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## **SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY IN BRITISH LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES**

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### **Introduction**

Social anthropology in Britain was founded on research done in various areas of imperial dominion and Latin American has traditionally attracted fewer devotees than other areas of the world. Although this is still partly the case, Latin America has become a more fashionable research site. Before the 1960s, there were virtually no British social anthropologists working in Latin America. By 1996, a major interest in Latin America occupied about 26 staff in the 25 anthropology departments in the UK.<sup>1</sup> Between 1984 and 1991, thirty-one doctoral dissertations were completed on Latin Americanist themes in social anthropology, most of them supervised by a handful of researchers such as Joanna Overing and Michael Sallnow at the LSE, Stephen Hugh-Jones at Cambridge, John Gledhill at UCL, Peter Rivière at Oxford, Norman Long at Durham, Douglas Gifford at St Andrews and Colin Henfrey at Liverpool.<sup>2</sup> Even so, in Britain both anthropology within Latin American studies and Latin America within social anthropology remain relatively minor interests.<sup>3</sup>

British social anthropology<sup>4</sup> has focused principally on three areas of Latin America: the Andes, Amazonia and Mesoamerica. In each area, the concerns of British anthropologists have been shaped by the development of anthropology in general and Latin Americanist anthropology in particular and have thus followed a similar course over the last three decades. In each area too, the influence of North American and French anthropological traditions have been important, although to varying extents. Overall, a classic anthropological bias towards the culturally distinct Other has resulted in an overwhelming interest in peoples definable as Indians or Native Americans, with a lesser emphasis on people who might be classed as peasants, blacks, or urban migrants.<sup>5</sup>

I will look at each main geographical area in turn, ending with a section on studies that fall outside these areas.

## **Andean anthropology<sup>6</sup>**

British anthropologists going to the Andes in the 1960s and 1970s felt the influence of a number of theoretical currents. The classic structural-functionalism which had dominated British, and indeed Anglo-American, social anthropology during the first half of the century had been under severe strain for some time, criticised for its lack of attention to history, social change, inequality, conflict and the wider - typically national - context. Methodologically, however, most anthropologists found themselves constrained by the dictates of intensive participant-observation to study the small communities that had been the model for the self-contained system of the functionalist approach and this trend characterised many of the early studies done in the Andes and elsewhere in Latin America. On the other hand, French structuralism, under the aegis of Claude Lévi-Strauss who had done fieldwork in the Brazilian Amazon in the 1930s, was also a major influence and guided anthropologists towards an interest in symbolism, classification systems and mythologies.

Meanwhile, radical currents in social science generally had brought Marxist influences into anthropology of the 1970s with an increased emphasis on class inequality, colonialism and history; feminism also introduced an explicit concern with gender inequality. Finally, North American cultural ecology was important in Latin Americanist anthropology and was epitomised in the work of Julian Steward (e.g., Steward and Faron, 1959) who, despite never having done fieldwork in South America, was also the editor of the massive Handbook of South American Indians, published in the late 1940s with the aim of collating existing information on what was held to be an anthropologically little-known region (Henley 1996). For the Andean region, this influence, combined with Marxism, was partly felt through John Murra's seminal work on verticality which showed how Andean Indians exploited and integrated various ecological niches located at a range of altitudes. However, the North American influences were not restricted to cultural ecology and some work was being carried out on ethnic relations, pluralism and stratification in the tradition established by anthropologists such as Ralph Beals in Mesoamerica and by Pierre van den Berghe there and, later, the Andes (see Goldschmidt and Hoijer, 1970).

Tristan Platt, who first went to the Bolivian Andes as a VSO volunteer, began fieldwork among the Macha in 1970 and dedicated much of his early work to Murra's

verticality thesis.<sup>7</sup> But he also did work on symbolic practice among the Macha, showing the variety of theoretical influences on his work. Olivia Harris met Platt while they were both studying philosophy at Oxford, and she followed in his footsteps to the LSE and to Bolivia where she first did fieldwork among the Laymi in 1972-1974. Her early work covered a wide range of themes, including economic practices, verticality, beliefs about death and gender ideologies (Harvey 1988).

The emphasis of radical currents in anthropology, aside from foregrounding issues of inequality and dependent development, also heralded a concern with history. A historical approach could locate native communities in their relationship with dominant powers, show that no peoples were, in fact, "without history" (Wolf 1982) and that apparently "primitive" societies also lived in the modern period. Thus Pierre van den Berghe (1979), for example, breaking with his previous analysis of pluralism in Guatemala, approached ethnic relations in Peru from a long-term dependency perspective. At the same time, the structuralist interest in symbols and the supposedly language-like characteristics of culture was amenable to intellectual alliances with Geertzian cultural anthropology and some currents of British structural anthropology, developing a focus on the interpretation and translation of meanings. Thus in the 1980s and into the 1990s, British anthropologists in the Andes began to investigate issues of meaning, language and power, and problems of ethnohistory. The quincentenary of the conquest of the Americas was an important stimulus for work on history and the interaction of different notions of history and cosmology.

