

Uma (in)certa antropologia

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Arquivo da tag: Cultura

Saber dos xamãs jaguares do Yuruparí é nomeado patrimônio imaterial (Folha de S.Paulo)

🕒 29/11/2011 📁 Uncategorized 📌 Índios, Conhecimento tradicional, Cultura, Memória, Patrimônio 👤 renzotaddei

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DA EFE

O saber tradicional dos xamãs jaguares do Yuruparí, na Amazônia colombiana, entrou neste domingo para a Lista Representativa do Patrimônio Cultural Imaterial da Humanidade da Unesco.

O comitê de analistas da Unesco aprovou sua inclusão durante reunião em Bali, na Indonésia, ao considerar que este modo de vida, herança milenar dos ancestrais, é um sistema integral de conhecimento com características físicas e espirituais.

“Esta notícia é um enorme esperança para a comunidade que tem plena certeza de que esta decisão é um instrumento de salvaguarda desta sabedoria”, disse o diretor de Patrimônio da Colômbia, Juan Luis Isaza, em seu discurso de agradecimento.

Os xamãs do Yuruparí transmitem “uma cosmovisão associada a um território sagrado para eles, um conhecimento graças ao qual acham que o mundo pode estar

em equilíbrio”, explicou Isaza.

Os jaguares de Yuruparí, que habitam nas cercanias do rio Pirá Paraná, transmitem por via masculina e desde o nascimento o Hee Yaia Ket i Oka, uma sabedoria que foi entregue a eles desde suas origens pelos Ayowa (criadores) para cuidar do território e da vida.





O diretor de Patrimônio da Colômbia detalhou que esta cultura está ameaçada pela perda de interesse dos mais jovens e a interação com a “arrasadora cultura ocidental”.

A designação também ajudará, segundo Isaza, a combater os perigos que espreitam este povo que viveu sempre isolado do “contato com colonos, madeireiros, mineiros e políticos que, segundo os xamãs, vulneram o território e o equilíbrio”.

“O reconhecimento da Unesco serve para proteger e resgatar não só seu pensamento, também seu território, porque estão profundamente relacionados”, assegurou Isaza.

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Durban climate change conference: ‘Sideline the UN’ says leading academic (The Ecologist)

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Matilda Lee

Ahead of the latest UN climate conference, leading academic Anthony Giddens explains why it's time to switch to smaller agreements between major world powers



Lord Anthony Giddens, a Labour peer and former director of the London School of

Economics

Ecologist: In your book *the Politics of Climate Change*, you give credit to the green movement for challenging orthodox politics on climate change, yet you say that it's flawed at source. Why?

Anthony Giddens: I call myself a non-green green because I support a lot of the objectives of some elements of the green movement – globally and locally – but I

am not ideologically opposed to nuclear power like many greens, although I am reserved about it. I believe in the primacy of science in trying to resolve these issues, especially around climate change. Although I am interested in protecting the forests in terms of CO2 and so forth, I think what we are trying to save is really a decent future civilisation for us. There are aspects of the development of the green movement that I am not very comfortable with, including not all conservation measures, because while some are worthwhile, sometimes you have got to take risks in the interests of controlling greater risks. Climate change, to me, being one of the primary risks we face in this century.

As far as this country is concerned, I was pleased that the coalition sustained most of the framework that Labour had put into place and I think that is important because as you know, in the US the complete polarisation of climate change issues is really unfortunate for not just the US, but the rest of the world. Here, at the moment, we don't have that. Of course you can carp about what the government is doing now, whether it's going back on some of its initial presumptions, and to some degree this is true. Nevertheless, there is a pretty large cross-party consensus. Ideally, I'd like every country to have that. Climate change is not a left-right issue, it concerns everybody. You'll need all sorts of coalitions to support climate change progressive policies. But there is this tendency to polarise around left or right, especially in the US.

You need long-term policies, you don't want parties coming in that reverse the positions of the parties before them. My feeling about the UK is that we've got a reasonable framework but we don't have results from that framework. The UK is still way down the league in terms of proportion of energy taken from renewables, if you exclude nuclear. It's more the framework than a set of substantive achievements. You have to be a bit reserved about British position or other positions where it's all ends and objectives rather than the substantive achievements, which are in short supply across the world.

Ecologist: You mention renewable energy. Do you think the government has shot itself in the foot with backtracking on the feed-in tariff?

AG: Yes, I do. Unfortunately this has happened in other countries too. Some of the most impressive achievements in introducing renewables happened in Portugal and

Spain. They introduced feed-in tariffs and one or two other subsidies and they achieved results which no one could quite believe because they introduced a high proportion of renewables within five or six-year period. We used to think, like in the case of Denmark or Sweden, it took about 25 years to do this. Now with new technology, and if you organise things right, you can do it quickly. I read an account saying that there was one day last year when Portugal met 100 per cent of its energy needs from renewables.

Even though I'm worried about the experiments in Germany, I think it was also quite interesting, the commitment to phase out nuclear power and see if you could achieve 20 per cent of renewables by 2020. I think that could be a very useful experiment for the rest of the world because Germany does have a lot of technological know-how.

Ecologist: How much value do you put on reaching an international post-Kyoto agreement?

AG: I think the UN is an indispensable organisation in global terms, but I think we need to judge in terms of substance and achievement. So far, it's been pretty limited. I don't think one could say in spite of 20 years next June since Rio and 17-18 years since climate change negotiations started that those negotiations have had much impact really, in terms of reducing carbon emissions, which is the only feasible measure. I think we have to keep them going, but I think we have to recognise that you'll need more substantial agreements alongside them that would be bilateral or regional.

I think we are already seeing a change in the pattern of leadership globally, in respect of climate change issues, as a result of what happened in Copenhagen and in Cancun in which some of the large developing countries assumed much more of a leadership position, even as compared to the industrial countries. I think Brazil, under Lula has made important developments. It's a country which has very unusually energy patterns, since about 80 per cent of its energy comes from non-fossil fuel sources. Latin America is a region that could have a leadership position, hopefully China will. I think the Chinese over the last 6-7 years have really woken up to the dangers of the glaciers melting, the threat of climate change which to me is so real and frightening in its outer edges in terms of risks.

The main joker in terms of international arena is the United States. I was hoping that there'd be important bilateral agreements between China and the US, which would lead to substantial programmes of energy transformation. So far they've had talks but these haven't led to much. Lack of American leadership I find deeply disappointing. When I wrote the first edition of the book, I had high hopes that President Obama would be an inspirational leader for climate change policy. Partly because I think they put the Health Care bill ahead of everything else, it served to polarise the country and now federal leadership is more or less stymied in the US.

Ecologist: Should policy makers be focusing more on adaptation?

AG: We have to focus on adaptation anyway, because it's close to certain as one could be that fairly high levels of climate change is embedded in the system. I think a lot of lay people hearing that world temperatures increased by 1.4 degrees think that doesn't sound like very much. But when you think that in the Arctic it has increased several degrees and the main consequence will be extreme weather of all kinds – a combination of droughts and flooding – then you see the thin envelope that we live within, certainly in the poorer countries, we should be spending a lot on what I call “pre-emptive adaptation”. But we are not. All the promises of billions flowing from the developed to developing countries – where's the money? It would surprise me a lot if it was forthcoming in Durban given the economic situation in Europe, which is supposedly one of the main sources of this money. Again you have this distance between ambition and reality.

Ecologist: To what extent do you think developed countries can dictate the terms of development to less industrialised countries?

AG: I don't think they can dictate terms at all. Whether we like it or not we are in a more multi-polar international environment. Many people wanted that but it is proving to be very difficult to exert systematic governance when you've got a more multipolar system. No one is going to be able to tell China or India or Brazil what to do. We hope they will emerge as more important leaders than in the industrial countries, but industrial countries must reform because they've created most of the greenhouse gases historically anyway.

I think the main thing is to focus on substance everywhere. It seems to me very

important that we concentrate attention on areas where you can really make substantial progress and don't just talk in terms of endless frameworks and negotiation.

Ecologist: Which areas are you referring to?

AG: I don't think we are anywhere near resolving the issues without a fairly heavy dose of innovation. Both globally and nationally we should be spending to try and produce such innovation and even though you can't predict the future, you can certainly see some areas where it would be very valuable. For example, if we could find some way of storing electricity on the large scale, it would be very valuable in terms of promoting the spread of renewable energy. I think we have to start spending now on geo-engineering. At the moment we are just miles away from being able to control carbon emissions. The most effective form of geo-engineering, if someone could make a breakthrough would be finding some way of taking greenhouse gas emissions out of the atmosphere on a large scale. We don't know whether it will ever be possible to do that but I think we have to invest and investigate to try and find some projects that wouldn't be counter-productive. As you know, they could be very dangerous as people may interpret this to mean we don't need to do anything because they'll be some fix at the end, which is in no sense guaranteed.

