

Social Anthropology with Indigenous Peoples in Brazil, Canada and Australia

A comparative approach

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Resumo

A partir da noção de “estilos de antropologia” usada por Roberto Cardoso de Oliveira em suas pesquisas nos anos 1990, que examinou diversas “antropologias periféricas”, em países onde a antropologia foi implantada posteriormente, fora dos países centrais – EUA, Grã-Bretanha e França – onde emergiu e se consolidou como disciplina acadêmica, este artigo examina os estilos de etnologia indígena que se desenvolveram no Brasil, no Canadá e na Austrália, ex-colônias de países europeus. Com histórias e culturas muito diferentes, examinam-se os estilos de antropologia no contexto desses Estados nacionais que se expandiram sobre os territórios de povos indígenas, e as maneiras em que as histórias e contextos refletem no que está sendo feito atualmente em pesquisas de campo com povos indígenas. Examinam-se algumas das tensões que surgem ao trabalhar em uma disciplina acadêmica que pretende ser internacional e universal enquanto os contextos são locais.

Palavras-chave: estilos de antropologia; Brasil; Canada; Austrália; povo indígenas

Abstract

Starting from the notion of “styles of anthropology” used by Roberto Cardoso de Oliveira in his research in the 1990s, which examined “peripheral anthropologies” in countries where anthropology was implanted later, outside the central countries - USA, Great Britain and France - where it emerged and had consolidated as an academic discipline, this article looks at the styles of anthropology with indigenous peoples which have developed in Brazil, Canada and Australia, ex-colonies of European countries. With very different histories and cultures, the styles of anthropology within the context of these national States which expanded over indigenous territories are examined, and

the ways in which these histories and contexts reflect on what is being done today in field research with indigenous peoples. Some of the tensions which emerge between working within an academic discipline that aims to be international and universal while the national contexts are local are examined.

Keywords: styles of anthropology; Brazil; Canada; Australia; indigenous peoples

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Introduction

This article examines Social Anthropology with indigenous peoples from a comparative approach, looking at this area of studies in three national States - Brazil, Canada and Australia. From an examination of the different historical, cultural and institutional contexts in which Anthropology with indigenous peoples grew, I look at some of the most obvious differences within the discipline in these three national contexts and then compare some of the similarities between these three countries of European colonization. I also comment on recent trends associated with an increasing process of globalization which are bringing the situations of native peoples and the styles of Anthropology in collaborative and participative research projects into a closer exchange of ideas with the emergence of an increasing number of indigenous anthropologists, as well as indigenous intellectuals in many other academic areas. The aim is to show how the practice of Anthropology with indigenous peoples is framed by the social, cultural and political milieu of its practitioners and the increasing emergence of a discipline which seeks both universal understanding and local relevance. Themes such as the role of “race” versus “culture” in defining differences, “hierarchical” versus “egalitarian” ideologies; the importance of distance and the threat of encompassment; national ideologies based on monoculture, bi-culture and multiculturalism are superficially examined within the limits of a paper of this scope.

¹ A version of this article was presented at the American Anthropological Association (AAA) meeting in November 2011, SESSION 6-0195 “Challenges in Brazilian Anthropology: A Global View”, Organizer and Chair: Professor Bela Feldman-Bianco (UNICAMP and President of ABA). I thank Professor Bela Feldman-Bianco, president of the Brazilian Anthropological Association (ABA) for the invitation to participate in this session.

The research on which this article is based developed from a project started in 1990, when I was invited by the late Professor Roberto Cardoso de Oliveira to participate in the project he was coordinating on “Styles of Anthropology”, in which comparative research was being undertaken from his proposal to study “peripheral anthropologies” (Cardoso de Oliveira 1988: 143-159). That is, those anthropologies situated at the periphery of the metropolitan centres (the scientific and academic centres where anthropology originated and was consolidated as an academic discipline - England, France and the USA). Cardoso de Oliveira justifies a stylistic focus on peripheral anthropologies from the fact that the discipline in the non-metropolitan countries has not lost its universal character. Cardoso de Oliveira proposed to examine the tensions which emerge between working within an academic discipline that aims to be international and universal while the national contexts in which it is practiced are very specific.

In the same year, I started a comparative research project examining social anthropology with Indigenous peoples in Brazil and Australia, and in 1992 obtained a scholarship to spend five weeks at three academic centres in Australia interviewing social anthropologists and some indigenous leaders, about anthropology with indigenous peoples (Baines 1995). I had already spent three months in Australia, in 1979, visiting indigenous communities in Western Australia and Northern Territory. My aim, in the 1992 survey, was to examine anthropology with indigenous peoples in Australia, seen through the prism of my academic formation at PhD level in Brazil, where I have lived since 1980. In 1995 and 2003, I undertook similar short research survey visits to academic centres in social anthropology with indigenous people in Canada, widening the international comparison through interviews with social anthropologists who undertake research with indigenous peoples in that country, and with some indigenous leaders, and in 2009-2010 I spent five months at the UBC, Vancouver, Canada, and six months at the ANU, Canberra, Australia, on a post-doctorate research leave.

Over the eighteen years between my first research survey and post-doctorate leave in 2010, I witnessed great transformations in anthropology with indigenous peoples in the three countries. With its increasing expansion and consolidation as a field of study, ongoing processes and reconfigurations which have been oriented by accelerated social, political and technological changes have brought new dilemmas, new challenges and new perspectives to

both anthropological research and the roles played by anthropologists. I shall attempt to point out some issues in a global overview of the multiple challenges faced by anthropologists engaged in research with indigenous peoples in Brazil, Canada and Australia, as well as the increasing involvement in the three countries with issues outside the academic sphere. It is, of course, impossible, in such a short article, to present the vast variety of academic production on indigenous people in Brazil, Canada and Australia, so I shall mention just a few.

