

# THE ORIGINS OF THE CONCEPT OF AGGRESSION IN GESTALT-THERAPY: FREUD, REICH AND OTHERS

*Origens do Conceito de Agressão na Gestalt-Terapia: Freud, Reich e outras Fontes*

*Orígenes de lo concepto de la agresión en terapia Gestalt: Freud, Reich y Otros*

THAUANA SANTOS DE ARAÚJO  
ADRIANO FURTADO HOLANDA

**Resumo:** O conceito de Agressão, está na base da construção da Gestalt terapia, sendo central para o primeiro trabalho de Fritz Perls, *Ego, Fome e Agressão*, de 1942. O tema foi desenvolvido por Fritz e Laura Perls, a partir de um trabalho desta de observação de crianças. Objetivou-se resgatar as origens do conceito, que remonta às primeiras experiências com a psicanálise, buscando esclarecer os elos entre esta e a Gestalt terapia. O trabalho se pautou por uma análise de fontes primárias – obras de Fritz, de Freud e de Laura – e secundárias pertinentes. Evidenciou-se a necessidade de se retomar um elo claro entre a Gestalt terapia e sua fonte psicanalítica, bem como clarificar as influências de outros nomes, como Reich, Goldstein, Horney e Nietzsche, na construção desse conceito.

**Palavras-chave:** Gestalt-terapia; Agressão; Psicanálise.

**Abstract:** The concept of Aggression lies on the basis of the construction of Gestalt therapy, being central to the first work of Fritz Perls, *Ego, Hunger and Aggression*, of 1942. The theme was developed by Fritz and Laura Perls, from a work of watching children. The objective of the paper was to recover the origins of the concept, which goes back to the first experiences with psychoanalysis, seeking to clarify the links between this and Gestalt therapy. The study was based on an analysis of primary sources - works by Fritz, Freud and Laura - and relevant secondary sources. It points to the need to re-establish a clear link between Gestalt therapy and its psychoanalytic source, and clarified, as well, the influences of other names, such as Reich, Goldstein, Horney and Nietzsche, in the construction of this concept.

**Keywords:** Gestalt-therapy; Aggression; Psychoanalysis.

**Resumen:** El concepto de Agresión está en la base de la construcción de la Gestalt terapia, siendo central para el primer trabajo de Fritz Perls, *Ego, Hambre y Agresión*, de 1942. El tema fue desarrollado por Fritz y Laura Perls, a partir de un trabajo de ésta de observación de niños. Se objetivó rescatar los orígenes del concepto, que se remonta a las primeras experiencias con el psicoanálisis, buscando esclarecer los eslabones entre ésta y la Gestalt terapia. El trabajo se basó en un análisis de fuentes primarias - obras de Fritz, de Freud y de Laura - y secundarias pertinentes. Se evidenció la necesidad de reanudar un vínculo claro entre la Gestalt terapia y su fuente psicoanalítica, así como aclarar las influencias de otros nombres, como Reich, Goldstein, Horney y Nietzsche, en la construcción de ese concepto.

**Palavras-clave:** Gestalt-terapia; Agresión; Psicoanálisis.

## Introduction

A solid approach is built on several paths, and its foundations must be set from epistemological discussions, delimiting its objective value, and seeking a critique of its foundations (Jolivet, 1975). In this direction, one can consider that there has been an increase in Brazilian production on foundations issues, involving the gestaltic approach, as observed in recent publications (Holanda, 2009; Belmino, 2014; Helou, 2015). Currently, according to Frazão (2013), there are more than 60 published books, as well as numerous articles and book chapters, in addition to the growing number of master's dissertations and doctoral theses.

It is common the association of GT with a cluster of techniques, which helped to construct the image of a poorly supported approach, whose origins date back to the workshops conducted by Fritz Perls. Laura Perls (1992/1994) already suggested that the insertion of GT into the academic circle was not facilitated by this excessive emphasis on experiential practice, coupled with an anti-intellectualism discourse, which led to the weakening of

the approach. Prestrelo (2012) points to similarities related to the emergence of GT in Brazil, because here it was also established the idea of an approach based on techniques of expression of feelings, which demanded from pioneers explanations about what was *not* Gestalt.

In the wake of these events, concepts are forgotten and little visualized, such as that of *aggression* (Holanda, 2005; Staemmler, 2009). The lack of interest in the theme, for Staemmler (2009), is due to its unclear exposure in Perls's works, as well as because this notion refers to an intrapsychic consideration, as opposed to a field perspective. We have here, by object, the origin of this concept, which founded the first work of Perls (1942/2002).

## Theme Delimitation

Dental aggression was one of the themes that founded the first work of Fritz Perls (1942/2002), with significant contributions of his wife Laura, collaborator both in the writing of the book and

in the elaboration of the concept, derived from a work of observation of children in transition from sucking to biting (Perls, 1992/1994).

The aim here is to rescue the origins of the concept, which goes back to his first experiences with psychoanalysis. The research is based on a general overview of the origins of aggression theory in psychoanalysis, and other sources, considering the influences that both suffered during their professional and personal life, both intellectual and academic aspects, as well as cultural and political. This theoretical-conceptual study is based on a literature review of primary and secondary sources. The search resulted in the use of the following works and articles as primary sources: 1) From psychoanalysis, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (Freud, 1905/1996); *Instincts and their vicissitudes* (Freud, 1915/1996); *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (Freud, 1920/1996); *The Ego and the Id* (Freud, 1923/1996); *Civilization and its Discontents* (Freud, 1930 [1929]/1996); *Conference XXXII* (Freud, 1933a/1996); *An Outline of Psychoanalysis* (Freud, 1940a [1938]/1996), selected from a criterion of temporality - because they precede *Ego, Hunger and Aggression* (Perls, 1942/2002) - and relevance, for dealing with the writings that cover the studies of Freud, prior to 1942, of sexuality, drives, and aggression itself (Strachey, 1996b); 2) Texts relating to Laura Perls (Perls, 1977; 1988; 1992/1994; Bernard, 1986); 3) and Fritz Perls (1942/2002, 1951/1997, 1969/1979, 1973/2011, 1977). In addition, secondary sources were consulted and selected in the journal *Gestalt Review* and in the databases Scielo, PePSIC and BVS.

### The Position of the Question

The importance of addressing the question of origins lies mainly on Fritz's appropriation of this concept. At the time he launched his first work, Perls (1942/2002) was a psychoanalyst and aimed, with this production, to account for what he specifies in the subtitle of the book (*a revision of Freud's theory and method*). Through the reading of this work, it is noticed that the notion of aggression was born of an attempt to sketch a theory of the personality, which makes indispensable a return to Freud, although Perls delves more deeply into the oral phase and its resistances to mark the human development. In the shift of focus from the psychic to the organismic, Perls ends by outlining a theory of holistic personality, a fundamental subject of the *Gestalt-therapy* work of 1951 (Perls, 1977; Boris, 2002; Helou, 2015). A work on this theme, *Oral Resistance*, was presented at the congress of psychoanalysis (Czechoslovakia, 1936), which "was still written in Freudian terms" (Perls 1969/1979, p. 50).