I think we need to support hundreds of bottom-up innovations that are going on around the world – whether they are social, political or economic. My view is that we've also got to have what I call "utopian realism". We are living through the end of industrial civilisation as it existed for the past 150 years driven by fossil fuels. This will involve changes in the way people live, which could in principle be very profound over a 20 or 30-year period. I think we've got to experiment on how we produce these changes and make them converge with desirable critical outcomes.

One concrete place I try to think about is transportation, which is still driven 95 per cent by oil. Look what the car has done to city centres. I'm sure we could construct more creative cities, more creative transport systems. I quote the [MIT study on the future of automobiles](#) – where they envisage a "mobility internet" and big differences from how we organise transport now – bringing down private and public distinctions, organising Smart Cars to enter in transit in different parts of transport

systems. Having a fair proportion of driver-less cars on the roads, trying to reintegrate that with designing more effective communities within cities. All of us have got to explore different development models. If we have, after the recession, several years of 1 per cent growth, surely in the West there is a new invitation to discuss the nature of growth and its relationship to prosperity and wider political goals like Tim Jackson suggests in his book *Prosperity without Growth*.

Ecologist: Why do you suggest we need to do away with the term ‘sustainable development’?

AG: It became a popular term ever since the Bruntland report. Now there are similar terms like “green growth” and the “green economy”. To me, if you examine them they fall apart a bit. Let’s get something more substantial, something that’s not just an empty phrase. Let’s work out what it actually means on the ground and how you might achieve that. If you take the green economy, I’m in favour of it, I might prefer low-carbon economy but the point is we don’t know what a green economy is like. We haven’t done enough intellectual or practical work on it. It’s not going to be an economy where you simply have a few more renewables in it and everyone lives the same way.

Let’s say Denmark has successfully reduced its emissions to zero. It’s going to change lots of things all across the economy: job creation, job structures, transportation systems, lots of things about how people live. We need to work on this some more, and not just make empty claims. The same thing goes about green growth. We know you can create jobs through renewable technologies in some contexts, but they’ve got to be net new jobs and we’ve got to look at what happens when people lose their jobs in sectors that become less prominent.

I think we will get most growth through lifestyle change rather than the introduction of renewable technologies. When people invented the idea of the coffee shop 15 years ago, no one really thought we wanted better coffee because we lived, in the US and UK with bad coffee for hundreds of years. What people who set these things up did was to anticipate emerging trends – it wasn’t just having a dozen new kinds of coffee it was that it intersected with the information technology revolution, with people having more flexibility with where they work and therefore using computers in new places. If you generalise that, there will be many changes produced by a

movement towards a more sustainable society.

The Politics of Climate Change, second edition by Anthony Giddens (Polity Press, Sept 2011, £14.24)

[Original article [here](#)]

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THE SECRET LIFE OF WORDS (MYOO)

🕒 25/11/2011 📁 Uncategorized 📌 Cultura, Linguística, Oralidade 👤 renzotaddei

CULTURE

What untranslatable words reveal about the Brazilian culture, from Brazilian author Roberto Taddei.

Illustration by Andrew Holder.

Illustration by Andrew Holder.

I. ONE LANGUAGE, MAS QUE NADA

You might not know it, but Portuguese is part of your daily spoken English. Many words made it into English by way of Asia and Africa—places where the Portuguese landed during the **Age of Discoveries** (also known as the Age of Exploration 15th-17th centuries). Albino, for instance, and Dodo from doido (crazy). Sometimes the English word retains its original meaning buried within, like “fetish,” which comes from feitiço (charm and sorcery).

Other words, like those for native-grown food from Brazil, came from Brazilian indigenous languages, like cayenne and cashew. Then there are culture-specific words that migrated into English as the phenomenon became popularized: samba, **bossa nova**, **caipirinha**, Ipanema (originally meaning fish-less river), “Mas que Nada,” and so on. But although these words come to represent Brazil abroad the country is much more than a bracing drink or a sexy girl.

The spirit of Brazil can be found in its language, but like the country, the language is remarkably diverse. As with American English, the Brazilian version of Portuguese is a mixture of languages. The Roman language brought by the Europeans in 1500 suffered a long process of accommodation along the centuries. It first encountered the Tupi language, then used all over the Brazilian coast. Later it mixed with two major African languages: Bantu and Yoruba. Two hundred years later, the entire country was speaking a new language, Nhegatu

Nhegatu is a combination of the nearly 200 native idioms of Brazil, remnants of Roman Portuguese, Bantu and Yoruba. This hybrid language was widely used, reaching nearly across the entire country. When **Robinson Crusoe** lived in Bahia before his shipwreck he would have spoken Nhegatu, not Portuguese.

By the end of the 18th century, Portugal decided to bring the country back to speaking Portuguese by force. But despite their efforts Brazilian Portuguese retained ethnic and cultural echoes of the country itself. One example is the use of the **null subject** in Brazilian Portuguese, which is very distinct from Portugal. In several cases, some particularities of Brazilian Portuguese were initially seen by Portugal as grammatical errors, such as the usage of distinct pronouns and verbal agreements. But throughout the years, these “errors” came to be reinforced by Brazilian poets and speakers as a sign of post-colonial national identity. As the modernist Brazilian writer **Oswald de Andrade** once noted: “Tupy or not Tupy, that’s the question.”

II. THE UNTRANSLATABLES

Despite an influx of Brazilian Portuguese words into English, one word in particular has resisted eager translators—be they Nobel laureates, poets, scholars or songwriters. The word is **saudade**. Maybe you’ve heard of it, since saudade is used in English

without translation. Considered one of the top ten untranslatable words in the world, *saudade* is particularly difficult because it combines several emotions at once: fierceness, longing, yearning, pining, missing, homesickness, or all or none of the above. It is so complex that when I tried to explain it to a friend once she cut me short: “I’m sure I’ve never felt *saudade*.”

For this reason, of the most celebrated songs in Brazilian culture, “*Chega de Saudades*,” has never been translated into English. But the song lyrics, roughly translated, help explain *saudade* in part. The lyrics were written by Brazilian poet *Vinicius de Moraes*. They describe feeling *saudades* as being deprived of peace and beauty, full of sadness and a melancholy that never goes away because the poet’s muse has abandon him.

Vinicius frequently collaborated with the songwriter and maestro *Tom Jobim*. *Tom* had a country house a couple of hills away from *Elizabeth Bishop* and almost two decades after she wrote her “*Song for the Rainy Season*” he also composed a song to the Brazilian rain. “*Waters of March*” was created both in Portuguese and in English and yet the versions are not identical. The Brazilian version sings about the end of the summer in Rio. The English version is about the beginning of Spring in the North. Since the beginning of Spring in America (around March, the rainy season) is also the end of the hot weather in Brazil (also March, when the rains come) the translation evokes the same season of mists.

Tom and *Vinicius*’ collaboration resulted in many hit songs that have since become Brazilian standards. Many of their songs have bilingual versions, which helped them become popular internationally. Except of course for the elusive “*Chega de Saudades*,” whose message remains locked in the meaning of one untranslatable word.

In 1968, *Clarice Lispector* (a Ukranian-born Brazilian author also translated by *Elizabeth Bishop*) tried her own definition of *saudade*: it “is a bit like hunger. Only disappears when one eats the presence. But sometimes the longing is so deep that the presence is not enough: one wants to absorb the whole other person. This will of one being the other in a complete unification is one of the most urgent feeling that we have in life.”

As poetic as this sounds, her definition raises another translation problem. The very notion of “presence” in Brazil is also untranslatable. Like all Roman languages, Portuguese has two verbs for the English “to be”. There is a distinction between being in a physical place and being as an emotional or ontological state.

It's not only grammar, “being” itself is also seen differently in Brazilian culture. If the Portuguese carried to the New World the cartesian definition of presence, “I think, therefore I am,” once they got to Brazil they encountered cultures who thought about “being” very differently. Anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro made a lifetime study of amerindian perspectivism and discovered that some Brazilian native groups would have laughed at the idea of “I think, therefore I am,” suggesting as it does that the condition of thought predates existence. To them, the saying would likely go “the other exists, therefore she thinks.” This doesn't mean that they were necessarily more generous than the Portuguese. It seems like a simple construction until you compare it with “I think, therefore I am” and see that to the Portuguese existence could be proven in a vacuum, while for native Brazilians existence depended on the existence of others. In this community-based definition of existence the other would be more important than the self since it is only through the other that I can recognize myself.

