

# The production of the *Handbook of South American Indians Vol 3* (1936-1948)

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## Abstract

This paper discusses the intellectual division of labor between US scholars and the ethnographers researching in the field who together produced Volume 3 of the ambitious Handbook of South American Indians, entitled “Tropical Forest Tribes” (1936-1948). Julian Steward, the book’s editor, was an Anthropologist with a sociological approach. At the time, he was also involved in conceptual conflicts between scientific policies and collaboration in government programs. Here I focus primarily on the relationship between Steward and the volume’s contributors, specifically the hierarchical attitude that led to an asymmetrical classification of contributors like Curt Nimuendajú, taken as producers of ethnographic data. Researchers who lived in Brazil at the time were conceived as ‘minor’ authors by the editor compared to those held to be academic scholars, i.e. those who directed research and university-level academic training at US institutions. The production of this volume thus reiterated an intellectual division of labor between armchair scholars and fieldwork collectors of ethnographic artifacts for museums.

**Keywords:** South American Indians, Intellectual Division of Labor, Museums, Social Anthropology, Cultural Translation

## Resumo

O presente trabalho discute a divisão intelectual do trabalho entre pesquisadores dos Estados Unidos e os etnógrafos que faziam pesquisa de campo que produziram juntos o volume 3 (Tribos das Florestas Tropicais) do ambicioso Handbook of South American Indians(1936-1948). Julian Steward, o editor do livro, era um antropólogo que trabalhava com uma abordagem sociológica. Na época, ele também se envolveu com conflitos conceituais implicados com

as contradições entre as políticas científicas e a colaboração em programas governamentais. Eu focalizo aqui primariamente na relação entre Steward e colaboradores do volume, especialmente a atitude que levou a uma classificação assimétrica de autores como Curt Nimuendajú, tomados como produtores de dados etnográficos. Pesquisadores que viviam então no Brasil eram considerados como autores menores em comparação com os considerados “acadêmicos”, que ensinavam e orientavam pesquisas de pós graduação nas universidades americanas. A produção deste volume reiterou, portanto, a divisão intelectual de trabalho entre pesquisadores de gabinete e coletores de artefatos etnográficos para museus.

**Palavras-chave:** Índios Sul Americanos, Divisão Intelectual do Trabalho, Museus, Antropologia Social, Tradução Cultural

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## Introduction

The *Tropical Forest Tribes* volume of the *Handbook of South American Indians* (HSAI) is famous for its comprehensive overview of the ethnography of Lowland South American indigenous groups. Although the editor Julian Steward acknowledges Robert Lowie, Curt Nimuendajú and Alfred Métraux for their work in editing “many articles besides their own” (Steward, 1948: XXIV), a close reading of the book reveals that its production involved an intellectual division of labor and an internal ranking, reproducing the social differentiation that historically characterized the production of knowledge as a hierarchy between scholars, ethnographers studying in situ, and travelers’ observations. This prompted a consideration of the “discursive regimes” underpinning scientific writing (Biagioli & Galison 2003: 1). Though Steward acknowledged Nimuendajú as a pioneering ethnographic authority (Oliveira 1999), the relationship between the two was founded on a negative evaluation of the fact that the German-Brazilian ethnographer had no formal degree. Greater recognition was given to scholars trained in internationally renowned centers of higher learning, among them Eduardo Galvão, a Brazilian scholar trained by American anthropologist Charles Wagley at Columbia University.<sup>1</sup>

The production of the compendium was based on Steward’s own conception of contemporary Social Anthropology. The new disciplinary trends he envisaged were based on sociological approaches. His aim was to raise

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<sup>1</sup> Owing to space restrictions, in this paper I shall focus mainly on researchers responsible for ethnographical and comparative work on Amazonian indigenous groups.

the status of Applied Anthropology during the years leading up to World War II. By articulating both scholarly projects and war time agencies under the guise of Good Neighbor policies against the Nazi threat, and obtaining public financing for his projects, Steward changed the Boasian way organizing anthropological research. Even though both scholars were committed to practice in anthropology, they differed in that Boas was socialist and Steward liberal in terms of their political credos. The former proclaimed the urgency to “save” indigenous cultures, the latter sustained that the historical process would lead to the integration of Indians into national societies (Faulhaber, 2011). Steward envisaged the knowledge produced by anthropological investigation of regional areas being used subsequently by professional planners involved in economic development.

During the early twentieth century U.S. Americanist scholars focused mainly upon native peoples in North America, whereas European Americanists focused special attention on the Amazon, considered an exotic location. Throughout the history of the colonization of the Americas, Europeans had produced ethnographic descriptions of the Amazon, but few of them had actually spent as much time in the region such as Curt Nimuendajú.<sup>2</sup> European anthropologists concerned with Native American ethnography, such as Franz Boas, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Robert Lowie and Alfred Métraux, basically established their contacts in the field, but worked mainly in US academic institutions during wartime.

The construction of the concepts upon which the book is based expresses the social relations of its intellectual production, themselves embedded in broader social processes. The wider social conditions found during the war led to a shift from museum anthropology to the strategic study of regional areas, prompting US Anthropology to pursue studies abroad, including South America and specifically in Amazonia. This shift became enmeshed in disputes concerning the monopoly held by the close-knit scientific establishment over resources and funding.

These disputes involved the networks of relationships between researchers from different countries and implied a dynamic of symbolic exchanges that created interdependence between people working within an

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<sup>2</sup> Born in Germany, Nimuendajú arrived in Brazil in 1903 and conducted research with some 50 indigenous peoples until his death, in 1945, among the Ticuna Indians, during his last fieldwork trip.

establishment, such as the Smithsonian Institution, who needed resources managed by those outside of this establishment. However, the fight for hegemony implied excluding people from – or allowing them only limited access to – knowledge and power as part of a dynamic of cultural appropriation. This sort of dispute was at stake when Steward, in 1942, envisioned the creation of the Institute of Social Anthropology (ISA) as a Pan-American project for exchanging strategic information between the Smithsonian Institution and South American counterparts. Basically, a group of specialists formed a hierarchy of researchers financed by government money with the purpose of producing knowledge on South America and its tropical forests, creating and structuring regional domains as frameworks for government planning.

I begin by surveying a number of theoretical references on the division of labor in the production of Americanist anthropological knowledge and the ethnography of the Amazon. I then turn to the socio-historical situation manifest in the production of the third volume of the *HSAI*. My aim is to examine the personal and professional relationships involved in the volume's production, centering our attention on the social wartime networks within which U.S. anthropologists and their Brazilian colleagues interacted. Finally, I examine documents connected to the volume's elaboration that shed light on the intellectual division of labor based to a certain extent on the *HSAI*'s editor and the different ranking assigned to its contributors.

