBT has also become increasingly popular in Argentina because of the requirements of a new lifestyle focused on personal well-being. The historical changes that have resulted in the new visibility of CBT in Argentina are linked to institutional and ideological factors in the field of psychology, as well as to larger social and cultural issues connected to new forms of subjectivity.

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