In the preface to the 1969 edition of *Random House*, Fritz himself states that his first book represents the transition from orthodox psychoanalysis to GT (Perls, 1942/2002). Joe Wysong (2002) reveals that Perls's personal notes for an unpublished part of the introduction for the 1969 edition show that the project aimed to expose his revisions of Freu-

dian theory and develop his English skills. There is a consensus that *Ego, Hunger and Aggression* was born from this lecture on "Oral Resistance", and that Laura Perls had a significant participation in its production (Tellegen, 1984; Loffredo, 1994; Perls, 1992/1994; Frazão, 1997, 2002, 2013; Helou, 2015).

In the introduction for the edition of *The Gestalt Journal*, From and Miller (1997) also report that the GT embryo was an article written by Perls around 1930, in which he inferred that "resistances" - the psychological way of saying no to himself same or next - were of oral origin; and they point out that the relevance of this consideration is not exactly revolutionary, since it represented a small change in a classical psychoanalytic emphasis (psychoanalysis traditionally granted the origin of resistances to the anal region), although its developments were subversive. Both state the relevance of "oral", being the mouth, the "place" of eating, chewing, tasting, as well as language and love. In other words, "a more obvious place of encounter between the individual and the world" (From & Miller, 1997, p.21).

Fritz (Perls, 1969/1979) notes that the lecture was strongly disapproved and that "the verdict 'all resistances are anal'" (p 51) left him perplexed, and: "(...) I did not realize at the time, how revolutionary the lecture was, and how much it would shake and even invalidate some basic foundations of the Master's theory" (p.51). Strictly speaking, we should at least assume that Fritz constructed a particular interpretation of Psychoanalysis. Isadore From (quoted by Frazão, 2013) states that Perls's disagreement with Freud would be that he insisted that introjection was necessary until the age of six, while for Perls, Freud paid little attention to the psychological and emotional consequences of the eruption of the teeth, which would allow the child to stop introjecting without criticism much before the age of six.

For Laura Perls (1988, 1992/1994), the lecture, which later composed the section "Mental Metabolism" of the work of 1942, comes from a research she carried out during the birth of her daughter Renate. She noted that weaning was either carried out very early or very late, and that the initiation of infant feeding neglected the importance of chewing, maturing the idea that the beginning of chewing would be linked to learning about the assimilation process, antagonistic to the process of introjection without assimilation that occurs more frequently and constantly in this breastfeeding period. For Laura, chewing requires time, patience and awareness about what is being chewed, considering "feeding" as a process of consciousness. In an interview with Bernard (1986), she states that she and Fritz started the book together; she was aware of everything in the beginning and discussed everything, and left two chapters written for the book: "The puppet complex" and "The meaning of insomnia" as a review of Freudian analysis.

Laura Perls (1992/1994) admits that the process of feeding and weaning is one of the first bases of classical psychoanalytic thinking. She says that Fritz was in the army during the years that worked

in *Ego, Hunger and Aggression*, and Smuts, with holism, also influenced him greatly. Also, the demand for peace is opposed to one of the most vital instincts of the human being: aggressiveness; immediately associated with the destruction, and is therefore censored; and that adults usually respond with disapproval to any sign of aggression from the child and, despite education over the centuries emphasizing censorship to aggression, the results disappointing.

By being deprived of questioning, the infant is forced to swallow many things without biting, chewing or digesting. For Laura, this relationship is not a mere metaphor - which Staemmler (2009) will question - because both the ability to perform these processes with physical food and the ability to perform them with intellectual foods (such as the ability to think, criticize, understand) are manifestations of the same aggressive instinct<sup>1</sup>. The experience of psychoanalysts demonstrates that the inhibition of one of these functions affects the others; and the repression of individual aggressiveness may result in increased universal aggression, as the community will seek out other means. Finally, Laura argues that the way one eats teaches one to learn and make contact with the world. The baby, when feeding, reduces tension; and begins to make contact with the other, from the birth of the teeth (Perls, 1992/1994).

Perls says in her autobiography that she did not read Freud's entire work, but does not specify exactly what she read (Perls, 1969/1979). We find only a brief mention of the psychoanalytic origin - at least in part - of the hunger instinct: "I consider the analysis of the hunger instinct as a stepchild of psychoanalysis, without underestimating the importance of analyzing the sexual instinct" (Perls 1942, 283). Perls will devote herself in this work to developing the theory of the functions of individual self-preservation instincts, represented by food needs and self-defense; sexual priority, considered as an instinct for preservation.

In *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, Freud (1905/1996) explains that, in the oral phase,

1 On the concepts "instinct" and "drive", a brief comment is made. Gomes (2001a) states that Freud's two theories of drives use very different concepts. In the first, the key drives were sexual and for self-preservation. In turn, in the second, the drives of life and death. Freud never used the word *instinct* (*instinkt*) as an alternative or synonym of drive, since in the times in which he made use of that word he had a different meaning from its two concepts of *trieb* (drive). In contrast, Freud never opposed the translations of *trieb* as synonymous of instinct. When Freud specifically uses the word instinct, he is referring to the innate, hereditary, which is independent of individual experience, a notion that does not fit with *drive* - since the object of the drive is contingent - although it refers to the driving force, opposite to reason and reflection. Thus, in Portuguese, an acceptable translation would be "impulse". However, there is the disadvantage of not referring to the somatic, which was the Freudian idea and, when it is called "impulsive", it indicates the unreflective. Thus, the most recommendable translation is "drive", which took the place of "instinct", much used in the French translations, although "instinct" is still more usual in English. Therefore, the forces of self-preservation are, for Freud, drives throughout his work (not instincts). Therefore, hunger and thirst are drives. In this way, the aggressive drive, taken as a drive for dominance, can be thought of as selfconservation. Laplanche and Pontalis (2001) define instinct as a behavior inherited from an animal species, slightly variable from one individual to another, which extends over time without many changes and which apparently serves some purpose.

the baby's lips represent the corresponding erogenous zone, whose satisfaction, in principle, can be associated with the need for food, and that the sexual activity is initially supported by one of the functions that serve the preservation of life, achieving independence at a later time. Therefore, the need to repeat sexual satisfaction is separated from the need for food absorption, a separation that is inevitably imposed when teeth arise and food is no longer sucked but chewed. Thus, in the oral phase, sexual activity and nutrition are not yet separated, and the sexual aim lies in the *incorporation* of the object, which will play an important psychic role in the future, through *identification* (as Freud points out).

Freud makes almost no reference to the self-preservation instincts, with the exception of references on libido attach to them in the early stages of development (Strachey, 1996b, Laplanche and Pontalis, 2001). In an article of 1910 on psychogenic disorders of vision, Freud appears to suddenly introduce the expression "ego instincts", identifying them with the self-contained instincts and the repressive function, from which the conflict starts to be considered as occurring between two sets of instincts: those of the libido and those of the ego. The decisive point of the Freudian classification of instincts occurred in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. It is in this dual march of the instincts that it will arrive at the hypothesis of the death instinct. Freud presents a discussion of the subject in chapter IV of *The Ego and the Id* (1923b), retaking the theme in chapter VI of *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930a/1974), analyzing in the latter for the first time, with special attention, the aggressive and destructive instincts, bringing them as derived from the death instinct. Finally, the subject is revised in the second half of Conference XXXII (1933a) and in a final summary, in the second chapter, of the posthumous *An Outline of Psychoanalysis* (1940a [1938]/1974) (Strachey, 1996b).