Meanwhile, in the Andean countries themselves, particularly Peru where anthropology had been established in national universities since the 1950s, power and history was also the focus of a heated debate with the Peruvian left wing at times marginalizing ethnohistory and then, during the 1970s, embracing it in "a great show of enormous sensitivity towards the Andean world" (Rivera Cusicanqui, 1993: 80): the relative importance given to class and ethnicity as dimensions of theory and politics was a constant source of debate. The emergence of the nativist movement of Katarismo in Bolivia in the mid-1970s concerned national and foreign anthropologists alike and issues of history took on new significance since, in their discourse, this movement often referred back to colonial native resistance. The rise of Sendero Luminoso led to heated debates within Peru and beyond on the ideological nature of the movement and its relation to the native Andean population (see

Poole and Renique, 1991; Rivera Cusicanqui, 1993).

Platt and Harris took the agenda on power, meaning and history forward with work on Andean understandings of economic categories, of ethnic identities and of history; they also worked on the relationship between the state and Andean communities, taking up the theme of native resistance.<sup>8</sup> Harris, for example, has sought to show how the category of "Indian" has influenced, but also been constituted through, relationships with colonial powers and processes of economic exchange over time; she has also argued that Western periodisations of history that privilege 1492 as the crucial historic rupture do not necessarily correspond to native Andean concepts of historical time. Platt, meanwhile, having taken over the directorship of Douglas Gifford's Centre for Latin American Linguistics<sup>9</sup> at St Andrews and renamed it the Institute of Amerindian Studies, has published on native rebellion and on conflicts between different concepts of exchange and value. Native resistance seen as a complex process, however, and Platt argues that Bolivian Indians seem to have struggled to retain tributary systems and protectionist trade barriers against republican liberalism, while Inca revivalist movements also used the trappings of republican nationalism.

Themes of power, meaning and history have been pursued by a handful of other British researchers. Mike Sallnow's work on pilgrims of the Andes examines religion and politics in a historical context, looking at the spatialisation of power relations. Penelope Harvey has concentrated on the theme of language, meaning and power, encompassing relations between men and women, indians and non-indians, the local community and the state. Peter Gose, a North American, did doctoral research at the LSE on the meanings involved in economic relations and work practices. Rosaleen Howard-Malverde has published work on oral traditions, the way history is narrated by Quechua speakers and the power relations inherent in multilingual situations, including those found in Andean schools. Work has been done by Nicole Bourque on the household and social change, focusing on food, religion and economy in Ecuador and by Andrew Canessa on the impact of metropolitan values on religion and gender among Aymara speakers in the Bolivian Andes. All this work has looked broadly at issues of cultural change and power relations.

The interest in history created a more substantial overlap than before between anthropology and archaeology and, although this has been developed more by North American researchers, archaeologists such as Penny Dransart have strong leanings towards

anthropology. On the other hand, the work of literary specialists such as that of Gordon Brotherston on native American calendars and literatures has been of great interest to anthropologists, while Valerie Frazer's work on the architecture of conquest in Peru also addresses issues of power and representation. It is worth noting in all this that British anthropologists have not contributed much to studies of nativist Andean movements nor to research on Sendero Luminoso.

A rather different current in Andean anthropology and sociology is represented by Norman Long and Bryan Roberts, although both have also worked extensively outside the Andes. Their work on the Andes - the Mantaro Valley in Peru - dates mainly from the early 1970s when they were both at Manchester. It was set in the context of development theory, looking at the impact of capitalist expansion on peasants and miners, elaborating ideas about the relationships within and between articulated modes of production and assessing the role of entrepreneurs in regional development. This broad field of anthropological sociology (or vice versa) also includes David Lehmann's work on peasant agriculture in the Andes, Caroline Moser's work among the urban poor in Ecuador, Peter Lloyd's research on the "young towns" of Lima and Alison MacEwen Scott's work on women and the labour market in Lima. This work focuses on the poor, undifferentiated by notions of ethnic identity. In contrast, Charlie Davison's anthropology thesis on urban migrants in Bolivia tackles this theme more directly and geographer Sarah Radcliffe's work on peasant women and female migrants to Lima also looks at ethnic identity in the national frame.