That's why we so often use the word *saudade* in Lispector's way, as an urge to “eat the other,” because the closer we get to understanding ourselves the closer we get to the other, and perhaps it is only by fully incorporating the other that we can escape the existential question of whether or not we actually exist. Comparing Elizabeth Bishop and Tom Jobim's verses to the Brazilian rain you notice that the former is fundamentally about the poet, the latter sings about the outer world.

In an informal talk with Clarice Lispector in the 70s', Tom Jobim explained that Brazil “is a country with an extremely free soul.” This freedom encourages creative expression, but, he says, Brazil is not “a country for amadores.” The Portuguese “amadores” means both amateurs and lovers, a linguistic challenge that could get in the way of aspiring lovers themselves.

Ultimately, necessity and usage determines which words are absorbed into the culture; which we translate or use as-is (like *caipirinha*) and which words remain culturally specific. In Brazil there are no translations for several English terms—like

commodity, online, drag queen, shopping center—which seem to be more “authentic” in their original English format since what they refer to has an American or British origin. Brazilians seem to have never needed words like serendipity or patronize, just as English speakers perhaps never needed cafuné (caressing someone’s head with one’s fingers), or safadeza (a mixture of shamelessness, naughtiness, debauchery and mischief), both used on a daily basis below the Equator.

The more we know a language and its speakers, the more we understand their national culture. As Salman Rushdie writes in his novel *Shame*: “to unlock a society, look at its untranslatable words.”

– **ROBERTO TADDEI** is a writer and journalist who studied creative writing at Columbia. He lives in São Paulo and is adapting his first novel from English into Portuguese

<http://myoo.com/stories/the-secret-life-of-words-2/#.Ts-jUhdGXrc>.email

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Ritual de tribo brasileira é indicado a patrimônio da Unesco (BBC)

🕒 24/11/2011 📁 Uncategorized 📌 Antropologia, Índios, Cultura, História, Memória, Patrimônio, Políticas públicas 👤 renzotaddei

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Lista de indicados inclui cerimônia do povo enawenê-nawê (Foto: acervo Iphan)

Um ritual de um povo indígena brasileiro, voltado para “manter a ordem social e cósmica”, foi indicado para integrar uma lista de

patrimônios culturais imateriais “em necessidade urgente de proteção” elaborada pela Unesco, a agência da ONU para a educação e a cultura.

O yaokwa é a principal cerimônia do calendário ritual dos enawenê-nawê, povo indígena cujo território tradicional fica no noroeste do Mato Grosso.

O Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (Iphan) registrou o ritual Yaokwa como bem cultural em 2010. Segundo dados da Fundação Nacional de Saúde (Funasa), o povo enawenê-nawê – que fala a língua aruak – é formado por cerca de 560 integrantes. O ritual, que marca o início do calendário enawenê, dura sete meses e é realizado com a saída dos homens para realizar uma pesca coletiva com o uso de uma barragem e de armadilhas construídas com cascas de árvore e cipós.

A partir desta quarta-feira, a comissão intergovernamental da Unesco pela salvaguarda do patrimônio cultural imaterial se reúne em Bali, na Indonésia, para avaliar os rituais e tradições indicados para ser protegidos. A reunião se encerra no próximo dia 29.

O Brasil país conta com 18 bens inscritos na lista do Patrimônio Mundial da Unesco.

Entre o patrimônio imaterial, dedicado a tradições orais, cultura e a arte populares, línguas indígenas e manifestações tradicionais, estão as Expressões Orais e Gráficas dos Wajãpis do Amapá e o Samba de Roda do Recôncavo Baiano.

Se entrar na lista, o ritual dos enawenê-nawê passará a contar com apoio da entidade na sua preservação.

Muitas atividades da Unesco estão prejudicadas desde que os Estados Unidos

retiraram o seu financiamento da agência, depois que ela aceitou a Palestina como Estado-membro pleno.

Seres subterrâneos

Com o ritual Yaokwa, os enawenê-nawê acreditam entrar em contato com seres temidos que vivem no subterrâneo, os yakairiti, cuja fome deve ser saciada com sal vegetal, peixes e outros alimentos derivados do milho e da mandioca, a fim de manter a ordem social e cósmica.

Para a realização do ritual, os indígenas se dividem em dois grupos: um que fica na aldeia junto às mulheres, preparando o sal vegetal, acendendo o fogo e oferecendo alimentos, e outro que sai para a pesca, com o objetivo de retornar para a aldeia com grandes quantidades de peixe defumado, que é oferecido aos yakairiti.



Indígenas constroem barragem para pesca; alimentos servem de oferenda (Foto: acervo Iphan)

Os indígenas realizam a pesca em rios de médio porte da região. Com os peixes e os demais alimentos, os enawenê-nawê realizam

banquetes festivos ao longo de meses, acompanhados de cantos com flautas e danças.

Encantamento de camelos

Além do yaokwa, outro ritual indicado para proteção urgente na América do Sul é o eshuva, composto pelas orações cantadas do povo huachipaire, do Peru.

A lista de proteção urgente também inclui como indicados a dança saman, da província indonésia de Aceh, as tradições de relatos de histórias no nordeste da China e o “encantamento de camelos” da Mongólia, no qual as pessoas cantam para as fêmeas, a fim de persuadi-las a aceitar os filhotes de camelo órfãos.

Já para a lista representativa de patrimônio cultural imaterial da humanidade (sem indicativo de necessidade urgente de proteção), são indicados, pela América do Sul, o conhecimento tradicional dos xamãs jaguares de Yurupari (Colômbia) e a peregrinação ao santuário do senhor de Qoyllurit'i (Peru).

Outras tradições indicadas pela Unesco são as marionetes de sombras chinesas, o kung-fu dos monges Shaolin (China), a porcelana de Limoges (França), a música dos mariachis mexicanos e o fado (música tradicional portuguesa).

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Are We Getting Nicer? (N.Y. Times)

🕒 24/11/2011 📁 Uncategorized 🔖 Antropologia, Cultura, Discriminação, Memória, Opinião pública, Psicologia, Racismo, Violência, Visualidade 👤 renotaddei

By NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF

Published: November 23, 2011

It's pretty easy to conclude that the world is spinning down the toilet.

So let me be contrary and offer a reason to be grateful this Thanksgiving. Despite the gloomy mood, the historical backdrop is stunning progress in human decency over recent centuries.

War is declining, and humanity is becoming less violent, less racist and less sexist — and this moral progress has accelerated in recent decades. To put it bluntly, we humans seem to be getting nicer.

That's the central theme of an astonishingly **good book** just published by **Steven Pinker**, a psychology professor at Harvard. It's called "The Better Angels of Our Nature," and it's my bet to win the next Pulitzer Prize for nonfiction.

“Today we may be living in the most peaceable era in our species’ existence,” Pinker writes, and he describes this decline in violence as possibly “the most important thing that has ever happened in human history.”

He acknowledges: “In a century that began with 9/11, Iraq, and Darfur, the claim that we are living in an unusually peaceful time may strike you as somewhere between hallucinatory and obscene.”

Still, even in a 20th century notorious for world war and genocide, only around 3 percent of humans died from such man-made catastrophes. In contrast, a study of Native-American skeletons from hunter-gather societies found that some 13 percent had died of trauma. And in the 17th century, the Thirty Years’ War reduced Germany’s population by as much as one-third.

Wars make headlines, but there are fewer conflicts today, and they typically don’t kill as many people. Many scholars have made that point, most notably [Joshua S. Goldstein](#) in his recent book “Winning the War on War: The Decline of Armed Conflict Worldwide.” Goldstein also argues that it’s a myth that civilians are more likely to die in modern wars.

Look also at homicide rates, which are now far lower than in previous centuries. The murder rate in Britain seems to have fallen by more than 90 percent since the 14th century.

Then there are the myriad forms of violence that were once the banal backdrop of daily life. One game in feudal Europe involved men competing to head-butt to death a cat that had been nailed alive to a post. One reason this was considered so entertaining: the possibility that it would claw out a competitor’s eye.

Think of fairy tales and nursery rhymes. One academic study found that modern children’s television programs have 4.8 violent scenes per hour, compared with nursery rhymes with 52.2.

The decline in brutality is true of other cultures as well. When I learned Chinese, I was startled to encounter ideographs like the one of a knife next to a nose: pronounced “yi,” it means “cutting off a nose as punishment.” That’s one Chinese character that

students no longer study.

Pinker's book rang true to me partly because I often report on genocide and human rights abuses. I was aghast that Darfur didn't prompt more of an international response from Western governments, but I was awed by the way American university students protested on behalf of a people who lived half a world away.

That reflects a larger truth: There is global consensus today that slaughtering civilians is an outrage. Governments may still engage in mass atrocities, but now they hire lobbyists and public relations firms to sanitize the mess.