In *Instincts and Their Vicissitudes*, Freud (1915/1996) says that the ego hates, does not tolerate and persecutes, "with intent to destroy, all objects that constitute a source of unpleasant sensation for him, without taking into account that they represent a frustration of both sexual satisfaction and the satisfaction of self-preservation needs" (142-143). Thus, the cradle of the hate relationship is not sexual, but the struggle of the ego to preserve itself. Love and hate, for Freud, were born from different sources: love originates from the ego's self-erotic satisfaction for pleasure, in that sense we "love" food that supplies the organ/oral zone's need for food, providing pleasure. Hate is the expression of displeasure provoked by objects and, in this sense, always maintains a relation with the instincts of self-preservation. In this way, the instincts of self-preservation and the sexual instincts remain as opposed to love and hate.

In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud (1920/1996) says that there is a strong tendency in the mind towards the pleasure principle and that, from the standpoint of self-preservation, this is ineffective and replaced by the reality principle.

The principle of pleasure does not cease for a long time to insist on returning to command, functioning as the method undertaken by the sexual instincts, often succeeding in overcoming the principle of reality.

Freud (1920/1996) conceptualizes instinct as “an impulse, inherent to organic life, to restore an earlier state of things, an impulse that the living entity was forced to abandon under the pressure of external disturbing forces, that is, it is a kind of organic elasticity, (...)” (emphasis added, p. 47), and express the inherent inertia of organic life. As for the sexual instincts, Freud points out that they are conservatives at a higher level by resisting external stimuli more effectively, as well as preserving their own lives, what they call “instincts of life”. In this context, they operate against other instincts, which would work to achieve the ultimate goal of the organism and life more quickly; sexual instincts are therefore opposed to the ego instincts. The instincts of death and life would have something conservative: to restore the state of things. In the case of the death instinct, a return to an inanimate life; the instinct of life, in turn, would aim at its continuity. Life itself would thus be a conflict and a reconciliation between such tendencies.

There would then be two kinds of antagonistic processes acting, one in a constructive direction, of unification (instincts of life), and another in a destructive direction (instincts of death). Freud (1920/1996) finally defines the dualism between instincts of life *versus* death; but warns that both are associated from the beginning, so that there is a libidinal, therefore, life, character in the instincts of self-preservation. Starting from this dualism, he mentions as another example of polarities the opposition between love (affection) and hatred (aggression). In summary, for Freud both are libidinal in nature, but there would be other instincts belonging to the ego that could be found in the destructive instincts, hence the opposition instincts of life and instincts of death. Laplanche (1985) verifies two intentions in the way the death drive is described in *Beyond the pleasure principle*: to reaffirm the fundamental economic principle - the tendency to zero; and give a metapsychological status to the discoveries in the field of “aggressiveness” or “destructiveness”. Before 1920, the aggression drive does not appear and even the term *aggressiveness* is also hardly seen.

Müller-Granzotto and Müller-Granzotto (2007) point out that, unlike Freud, Perls does not identify these orientations as a drive of life and death, calling them “organismic functions”, supported by Goldstein, and through them the material elements involved in the current experience, whether of the present or of the past, will be oriented toward unification or destruction. In that, these elements are stabilized in the experience, for conservation. In destruction, they are transcended as channels of openness to the new: growth. Therefore, “Perls understands the drives described by Freud as an ambiguous flow of *awareness*: either toward the conservation of experience, or towards its transformation”

(p 53). The drives would not be archaic contents whose destination should be recovery or replacement. They would represent the ambiguous way the organism functions. That is, to assimilate the new and keep up, updating, the old must be destroyed. Perls, in an unpublished section of the preface to the 1969 edition of *Random House* (Wulf, 1996), alludes to the fact that a new approach to man in his health and situation emerged, and no longer is an analyst. It makes it clear that she did not conceive aggression as a mystical energy born of Thanatos, but as a tool for survival, and that concepts such as reflexes (stimulus-response) and instincts as stable properties have become obsolete.

Helou (2015) puts the concept of mental metabolism as a great innovation of Perls, although this comes from the notion of psychic work. Perls develops the hypothesis of organismic work through the mental assimilation of internal and external content (internal perceptions and sensations, and of reality); and shares the idea that aggression is a fundamental energy necessary for human survival, calling it “biological force” (Perls, 1942/2002). With the action of the ego through aggressive forces, new material can be rejected or assimilated. In this way, the Perlsian proposal - and, furthermore, Laura’s, inspired by Smuts and Goldstein - points to the addition of a healthy aspect (of assimilation and rejection) of the work of identifying the ego to the Freudian conception of introjection (“not healthy”, for the Perls, since it would only involve swallowing/incorporating without selection) (Helou, 2015). Still in the same preface, Fritz asserts that insufficiently applied aggression in the stage of entry (hunger) and de-structuring of external mental and physical foods impairs maturation, and that the idea of assimilation weakens Freud’s model, especially the instinctive relationship Super-Ego/Ego, and the uneven view of life as the struggle of Eros-Thanatos (Wulf, 1996). These processes of assimilation and rejection will delineate the contours of the notion of organismic self-regulation that will be built up in the 1951 work.

For Staemmler (2009), Perls defines aggression as a positive life force related to assimilation, and the associated terms (destruction, assimilation, growth) illustrate the historical context in which Fritz developed his theory: the attempt to overcome Freud’s view of aggression, which related it to death instinct. “The first break was in 1936 (...). I wanted to impress with my flight and with a lecture that transcended Freud” (Perls, 1969/1979, p. 49-50).

In *The Ego and the Id*, Freud (1923/1996) says that the destructive impulses, being neutralized in favor of life, are diverted to the external world with the aid of the muscles, so that the form of expression of this instinct would be by the destruction directed to the world and other beings. In this sense, such instincts become in part harmless when they merge with erotic components and, on the other hand, are diverted to the outside as aggressiveness. Freud points out that the more an individual controls his/her aggressiveness against the outside world, the more aggressive he/she becomes an ideal

of the ego, turning aggression towards him/herself. Fritz, corroborating, believed that the activity of internal aggression is necessary for a healthy metabolism; that externalizing aggression is necessary to maintain psychological health (Staemmler, 2009). Staemmler adds that this conception is presumably based on the psychoanalytic idea that energy was to be discharged before it accumulated and caused damage. In Perls, the solution to aggression poorly channeled or evolved to a pathological level would be its biological output by the use of the teeth.

In *Civilization and its Discontents* (Freud, 1930/1996), the main theme was precisely the invariable conflict between the instinctual needs and the limitations of civilization. Only later Freud recognized the original independence of aggression, and he added that independent sources would come from the self-preservation instincts. The impulses of aggressiveness always belonged to the self-preservation instinct, but as this was included in the libido, there was no need to testify for the independence of the aggressive instinct. Only after the emergence of the “death instinct” that an aggressive, indeed autonomous, instinct appeared in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Finally, there is a letter in which Freud seems to allude to the fact that at the beginning of life all libido is turned inward and all aggressiveness towards the external world, and that, throughout life, this vector would gradually change, in reverse. Nevertheless, Freud himself calls for careful consideration of this assumption and that his observations of the instinct of aggression need further consideration (Strachey, 1996a).