Styles of Anthropology

Roberto Cardoso de Oliveira classifies Brazil, Canada and Australia as “new nations” (1988: 143-159; 1998: 107-133), ex-colonies of European countries, despite having histories which are obviously very different. However, in these three countries research about the “Other” is conducted in the form of studies of native populations (although it is not restricted exclusively to this) over whose territories the nations have expanded. Canada and Australia, different from Brazil, were colonies of countries which became “central countries” of anthropology. Australia was a colony of Great Britain, and had overseas territories (Papua-New Guinea, up to 1973), as well as playing a neo-colonial role in Southeast Asia, while Canada was colonized by Great Britain and France.

First it is worth pointing out briefly a few very obvious historical, cultural and institutional differences between Canada, Australia and Brazil. From the late XV century, British and French expeditions explored and later settled along the Atlantic coast of North America. In 1763 after the Seven Years’ War, France ceded nearly all its colonies in North America. Canada was initially formed as a federal dominion of four provinces in 1867, through the Constitution Act, followed by a rapid accretion of provinces and territories. Australia became a British colony in 1788, more than 250 years after the beginning of Portuguese colonization in Brazil and British and French colonization in Canada. While Brazil became formally independent from Portugal in 1822 and has been a republic since 1889, Canada only severed the vestiges of legal dependence on the British parliament with the Canada Act 1982. The six British colonies in Australia became a federation and were transformed into the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901. The final ties between Australia and Britain were severed with the passing of the Australia Act 1986, ending any British role in the government of Australian states.

While Brazil was built from a hierarchical social ideology (DaMatta 1973; 1981), in Canada and Australia, egalitarian ideologies predominate, even though coexistent with class stratifications (Baines 2003: 115). Kapferer calls “Australian egalitarian nationalism” (1989: 178) the entrenched idea that Australia is a “society without classes”. While Australia and Canada are today classified among the “developed” countries (Australia ranks 2 and Canada ranks 6 in the HDI world ranking, UNDP), with a high standard of living for most of their populations, except for a large part of their indigenous populations, Brazil is classified among the “developing” nations with some of the greatest social inequalities and injustices in the world (73 in the HDI world ranking, UNDP)².

Brazil had a large contingent of Afro-descendant slaves from early in its colonial history, and was initially colonized by male Portuguese immigrants, different from Australia, which up to the 1970s had been colonized predominantly by British immigrants, and Canada which had been colonized mainly by British and French immigrants in its early years of colonization. In the first half of the XX century, Canada received large contingents of European immigrants, followed by immigration from all over the world from the second half of the XX century, transforming Canada into a multicultural society. Through the XIX and early XX century Brazil received immigrants from various parts of the world, while Australia abolished its “White Australia Policy” only in 1973, opening up the country to non-White immigration and introducing a multiculturalist policy. However, in Australia, the supposed “monoculture” was divided by major differences over religion and politics, class was a very real issue, and the White Australia Policy was manipulated to allow the entry of large numbers of migrants from Southern Europe and the Middle East, considered non-white by many Australians, well before the policy was finally abolished.

While Australia maintains a dichotomist racial classification of skin colour, similar to that of the USA, which saw the consolidation of cast-like social relations (Rowley, 1972) based on racist ideas which opposed white settlers and a dark-skinned Indigenous population of *blackfellas*, in Brazil there emerged a plethora of racial classifications “colour being seen along a continuum of grades” (Hasenbalg; Silva; Barcelos 1992: 67), and through its history

2 <http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2010_EN_Table1_reprint.pdf> Access on 12/06/2011.

Brazil has presented ambiguous discourses on miscegenation: some being encomiastic, others repudiating it (Baines 2003). While the Afro-Brazilian population was seen as part of the Brazilian national society and the subject of sociology, the indigenous populations were seen as “our ‘other’ who is different” (Peirano 1991: 167) and the subject of anthropological research. Canada, different in many ways from Brazil, and from Australia, emphasized the notion of “assimilation” to the national society, thought of in cultural rather than in racial terms, as a process in which it was believed that cultural differences of indigenous peoples would disappear.

Anthropology and the ideology of nation-building

Peirano (1991) affirms that the anthropologist’s thinking is part of the sociocultural configuration in which it emerges and that the ideology of nation-building is a parameter and an important symptom for the characterization of the social sciences wherever they emerge. Kapferer also argues that “the subjectivity of the anthropologist, like that of any other person, is rooted in the historic and ideological worlds in which he is positioned” (1989: 166).

Calling attention to the utility of Cardoso de Oliveira’s discussion of central versus peripheral anthropologies, to problematize the inequalities, Gustavo Ribeiro stresses the need to transcend these inequalities (Ribeiro, G. L. 2006). Inspired by the collective movement called World Anthropologies Network (<http://www.ram-wan.net/>), of which he is a member, Ribeiro, states that this network aims to contribute to the articulation of a diversified anthropology which is more conscious of the social, epistemological and political conditions in which it is produced (Ribeiro, G. L. 2006). This author views anthropology as a Western cosmopolitics about the structure of alterity that consolidated itself as a formal academic discipline in the XX century, and aims “to be universal but that, at the same time, it is highly sensitive to its own limitations and to the efficacy of other cosmopolitics” (Ribeiro, G. L. 2006: 365). As a cosmopolitan political discourse about the importance of diversity for humanity, it is part of a critical anthropology of anthropology, which decenters, re-historicizes, and pluralizes the discipline, emphasizing the increasingly important role non-hegemonic anthropologies play in the production and dissemination of knowledge on a global scale.