In contrast, until modern times, genocide was simply a way of waging war. The Bible repeatedly describes God as masterminding genocide ("thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth" — Deuteronomy 20:16), and European-Americans saw nothing offensive about exterminating Native Americans. One of my heroes, Theodore Roosevelt, later a winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, was unapologetic: "I don't go so far as to think that the only good Indians are the dead Indians, but I believe nine out of ten are, and I shouldn't like to inquire too closely in the case of the tenth."

The pace of moral progress has accelerated in the last few decades. Pinker notes that on issues such as civil rights, the role of women, equality for gays, beating of children and treatment of animals, "the attitudes of conservatives have followed the trajectory of liberals, with the result that today's conservatives are more liberal than yesterday's liberals."

The reasons for these advances are complex but may have to do with the rise of education, the decline of chauvinism and a growing willingness to put ourselves in the shoes (increasingly, even hooves) of others.

Granted, the world still faces brutality and cruelty. That's what I write about the rest of the year! But let's pause for a moment to acknowledge remarkable progress and give thanks for the human capacity for compassion and moral growth.

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Arjun Appadurai: A Nation of Business Junkies (Anthropology News)

🕒 24/11/2011 📁 Uncategorized 🔖 Antropologia, Cidadania, Cultura, Economia, Enquadramento, jornalismo, Marketing, Mídia, Mediação tecnológica, Opinião pública, Política, Semiótica, sociedade civil 👤 renzotaddei

Guest Columnist

Arjun Appadurai

By Anthropology News on November 3, 2011

I first came to this country in 1967. I have been either a crypto-anthropologist or professional anthropologist for most of that time. Still, because I came here with an interest in India and took the path of least resistance in choosing to maintain India as my principal ethnographic referent, I have always been reluctant to offer opinions about life in these United States. I have begun to do so recently, but mainly in occasional blogs, twitter posts and the like. Now seems to be a good time to ponder whether I have anything to offer to public debate about the media in this country. Since I have been teaching for a few years in a distinguished department of media studies, I feel emboldened to offer my thoughts in this new AN Forum.

My examination of changes in the media over the last few decades is not based on a scientific study. I read the New York Times every day, the Wall Street Journal occasionally, and I subscribe to The Atlantic, Harper's, The New York Review of Books, the Economist, and a variety of academic journals in anthropology and area studies. I get a smattering of other useful media pieces from friends on Facebook and other social media sites. I also use the Internet to keep up with as much as I can from the press in and about India. At various times in the past, I have subscribed to The Nation, Money Magazine, Foreign Policy, the Times Literary supplement and a few other periodicals.

I have long been interested in how culture and economy interact. Today, I want to make an observation about the single biggest change I have seen over my four decades in the United States, which is a growing and now hegemonic domination of

the news and of a great deal of opinion, both in print and on television, by business news. Business news was a specialized affair in the late 1960's, confined to a few magazines such as Money and Fortune, and to newspapers and TV reporters (not channels). Now, it is hard to find anything but business as the topic of news in all media. Consider television: if you spend even three hours surfing between CNN and BBC on any given day (surfing for news about Libya or about soccer, for example) you will find yourself regularly assaulted by business news, not just from London, New York and Washington, but from Singapore, Hong Kong, Mumbai and many other places. Look at the serious talk shows and chances are that you will find a talking CEO, describing what's good about his company, what's bad about the government and how to read his company's stock prices. Channels like MSNBC are a form of endless, mind-numbing Jerry Lewis telethon about the economy, with more than a hint of the desperation of the Depression era movie "They Shoot Horses Don't They?", as they bid the viewer to make insane bets and to mourn the fallen heroes of failed companies and fired CEO's.

Turn to the newspapers and things get worse. Any reader of the New York Times will find it hard to get away from the business machine. Start with the lead section, and stories about Obama's economic plans, mad Republican proposals about taxes, the Euro-crisis and the latest bank scandal will assault you. Some relief is provided by more corporate news: the exit of Steve Jobs, the Op-Ed piece about the responsibilities of the super-rich by Warren Buffet, Donald Trump advertising his new line of housewares to go along with his ugly homes and buildings. Turn to the sports section: it is littered with talk of franchises, salaries, trades, owner antics, stadium projects and more. I need hardly say anything about the section on "Business" itself, which has now virtually become redundant. And if you are still thirsty for more business news, check out the "Home", "Lifestyle" and Real Estate sections for news on houses you can't afford and mortgage financing gimmicks you have never heard of. Some measure of relief is to be in the occasional "Science Times" and in the NYT Book Review, which do have some pieces which are not primarily about profit, corporate politics or the recession.

The New York Times is not to blame for this. They are the newspaper of "record" and that means that they reflect broader trends and cannot be blamed for their compliance with bigger trends. Go through the magazines when you take a flight to Detroit or Mumbai and there is again a feast of news geared to the "business

traveler”. This is when I catch up on how to negotiate the best deal, why this is the time to buy gold and what software and hardware to use when I make my next presentation to General Electric. These examples could be multiplied in any number of bookstores, newspaper kiosks, airport lounges, park benches and dentist’s offices.

What does all this reflect? Well, we were always told that the business of America is business. But now we are gradually moving into a society in which the business of American life is also business. Who are we now? We have become (in our fantasies) entrepreneurs, start-up heroes, small investors, consumers, home-owners, day-traders, and a gallery of supporting business types, and no longer fathers, mothers, friends or neighbors. Our very citizenship is now defined by business, whether we are winners or losers. Everyone is an expert on pensions, stocks, retirement packages, vacation deals, credit-card scams and more. Meanwhile, as Paul Krugman has argued in a brilliant recent speech to some of his fellow economists, this discipline, especially macro-economics, has lost all its capacities to analyze, define or repair the huge mess we are in.

The gradual transformation of the imagined reader or viewer into a business junkie is a relatively new disease of advanced capitalism in the United States. The avalanche of business knowledge and information dropping on the American middle-classes ought to have helped us predict – or avoid – the recent economic meltdown, based on crazy credit devices, vulgar scams and lousy regulation. Instead it has made us business junkies, ready to be led like sheep to our own slaughter by Wall Street, the big banks and corrupt politicians. The growing hegemony of business news and knowledge in the popular media over the last few decades has produced a collective silence of the lambs. It is time for a bleat or two.

Dr. Arjun Appadurai is a prominent contemporary social-cultural anthropologist, having formerly served as Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at The New School in NYC. He has held various professorial chairs and visiting appointments at some of top institutions in the United States and Europe. In addition, he has served on several scholarly and advisory bodies in the United States, Latin America, Europe and India. Dr. Appadurai is a prolific writer having authored numerous books and scholarly articles. The nature and significance of his contributions throughout his academic career have earned him the reputation as a leading figure in his field. He is

the author of The Future as a Cultural Fact: Essays on the Global Condition (Verso: forthcoming 2012).

Ken Routon is the contributing editor of Media Notes. He is a visiting professor of cultural anthropology at the University of New Orleans and the author of Hidden Powers of the State in the Cuban Imagination (University Press of Florida, 2010).

Um comentário até agora

Why Culture Matters in the Climate Debate (The Yale Forum on Climate Change & The Media)

🕒 24/11/2011 📁 Uncategorized 🔖 Clima, comunicação científica, Cultura, Enquadramento, Incerteza, Mídia, Meteorologia, Mudanças climáticas, Opinião pública, Política, Políticas públicas, Previsão, Visualidade 👤 renzotaddei

Keith Kloor, October 25, 2011

A new paper argues that climate educators and communicators are ignoring deeply held beliefs that influence climate skepticism.

It is the great riddle of the day in climate circles: Why is public concern about global warming so shallow, and why do widespread doubts about man-made climate change persist?

Everyone seems to have a pet theory. Al Gore blames the media and President Obama. Some green critics argue that Gore should look in the mirror. Let's not ignore the recession, scholars remind us. Yes, but the lion's share of blame must go to those "merchants of doubt", particularly fossil fuel interests, and climate skeptics, plenty others assert. Err, actually, it's our brain that's the biggest problem, social scientists now say.

Commentary

Another reason, similar to that last one, is that cultural and religious beliefs predispose many to dismiss evidence that humans can greatly influence the climate. In fact, geographer Simon Donner in a paper published this week in *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*, argues:

“Successful climate change education and outreach programs should be designed to help overcome perceived conflict between climate science and long-held cultural beliefs, drawing upon lessons from communication and education of other potentially divisive subjects like evolution.”