### **Amazonian anthropology**

British anthropology in the Amazon region - which for the purposes of this essay will include the Orinoco basin - begins with Audrey Colson and Francis Huxley. Colson first did fieldwork in Guyana in 1951, among the Akawaio Indians, as the basis for a doctorate at Oxford. At the time, the overwhelming influence in Oxford anthropology was Africanist - Evans-Pritchard and Max Gluckman were there at the time - and several students decided to branch out: Francis Huxley went to Brazil, Ken Burridge to Melanesia. For Colson, the initial stimulus was visits to Rhodes House, opposite the Oxford Institute of Social Anthropology, where she met a District Commissioner and forester who were working in Guyana. She

continued to work in the Guianas and Venezuela - with a brief spell in the Peruvian Andes - for the next three decades. Francis Huxley completed a DPhil at Oxford, but after a brief spell at Cambridge with Myer Fortes and Edmund Leach and an unsuccessful application to the Department of Ethnology and Prehistory at Oxford - where Colson had taken up a post - he moved out of mainstream academia; however, he did do some later research on Haitian voodoo.

The intellectual context for these first Amazonianists was formed largely by British structural anthropology which, in Colson's view, was already leading in some of the directions that Lévi-Straussian structuralism was moving in France. Theoretical influences specific to North America such as cultural ecology, represented by Julian Steward, had little theoretical impact at this stage and his Handbook of South American Indians - the forest Indians volume of which had contributions by scholars such as Charles Wagley, John Gillin and Betty Meggers - was simply useful background material (Colson, personal communication). The German ethnological tradition of Amazonian studies was largely untranslated and thus largely unread by scholars in the English-speaking world - except for the work of the German-born naturalised Brazilian Curt Nimuendajú who wrote large sections of the Handbook volume on forest Indians. There was also some important French descriptive ethnology - for example, the work of Alfred Métraux (who also contributed to the Handbook volume).

It was really Claude Lévi-Strauss who was responsible for the emergence of Amazonia as an important research focus for British, and indeed many US, anthropologists. His influence was taken up especially by Rodney Needham in Oxford and Edmund Leach in Cambridge. David Maybury-Lewis, a student of Needham, worked in central Brazil in the late 1950s, among the Akwe-Shavante Indians, and in about 1961 moved to the USA where he directed the Harvard Central Brazil Project - which, incidentally, by including a number of Brazilian scholars, helped consolidate a strong school of Amazonianist anthropology in Brazil itself. French structuralism was a major theoretical influence and students involved in this project read Lévi-Strauss in the French original; cultural ecology was not a serious theoretical contender for this group.<sup>10</sup> The influence of cultural ecology did, however, remain strong for other anthropologists working in the region, such as Betty Meggers, Donald Lathrap and Robert Murphy (Hames and Vickers, 1983).

Needham also supervised Peter Rivière who was to have a lasting influence on Amazonian anthropology in Britain. Rivière first went to Brazil on an expedition with filmmaker Adrian Cowell (of The Tribe That Hides from Man fame); this was about the same time as John Hemming and Richard Mason's ill-fated 1961 expedition to central Brazil, inspired partly by the work of the Villas-Boas brothers, on which Mason lost his life to Kreen-Akrore Indians. Rivière's main anthropological fieldwork, however, has focused on Surinam where in 1963 he began research among the Trio Indians; he was funded by the Royal Anthropological Institute's South American Research Committee, set up partly by Audrey Colson with the aim of off-setting North American domination of this field. Four years later, Rivière also did some research in Brazil. Several Amazonianists later studied under Rivière, including Neil Whitehead, Andrew Gray, David Cleary and Vanessa Lea.

Meanwhile in Cambridge in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Edmund Leach supervised the work of Stephen and Christine Hugh-Jones, Peter Silverwood-Cope and French-Canadian Bernard Arcand, all of whom worked in the Amazon. Both Stephen Hugh-Jones and Silverwood-Cope had existing interests in Amazon Indians<sup>11</sup> and, against the prevailing Africanist interests of the Cambridge department, Leach sent all four students to South America, with three of them funded by a Social Science Research Council grant in his own name. The idea was to put some solid ethnography into the idealist abstractions of Lévi-Straussian structuralism. Their work interacted with that of French students - some students of Lévi-Strauss, some of Alfred Métraux - who also worked in the Amazon, including Pierre Clastres, Jacques Lizot, Philippe Descola, Anne-Christine Taylor, Michel Perrin, Patrice Bidou and Christian Gros. This generation of Cambridge anthropologists was the context for others such as Françoise Barbira-Freedman, Paul Henley, Marcus Colchester, Howard Reid and, in the 1980s, Peter Gow, Graham Townsley and Cecilia McCallum who all did doctoral fieldwork in the Amazon region, broadly defined, although they were not all based in the Cambridge department.