Ways of thinking about the national State are very different in Brazil, Canada and Australia. Trood affirms that “when the Commonwealth of Australia was founded in 1901, its political leaders did not seriously consider the possibility of pursuing an independent foreign policy” (1990: 89). During the first half of the XX century, anthropology in Australia must be seen within the context of a country in which most of its population saw Australia as an extension of Great Britain on the other side of the world (Baines 1995). After Radcliffe-Brown assumed the first chair in anthropology at the University of Sydney in 1926, introducing British anthropology in Australian academia, having easy communication between British and North American anthropologists through the English language, the style of anthropology which developed in Australia was firmly based on its British origins. This was reinforced by the fact that a large number of anthropologists who work in Australia came from Britain and the USA and/or completed their PhD’s or post-doctorate research there, whereas the majority of anthropologists who live and work in Brazil are Brazilian by birth. Taking into account the history of very close relations and dialogues between British, American, and Australian anthropologists, several anthropologists in Australia suggested that anthropology in that country might be best characterized as being “semi-peripheral”, in the sense used by Cardoso de Oliveira (1988) when he talks of “peripheral anthropologies”.

If the anthropology which is practised in Australia has been described by some anthropologists in that country as being semi-peripheral (Baines 1995: 75), Frank Manning, discussing anthropology in Canada, describes this country as “a kind of metropolitan colony” (1983: 2), neighbour of the biggest super-power in the world. Several anthropologists interviewed stressed the proximity of the USA as being a major factor of influence in moulding the development of anthropology in Canada, and many anthropologists who work in Canada are of American origin and trained in the USA. There is a reluctance, on the part of many anthropologists, to admit the existence of a specifically Canadian style of anthropology with indigenous peoples, or even a specific style of anthropology, so strong is the presence of American anthropology (as well as that of Great Britain and of France, although to a lesser extent). Some anthropologists, despite admitting today the peripheral or semi-peripheral character of the discipline in Canada, aspire to an international anthropology. However, this universalist aspiration in anthropology in

Canada tends to ignore or deny the inequalities and asymmetry of a colonial situation. So also does a more local, nationalist perspective enter in contradiction with the universalist viewpoint.

Anthropology in Brazil, different from Canada, has developed mainly with Brazilian-born academics, although up to twenty years ago many Brazilian academics went to the United States and other countries to do their PhDs, and a small minority of anthropologists of foreign origin work in Brazil, while anthropology in Canada, like in Australia, was established as an academic discipline through the importation of anthropologists - in the case of Canada, most notably from the United States. David Howes mentions that one line of thought argues that there is an absence of a tradition of anthropology in Canada which can be explained by the fact that “at the turn of the twenty-first century only 25 percent of the faculty in PhD-granting anthropology departments in Canada hold a PhD from a Canadian University” (2006: 200). Howes expresses this line of thought, which asks:

How could a local tradition possibly emerge in the face of such massive penetration by external forces? According to Tom Dunk, this situation is compounded by the ‘essentially neo-colonial mentality’ that arguably prevails in English Canada, where local conceptions of what is good are filtered by ideas and standards that come from elsewhere” (Howes 2006: 200).

This point is also stressed by Silverman in her “colonial encounter in Canadian academia” (1991).

Francophone and anglophone Anthropology in Canada

In discussing anthropology in Canada, it is important to stress the differences between anthropology in anglophone and francophone Canada, and the tensions created within the discipline by political aspirations for the independence of Quebec from the Canadian Federation. Roberto Cardoso de Oliveira states that “In the case of francophone Canada, in Quebec, we can observe a strong process of ethnicization of the discipline, producing, strictly, two modalities of anthropology, one francophone, the other anglophone, deeply marked by their linguistic-cultural horizons” (1995: 188). In my interviews with anthropologists in 1995, shortly before the Quebec Referendum in that same year (Baines 1996), and also in 2002, in the east of

Canada, those anthropologists who shared a federalist ideology of Canada as one bilingual nation (francophone and anglophone - an ideology which sometimes de-emphasizes the aboriginal peoples and large immigrant communities) expressed their will that francophone and anglophone anthropologists may be able to communicate as members of the Canadian nation. While those who supported the separation of Quebec emphasized the precariousness of communication between anglophone and francophone anthropologists, stressing the close ties of francophone anthropologists with anthropology in the large centres of the northeast of the United States and France rather than with the anglophone anthropologists of Canada, identified as their colonial oppressors. The strong focus in Quebec toward metropolitan anthropologies may also contribute to a lack of dialogue between anglophone and francophone anthropologists within the province, point stressed by Azzan Júnior (1995). M. Estellie Smith observes that “Quebecois have long prided themselves on a certain ‘innate cosmopolitanism’ considered lacking in the ‘stodgy, old-fashioned’ Anglo elite” (1984), posture reflected in some statements made by Quebecker anthropologists about anthropology in Quebec.

The Brazilian-Argentinian anthropologist, Guilherme Ruben, concludes that despite the conflictive issue of nationality in Quebec, the theory of identity formulated in Quebec within anthropology remains “essentially autonomous” (1995: 125) from the issue of nationality. Ruben argues that anthropology in Quebec refuses to try to define its origins in relation to its institutional history (1995: 133), since, according to his hypothesis,

the origins of the modern university programmes of research and teaching of anthropology in Quebec (in the Universities of Montreal and Laval) are the result of a prohibited relationship, and I would say even incestuous, between their legitimate parents (Tremblay e Dubreuil), founders (...) of the two institutional programmes and another, socially prohibited: American anthropology. In a nationalist, French, catholic, and rural context, how could the participation of an English, protestant and industrial partner be accepted, as co-genitor of the modern programmes of teaching and research in anthropology in contemporary Quebec? (1995: 133-134).