### **The production of knowledge and interpersonal relationships in the history of the Anthropology of the Amazon**

According to Azevedo (1994), following Charles-Marie de La Condamine's trip to the Amazon, various other European explorers and naturalists travelled to the region during the "age of the great expeditions" (1818-1910), among whom we can highlight Karl P. Von Martius, Sir Henry Walter Bates and, some time later, Erland Nordeskiöld. Historically the Natural History Museums also functioned as Brazil's main scientific institutions given the absence of universities until the mid-twentieth century. The first Brazilian museums were founded and consolidated during the late-nineteenth century in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Belém, the latter located in Amazonia. European researchers such as André Agassis, Theodor Koch-Grünberg, Constant Tastevin and Hermano Stradelli maintained contact with these

Museums. At the time a number of Brazilian naturalists, including the likes of Gonçalves Dias, João Barbosa Rodrigues, Domingo Soares Ferreira Penna and José Veríssimo, also explored the Amazon and wrote papers on various topics of interest to the Humanities.

The history of the anthropology of the Amazon shows how paternalist relationships were embedded in particular interpersonal ties and how these relationships, in turn, affected the construction of anthropological knowledge on the region's indigenous peoples. The usage of "paternity" as a metaphor for "authorship" shows the analogy between familial ties (blood and alliance) and intellectual creation, raising the question of whether this "creativity" is itself correlated with conception, thereby giving intellectual labor procreative connotations (Strathern 2003: 173). I would claim, more precisely, that paternalistic practices historically underpin the idea of "offspring." Pursuing the kinship analogy further, the dominant assumption that Brazilian intellectuals were "poor cousins" of the ruling classes during the Estado Novo dictatorship in the 1930s (Miceli 1979) leads me to think that the *HSAI* editor considered his southern contributors to be even more distant, say seventh or eighth-degree poor relatives.

The objective of this paper is to understand the inter-subjectivity of authors of distinct nationalities who lived in different countries, but who were all connected by their interest in the 'Americanization' of Anthropology. In the Amazon, expeditions were characterized by a social differentiation between those who gathered texts and artifacts in the field and those scholars who worked from their offices in museums and universities (Stocking 1983). I also argue that European and US, as well as South American, 'data gatherer' ethnographers contributed to the dislocation of texts and artifacts collected among indigenous groups (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998).

I hold that cultural translation is "inevitably enmeshed" in "professional, national and international balances of power" (Asad 1986: 163). As such, one of the tasks of the ethnographer is to understand the language of anthropological production and uncover its implicit meanings. These meanings convey asymmetric relations between authors living in different societies. I therefore focus my approach on how power enmeshes discourses as forms of cultural appropriation.

The geographic and social distance between northern and southern nations affected the relationships between ethnographers who had been living

in the Amazon, as well as anthropologists who had worked in Europe but moved to the USA at some point in their career, especially during the Nazi persecution of even famous anthropologists, such as those who worked at the Trocadero Square Museum (*Musée de L'Homme*) in the early 1940s. The museum was one of the sites of the “Resistance Française” (Laurière 2006), where eleven professionals were arrested, though two managed to escape: Paul Rivet, who went to Mexico via Spain, and Lévi-Strauss, aided by Robert Lowie, who obtained a Rockefeller Fellowship and moved to New York, eventually being employed at UNESCO’s headquarters. The human rights activist Alfred Métraux, anticipating the war, immigrated to the US in late 1935 and held temporary teaching posts at the University of California (Los Angeles and Berkeley) and Yale (Prins & Krebs 2005).

The separation of individual subjectivity and objective cultural production itself implies – especially following the growth in scientific compartmentalization – a narrower range of knowledge and control, a phenomenon known as the “tragedy of culture” (Simmel 1968:46). This tragedy comprehends symbolic exchanges as parts of a dynamic process of creating knowledge, based on power differences between scientific establishments. This power imbalance creates a chain of interdependence in which people who act within a given establishment need resources managed by others outside of it, forming a dynamic of cultural appropriation (Elias 1982:40). In the anthropological field, this dynamic of appropriation and exclusion led to the creation of a group of specialists who managed a “specific fund of symbolic representations” (Elias 1982: 43), paternalistically creating and structuring regionally strategic domains of knowledge, such as those within South American countries and along their borders, more specifically the unstructured and unexplored tropical forest regions.

In terms of the network of war institutions and the production of the *Handbook of South American Indians* during the Second World War, Washington was the principal headquarters for interactions between scientists and politicians looking to strengthen ties between North and South American peoples in the face of the Nazi threat.<sup>3</sup> It was this context that bred the idea of the *HSAI* as a compendium of volumes to add to the

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3 eleven of our colleagues of the Trocadero Museum have been arrested...Rivet had to escape under the most dramatic circumstances” (letter from Métraux to Steward, May 26, 1941).

already-existing *North American Indians Handbook*,<sup>4</sup> with the Amazonian volume expected to catalyze an appropriate anthropological response concerning the significance of the Tropical Forest at a time of global crisis.

Lowie, chairman of the Division of Anthropology and Psychology of the National Research Council first proposed compiling the *HSAI* in 1932 (Steward 1941: 48) and appointed a committee of three members (Lowie, Father John Cooper and Leslie Spier) to take charge of its planning (Kerns 2003: 210). However the project was quickly stalled due to lack of funding in the depression-strapped United States. In 1940 money was finally made available to produce the *HSAI* by means of a special appropriations bill for US cooperation with the American Republics, brokered through the State Department's Interdepartmental Committee.<sup>5</sup>

The network of institutions through which the *HSAI* contributors interacted during the war years (mostly performing bureaucratic work) is revealed by the correspondence between those anthropologists committed to the idea of the significance of indigenous peoples for Pan-American self awareness.<sup>6</sup>

The Ethnogeographic Board was created in June 1942 as a wartime organization, jointly established and sponsored by the National Research Council, the American Council of Learned Societies, the Social Science Research Council and the Smithsonian Institution. The board operated as a non-governmental organization with the purpose of producing academic specialists and specialized knowledge “for the successful execution of the war” (Bennet 1947: 22). It was set up as a clearing house to provide the military and war agencies with regional information and personnel data and to encourage the promulgation of research projects.

The Ethnogeographic Board's documents deposited at the Smithsonian Archives provide information about the institutionalization of regional studies at the time of WWII (Stocking 1976). This institutionalization shaped the “geography of knowledge well-suited to the military's desire to impose control and stability within the extensive territories being ‘liberated’ from

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4 For several decades prior to the war, the Native American had been seen as a rallying symbol for Pan-American unity by many of the hemisphere's intellectuals. The genealogy of the idea of the *HSAI* can be traced back at least as far as Boas's proposal to the Bureau of American Anthropology for a Handbook of American Indigenous Languages (Boas 1911, Darnell 2001, Blanchette 2006).