It is noted, therefore, that the idea that the source of hostility is the repression of instincts is not Perlsian. Freud (1930/1996) argues that humans carry considerable burdens of aggression, and that this inclination is what hinders interpersonal relations and leads civilization to waste much energy. The nature of man would therefore be aggressive. It is also Freud’s assertion that struggle and competition are indispensable, and that civilization cares little for individual satisfaction, trying to undermine, at the expense of individual well-being, human aggressiveness. Aggressiveness is the basis of every relationship of affection and love between individuals and is also a source of satisfaction. Inhibition of instinctive satisfaction produces aggression.

In *Conference XXXII*, Freud (1933a/1996) comments that the theory of libido (or theory of instincts) is a mythology. It states that the organism is under the control of self-preservation and the preservation of the species that, independent, do not share the same origin and, not infrequently, conflict. When they come to dominate the scene, the sadistic and anal impulses, in connection with the emergence of the teeth, the strengthening of the muscular apparatus and the control of the sphincters, call into question the oral incorporation and the desire to maintain and to possess, elements of ambivalence (uniting and possessing, but also destroying and losing), more evident in the sadistic-anal phase. “The activity of nutrition provides the elective meanings by which the object relation is expressed and orga-

nized; for example, the relationship of love with the mother will be marked by the following meanings: eating, being eaten” (Laplanche & Pontalis, 2001, p. 245). From this perspective, the act of eating is a destruction of the object in order to incorporate it, and the sexual act would aim at a union (Freud, 1940a [1938]/1996).

Perls’s intuition about child development, which values implicit deconstruction in tooth development, is based on a self-regulated conception (Lobb, 2015). The child’s ability to bite, supports and accompanies the ability to deconstruct reality. This spontaneous, positive and aggressive force has the role of survival, but also of social interconnection and allows the individual to actively achieve what in the environment can satisfy his/her needs.

Thus, from an innovative notion of ego - as a function and not a psychic instance (Perls, 1977) -, different from the American ego psychology, though influenced by Karen Horney’s theory, Perls, supported by Goldstein’s organismic self-regulation, will explain the implications of the ego’s difficulties of conducting itself in the medium (to what Perls will call the actions of unification or destruction), which are the basis of growth. Healthy ego is the one who can exert the function of assimilating or rejecting through actions of unification or destruction (Helou, 2015).

For Laplanche and Pontalis (2001), psychoanalysis has given increasing importance to aggressiveness, alluding to the fact that it operates at an early age of human development and emphasizing the complex mechanism of its fusion and defusion with sexuality; warning that the notion of the death drive does not merely refer to an indiscriminate conglomeration of aggressive manifestations, but also entails a tendency towards an unrestricted reduction of tensions. After 1920, what is renewed, therefore, is the extension of the field in which the aggressiveness in action is recognized. This conception loses the connotation of hostility and becomes synonymous with entrepreneurial spirit. However, in terms of terminology, Freud finds a single term, *Aggression*, to denote aggression and aggressiveness (Laplanche & Pontalis, 2001). This conception and the Freudian consideration of aggression as energy necessary for survival are at the center of Perls’s idea of positive aggression.

### Perls and Psychoanalysis: “an open gestalt”

In 1925, Fritz Perls has his first contact with psychoanalysis (Helou, 2015). His analysis with Karen Horney aroused this interest, whose training - which took place amidst many comings and goings - began at the renowned Institute of Psychoanalysis in Berlin. Fritz and Laura Perls underwent psychoanalytic training first in Berlin and then in Frankfurt and Vienna (Wulf, 1996). Fritz started with Karen Horney and then went on with Wilhelm Reich, while Frieda Fromm-Reichmann was one of Laura’s training analysts. Karen Horney participated in the creation of the first institute of psychoanalysis, and

her theoretical trajectory turned to culturalism - in opposition to Freudian universalism - for self-realization, *self*-reconstruction and *self* autonomy strongly influenced Fritz.

Horney (1936/2007) analyzes the cultural factors, relevant to the structure of the neuroses and the personality. She considers Freud to have neglected these factors (for Freud, culture would be the result of a sublimation of sexual and aggressive impulses), indicating that there are no historical and anthropological data that endorse the thesis of the growth of civilization as directly proportional to the growth of the suppression of the instincts, and that clinical experience shows that neurosis is not simply the result of the suppression of one or other instinctual impulse, but mainly of difficulties in relation to the demands that are imposed on individuals. For Wulf (1996), this view oriented toward environmental influences in the genesis of neurosis is also of Reich, both having been responsible for this same orientation in Fritz. These themes, and also the relationship between culture and individual as responsible for determining health and disease, permeate the entire theoretical and practical path of Perls.

In his autobiography, Perls (1969/1979) states that he was attracted to the work of the neurologist Kurt Goldstein, the existential groups and the rich cultural atmosphere of Frankfurt. Frankfurt was Fritz's period of contact with Smuts' holism, Gestalt psychology, and Kurt Lewin's studies (Wulf, 1996; Helou, 2015). It is from a re-reading of Smuts and Goldstein that Fritz will formulate his review of psychoanalysis. It was also in Frankfurt at the Goldstein Institute that Fritz and Laura met. This shift to Frankfurt will also put Perls in touch with the "Freudian Left", and researchers at the *Institute for Social Research*, who worked in collaboration with the *Frankfurt Institute of Psychoanalysis* (also based on phenomenology and Marxism, resulting in contributions that revolutionized the academic landscape of the twentieth century) and paved the ground on which Perls launched his theoretical postulations of 1942 (Helou, 2015).

Directed by Clara Happel - disciple of Horney who lived in Frankfurt - Perls, in 1927, moved to Vienna to finish the last phase of his psychoanalytic training at the Vienna Psychoanalytic Institute. According to Bocian (as quoted by Helou, 2015), Perls was attending theoretical seminars on names such as Otto Fenichel, Anna Freud and Wilhelm Reich; Anna Freud's *Child Analysis* seminar apparently mobilized Fritz to write his first work, which focused on the ego. Anna, a pioneer in the subject, did not believe that an infant analysis focused on the unconscious was possible because of the superego's lack of maturity. Fritz and Laura postulated that the analysis of children was through the use of activities and tools to promote expression, hence the claim that Anna Freud inspired Perls in the elaboration of the method in GT, an active, creative and experiential method. After passing through other analysts - Hélène Deustch, Eugen Harnick and Wilhelm Reich - and extend sometimes its psy-

choanalytic formation, Fritz concludes it in the Netherlands. Already in Africa, Perls draws attention to themes that have aroused his interest, such as Smuts holism, and studies of the general semantics of Alfred Korzybski (Loffredo, 1994). The admiration for Smuts was one of the reasons that made him move to this country. The Perls couple founded the Institute of Psychoanalysis in Johannesburg. After the trip to Europe to present his work in the Congress of 1936, the break with psychoanalysis, with which he had already been distancing himself, began. Consequently, Perls develops better the ideas contained in the work on oral resistances and links them with what he had learned from Smuts and Goldstein, redirecting himself to a different direction from Freudian as expressed in his autobiography (Perls 1969/1979).

At the origin of the GT, Wulf (1996) comments that Otto Rank's therapy deserves special mention, since it was centered on the will and functions of the ego as an autonomous organizing force within the individual. Rank required the client to re-experience and repeat (rather than remember), which implies an active role of the therapist. For Loffredo (1994), there is a lack of uniformity among the authors who have proposed to rescue the set of influences that gave rise to the GT, especially regarding post-Freudian influences. However, Reich's influence is unanimous, which can be seen throughout Perls's writings because of the direct mention he makes. In his autobiography, Perls (1969/1979) makes clear that the work *The analysis of character* was a fundamental contribution; and, for Tellegen (1984), even the Perls's concept of "retroflexion" referred to a retention of impulses through muscular contraction. In the meantime, even before the Reichian contributions, attention to body perception must be credited to Laura's experiences with modern dance, expressive movement and creativity, and her attention to the methods of Alexander and Feldenkrais (Loffredo, 1994; Frazão, 2013).