Ruben adds: “the recognition of the founding fathers of the modern programmes of anthropology in Quebec would imply the recognition of

the deep and intimate relationship of the province with the English world, which would make unviable the ethnic character which marks the style of the discipline in Quebec” (1995: 134). These examples reveal the ways in which a complex configuration of regional, national, imperial, ethnic and indigenous allegiances in which anthropologists are positioned as members of national states, and regional, ethnic and indigenous groups within these states, permeate their perspectives. While many francophone anthropologists in Quebec feel that they are colonized by anglophone Canadians, the majority of both francophone and anglophone Canadians feel colonized by the Americans, and some indigenous anthropologists feel colonized by all.

Anthropology with indigenous peoples in Brazil

In Brazil, numerous publications reflect on social anthropology with indigenous populations: bibliographical works by Julio Cezar Melatti (1982; 1984), Anthony Seeger & Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (1980); a more recent review of ethnology with indigenous peoples by Viveiros de Castro (1999), numerous publications about indigenism by Alcida Ramos (1998) and a reflection about the Brazilian style of doing ethnology (Ramos 1990), a survey of ethnology with indigenous populations by Roque de Barros Laraia (1987), publications about indigenist policy by Roberto Cardoso de Oliveira (1978), João Pacheco de Oliveira (1998; 1999), Antônio Carlos de Souza Lima (1995), and many other anthropologists which have been written within the tradition established in Brazilian ethnology with indigenous peoples that focuses on the interethnic relations of these peoples within the context of the national state, in addition to studying internal aspects of indigenous societies, tradition firmly established by Darcy Ribeiro and finding its principal theoretical mentor in Roberto Cardoso de Oliveira in his notion of “interethnic friction” in the early 1960’s. Cardoso de Oliveira, influenced by the study of social relations in British anthropology at the time, and the notion of “colonial situation” of Georges Balandier, changed the focus in ethnology in Brazil from acculturation studies, influenced at the time primarily by American anthropology, to the social relations of interethnic contact between indigenous peoples and segments of the national society, and the conflictive and contradictory nature of these relations (Cardoso de Oliveira, 1981 [1964]; 1978).

Mariza Peirano postulates that,

the concept of ‘interethnic friction’ was itself the theoretical result of the difficulty and/or the impossibility to live the distinction (between ‘anthropology with native populations’ and ‘anthropology of the national society’) by Brazilian anthropologists, establishing itself, perhaps as the most genuinely ‘native’ concept which anthropology has yet produced in Brazil” (1991: 83-84).

Peirano argues that: “In Brazil a theory with political engagement led to the development of the concept of ‘interethnic friction’ [...]. The concept of interethnic friction [...] had as its objective an evaluation of the integration potential of indigenous groups in the national society together with a theoretical preoccupation, the political engagement of the anthropologist being undeniable” (1991: 247-248).

The notion of “interethnic friction” profoundly influenced the development of the style of anthropology with indigenous peoples that is practiced in Brazil, deeply influencing nearly all academic production from the early 1960s until the mid-1980s. From the end of the 1980s, João Pacheco de Oliveira, from the National Museum at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, elaborating from Roberto Cardoso de Oliveira’s work, under the influence of Max Gluckman and the Manchester school, presented the notion of “historical situation” notion which refers to “models or schemes of distribution of power among diverse social actors” (Oliveira 1988: 57). More recent works by this author and his PhD students reflect on the phenomena of ethnic re-elaboration in the Northeast of Brazil (Oliveira 2004).

Another line of research in social anthropology with indigenous peoples has been developed from the National Museum in Rio de Janeiro, around Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (1996; 2011) and some of his PhD students, on Amerindian “perspectivism”, the ideas in Amazonian indigenous cosmologies concerning the way in which humans, animals, and spirits see both themselves and other world beings.

In Brazil, there has been a series of publications looking at styles of anthropology in different national contexts, for example those by Roberto Cardoso de Oliveira (1988; 1998) - the proposal to study peripheral anthropologies; Cardoso de Oliveira’s own research on ethnicity as a factor of style in anthropology in Catalonia (1998: 135-156); Mariza Peirano (1981; 1992; 1995) - Brazil and India; Leonardo Fígoli - Argentina (1995); and Guillermo Ruben

(1995) and Celso Azzan Júnior (1995) – Quebec, Canada. These and many others represent attempts, some of a comparative nature, to think about the discipline anthropologically.

Studies with indigenous peoples within Anthropology

In Brazil, Canada and Australia, anthropology was introduced first in museums³, and when it was established as an academic discipline it was primarily defined as the study of indigenous peoples. Despite the fact that social anthropology in Brazil, Canada and Australia soon expanded its objects of study to include many areas other than indigenous peoples, in all three countries ethnology with indigenous people still plays a central role (Berndt; Tonkinson 1988, Dyck 1990, Melatti 1984, Viveiros de Castro 1999). However, in Canada and Australia, from early in its history as an academic discipline, social anthropology was divided by the anthropologists who work there into geographical areas at a world level, as in the British and North American traditions, different from the anthropology practiced in Brazil up to the late 1980s, which, with rare exceptions, was restricted to Brazil. Only from the early 1990s has anthropology in Brazil expanded to include research in geographical areas at a worldwide level.

