Sir Francis Galton at any rate identified him as such because of his impressive mental capabilities (Drower 1985:68). It is quite possible that this comment was invented by someone who confused Petrie’s racism with Galtonian racism, and failed to appreciate his idiosyncratic approach to the issue.

I would therefore tend to lend more credence to the comments of Dr. Thompson, head of the government hospital in Jerusalem, who M. Drower does quote. The former hoped that Petrie’s brain might ‘reveal some of the reasons for the remarkable capacity and retentive memory he had, even up to the day he died, of the most minute facts’ (Drower 1985:424). Whether or not this is actually the case, Petrie’s views about race and its import on history demonstrate, that reality, as it relates to human beliefs, is rarely simplistic. We must therefore take pains to avoid unfairly construing it as such, when we come to represent it in historical interpretations.

References


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Commentary: Mid-20th Century Development of Brazilian Archaeology (1964–1985)

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Two recent articles in the International Journal of Historical Archaeology provide a bit of light on the development of Brazilian archaeology in the middle 20th century. The first is one by Pedro Paulo de Abreu Funari entitled ‘Class Interests in Brazilian Archaeology’ (Vol. 6, No. 3, pp. 209–216, 2002) and the second is a heated response to Funari, along with his rejoinder, by James A. Delle, Igor Chmyz, Ondemar Ferreira Dias, Tania Andrade Lima, Betty J. Meggers, and Pedro Paulo de Abreu Funari, entitled ‘On Collaboration, Class Conflict, and Archaeology in Brazil’ (Vol. 7, No. 3, pp. 223–237, 2003).
Funari’s 2002 article is openly a Marxist appraisal of the origins of Brazilian archaeology. He sees Brazilian intellectual society of the 19th century as being patriarchal, paternalistic, and generally split by race, gender, status and class. The first archaeological work was under the auspices of the Royal Museum in 1818, which was renamed the Imperial Museum in 1822, and finally the National Museum in 1889. The early focus was particularly on collecting artifacts from Mediterranean ancient cultures, such as the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans. Remains of cultures from South America were regarded as those of ‘noble savages’, and little attention was directed to them. By the 1870s and 1880s, various provincial museums had been established, resulting in several local archaeological explorations. These early ‘archaeologists’ were mainly natural scientists, whose training led them to focus upon collecting and classification.

Funari believes that archaeology was the purview of the museums only until after World War II, with the first academic study of archaeology in Brazil beginning only then. Funari credits Paulo Duarte, a conservative liberal, who while exiled in the late 1930s and early 1940s in France and the U.S. became interested in archaeology, as the first academic Brazilian archaeologist. When Duarte returned to Brazil after the war, he was instrumental in setting up the Institute of Prehistory, and he was also instrumental in getting legislation passed like the U.S. Antiquities Act in 1961. He was prominent in bringing in Joseph Emperaire and Annette Laming de Emperaire from France to do archaeology in Brazil at this time. And he was well underway in introducing archaeology as a separate university graduate discipline when the military coup occurred in 1964.

The Brazilian military was in close contact with American counterinsurgency agencies, and soon enacted several educational agreements. The university system modified to follow American one. Funari argues that the new Programa Nacional de Pesquisas Arqueológicas [National Program of Archaeological Research] (PRONAPA), set up by the Smithsonian at that time, was staffed only by students of the correct right-wing political beliefs; that the archaeology of this period was fettered by the political regime, until it was replaced in 1985, and that partially because of this, ‘archaeology is still very much an upper class career in Brazil’.

As might be expected, this view of the development of archaeology in Brazil brought strong reaction from Brazilian archaeologists who have been working in the country for the last few decades, particularly those who did not view themselves as right-wing students or right-wing stooges.