In the face of all this discussion, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the GT is the "daughter" of psychoanalysis - even a rebellious daughter - an expression, at least initially, of Perls's strong revolt against Freud. Several psychoanalysts that contested Freud have influenced Perls and Laura, many with active techniques and physical interventions. Fritz did not enjoy a traditional experience of psychoanalysis, so his criticisms must be placed in this context. Aside from this, Perls intended to strengthen and give an identity to his method, hence his focus on differences and the strengthening of boundaries.

In the United States, Perls, who was already far from Freudian psychoanalysis, became even more distant when he started to participate in arts and intellectual Marxists circles of the post-war period, becoming involved again with the theater. The development of Freudian psychoanalysis in the United States occurred amid conflict that resulted in neofreudism, a movement that questioned important concepts of Freud, such as sexuality, drive, repression and transference, as well as opposed to

Freudian dogmatism and universalism. It was in this wave of dissent that Fritz settled in New York.

Being a revisionist psychoanalyst meant to turn more to the intersubjective, to object relations (Helou, 2015). In his first work, e.g., Perls does not evoke the psychoanalytic concepts of drive and unconscious, focusing on the work of mediation of the ego through aggressive instinct in relation to the environment, without mentioning the unconscious scope of the ego proposed in the second Freudian topic. However, revisions of the Freudian theory of the Ego were not Perls's prerogative in the 1940s. On the other hand, Fritz set in motion a very peculiar and proper study of the ego, different from other post-Freudian currents and other psychoanalytic movements. In general, for Loffredo (1994), anchored in reasoning of Marcuse, the common cause of divergence of the revisionists of Freud was his attitude of disregarding the relation with the environment in the formulation of the neuroses and in the construction of the personality.

In summary, Helou (2015) concludes that "the instincts of self-conservation of hunger and defense, studied by Perls, are based on Freudian drives for self-conservation" (p.103). Perls (1942/2002), who questions some pairs of opposites pointed out by Freud, rejects the pair of opposites "life drive" and "death drive" introduced in the second Freudian topic. In view of this, Perls apparently starts from this second topic, since the life drive would be responsible for bringing together the self-preservation and libidinal functions, and does not recognize the death drives (Helou, 2015). The concept of necessity was also borrowed from Freud, with whom he referred to the drives of self-preservation, as Perls, Hefferline and Goodman (1951/1997) reproduce in Gestalt-therapy. In this way, Perls tries to change the concept of drive by necessity, simpler and organismic (Helou, 2015).

The influence of Reich on Perls is more evident than that of Freud, especially by the appeal to the body as an expression of reality, which also permeates the entire work of Perls. For Perls and Reich, the relieving of a muscular tension almost always gives rise to anguish, anger or sexual excitement, which are the three basic biological excitations. As biological energy dominates the somatic as well as the psychic, they consider that there is a functional unit in which biological laws can be applied to the psychic, but not vice versa. Thus, there is a constant oscillation of tension and relief; self-regulation eliminates the struggle against instinct, as it is compatible with natural instincts. Reich will also reflect on the conflict between society and individual and the implications of this conflict.

This influence of Reich on Perls is something that deserves greater prominence. Kyian (2001) brings together data of historical and theoretical character, and influences that constituted the process of existence of Perls and his approach; concluding that there is an integrated "whole" between Fritz, his history and his approach, leaving the question: Who was Frederick Perls? To this, he argues that a sure answer would be that he was a dissident psy-

choanalyst who constructed an approach that contrasted with psychoanalysis, from personal frustration and from divergences in the conception of man. Or, he was the creator of an approach, recognized from the 1960s on account of the changes in the social historical context, which converged with his premises. In this rescue, he mentions Perls's admiration for Reich, which would ultimately influence his entire work, and can be observed by comments in his autobiography (Perls, 1969/1979).

Ginger and Ginger (1995) comment that Reich attributed to the accumulation of genital sexual tension the origin of aggressiveness and neuroses and insisted on the "function of orgasm", proposing the analysis of the character, aiming to dissipate the muscular or character armor, believing that the total expression of the client should be fostered, and not only his/her verbal discourse, what would be given by the *how*, and not by the *why*, in the *form*, and not only in the *content* of the message. The heritage of Reichian thought is clear. Perls also stressed the importance of *how*, and not *why*; his holistic view of man was a total and integrated form of expression. The corporeal aspect is also present in both approaches, since it is through some bodily manifestations that some internal contents can be exhibited. They also used in their therapeutic work the instrument of frustration.

Regarding the subject of aggression, in *Character Analysis*, Reich (1933/1998) opposes the existence of a theory of the death drive or of any biological commitment for displeasure. For him, the supposed "death drive" could be explained by some specific form of orgasm anguish. Moreover, it demonstrates its agreement with Freud's theory that destructive feelings, which are usually caused by inhibitions of drives, are initially directed against the external world, turning against the person only later. In other words, for Freud, psychic development would take place on the basis of the conflict between the drive and the external world. The conflict later posed by Freud - between Eros and the death drive - reduced the importance of the former. Neurosis, then, would no longer result from the original conflict, and hence suffering would no longer result from the external world, from oppressive society, but from an internal biological will to suffer, to self-punch and self-destruct. With this, Reich demonstrates his disagreement that there is some primary tendency for self-destruction, independent of the environment, which came from "inside", from an inner drive of death.

For Reich (1933/1998), the basic rhythm of metabolism in meeting the need for food and sexual satisfaction occurs through the dynamics between tension and relaxation. He states that only one desire emerges from the individual's biopsychic oneness: that of unloading internal tensions, whether they come from hunger or sexuality, which would not be possible without contact with the external world. Hunger is something that can not be sublimated, unlike sexual energy. Any frustration of a satisfaction drive can cause anguish, which is the counterpoint of the libido or, in order to avoid an-

guish, generate a destructive impulse. The inhibition of the aggressive impulse by a threat of punishment from the external environment in addition to increasing the anguish, impairs the discharge of the libido, causing the release of the destructive impulse to the world and to the ego, producing new antagonisms: between the drive of destruction and self-destruction. Every libidinal impulse that is not directed towards the world ends up being nothing but reactions to frustrations resulting from the failure to satisfy libidinal needs and to satisfy hunger, frustrations generated by the social system, having nothing to do with death drive. Thus, a person destroys him/herself not because he/she is driven biologically by some obscure will, but because reality has generated unsustainable internal tensions that can only be relieved by self-annihilation. Indeed, it is the moral prohibitions of society that produce these "internal mechanisms" antagonistic to the sexual drive. Therefore, destructive impulses are not determined biologically, but socially; the repression of sexuality by authoritarian education transforms aggression into a demand, in other words, the accumulated sexual energy becomes destructiveness, and what seems self-destructive in fact are genuine manifestations of destructive intentions of a tyrannical society, not drives of self-annihilation.