5 Letter from Steward to Robert Redfield, October 7<sup>th</sup> 1939 (NAA/ISA correspondence).

6 Letter from Steward to Lowie, September 10<sup>th</sup> 1942 (NAA/ISA correspondence).

Axis control” (Nugent 2008:34). Regional ethnography during this period defined political borders and established “areas of study” in the interests of war (Nugent 2008:52). This regional intervention would eventually overlap and contradict autonomous national projects promoted beyond the confines of US scholarly institutions.

In its evaluation of strategic interests, the EB considered the Brazilian coast, which included the Amazon Basin, a “vast biological laboratory” and thus a first priority.<sup>7</sup> Latin America was identified as one of the most important ethnogeographic regions where social research was flourishing at the time. For the EB, though, it was just one area among many.<sup>8</sup> The wartime government agency specifically created to cover South American issues was the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA). This office was created by the Council of National Defense on August 16<sup>th</sup> 1940 “to respond to perceptions of a massive threat to the security of the U.S.” (Cramer and Prutsch 2006: 786).<sup>9</sup>

When the United States entered the war after Pearl Harbor (December 1941), Brazil, whose ‘neutrality’ was deemed inadmissible, declared its solidarity with the U.S. government, joining the allied forces against the Axis powers.<sup>10</sup> In exchange, the USA elected Brazil as its main strategic “Good Neighbor.” Several influential US figures visited Brazil as part of a full-blown

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7 NAA, BOX 49, Journal of WM Duncan Strong as Director of the Ethnogeographic Board

8 Report of the Committee of the Social Sciences Research Council, June 1943, p. 3.

9 Report of the Committee of the Social Sciences Research Council, June 1943, p. 3.

10 Brazil seemed reluctant to enter the war, trying to continue its stance of ‘neutrality’ and ‘equidistance’ in Brazil’s foreign affairs. Based on nationalist principles, the Brazilian dictator Getúlio Vargas ambiguously maintained economic and political exchanges with Germany and the USA simultaneously. Formerly an adept of Pan-American neutrality, he could also defend the Axis powers when he needed them commercially, such as to buy a significant amount of weapons from Germany. However, due to Brazil’s strategically privileged position in South America, and despite disagreeing with Vargas’s ambivalent methods of governance, Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s administration continued to support him, recognizing the fact that Brazil’s government acted as a key representative of “Good Neighbor” politics during the 1930s. Vargas’s political reforms were able to eliminate political opposition from both the socialist and fascist movements. At this time, the state bureaucracy recruited a large number of elite intellectuals, promoting the institutionalization of a civil service meritocracy which generally served to justify an authoritarian ethos. Despite being merely ‘poor cousins,’ representatives of nationalist social thought, they spoke in the name of the elite (Miceli 1979: 166), guided by the belief that the state bureaucracy could serve the people. The goal of this organization had been, at least in a paternalist discourse, to promote – without changing the whole social structure – populist reforms that provided labor rights, education and healthcare, mainly to urban workers and their families, but also to the general poor population as well.

propaganda campaign. Taking advantage of this climate of emergency in the US Administration, the USA was able to advance its interests in international trade along with promoting its own military security (Dean 1987: 88). The Coordinator's Office had a special regard for the Amazon, conducting a Health Project based on an inter-governmental agreement between the USA and Brazil. Amazonia was seen as a favorable economic frontier for the development programs then blossoming in the international arena (Weinstein 2007). During World War II, the office specifically invested in programs directly related to supporting the rubber industry. These development policies were a forerunner to the selection of Brazilian locations suitable for Cold War investment, making Brazil as a more favorable "good neighbor" than Central American or Caribbean countries such as Mexico or Cuba.<sup>11</sup>

In 1940 the National Research Council created the Committee on Latin American Anthropology (CLAA) which, prior to direct US involvement in the war, reflected a "desire to integrate professional research with Governmental programs."<sup>12</sup> One of the goals of the CLAA was the creation of a regional roster that included people available for services, such as specialized emergency advisors, Americans conducting research and able to provide training in military activities, and researchers undertaking fieldwork trips in areas strategic to the USA.<sup>13</sup> William Duncan Strong, Director of the EB, contacted leading

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11 The Brazilian government, pursuing sustainability, created the BCB (Rubber Credit Bank) with the aim of establishing a "reserve fund" to promote regional and national development beyond the war efforts (Martinello 2004: 117). In order to boost its own political power bases as a corporate state, Brazil proposed basic health and subsistence measures for "rubber soldiers" to be relocated under emergency situations from the semi-arid Brazilian Northeast to remote areas of the vast Amazonian rainforest. The Washington Agreements (March 3<sup>rd</sup> 1942) included an increase in rubber production, allocating resources to improving the quality of Amazon rubber, and supporting a health program that would improve sanitary conditions in the region. This health program resulted in the creation of the SESP, a governmental health service in which representatives from the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Cooperation actively participated. This office was assigned responsibility for the cultural part of the program, including innovative plans for self-sustaining agriculture to be practiced by relocated rubber tappers, as well as a series of propaganda measures intended to create support for the program. However, the circumstantial and episodic forms of assistance promoted by the Brazilian government and the inter-American cooperation provided insufficient help to the rubber tappers moved to the Amazon from the Northeast (Wagley 1953).

12 Records of the BAE, Series 4, Miscellaneous Administrative Files (1948-1965- Box 289), Bureau of American Ethnology, Memorandum re: A guide to the Survey of Foreign Liaison Activities of the Research groups within the Federal Government (9 pages).

13 See: World regions in the Social Sciences - Report of a Committee of the Social Sciences Research Council June, 1943, pp 10.

professors from the most important American universities on behalf of the CLAA. These sent him lists of recommendations to compose the Committee's "body of specialists" from academics those already integrated into the regional committees, who were subsequently called into government service.

Anthropologists involved in these committees and organizations put their academic skills to use in professional practices not traditionally considered part of ethnographic fieldwork. For instance, they would try to attract US scholars to collaborate with them on official documents and argue with public policy managers that Latin America – and the Amazonian Indians – were a relevant subject for an ethnographic handbook. These anthropologists were also members of scientific boards, which themselves advised governmental bureaucrat committees and boards.

During this time Julian Steward set up the Institute of Social Anthropology at the Smithsonian Institution to capitalize on (and advance) the State Department's "good neighbor" policy by sending anthropologists to teach and organize research in a number of Latin American countries. Offices of the Institute were created in these countries to serve as intermediaries between academic institutions and government agencies, promoting interaction between researchers and the administrators of anthropological research programs (Faulhaber 2011).<sup>14</sup>

### **The production of Volume 3: Tropical Forest Areas**

Steward was appointed editor of the *HSAI* in the spring of 1939, shortly after his unhappy experiences as a Consultant Anthropologist to the Office of Indian Affairs, where he had learnt first-hand about all the complexities of the intertwined academic and government interests involved in the use of applied anthropology among indigenous groups (Kerns 2003, 218). This experience had persuaded him to lobby for the position of editor of the *HSAI*, even though he realized that conducting his own fieldwork in South America would be hard and completely outside his career plans: his armchair nostalgia had already led him to interrupt his trip to South America in 1938. Even though he had written mainly about North American indigenous groups, he

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14 Here I focus solely on Steward's view of this institute when it appears in conjunction with the organization of the Handbook and in relation to Brazilian scholars, ignoring his relationship with scholars in other countries.

perceived the theoretical significance of comparing Northern and Southern peoples while studying under Lowie as a graduate student at Berkeley, where Erland Nordenskiöld had also taught for a semester in 1927. Once he was engaged in organizing the volume, he met with his mentors as well as the committee members in charge of its planning.

