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Panel

Rescued genealogies: pathways for a historiography of World Anthropologies

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Short abstract:

This panel seeks to re-examine anthropology's past through a comparative reflexion on the historical background of the current paradigm of World Anthropologies and the global dissemination of ethnographic practices. The focus is on anthropological traditions – e.g. Lusophone and Iberian-American – that are peripheral or off-centre in relation to the so-called “Major Traditions”.

Long abstract:

This panel seeks to contribute to a re-examination of anthropology's past in a broad sense, comprising ethnographic experiences that preceded the scientific institutionalization of the discipline or remained complementary to it, sometimes through experimentalism and amateurism in various, interweaved contexts. Apart from a post-colonial critique of past attempts to survey and analyse human variability, the purpose is to understand them in their time and to reassess their place in the historical dynamics of anthropology. The panel is open to case studies focused on anthropological traditions – e.g. Lusophone and Iberian-American – that are peripheral, external or off-centre in relation to the so-called “Major Traditions”. At the core is a comparative reflexion on the historical background, in the 19th and 20th centuries, of the World Anthropologies paradigm and the dissemination of an anthropological *praxis*. The aim of the panel is to explore the connections between actors, outputs and institutions, local and international, and to raise new questions on the vastness and meanings of the archive in a plural and global sense. The panel fits into the subdisciplinary field of the history of anthropology, leading to interdisciplinarity between anthropology, history, history of science and historical anthropology, further promoting dialogues around ethnographic and anthropologic texts from different places, times and dimensions.

1st Session

01. A letter from Lady Frazer to Lévy-Bruhl (or the feminine side of the history of “Franco-British” anthropology)

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Short abstract:

The British and the French traditions are revisited around a letter sent by Lady Frazer to Lévy-Bruhl. The reconstitution of its historical context allows to understand the role played

by a figure who, by virtue of the gender codes of his time, was relegated to the margins of the discipline.

Long abstract:

Two national traditions - the British and the French - that usually occupy a central place in the historiography of Anthropology are revisited around a letter sent by Lady Frazer to Lucien Lévy-Bruhl. in 1930. This letter was sent with the purpose of inviting the philosopher to write the preface to the bibliographical volume of the French translation of the third edition of *The Golden Bough*. However, this document is much more than a simple invitation. The sender is Lady Frazer because she was in charge of the immense work of translation and dissemination of her husband's works in France, playing a pivotal role in the network that linked her, as well as Frazer himself, to the French intellectuals, publishers, and writers. In the letter she comments on several aspects of this work, the most interesting of which concerning her own position, situated between the function of wife and, in the absence of a better term, of agent. She thus demonstrates an acute awareness of the indeterminate character of her social position, within a certain gender boundary. The historical context of this document offers an unusual perspective on the circulation of ideas and people in the history of anthropology.

02. Euro-American connections: German-speaking ethnography and zoology in Brazil (1880-1939)

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Short abstract:

The historical connection between European and American anthropological and ethnographic traditions is evaluated through an analysis of the contribution to Brazilian ethnology of four German-speaking zoologists living in Brazil: the Germans Hermann von Ihering (1850-1930), Emilie Snethlage (1868-1929) and Emil Heinrich Snethlage (1897-1939), and the Swiss Emílio Goeldi (1859-1917).

Long abstract:

The institutionalization of social sciences in higher education establishments in Brazil in the 1930s did not only provide academic professionalization, but also the separation of scientific disciplines within humanities. Before this, however, ethnology was practiced in various types of institutions by scientists of diverse scientific backgrounds. In the period from the apogee of the reign of the second Brazilian emperor, Dom Pedro II (1825-1891), around 1865, until the foundation of the *Escola de Sociologia e Política de São Paulo* (1933), ethnology was practiced mainly by naturalists established in natural history museums. In addition to their administrative tasks, four German-speaking scientists performed researches in the fields of both natural sciences and ethnography: Hermann von Ihering (1850-1930), Emílio Goeldi (1859-1917), Emilie Snethlage (1868-1929) and her nephew Emil Heinrich Snethlage (1897-1939). The purpose of this presentation, which is supported by primary material held at the archives of the Museu Paraense Emílio Goeldi in Belém (Brazil) and the estate of Theodor Koch-Grünberg (1872-1924) in Marburg (Germany), is the evaluation of the contributions of these four scientists, for the Brazilian indigenous ethnology, as well as to understand the limits of their methodological approaches and thus collaborate for a discussion on the epistemology of anthropology.