Donner is not the first to try to bridge the gap between science and religion. E.O. Wilson gamely attempted to do so several years ago, with his book, *The Creation*. In a 2006 interview with NPR, Wilson acknowledged that, “the usual approach of secular science is to marginalize religion” in debates on environmental issues. After the book’s publication, this writer facilitated a lengthy dialogue between Wilson, ecologist Stuart Pimm and leading evangelical Richard Cizik, on areas where science and religion could find common ground. Expanding on that public dialogue has proven difficult. If anything, the polarized political landscape and the continuing climate wars have narrowed the space for science and religion to be reconciled.

Still, those who want to overcome obstacles to climate action should be mindful of culture’s importance, Donner stresses in his paper. He writes that “lingering public uncertainty about anthropogenic climate change may be rooted in an important but largely unrecognized conflict between climate science and some long held beliefs. In many cultures, the weather and climate have historically been viewed as too vast and too grand to be directly influenced by people.”

Donner writes that scholars studying public attitudes on climate change should factor in such cultural worldviews when accounting for climate skepticism. He surmises: “Underlying doubts that human activity can influence the climate may explain some of the malleability of public opinion about the scientific evidence for climate change.”

Donner suggests that climate educators and communicators learn from approaches that have worked in the evolution debate. He informs us:

“Pedagogical research on evolution finds that providing the audience with opportunities to evaluate how their culture or beliefs affect their willingness to accept scientific evidence is more effective than attempting to separate scientific views from religious or cultural views.”

Moreover, Donner argues that “reforming public communication” on climate change “will require humility on the part of scientists and educators.” He concludes:

“Climate scientists, for whom any inherent doubts about the possible extent of human influence on the climate were overcome by years of training in physics and chemistry of the climate system, need to accept that there are rational cultural, religious and historical reasons that the public may fail to believe that anthropogenic climate change is real, let alone that it warrants a policy response. It is unreasonable to expect a lay audience, not armed with the same analytical tools as scientists, to develop lasting acceptance during a one-hour public seminar of a scientific conclusion that runs counters to thousands of years of human belief. Without addressing the common long-standing belief that human activity cannot directly influence the climate, public acceptance of climate change and public engagement on climate solutions will not persist through the next cold winter or the next economic meltdown.”

The intersection where science and religion meet is all too often home to an ugly collision. Donner advises that such crack-ups can and should be avoided in the climate debate.

Can it be done?

Keith Kloor is a New York City-based freelance journalist who writes often about the environment and climate change. (E-mail: keith@yaleclimatemediaforum.org)

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Claude Lévi-Strauss: fundador do pós-

estruturalismo – Eduardo Viveiros de Castro

🕒 24/11/2011 📁 Uncategorized 🔖 Antropologia, Índios, Cultura, Levi-Strauss, Linguística 👤 renzotaddei

Palestra do antropólogo Eduardo Viveiros de Castro no IEB (USP) em 09/10/08, por ocasião de um evento consagrado ao 100o aniversário de Claude Lévi-Strauss.

Atrair a atenção do público é o grande desafio para os satisfeitos jornalistas de ciência (Fapesp)

🕒 29/10/2011 📁 Uncategorized 🔖 comunicação científica, Cultura, Educação, Interatividade, Visualidade 👤 renzotaddei

Pesquisa FAPESP

Edição 188 – Outubro 2011

Política de C & T > Cultura científica

Leitores esquivos

Mariluce Moura

Dois estudos brasileiros sobre divulgação científica, citados em primeira mão na Conferência Mundial de Jornalismo Científico 2011, em Doha, Qatar, no final de junho, propõem quando superpostos um panorama curiosamente desconexo para esse campo no país: se de um lado os jornalistas de ciência revelam um alto grau de satisfação com seu trabalho profissional, de outro, uma alta proporção de uma amostra representativa da população paulistana (76%) informa nunca ler notícias científicas nos jornais, revistas ou internet. Agora o mais surpreendente: no universo de entrevistados ouvidos no estado de São Paulo nesta segunda pesquisa, 52,5% declararam ter “muita admiração” pelos jornalistas e 49,2%, pelos cientistas, a despeito de poucos lerem as notícias elaboradas por uns sobre o trabalho dos outros. Esses e outros dados dos estudos provocam muitas questões para os estudiosos da cultura científica nacional. Uma, só para começar: a satisfação profissional do jornalista de ciência independe de ele atingir com sua produção seus alvos, ou seja, os leitores, os telespectadores, os ouvintes ou, de maneira mais geral, o público?

A Conferência Mundial, transferida de última hora do Cairo para Doha, em razão dos distúrbios políticos no Egito iniciados em janeiro, reuniu 726 jornalistas de 81 países que, durante quatro dias, debateram desde o conceito central de jornalismo

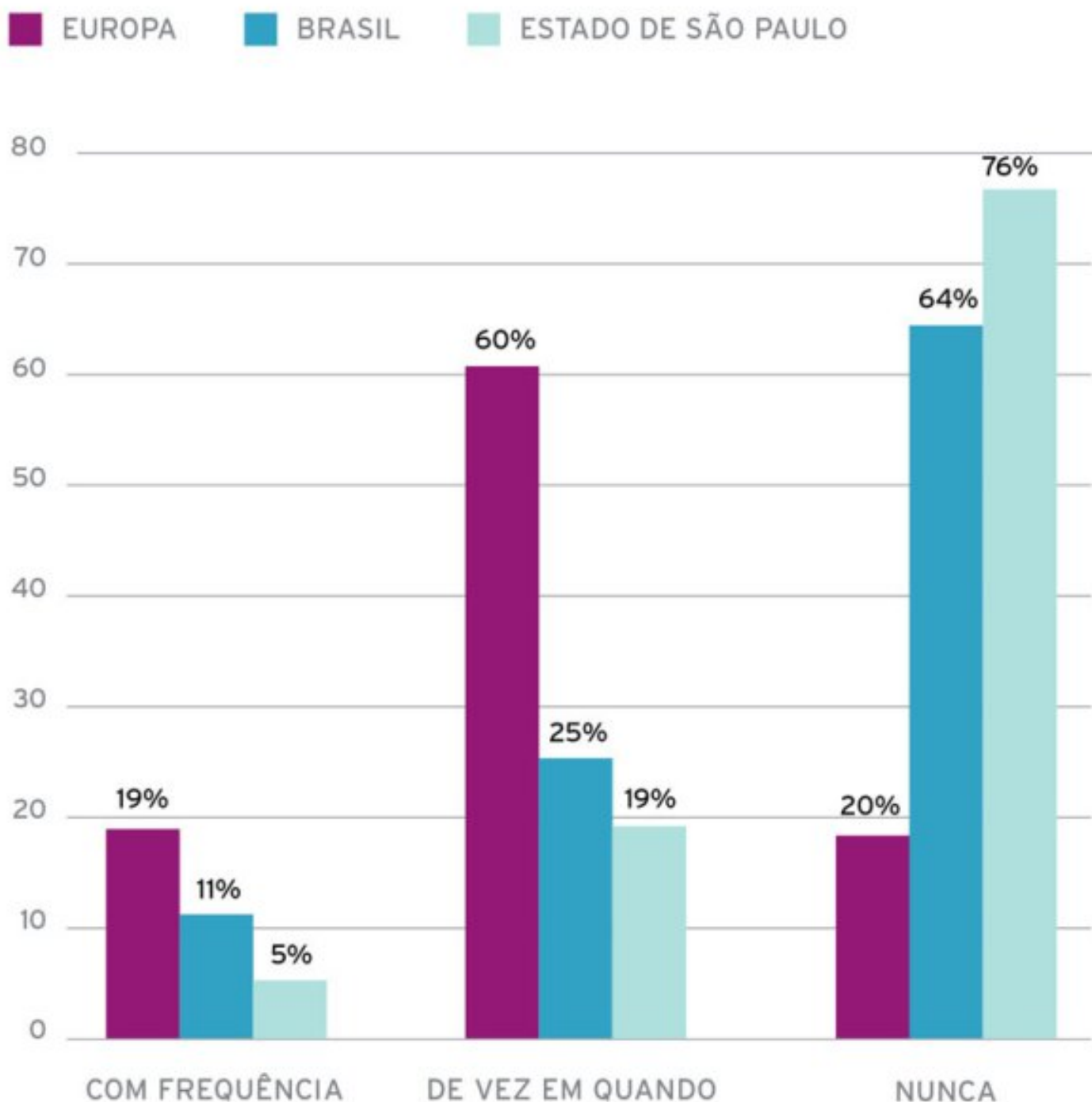
científico, passando pelas múltiplas formas de exercê-lo e suas dificuldades, até os variados problemas de organização desses profissionais na Ásia, na África, na Europa, na América do Norte ou na América Latina, nos países mais democráticos e nos mais autoritários. Uma questão que atravessou todos esses debates foi o desenvolvimento da noção de que fazer jornalismo científico não é traduzir para o público a informação científica – seria mais encontrar meios eficazes de narrar em linguagem jornalística o que dentro da produção científica pode ser identificado como notícia de interesse para a sociedade. A próxima Conferência Mundial será realizada na Finlândia, em 2013.