In a short overview of anthropology in Canada, Noel Dyck (1990) categorizes the bulk of social and cultural anthropological publications written during the 1970s and 1980s under one or more of four headings: “ethnohistory, ethnology, community studies, and native-state relations” (Dyck 1990: 43). Both Dyck and Kew point to a paucity of anthropological research on the situation of native peoples in urban settings (Dyck 1990, Kew 1993-94), despite the fact that in B.C., for example, in 1989, nearly half of registered status

3 Melatti (1984) affirms that anthropology in Brazil was first introduced into museums before university departments were set up in Brazil. The Australian Museum in Sydney began functioning in 1829, followed by the Tasmanian Museum in 1843, the National Museum of Victoria in 1854, the Queensland Museum in 1855, the South Australian Museum in 1856 and the Western Australian Museum in 1891 (McCarthy 1982). Richard Preston (1983) states that anthropology as an academic area was established very late in Canada. It was first introduced in the museums with a view of salvage ethnology and archaeology of Canadian Indians. Edward Sapir, indicated by Franz Boas, was the first Chief of the Anthropology Division in 1910, which began within the Geological Survey of Canada, and the building of the Victoria Museum in Ottawa. By 1920, the staff consisted of four ethnologists: Sapir, Marius Barbeau, Diamond Jenness, e F.W. Waugh. Anthropology was introduced at the University of Toronto in 1925, and at the Royal Ontario Museum, gaining the first partial departmental status and an M.A. programme by 1927.

Indians were resident off-reserve, situation which has changed over the past twenty years with many recent research projects focusing on indigenous people in urban settings. In the 1970s, the attention of ethnologists moved from more isolated communities to acculturated Indians, urbanized Indians, minority groups, ethnic fractions or sections, etc., which marks a development, in some ways similar to that observed by Peirano (1991) in the anthropology which is practised in Brazil. From a focus first on Aboriginal peoples, there was a shift to other themes such as ethnic minorities within the national society, and then to the Canadian national society itself, as well as a concern with political issues and discourse analysis (Drummond 1983, Paine 1983). The more recent collection of articles in the volume edited by Harrison & Darnell (2006a) examines more fully the historical development of anthropological study in Canada.

Noel Dyck, reflecting on recent changes in anthropology in Canada and the ethnography of “Indian administration”, affirms that

In the late stages of an age of identity politics, considerable care has been invested into grooming anthropologists not so much as intellectuals but rather as practically oriented professionals who wish to proclaim their sympathies and solidarity with Indigenous peoples and to place their services at the disposal of Aboriginal leaders (2006: 87).

Hamilton (1982) presents a short overview of anthropology in Australia up to the early 1980s, as does McCall (1982). In the words of Ronald Berndt & Robert Tonkinson, examining the developments in social anthropology and Australian Aboriginal studies in the period from 1961 to 1986, the importance of research with indigenous people in anthropology in Australia is made clear:

It is probably true that social anthropology in Australia, in spite of the fact that its research interests embrace Australian society at large and a number of neighbouring regions, is still evaluated within and outside this country largely in terms of research and publications on Aboriginal Australia (Berndt; Tonkinson 1988: 6).

These authors divide their book into five topics: gender, kinship, economy, law and religion, which, with the exception of “gender”, follow the traditional division of a monograph in British anthropology, revealing the strong

influence of the British tradition. They observe, however, that the “salvage” anthropology, which prevailed up to 1961, had given way to the study of processes of change and cultural transformation (1988: 4).

The majority of anthropologists interviewed in 1992 affirmed that nation-building did not present itself as a relevant question in Australian anthropology. In the opinion of a North American anthropologist who works in Australia, the question of nation-building is not present in the anthropologists’ conceptualization. However, this same anthropologist argued that the question of the tension between indigenous peoples and the national society was more in the foreground, a different way of perceiving a similar issue. The same anthropologist mentioned, in contrast, anthropology in Indonesia as an example of a style of anthropology closely related to the question of national integration and the attempt to create a national identity, in which some anthropologists, such as Koentjaraningrat, identify with national questions, examining them through a theory of ethnicity and a focus on the question of an Indonesian identity⁴. A situation, however, very different from that of Brazil, considering that Indonesia is a very much newer national state than Brazil, made up of an enormous archipelago of many islands and divided by large contingents of ethnic groups with great cultural and linguistic differences. Yet, being an ex-colony in which a majority of colonized peoples were dominated by a minority of European colonizers during the Dutch occupation, different from Australia which was conceptualised as a European settler nation of colonization, Indonesia faced, and is still facing the problem of attempting to construct a national state as a political programme (Geertz 1973).

A major change in anthropology with indigenous peoples occurred in anglophone anthropology in Canada during the 1960s and early 1970s, with the intensive occupation of the north of the continent and studies directed towards questions of development and modernization, paralleled also in Australia with large-scale mining development projects in the north and centre of the continent, and in Brazil with the setting up of large-scale development projects of mining, hydroelectric schemes, cattle-raising and a highway system in the Brazilian Amazon from the 1970s. These studies were directly related to the building of the Canadian nation, but were seen by the anthropologists involved not so much as a question of nation-building, but more as

4 Greg Acciaoli, UWA, personal communication, March 1992.

a question of dealing with specific problems as experts or technocrats.