The ambivalence of feelings, such as love and hate, is also not a biological law, and therefore comes from social development. Believing that it is possible to extract the full range of affections from the three basic affections pleasure, anguish, and anger, Reich argues that sexual excitement and anguish can be understood as two contrary directions, but hate would relate to these two affections in the following way: when the armor of character is undone, aggressiveness emerges first. Subsequently, when the aggressiveness is released, the anguish will be released. This means that anguish can become aggression and vice versa. Inhibition of aggression, moreover, is linked to an increased tone, to a stiffening of the musculature. Inhibited aggression leads to an affective blockage. Thus, all "*chronic muscular hypertonia represents an inhibition of the flow of all forms of excitation (pleasure, anguish, anger) or at least a significant reduction of the vegetative current*" (Reich, 1933/1998, p. 319. Emphasis added). It would be like saying that the inhibition of vital functions (libido, anguish, aggression) is achieved through the formation of a muscular armor around the biological nucleus. Thus, there is a functional relationship between neurotic character and muscular dystonia.

Costa (1984) states that the way in which a person makes contact with him/herself and the world is organized in the various character traits. The organism, for Reich, functions integrally, is expressed in several levels and at one time. Both the character and the subject as a whole were not the object of Freudian analysis. This was limited to the symptoms and the positive transfers, because negative ones were considered to hinder the process. Thus, the priority for Reich was to analyze how customers avoided contacting themselves. In

working on bodily inhibition, the repression of repressed instincts or impulses is also worked. All of these points are validated and incorporated by Perls into his theory. Although Reich's clinical observations were against Freud's early postulates relating the formation of the neuroses to the repression of sexuality, for Reich they are especially the social factors that turn sexual excitement into anguish, reflecting the conflict between sexual needs and world. The conflict between internal needs, and social prohibitions to gratify them, leads such prohibitions to be internalized in the form of morals. Perls (1942/2002, 1951/1997, 1975/1977) also debates social norms, the repression imposed on instincts and morals of the organism. However in Perls's case, his theory focuses more specifically on the repression of aggression, not on the repression of sexuality. Reich said that if the spontaneous movement of the organism is repressed, the need for gratification will be increasing, and the need for reinforcement of the barrier is increased, which, in turn, increases the pressure for gratification as well, turning more violent the need, for himself and for the world.

Costa (1984) argues that Reich corroborates Freud's assumption that sexuality represents the emotional pleasure movement of the organism, which tends to be regulated by this principle, that is, the organism regulates itself by the pleasure principle. Thus, if a child is deprived of affection, of contact, that is, in the face of the frustration of its pleasure movement, it will experience anguish from which anger arises, and a movement which was both discharge and pleasure becomes destructive, even violent. To avoid the pain, the child will then retain their painful feelings and sensations and withdraw contact from the world. These conceptions are clearly to be found in Perls's theory, as seen in the 1942 writing. Therefore, the notion that destructiveness is an impulse originated from the inhibitions of spontaneous and preponderantly pleasurable vital movements is of Reich, who likewise evolved such ideas from Freud, which leads to the deduction that both are in the basis of the postulates of Fritz, that is, the theory of aggression is predominantly a Perlsian elaboration of the assumptions of Freud and Reich, chosen according to the convenience and affinity of Perls.

Therefore, according to Reich - reproduced and reworked by Perls, later - when not linked to survival, the destructiveness derives from the inhibition of sexual pleasure, as Freud also assumed - in Perls, arises from the inhibition of aggression. Destructiveness can also be organized in a spontaneous, libertarian, natural, true, loving, and cordial fashion, which strongly resembles the notion of positive aggressiveness suggested by Fritz Perls in 1942 and 1951. Reich further reports on the importance of sex and nutrition for the balance of the other functions of the organism, because through food, the organism is rebuilt and by sex, it regulates itself, and the life of the organism is maintained by tension, load, discharge and relaxation. As for sexual economics, for Costa (1984), aggression is not



conceived as destruction, sadism or death instinct. In itself, it is neither destructive nor sadistic. There is, in this Reichian conception, a primary aggression that becomes secondary and destructive from the dissatisfaction of basic needs, especially sexual ones. Aggression by itself means activity, approach, movement, discharge, so it must be discriminated its most varied ways of expression: sexual, destructive, sadistic, locomotive, etc. In fact, aggression is posed by Costa, who is endorsed in Reich, as energy of action, similar to what seen in Perls and his conception of positive aggression, as a movement of life. Perhaps this varied way of Freud and Reich to conceptualize aggression and refer to it, in so many ways, explains the fact that Fritz denominates aggression in several ways as well: energy, force, action, function, instrument, and so on.

Aggression, in this sense, is the means by which life is preserved and perpetuated, “it is life itself in motion” (Costa, 1984, p. 74). Instinct gratifies itself through it, it is the force of it in movement. When instinct is not satisfied, this aggression as a force of action accumulates and then becomes destructive. If emotional discharge does not occur spontaneously, it will occur in a reactive and probably inappropriate way. Biological dissatisfaction, both of nutrition and sexual, can lead to aggression, therefore, to become destructive. However, even when manifested destructively, it is followed by a pleasure, because every discharge of energy is accompanied by the sensation of relieving tension. When aggression is the movement itself, it is the activity itself, in search of gratification. It is a strong, determined, active, firm, sweet, tender and spontaneous movement when the internal and external conditions are compatible with its accomplishment.

In general, Costa comments that Reich asserts that society precludes individuals from satisfying their hunger and sexuality, and the supposed death instinct is nothing more than an unconscious desire for orgasmic relief from tension. Reich remained faithful to Freud’s initial ideas, especially on the fact that neurosis was the fruit of the sexual repressions imposed by society on internal needs. In short, “the greater the armor, the less sexual and aggressive motility for pleasure and fulfillment” (p. 81). Normally, the release of contained content will occur in that order: anguish, hatred, anger, pleasure, love. All these modes of theorizing, analyzing and conceptualizing aggression are observed in Perls’s theory of aggression, especially in the writings of 1942, 1951, and 1975.

### **Other possible influences in the roots of Theory of Aggression**

Helou (2015) also points out the influence of Nietzsche’s philosophy on Perls who, timidly, makes allusions to the philosopher in some of his writings. According to Petzold (cited by Loffredo, 1994), Friedlander, a philosopher who greatly influenced Perls through his theory of Creative Indifference, also wrote about Nietzsche, especially on the Dionysian

aspects of his thinking, which struck Fritz who, indirectly, also visited the thought of Nietzsche. For the commentator, the teaching and practice of GT are an application of these Nietzschean aspects and of his superman doctrine. On this occasion, Loffredo encourages further investigation into GT relations with Nietzsche. Smith (2007) is dedicated to pointing out the similarities between Perls’s theory of aggression and Nietzsche’s thinking by rightly arguing and illustrating with many very similar examples and passages in their legacy in order to attribute the origin of this theory to the philosopher. According to Smith, Nietzsche was the first to discuss the disadvantages of “swallowing whole” and “swallowing the words of others”, and how this attitude ultimately contributes to the formation of a harmful confluence. Thus, the central point of the metaphor of eating would be Nietzsche’s, having been developed by Perls.