Apresentado por um dos representantes da FAPESP na conferência, o estudo que trouxe à tona a medida preocupante do desinteresse por notícias de ciência chama-se “Percepção pública da ciência e da tecnologia no estado de São Paulo” ([confira o pdf](#)) e constitui o 12º capítulo dos *Indicadores de ciência, tecnologia e inovação em São Paulo – 2010*, lançado pela FAPESP em agosto último. Elaborado pela equipe do Laboratório de Estudos Avançados em Jornalismo da Universidade Estadual de Campinas (Labjor-Unicamp) sob a coordenação de seu diretor, o linguista Carlos Vogt, em termos empíricos a pesquisa se baseou num questionário composto por 44 perguntas aplicado a 1.076 pessoas na cidade de São Paulo e a mais 749 no interior e no litoral do estado, em 2007. Portanto, foram 1.825 entrevistados em 35 municípios, distribuídos nas 15 regiões administrativas (RAs).

Vale ressaltar que esse foi o segundo levantamento direto em uma amostra da população a respeito de sua percepção da ciência realizado pelo Labjor e ambos estavam integrados a um esforço ibero- -americano em torno da construção de indicadores capazes de refletir a cultura científica nessa região. A primeira enquete, feita entre 2002 e 2003, incluiu amostras das cidades de Campinas, Buenos Aires, Montevideú, além de Salamanca e Valladolid, na Espanha, e seus resultados foram apresentados nos *Indicadores de C, T&I em São Paulo – 2004*, também publicado pela FAPESP. Já em 2007, a pesquisa, com a metodologia mais refinada e amostra ampliada, alcançou sete países: além do Brasil, Colômbia, Argentina, Chile, Venezuela, Panamá e Espanha. O núcleo comum do questionário era constituído por 39 perguntas e cada região podia desenvolver outras questões de sua livre escolha.

Quem lê tanta notícia?

Comparação da frequência de consumo de veículos informativos: “Lê notícias científicas nos jornais, revistas ou internet?” - 2007



O outro estudo brasileiro apresentado em Doha chama-se “Jornalismo científico na América Latina: conhecendo melhor os jornalistas de ciência na região” e, a rigor, ainda está em curso. Os resultados preliminares apresentados baseavam-se nas respostas a um questionário composto por 44 perguntas – desenvolvido pela London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) –, encaminhadas até 21 de junho. Mas a essa altura, mais de 250 jornalistas responderam ao questionário, dentre eles aproximadamente 80 brasileiros, segundo sua coordenadora, a jornalista Luisa Massarani, diretora da Rede Ibero-americana de Monitoramento e

Capacitação em Jornalismo Científico, instituição responsável pelo estudo, em parceria com o LSE. O levantamento tem ainda o apoio de associações de jornalismo científico e outras instituições ligadas à área de divulgação científica na Argentina, Bolívia, Brasil, Chile, Colômbia, Costa Rica, Equador, México, Panamá e Venezuela.

No alvo desse estudo, como indicado, aliás, pelo título, está uma preocupação em saber quantos são, quem são e que visão têm da ciência os jornalistas envolvidos com a cobertura sistemática dessa área na América Latina. “Não temos ideia sobre isso, sequer sabemos quantos jornalistas de ciência existem no Brasil e se eles são ou não representativos dentro da categoria”, diz Luisa Massarani, que é também diretora do Museu da Vida da Fundação Oswaldo Cruz (Fiocruz) e coordenadora para a América Latina da Rede de Ciência e Desenvolvimento (SciDev.Net). Até algum tempo, lembra, “a Associação Brasileira de Jornalismo Científico (ABJC), com base em seu registro de sócios, situava esse número em torno de 500, mas isso na verdade incluía cientistas e outros profissionais interessados em divulgação da ciência”. A propósito, a ABJC vai iniciar no próximo mês o recadastramento dos sócios, junto com uma chamada para novos associados, o que poderá contribuir para esse censo dos jornalistas de ciência no Brasil.

Crença na ciência – Com 46 gráficos e 55 tabelas anexas que podem ser cruzados de acordo com o interesse específico de cada estudioso, o estudo de percepção da ciência bancado pela FAPESP e coordenado por Vogt permite uma infinidade de conclusões e novas hipóteses a respeito de como a sociedade absorve ciência por via da mídia ou como as várias classes sociais ou econômicas no estado de São Paulo reagem à exposição a notícias da área científica. Ao próprio coordenador, um dos pontos que mais chamaram a atenção nos resultados da pesquisa foi a relação inversa que ela permite estabelecer entre crença na ciência e informação sobre ciência. “O axioma seria quanto mais informação, menos crença na ciência”, diz. Assim, se consultado o gráfico relativo a grau de consumo autodeclarado de informação científica *versus* atitude quanto aos riscos e benefícios da ciência (**gráfico 12.11**), pode-se constatar que 57% dos entrevistados que declararam alto consumo acreditam que ciência e tecnologia podem oferecer muitos riscos e muitos benefícios simultaneamente e 6,3% acreditam que podem trazer muitos riscos e poucos benefícios. Já daqueles que declararam consumo nulo de informação científica, 42,9% veem muitos riscos e muitos benefícios ao mesmo tempo e 25,5% veem muitos riscos e poucos benefícios. “Ou seja, entre os mais informados é bem

alta a proporção dos que veem riscos e benefícios na ciência ao mesmo tempo”, destaca Vogt, presidente da FAPESP de 2002 a 2007 e hoje coordenador da Universidade Virtual do Estado de São Paulo (Univesp), indicando que essa seria uma visão realista. Registre-se que o grau de pessimismo é muito maior entre os que declararam consumo nulo de informação científica: 8,1% deles disseram que a ciência não traz nenhum risco e nenhum benefício, enquanto esse percentual foi de 5,8% entre os que declararam consumo baixo, de 2,3% entre os que se situaram na faixa de consumo médio baixo, de 0,7% na faixa médio alto e de zero entre os altos consumidores de informação científica.

Na parte do trabalho sobre interesse geral em C&T, chama a atenção como o tema está medianamente situado pelos entrevistados em quinto lugar, depois de esporte e antes de cinema, arte e cultura, dentre 10 assuntos usualmente cobertos pela mídia (gráfico 12.1). Mas enquanto para esporte 30,5% deles se declaram muito interessados e 34,9%, interessados, em ciência e tecnologia são 16,3% os muito interessados e 47,1% os interessados, ou seja, a intensidade do interesse é menor. Vale também observar como os diferentes graus de interesse em C&T aproximam a cidade de São Paulo de Madri e a distanciam imensamente de Bogotá (gráfico 12.2). Assim, respectivamente, 15,4% dos entrevistados em São Paulo e 16,7% dos entrevistados em Madri declararam-se muito interessados em C&T; para a categoria interessado, os percentuais foram 49,6% e 52,7%; para pouco interessado, 25,5% e 24,8%, e para nada interessado, respectivamente, 9,4% e 5,9%. Já em Bogotá, nada menos que 47,5% declararam-se muito interessados. Por quê, não se sabe. Os interessados totalizam 33,2%, os pouco interessados, 15,3% e os nada interessados, 4%.