Julian Steward hired Alfred Métraux's "services on a full-time basis as assistant editor in the fiscal year 1941-1942" (BAE 1941: 6). On September 17<sup>th</sup> 1943, Alfred Métraux was promoted to the post of Assistant Director of the Smithsonian Inter-American Anthropological Institute. Métraux was an expert on Latin American ethnography, hence Steward's decision to invite him to help edit the Handbook, as well as contribute his own texts based on first-hand knowledge of the subject. However in Steward's mind there was no space at the top of the apex for two editors. Washington-born Steward with his pragmatic liberal ethos was able to coordinate the wartime network more effectively than the Swiss-born Argentinean human rights activist Métraux, renowned for his fight against racism (Prins & Krebs 2005). The latter's informed knowledge was of lesser value in terms of producing the volume than the former's, who, in addition to his editorial tasks, had also explicitly assumed the "dirty work" of coordinating bureaucrat and political contacts.

In Steward's words, "the general editor need not be the highly skilled expert on South America which we should otherwise require. The editor will really do the dirty work"<sup>15</sup> The collaboration between both men had a sad ending for Métraux, as he told Lowie in a letter written in the aftermath, on March 15<sup>th</sup> 1945: "My official connections with the Smithsonian are not broken, but, under no conditions shall I resume any work connected with Dr. Steward. My relationship with him has been the most unfortunate experience of my whole scientific career. Not even in Tucuman did I have to face so many difficulties and unpleasantness. I would gladly say farewell to the South American field until some prospect develops of really serious and competent work".<sup>16</sup>

Dealing with more than eighty contributors, all of whom submitted first-hand ethnographies, Steward used the production of the handbook as a means to achieve his own research goals – and boost his academic career – both at the office and at home. The editor position gave him the 'privilege,'

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15 Letter from Steward to Alfred Métraux, August 23, 1939, NAA/HSAI records.

16 Bancroft Library, Lowie Professional Papers, Box 12.

as he once put it, “of not being in the field for a time” (Kerns 2003: 218). In several of his letters to Lowie and others, Steward wrote about the difference between the academic researchers and renowned professors who were in charge of writing the introductory, general and theoretical subjects, and the fieldworkers who lived in direct contact with Native Americans and who were responsible for the more specific and descriptive information.<sup>17</sup>

Robert Lowie was the first US anthropologist to introduce South American Indigenous issues into the North American anthropological literature. When Steward began organizing the *HSAI*, he initiated a systematic correspondence with Lowie, recognizing his contributions to the analytical study of South American Indians. Steward, who had studied with Lowie at Berkeley during his freshman year (1921/22) and as a graduate student (1925-27), asked for his former professor’s advice on the framework of the *HSAI*, discussing what Steward termed the “regional treatment of cultures” and defining boundaries between geographical and cultural areas, highland and lowland peoples, tropical and non-tropical environments. The two researchers also discussed an intellectual division of labor (over which Steward intended to preside) for compiling the Handbook, submitting to the elder anthropologist the idea of a hierarchy of ‘contributors’ and ‘sub-contributors,’ dividing tasks between “key authors” (responsible for the introductory and focal papers) and “local collaborators” (responsible for the detailed descriptions of particular indigenous peoples). He invited graduate students such as Charles Wagley and William Lipkind to take part in the project and asked Lowie to act as an intermediary with Curt Nimuendajú. Besides Lowie, Steward considered his “key men” to be Métraux, Claude Lévi-Strauss and Father Cooper. Lowie and Métraux tried to dissuade Steward from this first idea, convincing him that if contributors [were to] merely send raw material to someone else who writes it up and adds their names as co-author, they are “quite likely to raise a rumpus”.<sup>18</sup> Steward, however, stuck to his conviction that an academic degree was a necessary part of scientific production and thus maintained his distinction between armchair savants and traveler-collectors.

The separation of the lowland cultures into two volumes was not part of

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<sup>17</sup> Letter from Steward to Lowie, June 21<sup>st</sup> 1939.

<sup>18</sup> Letter from Steward to Métraux, March 6, 1940.

the original plan. The distinction between “Tropical Forest” and “Circum-Caribbean” was made for theoretical and strategic reasons: the former had appeared first because of the wartime interest in Amazonian rubber, the ecological significance of lowland indigenous forest cultures, and their openness to cultural change. The evolutionary distinction between ideal types such as “the simplest Amazon cultures” and “more complex societies as the chiefdoms” had already been criticized. In his preface to the volume, Steward at one point explains his main concerns about the arbitrariness of dividing the region into cultural areas and the difficulties inherent in any such division, as exemplified by comparing Map 1, showing the five parts covered by the volume, with Map 8, showing the cultural areas themselves. He also registers his discomfort with the idea of ‘acculturation’ as defined in the “Memorandum for the Study of Acculturation” (Redfield, Linton & Herskovits 1936).<sup>19</sup> Steward suggested to Redfield that the *HSAI* should treat cultures as a “broad outline with emphasis on ethnography,” claiming that “[a]fter careful consideration, it was concluded that acculturation should be minimized.”<sup>20</sup> Following this decision, Steward would downplay the importance of the concept of acculturation, emphasizing such concepts as “cultural change,” “culture core” and “multilineal evolution” in his later work (Steward 1955). He believed that acculturation as a practical problem in areas where indigenous cultures were “still a matter of some national concern” (Steward 1948: XXIII), such as certain Andean peoples. He did not go so far as to recognize, however, that indigenous cultures were also a matter of national concern in Brazil, as shown by the nation’s indigenous policies at federal level. At the same time, though, he was aware that contributors to the volume were dealing directly with Brazilian indigenous policy makers, meaning that their anthropological studies of cultural change, administration, community and regional studies were backed by public funding in modern nation states and undertaken more from political than cultural motives: namely, to identify and support capitalist economic development along border regions.<sup>21</sup>

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19 Letter from Steward to Lowie, July 21<sup>st</sup> 1939 (NAA: Records of the HSAI).

