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### The History of Anthropology in France

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Andrew and Harriet Lyons (Wilfrid Laurier Univ.) are doing a study of anthropologists' notions and observations on the sexuality of "primitives."

Joan Mark (Peabody Museum, Harvard Univ.) is working on a biography of Alice C. Fletcher (1838-1923).

David J. Meltzer (Anthropology, Univ. of Washington) has been awarded a predoctoral fellowship at the Smithsonian Institution for research on the development of Early Man studies.

Michael M. Sokal (Humanities, Worcester Polytechnic Institute) is preparing a monograph on American Mental Testing in the nineteenth century, for which he is examining the studies of physical anthropologists relating physical traits to psychological characteristics.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHICA ARCANA

##### I. THE HISTORY OF ANTHROPOLOGY IN FRANCE

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[These remarks, originally prepared as a preliminary paper for the symposium to be held in November, are presented here in slightly revised form because of their general interest to historians of anthropology elsewhere. Full responsibility for errors introduced in translation is assumed by G.W.S.]

The first conference of the French Association of Anthropologists (founded in 1979 and known by the acronym AFA), which will be held in Paris November 19-21, 1981, will include among its fifteen topics that of the history of anthropology. (The term "anthropology" is understood here in the broad sense--contrary to one prior French tradition--as including ethnology, as well as prehistory and biological anthropology.) The preliminary abbreviated schedule is put forth in this perspective: the goal is to evaluate what has been accomplished so far in this relatively dispersed domain, to pose current problems and to open debate. A more thorough resume with fuller information will be given at the opening of the conference.

##### 1. The Present Situation

Large-scale studies in the domain of the history of anthropology are relatively few in France. There are two pocket books (Mercier, Poirier), and overview in the Encyclopedie de la Pleiade (Poirier), Duchet's book on the philosophes, Lombard's on British anthropology, a translation of Lowie's History of Ethnology published by Payot, and M. Panoff's Ethnologie: le deuxieme souffle, as well as several articles. A critical overview of the principal theoretical currents is to be found in one of the recent works of M. Auge. No book, to our knowledge, re-traces this history for France in particular. The situation thus contrasts

sharply with the United States. There have been neither large conferences (with the exception of the Durkheim conference organized by a group of sociologists in 1980, and the Conference on "Anthropology in France" organized in 1977 by G. Condominas and S. Dreyfus-Gamelon to evaluate the present situation) nor has there been a concerted policy of reeditions or biographies of the "founding fathers," or full bibliographic resources, or specialized reviews, or other instruments of information.

Discussion is not absent in France, but it is contained either in debates of a general order--theoretical or epistemological reflections (Foucault and many others), vast compilations on the emergence of the human sciences (Gusdorf)--or in more specific works such as books on the history of method (LeClerc); on the origins of anthropology in DeGerando (Copans/Jamin); on the iconographic aspect of the vision of the "other" in the sixteenth century (Bucher); on the image of the savage, the native, and the colonized (P. Brasseur, Clastres, Jamin, Mahn-Lot). Still others concern the genesis of economic ideology (Dumont), of psychiatry (Gineste, Postel), or of historical discourse and the conditions of its production (M. de Certeau). In regard to physical anthropology one must note works on the history and philosophy of the life sciences (Canguilhem, Jacob), and on the history of Darwinism (Conry), as well as the analysis of racism (Guillaumin, Olender). Two books treat the relationship of colonialism and anthropology (LeClerc, Copans) and the role of missionaries is analysed by Fr. Raison, M. Panoff, D. Defert and others; historians have been attracted by the notions of nature (Ehrard) and work (Lemay). A certain number of books are consecrated to the writings of "founding fathers": Herodotus (Hartog), Rousseau (Lévi-Strauss), Buffon (Duchet), Las Casas (Mahn-Lot), J. Demeunier (Lemay), and A. von Humboldt (Minguet); and closer to us, to the works of Morgan (Makarius, Terray, Godelier), Malinowski (Panoff), Durkheim (Lévi-Strauss), Marcel Mauss (Karady, Lévi-Strauss, Condominas) and Arnold Van Gennep (Belmont). There are some editions of complete works: Marcel Mauss (Karady), Paul Delarue (M.-L. Teneze). Also to be noted is a lively editorial activity making available older texts: accounts of discoveries, explorations, world travels, voyages, captivities, and shipwrecks follow each other at an accelerated pace, reeditions often supplied with substantial introductions. Most often these relate to the Americanist domain, which in other respects too, is one of the best studied (Duviols, Julien, Laming-Empeaire, Mahn-Lot, Wachtel, etc.).

Numerous additional researches are in process, not only on themes which are part of the history of anthropology narrowly speaking, but also in bordering domains: archeology (Schnapp), the anthropological current in linguistics (S. Auroux), the analysis of literary texts (C. Basuel, Ch. Minguet, M. Izard). Certain researches correspond to territorial or national divisions: the anthropology of Great Kabylia (C. Lacoste-Dujardin), of the Maghrib (D. Brahimi), of the Soviet Union (B. Chichlo), of Germany (B. Rupp-Eisenreich), of Oceania (Panoff), of Haiti (L. Hurbon). Still others isolate themes: degeneration (C. Bénichou), race and sociobiology (O. Ducros), criminal anthropology (R. Harris, C. Bénichou), artifacts and museology (F. Lupu), legal anthropology (R. Verdier, A. Kremer-Marietti). We are promised important theses on anthropology in the time of Broca (C. Blankaert) and on the

conditions of the birth of ethnology in France (H. Clastres). Lastly, the field of historical anthropology is so vast that it must be the object of a separate presentation.