Igor Chmyz noted that regional archaeology began in Parana in 1939 under the provincial museum, with work by Jose Loureiro Fernandes, who conducted some of the first known excavations on sambaquis. With the federalization of the local university in 1950, the museum was transferred to it, and archaeology became an academic subject. Chmyz argues that the university set up the Instituto do Pesquisas in 1952, which brought in the Yugoslav archaeologist, Adam Orssich de Slavetich, to conduct excavations. In 1955, Fernandes created the Centro de Ensino e Pesquisas Arqueológicas (CEPA), and it was CEPA, along with the Instituto de Pesquisas, which brought in Joseph Emperaire and Annette Laming in 1955–56 (rather than Duarte), and later brought in other scholars such as Wesley Hurt. Chmyz agrees that Paulo Duarte assisted Fernandes and Luis de Castro Faria in drafting Law No. 3924 during the late 1950s, the Brazilian antiquities law which protects archaeological sites, which was passed July 26, 1961.

Chmyz rejects the idea that the Smithsonian work in Brazil was collaborationist. The 1964 course held at Parana attended by graduates from 11 Brazilian states on archaeological
methods by Evans and Meggers was in response to an invitation issued in 1954 at the 31st ICA in Sao Paulo. The idea to develop PRONAPA came out of this 1964 course. PRONAPA, which existed from 1965 until the early 1970s, was subsequently approved by Instituto do Patrimonio Historico e Artístico Nacional (IPHAN) and co-sponsored by Conselho Nacional de Pesquisas (CNPq).

Ondemar Ferreira Dias, Jr., points out that the Seminario de Estudos e Pesquisas em Jazidas Ceramicas in Parana was planned nearly a decade before 1964 by Fernandes, who had begun inviting foreign archaeologists to teach at the Centro de Estudos e Pesquisas Arqueologicas at the University of Parana in the early 1950s. And Ondemar Dias rejects the idea that PRONAPA, which was set up with Smithsonian Institution help, collaborated with the North American agencies of political control and espionage and with the military authorities of the right-wing Brazilian dictatorship. Dias objects to be called a spy, and points out that during this same time period, the Smithsonian Institution archaeologists Clifford Evans and Betty Meggers also supported well-known leftists such as Darcy Ribeiro, Mario Sanoja, Luis Lumbreras and Lautaro Nunez, so the charge of the Smithsonian influence being rightist was incorrect.

In her defense, Betty J. Meggers notes that PRONAPA was not just the creation of the Smithsonian Institution, but was founded in cooperation with CNPq, IPHAN, and other Brazilian member institutions. Thus the Smithsonian Institution simply provided expertise to help in the formation an essentially Brazilian development.

In rebuttal, Pedro Paulo A. Funari noted that Minister Helio Beltrao was a member of the rightist military cabine, and that it was his wife, Conceicao Beltrao, who controlled archaeology at the CNPq, and trained Tania Andrade Lima, among others. In the 1960s, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) was a known front for various American intervention programs. Funari argues that the participation in the development of archaeology at this time by CNPq and IPHAN was required by USAID, and hence sees the fact that Meggers and Evans worked with CNPq and IPHAN as evidence of additional interference from USAID. It is his belief that there were rewards for cooperating with the U.S. at this period, and as evidence he claims that Ondemar Dias, who was deeply involved in PRONAPA and the development of archaeological institutions sponsored by the U.S., was rewarded with a professorship at the University of Rio, even though he lacked any advanced degrees such as an AM or PhD. He claims that PRONAPA was responsible for suppressing Palo Duarte’s work, eventually helping to fire him. In response to the claim that his analysis of the situation is not shared by others, Funari further argued that even other North American archaeologists, such as Anna Roosevelt, complained of the fact that PRONAPA was a ‘determinist school’ and did not allow the publication of dissonant findings such as two dates which were viewed as too early in terms of ‘right-think’, or the evidence of complex prehistoric settlements.

The 1960s and 1970s were a tumultuous time in Brazilian academic circles, and it may take a bit more distance to work out a more dispassionate story of the history of the development of Brazilian archaeology during this period. But in doing so, commentaries of the various major players above will be critical components of the eventual assessment. Certainly the Brazilian political scene was in part a microcosm of the larger agendas influencing the politics of the ‘cold war’ during this time, and the academic community was an integral part of the national fabric.