20 Letter from Steward to Redfield, October 7<sup>th</sup> 1939 (NAA/ISA correspondence).

21 After World War II, area studies lost the immediacy they had during the war effort and were refocused in line with new approaches (Patterson & Lauria-Parricelli 1999). Steward’s posterior theoretical systematization failed to understand the political potential of indigenous cultures, relegating them to the role of ‘subcultures’ encompassed by Western nation states and societies

In the volume's introduction, Lowie provides a systematic comparison of the information furnished by contributors and ethnohistorical sources, singling out Nimuendajú and Koch-Grünberg in particular. He then summarizes the general ethnographical contained in the book, following the scheme designed by Steward for the *HSAI*: a topic-based approach with a detailed index.<sup>22</sup> Lowie focuses on tropical forest locations and provides general cultural data: agriculture, gathering, hunting, fishing, food preparation, as well as data on villages, residential structures, dress and ornamentation, transportation and manufacturing. Significantly, he combines social and political organization (his main earlier interest) with other general ethnographic data on warfare, life cycles, esthetic and recreational activities, religion, shamanism and traditional medicine, mythology and literature, lore and learning, as well as on etiquette. The introduction, however, lacks the theoretical explorations that characterize Lowie's work elsewhere, such as his comparison of the social and political organization of North and South American indigenous groups (Lowie 1960).

The volume offers first-hand information on how the Indians lived at the time the book was compiled: however it does not show how indigenous culture and mythology avoided disappearing under conditions of subordination, accommodation or adaptation, contrary to the predictions made in the *Memorandum* (Redfield, Linton & Herskovits 1936). Other merits of the volume are its consideration of different countries within a pan-Amazonian view of the indigenous peoples of the tropical forest, exploring the differences between Bolivian, Peruvian and Ecuadorian 'tribes' (Radin 1948). Métraux, Steward and their collaborators focused on the specificities of these groups, many of whom Métraux already knew through first-hand observation. They also worked with second-hand information about Colombian groups (primarily from the Marañon, Putumayo and Caquetá rivers) showing how the situation of these groups was different from Brazilian groups who lived in Mato Grosso state or along the banks of the Amazon River and its tributaries.

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(Steward 1955). He also lacked a broader vision of the general social dynamics of the time and especially the interdependence of scientific policies, which led him to misunderstand the nationalist aims of South American elite scholars who were deeply immersed in citizenship issues and committed to creating new historical practices. Moreover, his conception of functional intervention disregarded political opposition to US rule among the non-aligned nations.

22 Letter from Robert Redfield to Julian Steward, November 14<sup>th</sup> 1939 (NAA/ISA correspondence). In this same letter Redfield states that the "the Mayan frontier is a good place to draw the line between the South American and the Middle American HSAI."

This international view may basically be attributed to the inspiration of the ethnogeographic and pan-American thinking of the Second World War, as well as the aftermath of isolationism, economic breakdown and the resettlement of intellectuals throughout the western world. However, the *HSAI* failed to update the cartographic information concerning the peoples described, referring to their social situations and national locations as found in the 1940s, when the data was gathered.

### **The editor, the ethnographer and the local contributors**

Reading the correspondence shows that over the course of organizing the volume, Steward changed his view of Nimuendajú and the role played by ethnographic sources in scientific practice. At first, Steward understood Nimuendajú to be a secondary collaborator, “a local scholar” who needed help from Lowie to publish his contributions on Amazonian indigenous peoples. Afterwards, during his trip to Brazil, when Steward actually met Nimuendajú, he became aware of the anthropological significance of the German-Brazilian ethnographer’s work. As editor of the *HSAI*, however, Steward imposed rules that Nimuendajú did not entirely accept and the relationship between the two was tense from the outset.

Nimuendajú worked with Lowie from 1935 to 1942. His work was funded by the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of California. In 1942, however, this Institute was only able to give him \$300<sup>23</sup>. Although Social Anthropology was not the main focus of the Rockefeller Foundation (RF), this institution had supported anthropological research since the 1930s, dedicating small sums to projects at Yale and Columbia. Lowie requested \$500 from the RF in order to supplement the resources for Nimuendajú’s 1942 trip to the Upper Amazon.<sup>24</sup>

Lowie considered Nimuendajú as a ‘co-worker’(sic) and requested money from Steward to support his fieldwork.<sup>25</sup> However, the Smithsonian was

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23 “Application for research grant funds of the Institute of Social Sciences, University of California,” signed by Robert Lowie on March 6<sup>th</sup> 1941. This document was found in a folder entrusted by Lowie to John Rowe (JRA). I thank Patricia Lyon (p.i.) for granting me access to this documentation

24 “Report on Sr. Curt Nimuendajú’s work since 1938,” signed by Lowie on February 2<sup>nd</sup> 1942, 4 pages (JRA).

25 Letter from Lowie to Steward, October 16<sup>th</sup> 1940.

unable to pay for activities other than writing up papers, strictly evaluated by the number of words. The Institution had no extra funds to pay for fieldwork activities. According to Steward, the bill presented to Congress by the Smithsonian for the *HSAI* project was part of the more all-encompassing South American goodwill project. Financial aid therefore had to be drawn from the limited sphere of the Bureau of American Anthropology's budget, which was subject to specific bureaucratic rules and regulations.<sup>26</sup> The Smithsonian's reports contain examples of the wages paid to researchers and professors, whose fieldwork expenses were covered by specific budgets. Though the editor considered the 'volunteer' ethnographers working outside US institutions to be important sources of information, he did not recognize them as equals comparable to professional scholars academically trained as anthropologists.

In a letter to Harold Shultz,<sup>27</sup> Nimuendajú complained that he needed to pay his 'informants' (sic) for the knowledge they provided and for their subsistence when they were 'helping' him. Nimuendajú somewhat paternalistically believed that the Ticuna were delighted to receive the beads sent by Galvão in 1944 and to use them in preparing necklaces and bracelets for girls' puberty rituals. Despite his symbolic and cultural exchanges with these indigenous groups, in which he recognized their skills as 'artists,' 'sculptors' and 'artisans,' Nimuendajú reified the hierarchy imposed by anthropological inquiry, not just qualifying the Ticuna as 'informants' but treating them as his 'offspring.'

This hierarchical view also dictated how Nimuendajú approached his work: he considered the information supplied by Constant Tastevin to be a "secondary source," as can be clearly seen in a text in which Nimuendajú critiques the missionary's article on the Mura. However, the translation of the text published in the *HSAI* suppressed this critique, despite the fact Nimuendajú used the ethnographic information gathered by the missionary, acknowledging his historical contribution towards the understanding of indigenous peoples from the Amazon.<sup>28</sup>

The Rockefeller Board decided to send money through a Brazilian

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26 Letter From Steward to Lowie, June 21<sup>st</sup> 1939.

27 May 31<sup>st</sup> 1945. Nimuendajú archive, National Museum/UFRJ

28 Tastevin's archive is deposited at the *Seminaire de Missions* in Chevilly Larue, a village close to Paris.

institution. The National Museum and the Goeldi Museum competed to be the chosen intermediary. Both institutions supported Nimuendajú's expeditions and disputed the status of Brazilian custodian of his ethnological collections. For operational reasons, though, Nimuendajú asked for the funds, which Métraux helped him obtain, to be sent directly to the Goeldi Museum in Belém. Heloisa Alberto Torres, Director of the National Museum, was a member of the CFECAN<sup>29</sup> and she used her prerogatives to mediate the transaction activating (internal) colonialist practices underscored by Métraux and Nimuendajú.