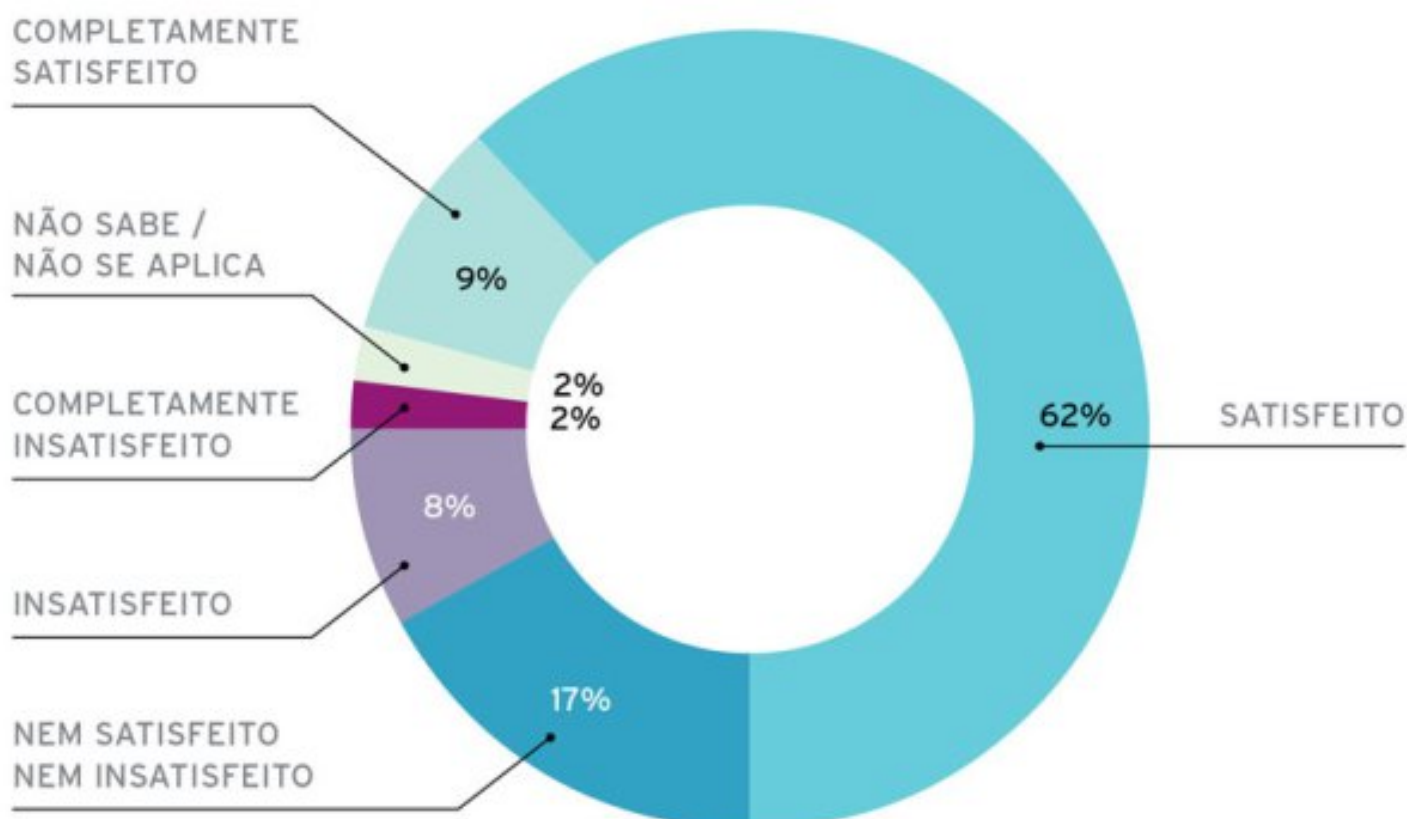
Não há muita diferença no nível de interesse por idade. Jovens e pessoas mais velhas se distribuem democraticamente pelos diversos graus considerados (gráfico 12.6a). Já quanto ao grau de escolaridade, se dá exatamente o oposto: entre os muito interessados em ciência e tecnologia, 21,9% são graduados e pós-graduados, 53,9% têm grau de ensino médio, 21,5%, ensino fundamental, 1,7%, educação infantil e 1% não teve nenhuma escolaridade. Já na categoria nada interessado se encontra 1,2% de graduados e pós-graduados, 26,3% de pessoas com nível médio, 47,4% com ensino fundamental, 8,8% com educação infantil e

16,4% de pessoas que não tiveram nenhum tipo de escolaridade (gráfico 12.5).

A par de todas as inferências que os resultados tabulados e interpretados dos questionários permitem, Vogt destaca que se a maioria da população não lê notícias científicas, ela entretanto está exposta de forma mais ou menos passiva à informação que circula sobre ciência. “Cada vez que o *Jornal Nacional* ou o *Globo Repórter* fala, por exemplo, sobre um alimento funcional, praticamente a sociedade como um todo passa a tratar disso nos dias seguintes”, diz. Ele acredita que pesquisas de mídia e de frequência do noticiário sobre ciência na imprensa poderão dar parâmetros de indicação para estudos que possam complementar o que já se construiu até agora sobre percepção pública da ciência.

Satisfação com o papel de informar

Como os jornalistas científicos veem seu trabalho



Profissionais satisfeitos – Luisa Massarani observa que se hoje já se avançou nos estudos de audiência em muitos campos, especialmente para as telenovelas no Brasil, na área de jornalismo científico ainda não existem estudos capazes de indicar o que acontece em termos de percepção quando a pessoa ouve e vê uma notícia dessa especialidade no *Jornal Nacional*. “As pessoas entendem bem? A informação

suscita desconfiança? Não sabemos.” De qualquer sorte, permanece em seu entendimento como uma grande questão o que significa fazer jornalismo científico, em termos da produção e da recepção.

Por enquanto, o estudo que ela coordena conseguiu identificar que as mulheres são maioria entre os jornalistas de ciência na América Latina, 61% contra 39% de homens, e que essa é uma especialidade de jovens: quase 30% da amostra situa-se na faixa de 31 a 40 anos e 23% têm entre 21 e 30 anos. De forma coerente com esse último dado, 39% dos entrevistados trabalham há menos de 5 anos em jornalismo científico e 23% entre 6 e 10 anos. E, o dado impressionante, 62% estão satisfeitos com seu trabalho em jornalismo científico e mais 9% muito satisfeitos. É possível que isso tenha relação com o fato de 60% terem emprego formal de tempo integral na área.

Por outro lado, se os jornalistas de ciência da América Latina não têm muitas fontes oficiais que lhes deem um *feedback* de seu trabalho, 40% deles estão seguros de que seu papel é informar o público, 26% pensam que sua função é traduzir material complexo, 13% educar e 9% mobilizar o público. E avaliando o resultado do trabalho, 50% creem que o jornalismo científico produzido no Brasil é médio, 21% bom e somente 2% o classificam como muito bom.

A melhor indicação do quanto os jornalistas de ciência gostam do que fazem está na resposta à questão sobre se recomendariam a outros a carreira. Nada menos do que a metade respondeu que sim, com certeza, enquanto 40% responderam que provavelmente sim. De qualquer sorte, ainda há um caminho a percorrer na definição do papel que cabe aos jornalistas entre os atores que dizem o que a ciência é e faz. “Quem são esses atores?”, indaga Vogt. “Os cientistas achavam que eram eles. Os governos acreditavam que eram eles. Mas hoje dizemos que é a sociedade. Mas de que forma?”

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Matt Ridley: When ideas have sex (TED)

🕒 29/10/2011 📁 Uncategorized 📌 Cultura, Economia, Educação, Enquadramento, História, Incerteza, Mediação tecnológica, Psicologia, Semiótica, Visualidade 👤 renzotaddei

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Indigenous Voices on Climate Change

🕒 29/10/2011 📁 Uncategorized 📌 Índios, Cidadania, Clima, Conhecimento tradicional, Cultura, discurso ambiental, Economia, Enquadramento, Incerteza, Meteorologia, Mudanças climáticas, Opinião pública, Oralidade, participatividade, Política, Previsão, sociedade civil, Visualidade 👤 renzotaddei

[Video streaming by Ustream](#)

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Michael Pollan: The omnivore's next dilemma (TED)

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<http://ted.com/talks/view/id/214>

“Looking at the world from other species’ points of view is a cure for the disease of human self-importance.”

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Little Ice Age Shrank Europeans, Sparked

Wars (NetGeo)

🕒 27/10/2011 📁 Uncategorized 🔖 ambientalismo, ciência, Cultura, discurso ambiental, Economia, História, Incerteza, Meteorologia, Mudanças climáticas, Violência 👤 renzotaddei

Study aims to scientifically link climate change to societal upheaval.



London's River Thames, frozen over in 1677. Painting by Abraham Hondius via Heritage Images/Corbis

Brian Handwerk, for [National Geographic News](#)

Published October 3, 2011

Pockmarked with wars, inflation, famines and shrinking humans, the 1600s in **Europe came to be called the General Crisis.**

But whereas historians have blamed those tumultuous decades on growing pains between feudalism and capitalism, a new study points to another culprit: the coldest stretch of the **climate change period known as the Little Ice Age.**

(Also see [“Sun Oddly Quiet—Hints at Next ‘Little Ice Age’?”](#))

The Little Ice Age curbed agricultural production and eventually led to the European crisis, according to the authors of the study—said to be the first to scientifically verify cause-and-effect between climate change and large-scale human crises.

Prior to the industrial revolution, all European countries were by and large agrarian, and as study co-author **David Zhang** pointed out, “In agricultural societies, the economy is controlled by climate,” since it dictates growing conditions.

A team led by Zhang, of the University of Hong Kong, pored over data from Europe and other the Northern Hemisphere regions between A.D. 1500 to 1800.