03. Peripheral traditions at the core of modern Anthropology. Lamberto Loria's fieldwork in British New Guinea twenty years before Malinowski

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Short abstract:

Due to the recent analysis of his seven years of research in British New Guinea, the Italian ethnographer Lamberto Loria (1855-1913) has recently assumed a paramount role in the history of the early explorations and anthropology of Melanesia and in the understanding of the first developments of modern anthropological fieldwork.

Long abstract:

Due to the latest transcription and analysis of his travel notes, Lamberto Loria (1855-1913), mostly known in Italy for the part he played in founding Italian ethnography, has recently been recognised for his role in the early exploration of British New Guinea and the first development of modern anthropological fieldwork. Travelling for seven years along the coasts, islands and inlands of British New Guinea during the last decade of the nineteenth-century (1888-1897), the Italian ethnographer had the chance to collect anthropological specimens and ethnographic objects, to interview and photograph the native populations and their habits, and to acutely observe the life of the recently founded colony. For the duration of the stay, the intensity, quantity and quality of the observations, Loria's experience emerges today as unique in the Italian and international anthropological panorama of the time. In fact, Loria used new methods of investigation that anticipated by twenty years those of Bronisław Malinowski, inaugurating a peripheral tradition in the very *sancta sanctorum* of future modern anthropology. A case study of Loria, then, can help us understand the birth of the Italian 'minor' tradition, rethink the British 'major' one, and identify the intertwining of their early development.

04. Cosmopolitan dialogues: the Mozambican ethnography of Franz Boas

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Short abstract:

The paper explores the content of Franz Boas' brief ethnography on the Mandau of Mozambique, as well as his ethnographic dialogue with his Mozambican assistant, Kamba Simango. It is a dialogue that allows us to understand disciplinary history through a less nation-centric approach and more attentive to the world's anthropologies.

Long abstract:

Franz Boas, the "founding father" of American culturalism, was never in Mozambique. However, he wrote about the central region of this country - more specifically, about the Mandau (Vandau) - five articles on kinship, religion and mythology. One of these articles was co-authored with Kamba Simango, a Mozambican of Ndau origin. Simango arrived in the US with the support of missionaries from the American Board of Missions. In 1919, he met Boas, with whom he began a brief but qualitatively remarkable ethnographic dialogue for the trajectory of both. This communication explores this dialogue, its limits, tensions and challenges, in a transcontinental context. The emergence, in the 1920s, of the new African elites and the growing pan-Africanist sensitivity (Kamba participated in the III Pan-African Congress in London) coincide, in this period, with the professionalization of anthropology, which was intended to be emancipated from the "pre-ethnographic" knowledge of missionaries, travelers and colonial administrators. Through the "Mozambican ethnography" of Boas, we intend to inquire about the non-consecrated histories of anthropology. Studying

these little explored interstices is a way of exercising a fundamental methodological relativism and of understanding the legacy of our predecessors through an approach less focused on heroes and great national traditions.

05. A Humanist Trace: Critical reception and reassessment of Edward Sapir's "Culture, Genuine and Spurious"

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Short abstract:

This paper recovers Edward Sapir's old text, "Culture, Genuine and Spurious" (1924), with the aim of reflecting on two of the main characteristics that led it to be the target of skepticism in its time.

Long abstract:

In "Culture, Genuine and Spurious" (1924), Edward Sapir develops his vision of "what kind of thing" is what we call culture. The "unscientific" nature (according to his critics), the humanist inclination and the cautious way Sapir is drawing the traces of what he considers to be a "genuine culture", made this text a dissonant reflection of the theories of culture in force at the time - Sapir's aim was to write precisely against reifying conceptions of culture. In this paper, I propose to return to this text with a particular focus on two points: (i) the nature of the text itself, i.e., the way Sapir seeks to describe his ideas and articulate the argument; and (ii) his conciliatory view of the eternal anthropological dilemma 'individual vs. culture'. The re-reading of "Culture, Genuine and Spurious" from these two dimensions suggests that, ironically, the relevance of this text for today's world may lie precisely in the particularities that led it to be the target of skepticism in its time.

2nd Session

06. Literary modernism and anthropology in Brazil: (in)disciplinary dialogues

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Short abstract:

The presence of Mário de Andrade and literary modernism within the anthropology inaugurated by Roger Bastide at the University of São Paulo invites us to question the interrelationships between "amateurism" and "science", "essay" and "research". These were perhaps decisive in Bastide's research agenda and in theoretical-methodological perspective that he established.