Joanna Overing at the LSE was an important third pole, counterbalancing Oxford and Cambridge. A North American, she first did fieldwork in a Creole fishing village in Belize, but Venezuela was the site for her doctorate, completed at Brandeis University in 1974. She later moved to Britain and during the 1980s supervised many students - such as Peter Gow, Cecilia McCallum, Fernando Santos, Charlotte Seymour-Smith, Laura Rival and, later, Elvira

Belaunde - all of whom have continued their work in anthropology, although not always in Britain.

For many of these anthropologists, the basic orientation set by French structuralism came out in a widespread interest in classification, myth, symbolism, shamanism and cosmology; social organization and kinship were also important themes. Amazonia did not, however, only attract their interest because of Lévi-Strauss's early work there: the image of the Amazonian Indian played a part, as the image of the American Indian has done in Western thought for centuries, whether as noble or ignoble savage. For anthropologists, this worked at different levels: there was the idea of the original "stone-age" economy and the fascination of the marvellously skilled way these people lived in the forest. This was complemented by the rich complexity and variety of the cosmologies that coexisted with systems of economic and often social organisation that were quite simple: what Viveiros de Castro (1992) has called "minimalist societies" for which relations with divinity are more valued than relations among humans. There was also the important role that hallucinogenic drugs played in these cultures which, given the hotly contested place of drugs in American and European societies at the time, was not an insignificant element. Lastly, in the 1970s especially, there was the widespread view of Amazonian Indians as innocents under threat of ethnocide (Jaulin, 1970): the Amazon situation was the principle stimulus for the organisation Survival International, founded in 1969 by people such as Robin Hanbury-Tenison who had direct experience of the region. Some anthropologists who did fieldwork in the region - Marcus Colchester, Andrew Gray, to name but two - went on to work for Survival International or IWGIA; others, such as Stephen Hugh-Jones and Paul Henley also worked with Survival at times.<sup>12</sup> Many others have published on land rights, health and development (e.g., Barbira-Freedman, Colson, Nugent).

Film was important for this generation of Amazonianist anthropologists. The last of the Cuiva and War of the gods, both part of Brian Moser's productions for the BBC's Disappearing World series, were widely seen and added strongly to the image of the Amazon and its Indians under threat; both used anthropologists from this group as advisers. A later film trilogy by Moser on coca and cocaine focused more on frontier issues and also used Stephen Hugh-Jones and Andean anthropologist Tristan Platt as advisers.<sup>13</sup> Others from this group of anthropologists have gone on to filmmaking themselves: Paul Henley, current



director of the Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology at the University of Manchester, Howard Reid at the BBC, and Graham Townsley who works as an independent filmmaker.

Structuralism remains a strong legacy for Amazonianist anthropology in Britain and elsewhere. Against the synchronic bias of this approach, and as in anthropology generally, history and archaeology have become again the important emphasis they had been in the days of French ethnology and the Handbook of South American Indians, although the historical lens is now focused more on the impact of conquest and power relations. Themes have included slavery, millenarian movements, ethnic relations, European images of Indians and attempts to understand history, or temporality, from a native perspective (see Whitehead 1993). Peter Gow, for example, questioned the transition from cultural coherence without history to incoherence with history which has underlain much Amazonian ethnography, but which bore little relation to the way native people in the Peruvian Bajo Urabamba area think about their own history. The Piro defined themselves as autonomous people living in real villages, as opposed to their ancestral "wild Indians" who lacked "civilised knowledge" (Gow, 1991). This approach also fitted into the deconstruction of the exoticized Other - a role that Amazonian Indians had admirably fulfilled - which had long been anthropology's object of analysis, but the theoretical legitimacy of which had been under erosion with processes of decolonisation and reflexive critique by anthropologists. British Amazonianists have not participated much in the extensive deconstruction of ethnographic writing that characterised the 1980s (but see Campbell, 1989), but the inclusion of Indians as active historical agents - as modern people with a stake in the future - is an important part of the reflexive questioning of the theoretical foundations of anthropology.