In Australia, after World War II, Peterson perceives a fundamental transformation in anthropology. The threat of a Japanese invasion from the north induced the government to improve internal communications and to occupy permanently the north of the continent, especially the Northern Territory. In this period, even though there were around one thousand indigenous people who had not had contacts with Europeans “it seems there was a widespread academic view, both within and beyond Australia, that Aboriginal societies and cultures could no longer provide a special insight” (1990: 14). With the complete occupation of the north of the continent, indigenous Australians came to be thought of as “our others” and, therefore, less exotic than the “others” overseas (Baines 1995). Peterson points out, citing Cowlshaw, that

a consequence of this was that working with Aboriginal people became doing anthropology at home whereas before it had been working in a foreign country, so to speak. The interesting and authentic non-Western ways of life were now to be found exclusively outside Australia and work within Australia became less valued professionally (Peterson 1990: 14).

This provides a clear contrast to anthropology with indigenous peoples in Brazil at this time, in which indigenous societies within the national territory were the privileged object of study. In the case of Australia, a European nation of colonization, conceptualized at the time as an antipodean extension of Britain, there was no possibility of admitting indirect rule of the native populations, and, consequently, functionalist theory was not thought of as adequate to study them. At this time the native populations were excluded from the history and from the future of the Australian nation, losing their “exotic” quality.

In Brazil, in the late 1950s, Roberto Cardoso de Oliveira was involved in the formulation of indigenist policy, and invited by Darcy Ribeiro to work in the government indigenist agency, the *Serviço de Proteção aos Índios* (SPI). Through the concept of “interethnic friction”, Cardoso de Oliveira was obliged to confront ideas entrenched in the definition of social sciences, that sociology is the study of the national society while anthropology is the study of “others”, which led to his oscillation between sociology and anthropology (Peirano 1991). Peirano argues that the fact that Indians are seen as “different” and “oppressed” explains why the “interethnic friction” model never really solved the

question of whether this is an issue for anthropology or for sociology.

From the late 1960's and 1970's, the work of Otávio Velho opened up a new perspective in anthropology in Brazil, with a focus of analysis on the nation state (Peirano 1991) and, "despite all the efforts to incorporate the Indian theme into the discipline, the Indian remained always the 'other' which is 'different'" (Peirano 1991: 167). "The premise of homogeneity, which is one of the basic tenets of Brazilian nation-building, did not catch on in relation to the Indians. Because they could not be incorporated as part of a national 'us', they were excluded, having maintained the role of the 'different other'" (Peirano 1991: 168). Peirano adds that "despite the fact that the Indian is no longer considered by all anthropologists as the discipline's true and genuine object of analysis, the concern with Indians did not disappear" and that "it is in their role as 'intellectuals' that anthropologists are concerned with Indian populations" (Peirano 1991: 169). Peirano affirms that anthropologists, as Brazilian citizens, "are held responsible for the rights of the populations they study [...] Brazilian anthropologists studying Indians are looking at part of their own country's population. It is not the case of anthropologists going abroad and later returning to their countries of origin" (1991: 173-4).

In the 1950's, anthropology in all three countries was defined largely as the study of native populations, although, in Canada and Australia, different from Brazil, this definition included not only internal indigenous populations, but also native peoples of other countries of the world. In the case of Australia this included Oceania and Southeast Asia, and especially the then Australian colony of New Guinea. In the case of Canada the field of anthropological research covered the world, divided into continents and research areas as in American anthropology. However, as Harrison and Darnell mention, "until university curricula began to expand in the 1960s and 1970s as Canadian anthropologists ventured beyond their national borders, anthropology followed the Americanist tradition of almost exclusive study of the nation's indigenous peoples (Harrison; Darnell 2006b: 8).

According to Peirano, referring to the formative period of anthropology, "The anthropologist in Brazil is part of an elite which defines itself as the 'intellectual' group of the country" (1991: 174). Peirano adds that academics are defined as "intellectuals" and "intrinsic to this definition is a critical approach to Brazilian society". Citing Antônio Candido to support her argument, Peirano affirms that in Brazil there is a sense that, by writing, the

anthropologist as an intellectual and an engaged citizen, is contributing to the building of the nation. Peirano shows that this idea, which “contrasts with the European intellectual [...] for whom the commitment to national issues is not so emphasized” (1991: 174), was part of Brazilian intellectual life, although it may not have always been conscious in the thinking of Brazilian anthropologists. As mentioned above, in both Canada and Australia at this time, Canada of a strong American tradition with British and French influences, and Australia of a largely British anthropological tradition, there was not a conscious identification of the anthropologist with a role of nation-building, the national question coming to take a prominent conscious place in Australian intellectual life from the 1970s (Peterson 1990: 16), and in a very different way from the ideology of nation-building which Peirano and Ramos (1990) draw attention to in the case of Brazil.

However, in Quebec, as Asen Balikci mentions, “The Québécois went to study the Amerindians of Quebec. Their Amerindians, in their province. The history of the Amerindians was partly their history” (1980: 124), relating anthropology directly to the process of nation-building. The ideology of Quebec nation-building, with which many anthropologists identify as Quebeckers, enters into conflict with their ethical commitment to the Indians’ interests.