Long abstract:

For some, the late creation of the university in Brazil works as a divider to separate the essay production of the period before 1930 from the research of specialized timbre, which becomes "routine" within the academy from the 1940s. The "portraits of Brazil", balanced between literature and social sciences, tended to be supplanted by specialized monographs, endowed with precise methods and cutouts. However, it seems difficult to endorse such a divisor, as if scientific institutionalization had represented the victory of "science" against "literature" or against the "impressionism" that until then had been dominant. In order to contribute to the debate on rescued genealogies, I suggest a reflection on the interrelationships between "amateurism" and "science", or between "essay" and "scientific research" from the analysis of the decisive presence of Mário de Andrade (1893-1945) and São Paulo literary modernism within the scientific-academic anthropology that Roger Bastide (1898-1974) inaugurated at the University of São Paulo. Modernist knowledge, especially the poetry and ethnographic

research of Mário de Andrade, are decisive not only for Bastide to establish a research agenda (folklore and the African matrices of Brazilian culture, for example), but also for forging an original theoretical and methodological point of view.

07. The concept of syncretism and the anthropology of African-Brazilian religions (1930-1960)

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Short abstract:

Brazilian anthropology, centered on the study of religions of African origin, played an important role in the anthropological appropriation and consolidation of the concept of syncretism. An analysis of this process between the 1930s and the 1950s and 1960s is tantamount to rescuing a capital genealogy of the history of the discipline.

Long abstract:

Originating from the history of religions, the concept of syncretism was adopted in anthropology from the 1930s. In this process of co-optation, Brazilian anthropology, focused on the study of religions of African origin, played an important role. This paper aims to carry out a historical analysis of the anthropological appropriation and consolidation of the concept of syncretism between the 1930s - the decade in which Arthur Ramos began to use it - and the 1950s and 1960s - the decades in which Roger Bastide's reflection was essential to the international affirmation of the concept. It will seek to identify the networks of circulation and debate of ideas that allowed the triumph of the notion of syncretism, as well as contribute to a discussion of the broader ideological contexts that facilitated it.

08. Constructing the “oriental” in colonial scientific institutions: inputs from Portuguese anthropology

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Short abstract:

By focusing on the contribution of António de Almeida, anthropologist and professor at the Portuguese Colonial Higher School, in the 24th International Congress of Orientalists (Munich, 1957), this paper aims to reflect on the place of Portuguese anthropology within oriental studies, in the middle of the 20th century.

Long abstract:

By focusing on the contribution of António de Almeida (1900-1984), anthropologist and professor at the Portuguese Colonial School, in the 24th International Congress of Orientalists (Munich, 1957), this paper aims to contribute to a reflection on the place of Portuguese anthropology within oriental studies, in the middle of the twenty century. Almeida – the only Portuguese participant – presented the documentary “Arts and Métiers du Timor” that aimed at portraying the arts and crafts of the people of Timor in their daily activities, namely pottery, jewelry production, the manufacture of decorative objects and utilities in brass and clay, the production of textiles, the fabrication of salt or the construction of houses. This visual anthropological record goes beyond the realm of physical anthropology to privilege a cultural approach, unlike the majority of the Portuguese anthropological production of the time, which in spite of its imperial dimension was anachronistic.

09. Towards a historiography of anthropological praxis in India

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Short abstract:

This paper focuses on the city of Varanasi, India, transformed by Western academic institutions into a “laboratory of social sciences” since the 1960s. Local specificities and long-standing transnational academic flows between social researchers in Europe, North America, Asia and Australia are analysed.

Long abstract:

From the 1960s, the city of Varanasi in India has been transformed by Western academic institutions into a “social science laboratory”. This case study invites us to explore the political, socio-economic, and academic context that has replaced the long field work in India by short “bus tour scholarship”, in an accelerated time – because “time is money”. Focusing on the history of social research in Varanasi, we aim at examining the ethnological praxis in India and illustrating how the Anglo-Saxon “world system of anthropology” influenced and was influenced by Indian anthropology, a “world anthropology” with a distinct discourse. It has developed a proper critical style due to local influences, as reflected in the debates of the journal *Contributions to Indian Sociology* and the “Subaltern Studies” series, which result from the long-standing transnational academic connections between social researchers in Europe, North America, Asia and Australia. The multidirectional traffic of influences, the internal diversity of national traditions and the trajectories of individual biographies reflect the historical dynamics of the praxis of ethnography in India.