During his sojourn in Belém, Steward acquired Nimuendajú's Ethnohistorical map, which he dispatched to the American Consul in Belém on July 18<sup>th</sup> 1942. The CIAA eventually produced, that same year, a map identifying indigenous groups that could be used as labor forces for rubber collection. This map delineates the rubber production area in Brazil and specifies tribal names and geographic locations for numerous indigenous populations, highlighting those tribes potentially available for work in rubber forests, estimated to be at most 10% of the total Indian population. Irving Goldman, who contributed to the Handbook with a chapter about the "tribes of the Uapés-Caquetá Region," compiled the map using Nimuendajú's ethnohistorical data.

Steward also met Charles Wagley in Belém together with "his field parties of Brazilians."<sup>30</sup> He then left for the metropolitan cultural centers of the country's southeast where Brazilian academic and intellectual life was concentrated. Previously, Steward had invited a select group of people from these centers to contribute to the HSAI (albeit as minor collaborators), stipulating the number of words he expected each author to submit.

The main purpose of my trip is to contact people we are inviting to contribute to the HSAI. The idea is to ask for short articles, which, for the most part, may have to be reworked into broader regional articles. I have made the following requests from Brazilians: Maria Julia Pourchet, 2,000 words on morphological types of present-day mixed blood populations of Brazil. Roquette-Pinto, demography of present types in Brazil, 2,000 words. Anibal Matos, 2,000 words on

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29 *Conselho de Fiscalização das Expedições Artísticas e Científicas no Brasil* (Brazilian Council for Inspection of artistic and scientific expeditions in Brazil, deposited at the Mast/MCT/Brazil). As a foreign collector, Nimuendajú was subject to the Brazilian state's patrimonial policy.

30 Handbook-Smithsonian\_11\_28, Container "Records of the Handbook of South American Indians." Folder: South American Trip (1942), Itinerary and Schedule of Julian H. Steward to South America.

Lagoa Santa culture. Heloisa Torres, 3,000 words on Marajó culture. Bastos de Avila, 3,000 words on anthropometry of Brazil.<sup>31</sup>

Eventually Steward heard about the tardy founding of universities in Brazil, eventually created the country's elite in an effort to promote the national intelligentsia. A sad example of the difficulties involved in this attempt was the short-lived *Universidade do Distrito Federal/UDF* (1935-1939), closed following State intervention. Its creator Anísio Teixeira, who had studied at Columbia (New York) University in the late 1920s, attempted to invest public funds in a University based on autonomous research (Favero 2006). Under the authoritarian government, the academic staff were incorporated into the *Faculdade Nacional de Filosofia (FNF)* at the *Universidade do Brasil*, created in 1939 and subject to the control of Catholic Church. The trajectories of Brazilian intellectuals might have seemed odd to a US scholar. One example of the kind of ambivalence found among Brazilian intellectuals was Arthur Ramos, an internationally renowned social anthropologist who corresponded with S. Freud and L. Lévy-Bruhl, who prior to 1937 had supported the fight against the Nazi threat and a short while later, in 1939, accepted work as a professor at FNF, paid by the authoritarian Brazilian State whose police arrested and persecuted socialists and communists. Another controversial author was Gilberto Freyre, who studied with F. Boas at Columbia before heading back to Brazil, there he wrote and publicly launched the Regionalist Manifesto in the Northeastern city of Recife in 1926, advocating the study of regional and racial singularities as a way of promoting nation building.

Asking Brazilian scholars to write short articles that would inevitably be reworked led to outright refusals, as Lowie had warned would happen. The absence of any solid relationship between Brazilian and US anthropologists contributed to the misunderstanding, especially since Steward evidently did not see them as members of his own intellectual lineage. Even though US sociological research had planted deep roots in Brazil by this time, the anthropological research conducted lacked a background spirit of cooperation between the US and Brazilian anthropologists. This was despite previous academic exchanges between researchers from the University of Columbia and the National Museum, which was Brazil's foremost academy for field research, since the incipient Brazilian Universities were basically no more

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31 Letter from Steward to Wagley, January 15<sup>th</sup> 1942, NAA/ISA correspondence

than “vocational centers” until the 1940s. The encyclopedic worldviews of Brazilian anthropologists under European influence may well have been considered unscientific by Steward. Moreover, most Brazilian intellectuals and writers working under the Vargas dictatorship were involved in state-building practices. Roquette Pinto’s ethnography mixed physical and social anthropology, while examining indigenous cultures in the light of nationalist indigenous policy making.<sup>32</sup> The other Brazilian anthropologists to whom Steward wrote also had administrative inclinations that would probably have been considered spurious compared to his own scientificism.

In Rio de Janeiro, Steward met with *Dona* Heloisa Alberto Torres (National Museum), Dr. Artur Ramos (Universidade do Brasil) and Roquette Pinto.<sup>33</sup> In São Paulo he encountered members of the group of anthropologists formed by US anthropologist Donald Pierson, as well as the German anthropologist, Herbert Baldus, recently naturalized as a Brazilian in 1941. Steward also met Radcliffe-Brown in São Paulo during the period in which he was lecturing at the *Escola Livre de Sociologia e Política*. In a letter to Lowie, Steward suggested that Radcliffe-Brown was a representative of colonial Anthropology, whose practices typically involved daily contact with colonial administrative powers.<sup>34</sup>

In meeting with his Brazilian contacts, Steward seemed to be aware that São Paulo, Brazil’s principal economic metropolis, exercised a colonial-like dominance over Northern Brazil. At the same time, Steward did not visit other regional centers such as Manaus or the smaller Amazonian urban centers. Years later, Brazilian anthropological criticism would characterize the asymmetrical relations between Brazilian regions as “internal colonialism” (Oliveira 1978). This Brazilian power structure clearly affected Amazonian fieldwork too.

During his trip, Steward also made contacts with the aim of establishing

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32 Edgar Roquette Pinto, a physician trained in physical anthropology who traveled with General Candido Rondon – the positivist founder of Brazilian indigenous policies – wrote a compendium about Serra do Norte and Rondonia’s indigenous groups, recognizing direct influence from Paul Rivet and Koch-Grünberg. His social ideas were influenced by humanist thought. In the rising field of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology he met Verneau in 1911 and Boas in 1924. Director of Brazilian National Museum (1906-1935), he recognized that in Brazil, Museums occupied the place of as yet non-existent universities, and he thus foresaw the Museum as a privileged site for the task of the popularization of science.

33 Handbook-Smithsonian\_11\_28, Container “Records of the Handbook of South American Indians.” Folder: South American Trip (1942), Itinerary and Schedule of Julian H. Steward to South America.