Recent trends in Anthropology with indigenous peoples

Ramos observes that the “profound transformation in the political role of the Indians at the local and national levels” (1990: 466) in the indigenous political movements in Brazil (where the indigenous populations, at that moment of history, were a minority of only 0.2% of the total population)⁵, has led to a more and more complex situation, which, as this author adds, “none of the well-known theoretical approaches - acculturation studies, interethnic friction, or ethnicity, for instance - seem quite appropriate to unravel...” (1990: 466). The inadequacy of an anthropology based on the “subject-object chasm” has led to dialogical approaches, as has also occurred in anthropology with indigenous peoples in Canada and Australia over the past decades. Three examples in Australia

5 According to the 2010 census of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatísticas - IBGE) the indigenous population was estimated to be around 0.4% of the national population, 817,963 individuals in a total population of 190,755,799, revealing a rapid populational increase over recent decades.

which aim to approach theoretically the question of interethnic relations are those of Barry Morris (1991), who uses the notion of resistance in writing about an Aboriginal population in NSW, in the southeast of Australia, David Trigger (1992), who uses the notions of accommodation and resistance in describing the life of indigenous people in a mission in the north of Queensland, and Francesca Merlan (1998), who re-examines anthropological understandings of the connections between change and continuity in indigenous societies from an analysis of practices of indigenous peoples, focusing the intercultural situation of indigenous people in a town in the Northern Territory.”

Although in none of the three countries is there any consensus of opinion about the definition of a style of social anthropology with indigenous peoples, several anthropologists characterized the greater part of research in Australia as having a strong emphasis, following the British tradition, on the empirical study of sociological, economic, political and religious facts. And a strong emphasis on carrying out long periods of fieldwork which result in descriptive style monographs. This contrasts with ethnology with indigenous peoples in Brazil, with its emphasis on values, reflecting the French influence and a different definition of anthropology itself that “sprang from a tradition common to philosophers, writers, and other humanists, as Peirano points out” (Ramos 1990: 456). While in Brazil, social anthropology emerged from the social sciences as a separate academic discipline, in Australia social anthropology was introduced as an already consolidated academic discipline by Radcliffe-Brown in 1926. Anthropologists, heirs of the British tradition, directed their attention to the themes of social organisation and kinship. Sociology, in contrast, was introduced much more recently in Australia, as a distinct discipline. However, the diversification of social anthropology in Australia, especially since the 1980s, has profoundly modified this style.

It is worth mentioning that, in Brazil, the question of racism has been examined, in both Anthropology and Sociology, however, above all in studies on “race relations” associated with Afro-Brazilians and less in Anthropology with indigenous peoples, which was associated with the notion of culture in “acculturation studies”.

Over the past 25 years, the rapid expansion of PhD programmes in universities in all three countries has led to the production of a sufficient number of PhD’s in anthropology to perpetuate the discipline without the need to import academics and without the need for students to go abroad for

post-graduate studies, as was the case in previous periods. In all three countries there has been an increasing involvement of anthropologists in experiences of social intervention over this same period, including participation in land claims, environmental impact reports for large-scale development projects, consultancy work for government and non-government organisations, such as the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI), the Federal Public Ministry (MPF), the Socio-environmental Institute (Instituto Socioambiental - ISA), and the Centre for Indigenist Work (Centro de Trabalho Indigenista - CTI), in Brazil. In both Canada and Australian many anthropologists undertake consultancy for indigenous communities, non-government and government organisations, and for the mining sector. This social involvement has led anthropology into dilemmas at the same time that it has contributed to the strengthening of research with indigenous peoples. The challenges which anthropologists face have led to the emergence of new issues and theoretical developments, with new collaborative and participatory research, widening the horizons of anthropology as an academic discipline, such as participatory demarcation of indigenous lands (Oliveira, J. P.; Iglesias 2002). The old role of the anthropologist as intermediary and spokesperson between indigenous peoples and the state has been replaced by that of an assessor who establishes a dialogical posture of political commitment with the indigenous people (s) he works with, respecting their opinions and decisions (Oliveira, J. P. 2009).

There has also been an increasing effort among indigenous peoples involved in indigenous political movements in all three countries to qualify academically and thereby face the national society using its own instruments to help bring into effect indigenous rights. In Brazil the demand for academic education has been more recent than in Canada and Australia and, over the past decade, it has increased very rapidly (Baniwa 2009). Many indigenous leaders who participate in the administration of indigenous organisations are highly educated persons, and a few are anthropologists. Ramos emphasizes the substantial change in the political role of indigenous people over the past forty years (Ramos 2010). Nevertheless, this author points out that symmetrical relations in research with indigenous peoples will only come into effect “when academic and indigenous ideas are mutually fertilised, generating new understanding on both sides”⁶ (2010: 41).

6 The translation is mine.

Some examples of recent anthropological publication on indigenous peoples

I shall conclude, mentioning just a few of the many important recent publications, which reflect the diversification of anthropological research in Canada and Australia today. In Australia, Yasmine Musharbash (2008) explores everyday life in an indigenous settlement in central Australia, presenting narrative portraits of five Warlpiri women and the ways in which people in a relatively remote community connect to the state. From a historical and anthropological perspective, Howard Morphy (2007) analyses the shifting cultural and social contexts that surround the production of Yolngu indigenous art in Australia. Diane Austin-Broos (2009) examines two moments of change in the Western Arrernte world, the sedentarisation policy imposed in the late XIX century and the state-sponsored “return to the country” which came with the federal government’s self-determination policy in the second half of the XX century. Gillian Cowlishaw (2004) examines race relations from an analysis of the interface of multiculturalism and the situation of indigenous people in rural NSW.

A collection of critical articles was organized by Jon Altman and Melinda Hinkson (2007) in response to the 2007 Australian federal government intervention in the Northern Territory in the lives of over 40.000 indigenous people under the pretext of a national emergency in respect of widespread allegations of child sexual abuse. As Hinkson affirms, these restrictive measures to impose government control “constitute a governmental intervention unmatched by any other policy declaration in Aboriginal affairs in the last forty years” (2007: 1). Altman observes that “This radical plan fundamentally to transform kin-based societies to market-based ones is based on some highly contentious notions [...]” (Altman 2007: 307).