An openness to history has also involved taking a broader geographical viewpoint. Although French structuralism was in some ways opposed to British functionalism, most of the ethnography done in the Amazon in the 1960s and 1970s was tightly focused on particular communities (which often stood as proxies for whole "peoples"). Later work has tended to take a broader perspective, perhaps also looking at ethnic relations (e.g., Barbira-Freedman, Henley, Gow, Whitehead). Indicative of this trend is the difference between Hugh-Jones's early work on myth and ritual based on fieldwork in a handful of Barasana villages in the Colombian Amazon and his work in progress on the rubber and cocaine trades in that whole region and over a long time period. A rather different but not unrelated current

consists of work done in Amazonia on caboclos (peasants of Indian-white descent) by Stephen Nugent from the mid-1970s and, more recently, his student Mark Harris, and on garimpeiros (small-scale goldminers) by David Cleary.<sup>14</sup> The emphasis here is on political economy, development - sustainable or otherwise - and environment. There is a conscious attempt to make visible to anthropology - and indeed to sociology and history - categories of people often previously seen as a threat to Indian autonomy and/or the environment, or simply as acculturated mestizos, and thus unworthy of anthropological study in their own right. This has also challenged the standard anthropological focus on "Indians" as the category of analysis. However, the challenge to create an anthropology of environment management (in the informal sense of the term) has not really been taken up.<sup>15</sup>

Over the last decade, Amazonianist anthropology has entered more fully into the mainstream of debates in anthropological theory, although this is as much a result of French and North American work as of that done by British researchers. This is largely due to the steady build-up of good ethnographies - including those of world-famous peoples such as the Yanomami or the Kayapó - which have addressed important themes in the study of kinship, myth, symbolism, exchange, warfare, alterity and history, and from which has emerged the possibility of synthesis.<sup>16</sup> For example, some of the work on kinship, while located firmly in the Amazonian material, also goes beyond it in examining concepts of descent, affinity and the role of memory in creating kinship. The applicability of the notion of lineal descent groups after the Africanist model has been widely challenged and social structure seen more in terms of the circulation of symbols and substances that constitute the person and the body and that are exchanged in what Viveiros de Castro calls a symbolic economy that encompasses the living and the dead, the known and the unknown. Ideas of descent have, however, had to be adapted rather than abandoned and in some areas the notion of "house" as a moral person with some corporate continuity has been useful (Rivière, 1993; Henley 1996; see also recent works by Hugh-Jones, Lea, and Gow).

The burgeoning of Amazonianist anthropology is also due to the international composition of anthropologists working in the region: British, French and North American anthropologists read each other's work and interact frequently.<sup>17</sup> Added to this mix are the well-established traditions of Amazonianist anthropology that exist within Brazil, Peru and Colombia.<sup>18</sup> An Africanist, in contrast, could fairly safely stay in the golden triangle of

London, Oxford and Cambridge. This internationalism has been fomented by the widely publicised emergence of native American social movements and, in the climate of a post-colonial anthropology that questions the authority of the ethnographer, attempts to give room to "native" voices and encompasses the study of social movements, this has also helped to push Amazonian anthropology into a more central position. British Amazonianist anthropologists, however, although some have published on issues of land rights (see above), have not written much on the theme of social movements, compared to North American, French and Latin American scholars.<sup>19</sup> In sum, then, although Rivière observed in 1993 that Lowland South America was still probably the least known region in anthropological terms, he also considered that the work done there was amongst the most innovative of the last fifteen years (1993: 507).

### **Mesoamerican anthropology**

British anthropologists working in Mesoamerica - principally Mexico - number much fewer than those in the Andes or Amazonia. They have also encountered a rather different intellectual context for their work. Hewitt de Alcántara, in her review of anthropological perspectives on Mexico (1984), shows how a concern with understanding rural Mexico began with particularist studies that recorded details of supposedly isolated cultures. This developed under the aegis of the *Escuela de Arqueología y Etnografía Americana*, founded by Boas in 1909 - the very early start of a national school of anthropology is an important aspect of the Mexican scene. Such endeavours were incorporated in contradictory ways both into early currents of indigenismo that saw Indians as different, and in need of special attention, and into liberal schemes of assimilation and education of the indigenous peasantry.

Onto this basis were grafted the numerous functionalist studies of individual communities carried out mainly by North American, but also some Mexican, anthropologists: starting in the late 1920s, Robert Redfield was a pioneering figure here. Even within this theoretical framework, ideas of change and acculturation could not be ignored and were acknowledged in Redfield's folk-urban continuum. Other community studies followed, carried out by, among others, Ralph Beals, George Foster and Oscar Lewis. Functionalism held sway through the 1950s and 1960s, but the growing concern with power relations and exploitation among those working from an indigenista perspective - for example, Aguirre

Beltrán in his work on regions of refuge - meant that the Harvard Chiapas Project researchers, starting in the 1950s, although almost anachronistically functionalist in some of their studies, also directly addressed questions of change and interethnic relations - for example, Frank Cancian, Sol Tax, Manning Nash, Benjamin Colby and Pierre van den Berghe. There was also some study of peasants in cities by, among others, Lewis and by Robert Kemper.