Goldstein (1951), who is also in the root of the theory of aggression, teaches that an inherent inter-relational behavior is the fact that the self-actualization of the individual in his social environment will only occur if he usurps the freedom of the other, if to claim something from the other, imposing him/herself to that other to some extent. The fact that the individual does not exist alone but with others necessarily points to the incomplete realization of the nature of each individual, and this implies impact, antagonism, conflict and competition with others. Therefore, it is possible to affirm that the activity of usurping the freedom of others also belongs to the nature of man. Thus, self-realization can only be achieved by some renunciation on the part of another, and each one must request from others, such renunciation. Goldstein explains that these two types of behavior - self-restraint and usurpation - were referred to by McDougall under the nicknames of “submission” and “aggression” as two basic “directions” of human nature (Goldstein, 1951, Holanda & Moreira, 2017).

In his general critique of the theory of drives and instincts, Goldstein clarifies that there is no reason to suppose that such drives are inherent to man, since both behaviors are not distinct and antagonistic tendencies that operate in man. Man is neither aggressive nor submissive by nature. He is led to update himself and come to terms with his environment. In doing so, he sometimes has to be submissive and sometimes aggressive, depending on the situation. At this point, Goldstein’s influence on Fritz, who advocated a theory of “non-instinct” (Perls, 1969/1979) is clear, - according to Mayer (1986), Perls’s disagreement with the Freudian approach begins with the theory of instincts and the libido and the use of aggressive energy in the service of the situation, that is, man is in constant interaction and updating with his environment (Perls, 1942/2002, 1951/1997). Thus, Goldstein regards stiffened aggression as a characteristic symptom of neurosis.

If this conception of the relationship between individuals is correct, if all relationships between people are determined by the tendency of each to be accomplished, then it is possible to arrive at the

general conclusion that the individual is primary (in the sense of principal, most important) in the whole social organization. Often the “we”, the relationship between the individual and others is considered the main factor, and the behavior of the individual is taken as understandable only in terms of this “we”. Indeed, the widespread assumption is that nature is not interested in the individual. It seems a waste of individuals to have no other purpose than the perpetuation of the species. Generic as it is, this hypothesis is by no means based on facts. In all of nature, we encounter individuals, both in the realm of man and in that of animals and plants. These reflections of Goldstein, along with Freud’s conclusions about the consequences of the suppression of the individual in civilization, may also lie at the heart of the theory of aggression, which also reflects an individual character.

Goldstein further asserts that there is nothing negative about nature. If the individual is the most important element of nature, the present time becomes the center of importance, because the present is always individual. What is called “species” is never present; the species belongs to the past or to the future. Nature in general seems to live in only one dimension (the present), the dimension of the concrete, of the individual. Only the human being and possibly some of the more developed animals go beyond this dimension. Thus, it would not be rash to suppose that Perls’s focus on the conservation of the individual and aggression as positive is also the fruit of these Goldsteinian reflections. For Tellegen (1984), although Perls says that organism-environment interaction must be taken in a pluralistic way (involving physical, biological, psychological and sociocultural aspects of the field), it usually focuses on what is biologically essential, and the fact that it frequently uses digestive and physiological metaphors is a reflection of Goldstein’s great influence on Perls’s thinking. Tellegen (1984) still indicates GT contains Goldstein’s conceptions about the organism having a natural movement for growth and self-actualization.

### Final considerations

The theory of aggression, in GT, was an idealization of the Perls couple, based on Laura’s works and developments (somewhat erratic, given the myriad of themes that associates), by Fritz. The origins of this thesis are intimately intertwined with Freudian psychoanalysis (especially the second topic), with the drives of self-conservation and the dichotomy of life drives versus death drives. In addition, the complexity of the formulation of the Perls still adds other related contributions, like those of Horney, with her concept of ego; those of Reich and his conceptions of resistance and the conflict of instincts with the environment (which differed from Freud’s psychic conflict); those of Anna Freud, by her understanding of active ego; and concepts derived from other sources, such as Goldstein, Smuts, and Nietzsche.

A large number of researchers have denounced the need to circumscribe the influence of psychoanalysis on Perls’s thinking (Helou, 2015). According to Freud, neurosis results from a conflict between individual and society, but Fritz innovates by placing, in 1942, the oppression of aggressive energy at the heart of that conflict, which would be displaced from its biological function. With this, the focus of therapy would be the resumption of biological functions. With accumulated aggressive energy, the only possible path of realization would be neurosis, and the destructive power of aggression would find its way out in violence. However, Perls himself seems to leave the theory of aggression in the background in the following works and starts betting on the proposition or development of other constructs, favoring the field perspective.

Among so many questions, it is expected that this theme can be retaken, both for its historical relevance and for the possible influence it may still have on the scope of the approach.

### References

- Belmino, M.C. (2014). *Fritz Perls e Paul Goodman. Duas Faces da Gestalt Terapia*. Fortaleza: Editora Premius.
- Bernard, J. M. (1986). Laura Perls: from ground to figure. *Life Lines. Journal of Counseling and Development*, 64, 367-373.
- Boris, G.D.J.B. (2002). Sobre Fritz Perls e “Ego, Fome e Agressão”. Em F. S. Perls (1942/2002). *Ego, Fome e Agressão* (p. 19-28). São Paulo: Summus.
- Costa, R. A. (1984). *Sobre Reich, Sexualidade e Emoção*. Rio de Janeiro: Achiamé.
- Frazão, L. M. (1997). Apresentação à edição brasileira. Em F. S. Perls; R. Hefferline; P. Goodman (1951/1997). *Gestalt-terapia* (p. 7-10). São Paulo: Summus.
- Frazão, L. M. (2002). Apresentação à edição brasileira. Em F. S. Perls. *Ego, Fome e Agressão* (p. 9-10). São Paulo: Summus.
- Frazão, L. M. (2013). Um pouco da história...um pouco dos bastidores. Em L. M. Frazão; K. O. Fukumitsu (Orgs). *Gestalt-terapia: fundamentos epistemológicos e influências filosóficas* (p. 11-23). São Paulo: Summus.
- Freud, S. (1996). Além do princípio de prazer. Em *Além do princípio de prazer* (p. 11-75). Rio de Janeiro: Imago (Original de 1920).
- Freud, S. (1996). Conferência XXXII: ansiedade e vida instintual. Em *Novas conferências introdutórias sobre psicanálise e outros trabalhos* (p. 85-112). Rio de Janeiro: Imago (Original de 1933a).
- Freud, S. (1996). Esboço de psicanálise. Em *Moisés e o monoteísmo* (p. 151-222). Rio de Janeiro: Imago (Original de 1940a [1938]).