A recent publication which has made a big impact on anthropology in Australia is the collection of highly polemical essays published in 2009 by the anthropologist-linguist Peter Sutton “The Politics of Suffering: Indigenous Australia and the end of the liberal consensus”. In this book, Sutton claims to be breaking the silence of some anthropologists who, together with the political left, have, since the 1970s, been supporting the movement which aimed at decolonization of indigenous peoples in Australia. The author openly defends government interventions under the pretext that is impossible to remain silent in view of the tragic situation of many indigenous communities,

and that measures were necessary to save these indigenous communities from “descent into dysfunction” (Sutton 2009: 3). Sutton describes the Wik people of Aurukun, in the Cape York Peninsula, with whom he did fieldwork from the 1970s, and later participated in applied research projects of community assistance, as well as acting as principal researcher on the Wik native title claim, as having “gone from a once liveable and vibrant community, as I had first experienced it, to a disaster zone. Levels of violent conflict, rape, child and elder assault and neglect had rocketed upwards since the introduction of a regular alcohol supply in 1985” (2009: 1). Feeling himself powerless to influence state policy, Sutton attacks his colleagues in an emotional outburst for remaining silent, looks for indigenous traditional cultural traits which might explain the current situation of violence, and justifies government intervention. Sutton’s book has raised deep criticism and resulted in a separation between those anthropologists and indigenous leaders who strongly disagree with the 2007 Northern Territory federal intervention, others who, with Sutton, sympathise with the intervention as a necessary measure to change the appalling conditions in some indigenous communities, and others who accept some form of government intervention but are highly critical of the way it has been done.

In Canada, publications by Bruce Miller (2000) examine tradition and law in the Coast Salish world in British Columbia province, and the politics of nonrecognition of indigenous peoples by national states (2003), focusing especially the United States and Canada, but also widening the discussion to a comparison at an international level about national states and the politics of nonrecognition. This same author organized a collection of essays which includes articles written by indigenous leaders (2007), and a book about indigenous oral history in the courts (2011).

A publication organized by Mario Blaser, Harvey Feit and Glenn McRae (2004), unites articles which examine the impacts of large-scale development projects in Canada and around the world. The history of the native fisheries in British Columbia and colonial prohibitions to salmon fishing and failure to recognize alternative indigenous legal frameworks is examined by Douglas Harris (2001), and a publication by Jennifer Kramer (2006) explores how the Nuxalk people of British Columbia negotiate questions such as: Who owns culture? How should culture be transmitted to future generations? Where does selling and buying Nuxalk art fit into attempts to regain control of

heritage? This author looks at the ways the Nuxalk use their cultural patrimony to assert their collective national identity in their attempt to regain self-determination in British Columbia.

The style of anthropology practised in Canada emerged above all under the influence of American anthropology, but was also influenced by British and French anthropology, made easy by the English and French languages and by academic exchanges between these countries, and more recently between Canada and Australia. These factors reinforce it being characterized as being “semi-peripheral” according to the opinion of many anthropologists who work in Canada, in the same sense of “peripheral anthropologies” used by Roberto Cardoso de Oliveira (1988). One factor which explains the dynamic character of anthropology in Canada has been pointed out by the Canadian anthropologist Marilyn Silverman, who in her article on the colonial encounter in anthropology in Canada, concludes that “Surely it cannot be accidental that Canadian anthropologists, in the periphery of an empire, are concerned with the political-economic trajectory of power and exploitation in its various forms” (1991: 392).

Vered Amit affirms that “in terms of the reproduction of anthropology as an academic discipline in Canada, the problem may be not so much that we are peripheral but that we are not quite peripheral enough” (2006: 267). Amit clarifies her statement referring to anthropology in Canada, affirming: “We are a marginal annex of the centre, and that gives us access to many of its activities without allowing us to exert much influence on its development. We’re neither really part of the centre nor really outside it” (2006: 273).

Conclusions

This brief examination of three styles of Anthropology with indigenous peoples reveals many noticeable differences, especially those resulting from very different histories and styles of colonization between three European powers - Portugal, Britain and France. Obviously, the local histories and differences are far more complex than can be dealt with in a short article and a flattening of nuance is an inevitable problem when surveying such large issues. However, despite enormous cultural and historical diversity, the colonial situations shared by Brazil, Canada and Australia reveal some amazing commonalities which are becoming ever more evident as the national borders of

Anthropology are becoming less rigid, and the indigenous political movements are becoming more and more international, resorting to international law in indigenous rights. Over the past twenty five years the indigenous political movements have become increasingly sophisticated and globalized in their organization, which has made research in Anthropology more complex and, at the same time, more dynamic, as researchers in Anthropology, indigenous or non-indigenous, work with indigenous intellectuals from diverse academic areas. The taken-for granted inequalities of the colonial past between anthropologists and the indigenous peoples researched have been replaced by negotiations between anthropologists and these peoples, to carry out research on more equal terms, in which the anthropologist must respect the demands and interests of the indigenous peoples in collaborative and participatory research, frequently sharing the field with indigenous anthropologists from the same peoples with whom research is carried out. Situations where anthropologists increasingly engage with government interventions and national/international development projects resulting from global economic and political processes, and attempts by large corporations to privatize policies for indigenous peoples, raise many questions which often lead to divergences of opinion between anthropologists on political issues which have no simple answers. Similar divergences of opinion are encountered in the multiple positions held by indigenous leaders and their organisations in an increasingly complex world.

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