Over the same period, Marxist influences operating on researchers such as Eric Wolf strengthened a more direct concern with peasants as an exploited economic category than with Indians as an oppressed ethnic category; Foster and Tax also contributed to work on peasant economics and social organisation. From here it was but a short step to the study of colonial relations and internal colonies within a dependency paradigm and thence to revisionist Marxist approaches to articulated modes of production. In all this, the role of the peasantry in capitalist development - as resistant traditionalists or proto-proletarians - was, of course, hotly debated, as were the relative roles of class and ethnicity. Some saw ethnicity as insignificant, while others, such as Judith Friedlander, Rodolfo Stavenhagen and Lourdes Arizpe, gave it more weight. Nevertheless, the concept of culture which had been the focus of the functionalist approach had lost a great deal of ground (Hewitt de Alcántara, 1984). This terrain only began to be recovered during the 1980s (Collier 1991) and it took different routes. On the one hand, there was an expansion of interest in pre-Hispanic culture in which archaeologists were obviously a major force, but in which British scholars played little role compared to North Americans. On the other hand, Indian social movements, or more particularly intellectuals involved in these movements, often focused on aspects of culture in the process of objectifying their own identities in the struggles of cultural politics (Gledhill, personal communication).

The few British social anthropologists working in Mesoamerica have taken up varied positions in a field overwhelmingly dominated by North American academics - in fact, three of the anthropologists in question are North Americans by birth. Despite this, British social anthropology has had an important impact on the discipline in Mexico, partly through the influence of scholars such as Guillermo de la Peña, who did an MA and a doctorate in social anthropology at the University of Manchester in 1969-77, under the tutelage of, among others, Bruce Kapferer and Norman Long.<sup>20</sup>

John Gledhill first went to Mexico in the late 1970s when he already had a full-time teaching post at UCL. His background was in economic anthropology at Oxford, his influences included a strong interest in Marxism (including Eric Wolf on the North American side) and he was involved in the anti-Vietnam war campaign while he was at Oxford. The link with Latin America was partly spurred by a long-standing interest in archaeology, but also by the emergence of Lévi-Straussian structuralism. His work has concentrated on agrarian reform, peasant political consciousness and social movements, as well as a long-standing interest in the historical emergence of the state and political centralisation. His student, Rob Aitken, has also studied class structures, political identity and social movements, but in the context of poor urban households in Ciudad Lázaro Cárdenas. The impact of a historical materialist concern with political economy is evident here as it is for Nanneke Redclift - also at UCL - who has worked in Mexico, mainly on women in development. Richard Wilson also began with a Marxist intellectual agenda and an initial interest in Christian Base Communities and trades unions in urban areas of Guatemala. For security reasons, however, he ended up in indigenous communities, an experience which itself made it necessary to reconsider Marxist approaches to ethnic identity. Not long after, Judith Zur worked in highland Guatemalan indigenous communities, with a focus on conflict, violence and human rights.

In contrast, Susan Drucker-Brown, Susanna Rostas and Anthony Shelton have worked on a more traditional anthropological themes. Drucker-Brown - who now does research in Africa - published an edition of Malinowski and De la Fuente's classic 1957 study of Mexican markets and Rostas has worked extensively on popular religion and culture and on performance in Mexico. Shelton first did fieldwork in the late 1970s among the Huichol Indians on Mexico, studying their conceptual system, art and ritual. More recently, Canadian Kristin Norget did a PhD at Cambridge on the Day of the Dead in Oaxaca (see also Carmichael and Sayer, 1992).<sup>21</sup>

As in the Andes, there are a couple of people who are more closely linked with sociology than anthropology, but whose work should be mentioned here. Bryan Roberts, prior to working in the Andes, did fieldwork on "organizing strangers" in Guatemala City: as with many sociologists and geographers who have worked among the urban poor, he made use of the kind of qualitative methodologies favoured by anthropologists. Both he and

Norman Long, whose interests have shifted to Mexico, currently head major research programmes in that country. Kate Young worked in Oaxaca, Mexico, before moving onto women and development in Nicaragua, and mention should be made of the social geographer Sylvia Chant whose work on households in urban contexts in Mexico is of interest to anthropologists (as is that of her students Cathy McIlwaine on Costa Rica and Sarah Bradshaw on Honduras). Simon Miller has also worked extensively on agrarian capitalism in Mexico.

### **Other regions: Afro-Latin themes**

There remains a rather disparate category of anthropologists who do not fit into the three regional groups discussed so far. Some of these I have mentioned in passing under the banner of anthropological sociology in the Andes or Mesoamerica, but there is a small number who have worked elsewhere. A linking theme for some of these people is Afro-Latin culture, a topic barely scratching the surface of Latin Americanist anthropology which, for all its self-critique and deconstruction of the category "Indian", still takes Indians as the primary focus of analysis.