34 July 9<sup>th</sup> 1942, NAA, Records HSAI.

a Brazilian office of the Smithsonian Institute for Social Research. Wagley advised him that it would be preferable to work with the National Museum in Rio, explaining its advantages as a center of excellence in research and teaching, as well as its director Heloisa Alberto Torres's academic talents and capacities. The same was not said of the *Escola Livre* in São Paulo, which Wagley saw as having a "hidebound curriculum" and was not impressed by the quality of its students' fieldwork.<sup>35</sup>

Heloisa Alberto Torres proved reluctant to sign a contract that would diminish her professionally, since she would only be able to submit a total of 3,000 words. He also sent her a letter suggesting the creation of the "collaborative institute," proposing, if funds were available, to send a group of American researchers to the National Museum, basically a cultural anthropologist, "assisted by a linguist, a human geographer, or even a physical anthropologist, according to the needs of the specific research to be undertaken..." The collaborating institution would mainly furnish space for teaching and for laboratory and research headquarters.<sup>36</sup> After a number of months had passed, she wrote to say that she had no time to write the article proposed by Steward. She also claimed: "the arrival of an entire staff of scientists to my 'village' at such a time [of war] would cause the same confusion as the settlement of a large group of researchers in an Indian tribe not accustomed to dealing with strangers."<sup>37</sup> She further argued that she needed only one creative anthropologist, perhaps remembering the incentive Wagley had given to the National Museum's intellectual life.<sup>38</sup> However, on the same day that she turned down Steward's proposal for an ISA office at the National Museum, Heloisa requested his authorization to publish, in Portuguese, the manuscripts submitted by Nimuendajú to the *Handbook* in their entirety, as well as the abbreviated versions to be used by the editorial staff, acting as a mediator in the relation between the German ethnographer and the volume's editor. Steward argued that a contract had already been signed and that

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35 Letter from Wagley to Steward, October 5<sup>th</sup> 1942.

36 Letter from Steward to Heloisa Alberto Torres, November 10<sup>th</sup> 1942.

37 Letter from Heloisa Alberto Torres to Steward, April 19<sup>th</sup> 1944.

38 Wagley's Guggenheim fellowship was authorized by Heloisa Alberto Torres and Boas' correspondence (Letter from Heloisa Alberto Torres to Boas - March 19<sup>th</sup> 1941, and letter from Boas to Heloisa Alberto Torres, April 11<sup>th</sup> 1941 - Boas Professional Papers' microfilms, Getty Research Center Special Collections).

copyright legislation prohibited the publication of the volume's contents before it was published.

Heloisa Torres (1895-1977) was the daughter of Alberto Torres, one of the founding fathers of Brazilian social thought. When she entered the National Museum (1918) she was 23 years old and became its director in 1938. Any analysis of her reasons for adopting such a challenging stance with her powerful American colleagues must take into consideration her profile as a female member of the Brazilian elite, a woman considered the godmother of ethnological studies among Brazil's indigenous peoples (Corrêa 2000:241). During WWII, she participated in the nationalist movement orchestrated by the Brazilian government. There is evidence that she found Steward's proposal to be asymmetrical, implying an unequal power relationship between Brazilian and US scholars, and thus depreciating both the museum and her own capacities, especially since she already suffered the disadvantages of being one of the few female scholars at the time.<sup>39</sup> She admitted that she felt 'invaded' by foreign intrusions into her personal decisions concerning collaborations between national and international institutes and universities. However competition between Rio and São Paulo research centers was also a reality during this period: following her refusal, Steward set up the ISA office at the *Escola Livre* in São Paulo instead, led by Donald Pierson. Betty Meggers, a US scholar, wrote the archeological article Steward needed for the *Handbook* without any contribution by *Dona* Heloisa. Her role in directing the National Museum and standing up to the Americans was remembered long after the episode was over. In 1946, after Nimuendajú's death, Métraux wrote to Lowie criticizing her character, her links to the Brazilian elites, and to the authoritarian state.<sup>40</sup>

*Dona* Heloisa's request to Steward for permission to publish Nimuendajú's complete work alluded to a quarrel between the two researchers. Responding to Steward's deadline pressures, Nimuendajú argued that he would rather produce a qualitatively complete product rather than merely a few incomplete papers. His arguments reveal his belief that the rules of institutional production should not override the scientific quality expected of anthropological research. Rhoda Métraux also made this claim about 'qualitative' work when she likewise refused to send her husband's unfinished

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39 Letter from Heloisa Alberto Torres to Steward, April 19<sup>th</sup> 1944.

40 Letter from Métraux to Lowie, January 13<sup>th</sup> 1946.

manuscripts to the HSAI.<sup>41</sup> Both Nimuendajú and Métraux were seeking scientific quality irrespective of schedules dictated by unscientific bureaucratic demands for speed and extensive productivity.<sup>42</sup>

The relationship between Wagley and Eduardo Galvão was more cordial than Steward's relationships with other Brazilian scholars. Galvão completed his PhD at Columbia University in 1952 under Wagley's supervision.<sup>43</sup> Galvão had been introduced to Wagley at the National Museum where he had also studied with Steward, adopting the latter's interface between Social Anthropology and Cultural Ecology (Oliveira 2001).

Galvão conducted fieldwork among the Tenetehara as Wagley's assistant and was financed by the OIAA (while his research on the Amazonian town of Gurupa was supported by UNESCO, the Viking Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation<sup>44</sup>). Despite having been an unequivocally distinguished student at Columbia, Galvão pursued a rather unusual career in academic terms: after obtaining his PhD and working with the Brazilian Indian Service (SPI), Galvão was then employed by the Brazilian National Research Council to work for INPA (the National Institute for Scientific Research in the Amazon) as Chairman of Anthropology at the Goeldi Museum, a modest position in a remote Amazonian institute, far from more prestigious US higher learning institutes.

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41 NAA/HSAI records, April 7<sup>th</sup> 1945

42 In 1946, Métraux left the Smithsonian and went to New York to work as an anthropologist in the Department of Social Affairs of the United Nations. Alfred Métraux's unstable life ended with his suicide on April 12<sup>th</sup> 1963 in the Valle de la Chevreuse.