A brief description of teaching will complete the tableau. Certain university programs provide partial, rapid instruction intended for future anthropologists, but this is not the rule. Two seminars, the one at the Ecole normale supérieure, the other at the Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS) treat very specific problems relating to the history of the enlightenment (M. Duchet) and of cosmography (W. Randles); another, entitled "The Sources of Ethnography," sparked by historians (Burgièrre, Chartier, Revel, Klapisch) has unfortunately not had the response it deserves among ethnologists; a fourth treats "the history of biological debates from Cuvier to Pasteur" (J.-P. Aron). The most specific is without doubt the introductory course which is part of a research program being established at the EHESS (L. Bernot). No doubt because of this fragmented situation, an analysis of the problems posed by instruction in the history of anthropology is in process (E. LeRoy). Also to be noted are various formal (e.g., the CNRS team on "Myths of Origin in African History and Historiography," J. Devisse) and informal (C. Blankaert) study groups scouting the field this way and that.

In summary, many elements relative to the history of anthropology, but no real specialization within the field as in the United States.

## 2. Two Preliminary Questions

Why should one be interested in the history of anthropology?--is this necessary or self-evident? And if it is, how are we to conceive it?

Accepting the recent terminology of T. Kuhn, anthropology--like sociology and psychology--has not yet found its paradigm. Because it is pre-paradigmatic, with a plurality of theories held, a broad field of thought is opened to all who seek to define their identity as anthropologists--in the same way that Hazard's "Crisis of the European Consciousness" has opened up in the last thirty years an extremely fertile field of thought as to the roots of the human sciences in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In view of the interdisciplinary nature of the field, one is well aware of the difficulties of defining it, tracing its boundaries, ascribing to it a set of appropriate concepts and particular methods (other than fieldwork itself) or even more so of giving it any set of regulations: once more there are more questions than answers. A retrospective turn, if it cannot entirely resolve the problems posed, can at least place them in a new light; this does not mean that we should wish to adhere to the idea formulated by R. Darnell: that history of anthropology justifies itself by the simple fact that anthropological identity and practice are inscribed in a cultural tradition which is itself historically constituted. But according to that writer, along with others (Hymes, Stocking) this too purely historical vision must be complemented by two other points of view: in the first place, to be done in such a way that the history of anthropology can provide something like a matrix of evaluation for prior theories, to the end of separating that which stands accomplished from that which is definitively surpassed, from the point of view of a sophisticated practice of the anthropologist's métier; secondly,

to create by the study of the history of anthropology, the necessary distance towards its present theoretical or methodological preoccupations, which themselves are only a stage in the science of man, capable of being surpassed by those which will succeed them in time.

Along side the epistemological dimension of the history of anthropology there is a certain deontological interest. For as long as concepts and notions which are already demystified at the level of scientific reflection (nature, progress, race, aggression, man-as-object [l'homme-objet]--redoubtable spectres, all) continue to haunt our disciplines, and we still meet them again today, perverse reflections of the first half of the twentieth century, in the public opinion of the society which engendered them, we present anthropologists will always have that task. In a general way, the knowledge of the advances of anthropology, as well as of its errors and oversights, can contribute usefully to ethical questions.

How can, how should the history of anthropology be written? Here is the second preliminary question, moreover a rather perilous one, studded with snares. The possible points of view are various: the history of ideas, the history of sciences and disciplines, the sociology of knowledge or the scientific theory providing privileged frameworks and determining methods and procedures. Those who are so inclined assess the greater part of previous attempts, insofar as they concern anthropology, as not very satisfactory. These are, in turn:

---strictly chronological, anecdotal, presenting only a delusively linear sequence of theories;

---thematic, in isolating only a single aspect;

---presentist, that is to say, brought in relation to the present state of the discipline, with the problematic of today which, itself, is necessarily partial, if not partisan;

---or, on the other hand, conceived from the point of view of historical sociology, each stage, each author, being studied in the light of the social context in which they were enclosed, and in relation to the intellectual currents which enfolded them. This last presents the inconvenience of not realizing at the outset a confrontation with the living problematic of today's anthropology.

This history--and here the controversy is heated--can only be written, according to some, by anthropologists themselves, giving thereby an internal vision, in vivid colors, a sort of "ethnoscience" of the "tribe" of anthropologists (Hymes)--or, according to others, only by external observers, historians not implicated and as a result more supposedly objective. The question remains open, unless one adopts the wise solution of a convergence of all the proffered possibilities.

How are we, in reconstituting the history of anthropology, to break out of the closed circle of the occidental viewpoint? This is one of the most difficult questions, on which opinions now and always will diverge. What is at stake, in effect, is a particular chapter of our

history, projected into another cultural realm which, nevertheless, bears our imprint. Many are conscious that the history of this unequal encounter, to be complete, must not only be criticized, but also conceived by those who have been subject to it through modern history. It is a problematic which returns to the debates around the questions of the relations between history and anthropology, of anthropology within history (C. Lévi-Strauss, M. Augé and others) which probably constitutes the fundamental issue. It is a problematic which has led others to consider the history of anthropology as itself an anthropological problem (Hallowell), as the systemized (and therefore unique) form of a popular, spontaneous anthropology common to all societies.

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