Colin Henfrey has worked extensively on agrarian reform and peasant social movements in Bahia; a concern with Afro-Brazilian culture is an important presence in his work and has surfaced more directly in an article on candomblé centres in Bahia (Henfrey, 1980). Henfrey's students at Liverpool - for example, Alves, Beaney, Hine, Rabelo and, more recently, Healey - took up a variety of themes connected to peasant politics and culture (see ILAS, 1992: 73-75). Peter Fry, although he started research in Africa and has since returned there, also worked in the 1970s and 1980s on identity and politics in an Afro-Brazilian context. David Lehmann, although not strictly speaking an anthropologist, has also turned in recent years to the study of religion and politics in Brazil and this inevitably includes aspects of Afro-Brazilian culture.

Finally, my own work has focused on black culture and ethnic relations in Colombia, growing out of an undergraduate interest in Amazonian Latin America, combined with some travelling experience on the Caribbean shores of Central America. Such work, with its challenge to the myth of racial democracy, fits more neatly with North American and Brazilian work on the sociology and history of race in Latin America than it does with the

main currents of anthropology. It is an area that is attracting increasing attention among Colombian anthropologists - as has been the case over a longer period for Afro-Brazilian culture and Brazilian anthropologists. The stimulus for this in Colombia and Brazil has been complex interactions between black communities, black social movements and the state over cultural and land rights, catapulting issues around blackness and national identity into the political arena. For Colombia this has focused on the Pacific coastal region of the country, where there is also a substantial Indian population, ignored by British anthropologists, with the exception of Donald Taylor, but studied by the Henry Wassén of the Scandinavian school of Latin Americanists.<sup>22</sup>

More recently, my work has turned to music and the cultural histories, identities and struggles it involves in the construction of nationality. This moves into areas of cultural studies and musicology where few British social anthropologists have ventured in Latin American studies (although see Suzel Ana Reily), but that are becoming more important with shifts in the intellectual agenda of anthropology generally.

## **Conclusion**

The interest of British social anthropologists in Latin America took off during the 1960s, although its roots go further back. In many cases, the attraction was the fascination of the Amazonian Indians who, for the counter-cultural trends of 1960s Europe and North America, were a symbol of the primitive values that modern civilisation seemed to have lost; or it was the excitement of a little known continent, apparently relatively pristine, but - like the Indians - under threat and in need of protection. On the other hand, post-1959 Latin America was also a place of intense and possibly radical social change: again, in the atmosphere of the 1960s and with the radical currents of social science flowing through anthropology departments - at least in their student bodies - it seemed like an exciting place to go to study the urban and rural poor, the oppressed and processes of social change. It has been said that anthropology has certain affinities with tourism, in that the endeavour is undertaken on the terms of the anthropologists and with their interests and agendas at the fore. The rise of Latin Americanist anthropology seems to indicate that this is undoubtedly the case to some extent: anthropology has always existed in that difficult area between a desire to know others and a desire to know oneself.

But anthropology departs from tourism in the depth and purpose of its engagement, in the loss of self (albeit still temporary). The purpose is not just self-serving: research also contributes to a canon of knowledge. It may be argued that such a body of knowledge itself becomes purely self-serving, but this not only denies the value of knowledge for its own sake, as a human endeavour in its own right, it also denies the way that such knowledge and the process of its acquisition feeds back into the social contexts from which it emerged. This may only happen occasionally - Terry Turner's work among the Kayapó springs to mind - but it is important. The emergence of native and black social movements in Latin America obviously has its own dynamic, but I think anthropology and anthropologists have had a positive role to play in foregrounding such issues in the consciousness not only of non-Indians and non-blacks in Latin America and beyond, but of Indians and blacks themselves. This raises a series of problems for the practice of a reflexive anthropology because the movements that anthropologists may support and even have a hand in fostering do not always engage in activities or representations of which a liberal anthropologist necessarily approves - ethnocentrism, patriarchy and essentialism, for example, may be aspects of some these new ethnic movements, not to mention groups' own representations of their "true" history and culture which conflict with the anthropologist's versions (see Wade, 1995). There is no simple answer to these quandries: different practices and representations become the territory of dialogue, debate and conflict in which "the people" and anthropologists begin - I repeat, begin - to engage on more equal terms.