43 Charles Wagley (1913-1991) wrote his doctoral dissertation on the Maya under the supervision of Franz Boas in the 1930s. In 1939, Wagley began work with the Tapirapé Indians of the Xingu. Afterwards he conducted long sojourns in Brazil on collaborative projects with Brazilian scholars. He eventually married a Brazilian woman. He carried out fieldwork with the Tenetehara Indians, assisted by the Brazilian anthropologist Eduardo Galvão. During WWII, Wagley supervised health programs run by the Brazilian Public Health Agency (SESP) in the region. After the war, he occupied bureaucratic positions as a staff member of the Institute of Inter-American Affairs in Rio de Janeiro and held several posts, including directorships, with various programs in the Brazilian-American Public Health Service (1945-1947). Invited by Steward to return to Columbia, Wagley went back to the US in 1948 to teach, creating several institutes for Latin American studies in his home country. However, he never cut his ties with Brazilian institutions, living for a while in Bahia where he developed a project sponsored by UNESCO and collaborating with the Brazilian Indian Protection Service (SPI) when his former student, Eduardo Galvão, took a post as one of the agency's leading anthropologists in 1953. Wagley switched jobs again in 1971, joining the faculty of the University of Florida at Gainesville. He occupied a prestigious position at that university until he died, by which time he was already widely recognized for his contributions to anthropological knowledge on Brazil.

44 RA, RG 1.1. Series 200, Box 316 F1dr 3767.

In 1954, Galvão began to organize the material gathered by Nimuendajú, for the most part, which had been indiscriminately stashed away in cardboard boxes. By classifying and organizing this material he was able to generate institutional support for founding the Ethnological and Archeological Collections of the Goeldi Museum. Classifying ethnological collections and comparing peoples gave these researchers first-hand experience of traveling to a distant field site to conduct research, which became the basis for Galvão's analysis of the "cultural areas" formed by Brazil's indigenous groups (Galvão 1967). Galvão elaborated the classification of regional cultural areas, linking these to specific geographic features. His work was considered to be a model of the scientific method, carried out in a dynamic dialogue with his predecessors in the field of ethnography.<sup>45</sup>

In his definition of a cultural area, Galvão adopts a temporal criterion (1900-1959), recognizing that discontinuities produced by the history of colonization changed territorial configurations and circumscribed indigenous groups in different situations. Galvão takes interethnic contact to refer to the relations between indigenous societies and to those between them and national societies. In his study on Galvão, Silva (2007) observes that instead of pursuing general laws, Galvão focused on acculturation as an outcome of cultural change (Galvão 1976). Harboring a pessimistic view of interethnic contact as an inexorable process of assimilation and ethnic homogenization, he overlooked the possibility of ethnic groups developing strategies to contest domination.

Galvão died when he was 56 years old, before he was able to witness the emergence of the indigenous rights movements and the general demographic rise in Brazil's indigenous population since the late 1970s. These changes have demanded a historical turn in anthropological analysis, inspiring several initiatives to update the Handbook, initiatives that all still underway.<sup>46</sup>

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45 Employing the classificatory criterion of homogeneous 'food areas,' C. Wissler (1928) was the first author to use the notion of 'cultural areas,' latter adopted by Julian Steward. Discussing the 'cultural type' in his article from the fifth volume (Steward 1949), the latter redefines the criterion for the purposes of organizing information in the Handbook, giving priority to sociopolitical and religious patterns as an alternative approach to cultural determinism. This definition coincides with Steward's shift from diffusionism to neo-evolutionism (Melatti 2001: 2). Actually Steward would claim in his post-war Puerto Rico project that indigenous integration would result in their submission to a proletariat condition within the system of domination imposed by complex societies (Peterson & Lauria- Perricelli 1999), ignoring the possibilities for ethnic groups to develop autonomous strategies in contact situations.

46 Unfortunately there is no space here to list and/or examine the different projects in this area.

Among other scholars, Julio Cezar Melatti maintains Galvão's emphases on interethnic contact, combining cultural areas and articulation poles (Melatti 2001:7) in the definition of "ethnographic areas" based on temporal, linguistic and environmental criteria. The touchstone of this latter definition is the researcher's interference in the definition of the area's limits while elaborating his or her object.

### **Conclusion: Anthropology on the (cultural) frontline**

The HSAI is an "area studies" artifact, one of anthropology's responses to wartime necessities. As such, even though field research in the tropical areas of Amazonia was not subject to direct military intervention, it represented a sort of "cultural frontline" affected by the war issue since the Amazon was seen as a strategic location, "the last frontier," the melting pot where nature and culture interacted. It was also a region laden with symbolism for Pan-American encounters. Mexican ideologies were too revolutionary for these pre-cold war times. Seeing Brazilian indigenous groups as a docile mass malleable for political development was a reversal of the previous image of these peoples (held by foreign Americanists) as "authentically living in the state of nature." The notion of social development implies assimilation and integration and not an "authentic state of nature."

The HSAI's editor, Julian Steward, collaborated with scientific policy makers and government technicians as anthropology responded to the military demands of WWII. The 'Americanization' of 'Americanist anthropology,' which incorporated European-born anthropologists who had moved to North and South America, led to the delimitation of specific national and regional units of study, conducted by professionals considered to be specialists and who undertook long periods of "front line" fieldwork in specific countries. The Tropical Forest areas, as important suppliers of natural rubber, were located far into the Western Hemisphere and as yet unexplored by the human sciences, thus making them a ideal site for the convergence of anthropological and logistical interests.

Pursuing sociological approaches developed during the war, Steward worked as a Social Anthropologist even though – having never done fieldwork in the Amazon himself – he saw Amazonian ethnography as a marginal area of study better suited to an applied science. Even so, he reshaped previous

hierarchies between armchair anthropologists and those who went out into the field, whose testimonies direct from the early twentieth century Amazon about the transformations taking place there significantly countered the previous tendency to view ‘primitive’ peoples as timeless and unchanging.

Today, the concept of “cultural areas” has come under criticism. A historical analysis of the transformations of “cultural zones” viewed intersubjectively implies a critique of the essentialism embedded in a static concept of culture, subjecting it to a new analysis of social change. This approach focuses on deeper aspects of knowledge among specific indigenous groups. These forest peoples have been considered the touchstone of the historical and conceptual turn in recent ethnological monographs. Fieldwork carried out by anthropologists in this region, introduced into scientific debate in different national contexts, as well as the recognition of cultural translation as a vital element of fieldwork (as a domain of theoretical research), have all played a significant role in this historical turn. History has thus heuristically influenced the ways in which anthropologists and natives interact in the construction of anthropological texts.

The possession or absence of a scientific degree is a constant feature in the relationships focused on in this paper, a hierarchy embedded in paternalism, and which underlies the production of knowledge, implying that ethnographers who lived in the Amazon in the first half of twentieth century would be ranked – despite all being European – as ‘local scholars’ and ‘minor’ contributors in comparison to the renowned academics who directed research and training in US institutions. However, at the same time, these ethnographers also adopted hierarchical attitudes when dealing with native groups whose lives and culture they studied. Moreover, the hierarchical relationships present in the social production of knowledge remain a problem for the heuristic understanding of the construction of anthropological knowledge, concerning which the production of the *HSAI* is a significant example due to its formative role in bringing about a contemporary way of understanding anthropology. Reflexive social thinking about this kind of production may hopefully lead to a more active pursuit of scientific quality instead of just working to meet high-productivity deadlines, and thus help breakdown the differentiation between theoretical production and field centers.

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