- Freud, S. (1996). *O ego e o id* (p. 13-72). Rio de Janeiro: Imago (Original de 1923).
- Freud, S. (1996). *O futuro de uma ilusão, o mal-estar na civilização e outros trabalhos*. Rio de Janeiro: Imago (Original de 1930 [1929]).
- Freud, S. (1996). *A história do movimento psicanalítico, artigos sobre a metapsicologia e outros trabalhos* (p. 115-144). Rio de Janeiro: Imago (Original de 1915).
- Freud, S. (1996). *Um caso de histeria, Três ensaios sobre a teoria da sexualidade e outros trabalhos* (p. 163-195). Rio de Janeiro: Imago (Original de 1905).
- From, I. & Miller, M. V. (1997). Introdução à edição do *The Gestalt Journal*. Em F. S. Perls; R. Hefferline & P. Goodman. *Gestalt-terapia* (p. 15-29). São Paulo: Summus.
- Ginger, S. & Ginger, A. (1995). *Gestalt: uma terapia do contato*. São Paulo: Summus.
- Goldstein, K. (1951). *Human Nature: in the light of psychopathology*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Gomes, G. (2001a). Os dois conceitos freudianos de *Trieb*. *Psicologia: Teoria e Pesquisa*, 17(3), 249-255.
- Gomes, P. W. (2001b). *Gestalt-terapia: herança em re-vida*. 123f. Dissertação (Mestrado em Psicologia Clínica) – UNICAP, Recife.
- Helou, F. (2013). *Frederick Perls, inquietações e travessias: da Psicanálise à Gestalt-terapia*. Mestrado em Psicologia. Universidade de Brasília, Brasília.
- Helou, F. (2015). *Frederick Perls, vida e obra: em busca da Gestalt-terapia*. São Paulo: Summus.
- Holanda, A. F. (2005). Elementos de epistemologia da Gestalt-terapia. Em A. F. Holanda; N. J. Faria (Orgs.). *Gestalt-terapia e Contemporaneidade: contribuições para uma construção epistemológica da teoria e da prática gestáltica* (p. 23-55). Campinas: Livro Pleno.
- Holanda, A. F. (2009). Gestalt-terapia e abordagem gestáltica no Brasil: análise de mestrados e doutorados (1982-2008). *Estudos e Pesquisas em Psicologia*, 9 (1), 98-123.
- Holanda, A. F. & Moreira, J. S. (2017). Fenomenologia, Organismo e Vida: uma introdução à obra de Kurt Goldstein. *Aoristo - International Journal of Phenomenology, Hermeneutics and Metaphysics*, 2 (1), 231-254.
- Horney, K. (2007). Cultura e neurose. *Revista da Abordagem Gestáltica*, 13 (1), 147-159 (Original de 1936).
- Jolivet, R. (1975). *Vocabulário de Filosofia*, Rio de Janeiro: Agir.
- Kyian, A. M. M. (2001). *E a Gestalt emerge: vida e obra de Frederick Perls*. São Paulo: Altana.
- Laplanche, J. & Pontalis, J.-B. (2001). *Vocabulário da psicanálise*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes.
- Laplanche, J. (1985). *Vida e morte em psicanálise*. Porto Alegre: Artes Médicas.
- Lobb, M. S. (2015). Fundamentals and development of Gestalt Therapy in the contemporary context. *Gestalt Review*, 19 (2), 1-24.
- Loffredo, A.M. (1994). *A Cara e o Rosto. Ensaio sobre Gestalt Terapia*. São Paulo: Escuta.
- Mayer, E. L. (1986). Frederick S. Perls e a Gestalt-terapia. Em J. Fadiman e R. Frager, *Teorias da Personalidade* (p. 125-148). São Paulo: Harbra.
- Müller-Granzotto, M. J. & Müller-Granzotto, R. L. (2007). Perls leitor de Freud, Goldstein e Friedlander e os primeiros ensaios em direção a uma psicoterapia gestáltica. *Estudos e Pesquisas em Psicologia*, 7(1), 42-55.
- Perls, F. S. (1977). Moral, Fronteira do Ego e Agressão. Em J. O. Stevens (org.). *Isto é Gestalt*. (p. 49-61). São Paulo: Summus.
- Perls, F. S. (1979). *Escarafunchando Fritz: dentro e fora da lata de lixo*. São Paulo: Summus (Original de 1969).
- Perls, F. S. (2002). *Ego, Fome e Agressão: uma revisão da teoria e do método de Freud*. São Paulo: Summus (Original de 1942).
- Perls, F. S. (2002). Prefácio à edição de 1969 da Random House. Em F. S. Perls. *Ego, Fome e Agressão* (p. 35-36). São Paulo: Summus.
- Perls, F. S. (2011). *A abordagem gestáltica e testemunha ocular da terapia*. Rio de Janeiro: LTC (Original de 1973).
- Perls, F. S.; Hefferline, R.; Goodman, P. (1997). *Gestalt-terapia*. São Paulo: Summus. (Original de 1951).
- Perls, L. (1977). *Entendidos e mal entendidos em Gestalt-terapia*. Conferência de Laura Perls no Congresso da Associação Europeia de Análise Transacional, Áustria.
- Perls, L. (1988). A conversation with Laura Perls. Em J. Wysong e E. Rosenfeld (Orgs.), *An oral history of Gestalt Therapy* (p.3-25). Gouldsboro, Maine, USA: The Gestalt Journal Press.
- Perls, L. (1994). *Vivendo en los límites*. Valencia: Promolibro (Original de 1992).
- Prestrelo, E. T. (2012). A história da Gestalt-terapia no Brasil: “peles-vermelhas” ou “caras-pálidas”? Em A.M. Jacó-Vilela, A.C.Cerezzo e H.B.C. Rodrigues (Orgs.), *Clio-psyché: fazeres e dizeres psi na história do Brasil* (p. 88-96). Rio de Janeiro: Centro Edelstein de Pesquisas Sociais.
- Reich, W. (1998). *Análise do Caráter*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes (Original de 1933).
- Smith, E. W. L. (2007). Gestalt Therapy and the Concretization of Nietzsche's Metaphor. *Gestalt Review*, 11(3), 207-216.
- Staemmler, F.-M. (2009). *Aggression, Time, and Understanding: contributions to the evolution of Gestalt Therapy*. New York: Routledge.

Strachey, J. (1996a). Nota do editor inglês. Em S. Freud, *O futuro de uma ilusão, o mal-estar na civilização e outros trabalhos* (p. 67-71). Rio de Janeiro: Imago (Original de 1930).

Strachey, J. (1996b). Nota do editor inglês. Em S. Freud, *Os instintos e suas vicissitudes* (p. 117-122). Rio de Janeiro: Imago (Original de 1915).

Tellegen, T. A. (1984). *Gestalt e grupos*. São Paulo: Summus.

Wulf, R. (1996). The Historical Roots of Gestalt Therapy Theory. *Gestalt Dialogue: Newsletter for the Integrative Gestalt Centre*, November, s/p.

Wysong, J. (2002). Prefácio à edição do The Gestalt Journal – 1992. Em F. S. Perls, *Ego, Fome e Agressão* (p. 29-33). São Paulo: Summus.

---

**Thauana Santos de Araújo.** Mestre em Psicologia Clínica pela Universidade Federal do Paraná. Possui graduação em Psicologia pela Universidade Tuiuti do Paraná (2014) e graduação em Direito pela Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Paraná (2010). Atualmente, é profa. nas Faculdades FACEL e trabalha também como psicóloga clínica (CRP-08/20667). É membro do Laboratório de Fenomenologia e Subjetividade/UFPR. Atua como gestalt-terapeuta. Email: [thauanaaraujo@hotmail.com](mailto:thauanaaraujo@hotmail.com).

**Adriano Furtado Holanda** é Doutor em Psicologia, Professor Adjunto do Departamento de Psicologia e do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Psicologia da Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR). Endereço Institucional: Departamento de Psicologia, Universidade Federal do Paraná. Praça Santos Andrade, 50 – Sala 215 (Ala Alfredo Buffren). 80020.300. Curitiba/PR. Email: [aholanda@yahoo.com](mailto:aholanda@yahoo.com)

---

First Revision: May 07, 2017

Second Revision: November 11, 2017

Accepted: December 27, 2017