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## NOTES

1. These data are drawn from ASA (1995).
2. These data are taken from ILAS (1989, 1992); for reasons that are unclear, many Cambridge theses are not included in these listings. I have not included the theses listed under "Sociology" that were often close to anthropological themes and methods - for example those supervised by Bryan Roberts at Manchester.
3. Anthropologists with a major interest in Latin America represent about 10% of the 270 full-time teaching staff in UK anthropology departments (ASA 1995). (In the total figure, I have included some anthropologists who teach in non-anthropology departments.) Anthropologists are about 6% of the 214 Latin Americanist staff listed in ILAS (1992). Over the period 1984-1991, a total of 290 theses were completed in Latin American studies, of which about 10% were anthropological (ILAS, 1989; 1992).
4. In this essay, I define "British social anthropology" broadly. I collected bibliographic information on about 60 individuals and, in addition to British anthropologists, included - though not exhaustively - the following categories: i) North Americans who now work in British anthropology departments; ii) British academics who now work abroad; iii) researchers who, although they are not anthropologists, work on themes of direct interest to anthropology; iv) people who trained in anthropology but then left academia. My coverage of graduate students is, of necessity, uneven: it was not practicable to track down everyone, British or otherwise, who is either in the process of doing a doctoral degree in anthropology on a Latin American topic, or who graduated very recently, or who did one some time ago but then left Britain or academia. Inclusion of such people is thus directed by my personal knowledge and that of colleagues who advised me and by the ILAS listings (1989; 1992).
5. Of the 56 individuals I had records of, 37 had a primary interest in Indians, 10 studied peasants - although I recognise that the dividing line is not a clear one - about 3 studied the

urban poor and 2 studied blacks.

6. I am very grateful to Penelope Harvey for allowing me to use an unpublished paper, "Andean history and anthropology: a general introduction to the British bibliography", from which much of the detail in this section is drawn. Her paper was first presented to the Coloquio sobre Antropología e Historia Andina, held at CERA Bartolomé de las Casas, Cusco, Peru in July 1988.

7. British anthropologist Audrey Colson was also doing fieldwork in the (Peruvian) Andes in 1971. However, her interests had started in Guyana and they soon switched back to this region (see Bennet and Colson, 1979).

8. The theme of history and the emergence of the (Inca) state has also been a primary concern with non-British anthropologists and archaeologists (see Ramírez 1993).

9. Gifford, a linguist who first visited the Andes in 1965 as part of his comparative research on dialects of Spanish, set up the Centre in 1968.

10. Personal communication from Professor Jean Lave who was a student in this project. Lévi-Strauss's first major work, Les structures élémentaires de la parenté (1949), contained little reference to Amazonian ethnography - in contrast to his later Mythologiques (1964-71) - but some of his earliest works were on this region - for example, Lévi-Strauss (1936, 1948).

11. Stephen Hugh-Jones had been brought up in Jamaica and had visited the Vaupés region of the Colombian Amazon before starting his undergraduate degree in anthropology; Peter Silverwood-Cope's father was a diplomat in South America.

12. The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, founded in Denmark in 1968.

13. These were A small family business, on Colombia, and God gave us the leaf, on Bolivia.

14. Stephen Hugh-Jones and Stephen Nugent have also both supervised other students on themes relating to caboclos, rubber-gatherers, etc. (Hugh-Jones and Nugent, personal communications).

15. See, however, Botelho (1990).

16. See the recent works listed for the Amazonianists mentioned in the text. See Henley (1996) for a useful review of themes in Amazonian anthropology.

17. See, for example, the international mix of contributors to the recent La remontée de l'Amazone, a special issue of L'Homme, nos. 126-128, 1993.

18. On Colombia, for example, see Jimeno (1990/91).
19. On Colombia, see, for example, Jackson (1991), Gros (1991), Findji (1992). See also Escobar (1992).
20. See Lomnitz-Adler (1993) for a discussion of the influence of British social anthropology on the discipline in Mexico.
21. A recent conference at the Institute of Latin American Studies in London titled, "Abriendo Puertas: Tendencias Contemporáneas de la Antropología Mexicana en Francia y el Renio Unido" (May 30-31, 1996), had, among many others, papers by some of the British anthropologists mentioned in this section.
22. A student of Myer Fortes, Elizabeth Kennedy, also did work on the Chocó Indians (Hugh-Jones, personal communication).

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The list of references is divided into two parts. The first is a select bibliography of the works of "British social anthropologists" (see note 4, above, for a definition); the list is, I hope, fairly complete of people who might have a claim to be in this category (apologies to anyone who feels unfairly excluded); it is not, however, exhaustive of their writings. By no means all the graduate students mentioned in the text are listed. If a person's main discipline is neither anthropology nor sociology, I have noted it in brackets after the name. The works are listed under each person, whether or not the first author is the person in question. There are some entries for people who are not mentioned in the text. The second section is a list of the works which I cited by people other than British Latin Americanist anthropologists.

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