The team compared climate data, such as temperatures, with other variables, including population sizes, growth rates, wars and other social disturbances, agricultural production figures and famines, grain prices, and wages.

The authors say some effects, such as food shortages and health problems, showed up almost immediately between 1560 and 1660—the Little Ice Age’s harshest period—during which growing seasons shortened and cultivated land shrank.

As arable land contracted, so too did Europeans themselves, the study notes. Average height followed the temperature line, dipping nearly an inch (two centimeters) during the late 1500s, as malnourishment spread, and rising again only as temperatures climbed after 1650, the authors found.

(Related: [“British Have Changed Little Since Ice Age, Gene Study Says.”](#))

Others effects—such as famines, the Thirty Years’ War (1618-48), or the 164 Manchu conquest of **China**—took decades to manifest. “Temperature is not a direct cause of war and social disturbance,” Zhang said. “The direct cause of war and social disturbance is the grain price. That is why we say climate change is the ultimate cause.”

The new study is both history lesson and warning, the researchers added.

As our climate changes due to **global warming (see interactive)**, Zhang said, “developing countries will suffer more, because large populations in these countries [directly] rely on agricultural production.”

More: “Climate Change Killed Neanderthals, Study Says” >>

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Seeing Value in Ignorance, College Expects Its Physicists to Teach Poetry (N.Y. Times)

 17/10/2011  Uncategorized  ciência, Cultura, Educação, Incerteza 
renzotaddei

By **ALAN SCHWARZ**

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Sarah Benson last encountered college mathematics 20 years ago in an undergraduate algebra class. Her sole experience teaching math came in the second grade, when the first graders needed help with their minuses.



Sarah Benson has a Ph.D. in art history and a master's in comparative literature, but this year she is teaching geometry. Shannon Jensen for The New York Times

And yet Ms. Benson, with a Ph.D. in art history and a master's degree in comparative literature, stood at the chalkboard drawing parallelograms, constructing angles and otherwise dismembering **Euclid's Proposition 32** the way a biology professor might treat a water frog. Her students cared little about her inexperience. As for her employers, they did not mind, either: they had asked her to teach formal geometry expressly because it was a subject about which she knew very little.

It was just another day here at **St. John's College**, whose distinctiveness goes far beyond its curriculum of great works: Aeschylus and Aristotle, Bacon and Bach. As much of academia fractures into ever more specific disciplines, this tiny college still expects — in fact, requires — its professors to teach almost every subject, leveraging ignorance as much as expertise.

“There's a little bit of impostor syndrome,” said Ms. Benson, who will **teach Lavoisier's “Elements of Chemistry”** next semester. “But here, it's O.K. that I don't know something. I can figure it out, and my job is to help the students do the same thing. It's very collaborative.”



Students in Ms. Benson's class discussing Euclid. Shannon Jensen for The New York Times

Or as St. John's president, Chris Nelson (class of 1970), put it with a smile only slightly sadistic: “Every member of the faculty who comes here gets thrown in the deep end. I think the faculty members, if they were cubbyholed into a specialization, they'd think that they know more than they do. That usually is an impediment to learning. Learning is born of ignorance.”

Students who attend St. John's — it has a sister campus in Santa Fe, N.M., with the

same curriculum and philosophies — know that their college experience will be like no other. There are no majors; every student takes the same 16 yearlong courses, which generally feature about 15 students discussing Sophocles or Homer, and the professor acting more as catalyst than connoisseur.

What they may not know is that their professor — or tutor in the St. John's vernacular — might have no background in the subject. This is often the case for the courses that freshmen take. For example, [Hannah Hintze](#), who has degrees in philosophy and woodwind performance, and whose dissertation concerned Plato's "Republic," is currently leading classes on observational biology and Greek.

"Some might not find that acceptable, but we explore things together," said Ryan Fleming, a freshman in Ms. Benson's Euclid class. "We don't have someone saying, 'I have all the answers.' They're open-minded and go along with us to see what answers there can be."

Like all new tutors, Ms. Benson, 42, went through a one-week orientation in August to reacquaint herself with Euclid, and to learn the St. John's way of teaching. She attends weekly conferences with more seasoned tutors.

Her plywood-floor classroom in McDowell Hall is as almost as dim and sparse as the ones Francis Scott Key (valedictorian of the class of 1796) studied in [before the college's original building burned down](#) in 1909. Eight underpowered ceiling lights barely illuminated three walls of chalkboards. While even kindergarten classrooms now feature interactive white boards and Wi-Fi connected iPads, not one laptop or cellphone was visible; the only evidence of contemporary life was the occasional plastic foam coffee cup.

The discussion centered not on examples and exercises, but on the disciplined narrative of Euclid's assertions, the aesthetic economy of mathematical argument. When talk turned to Proposition 34 of Book One, which states that a parallelogram's diagonal divides it into equal areas, not one digit was used or even mentioned. Instead, the students debated whether Propositions 4 and 26 were necessary for Euclid's proof.

When a student punctuated a blackboard analysis with, "The self-evident truth that

these triangles will be equal,” the subliminal reference to the Declaration of Independence hinted at the eventual braiding of the disciplines by both students and tutors here. So, too, did a subsequent discussion of how “halves of equals are equals themselves,” evoking the United States Supreme Court’s logic in endorsing segregation 2,200 years after Euclid died.

Earlier in the day, in a junior-level class taught by a longtime tutor about a portion of Newton’s seminal physics text “Principia,” science and philosophy became as intertwined as a candy cane’s swirls. Students discussed Newton’s shrinking parabolic areas as if they were voting districts, and the limits of curves as social ideals.

One student remarked, “In Euclid before, he talked a lot about what is equal and what isn’t. It seems here that equality is more of a continuum — we can get as close as we want, but never actually get there.” A harmony of Tocqueville was being laid over Newton’s melody.

The tutor, Michael Dink, graduated from St. John’s in 1975 and earned his master’s degree and Ph.D. in philosophy from the [Catholic University of America](#). Like most professors here, he long ago traded the traditional three-course academic career — writing journal articles, attending conferences and teaching a specific subject — for the intellectual buffet at St. John’s. His first year included teaching Ptolemy’s “Almagest,” a treatise on planetary movements, and atomic theory. He since has taught 15 of the school’s 16 courses, the exception being sophomore music.

“You have to not try to control things,” Mr. Dink said, “and not think that what’s learned has to come from you.”

This ancient teaching method could be making a comeback well beyond St. John’s two campuses. Some education reformers assert that teachers as early as elementary school should lecture less at the blackboard while students silently take notes — the sage-on-the-stage model, as some call it — and foster more discussion and collaboration among smaller groups. It is a strategy that is particularly popular among schools that use technology to allow students to learn at their own pace.

Still, not even the most rabid reformer has suggested that biology be taught by

social theorists, or Marx by mathematicians. That philosophy will continue to belong to a school whose president has joyfully declared, “We don’t have departmental politics — we don’t have departments!”

Anthony T. Grafton, a professor of history at Princeton and president of the [American Historical Association](#), said he appreciated the approach.

“There’s no question that people are becoming more specialized — it’s natural for scholars to cover a narrow field in great depth rather than many at the same time,” he said. “I admire how St. John’s does it. It sounds both fun and scary.”

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Archaeologists Find Sophisticated Blade Production Much Earlier Than Originally Thought (Tel Aviv University)

🕒 17/10/2011 📁 Uncategorized 🔖 Arqueologia, Cultura, Economia, Mediação tecnológica, Tecnologia 👤 renzotaddei

Monday, October 17, 2011

American Friends of Tel Aviv University

Blade manufacturing “production lines” existed as much as 400,000 years ago, say TAU researchers

Archaeology has long associated advanced blade production with the Upper Palaeolithic period, about 30,000-40,000 years ago, linked with the emergence of Homo Sapiens and cultural features such as cave art. Now researchers at Tel Aviv University have uncovered evidence which shows that “modern” blade production was also an element of Amudian industry during the late Lower Paleolithic period, 200,000-400,000 years ago as part of the Acheulo-Yabrudian cultural complex, a geographically limited group of hominins who lived in modern-day Israel, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan.

Prof. Avi Gopher, Dr. Ran Barkai and Dr. Ron Shimelmitz of TAU's Department of Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Civilizations say that large numbers of long, slender cutting tools were discovered at Qesem Cave, located outside of Tel Aviv, Israel. This discovery challenges the notion that blade production is exclusively linked with recent modern humans.

The blades, which were described recently in the *Journal of Human Evolution*, are the product of a well planned "production line," says Dr. Barkai. Every element of the blades, from the choice of raw material to the production method itself, points to a sophisticated tool production system to rival the blade technology used hundreds of thousands of years later.

An innovative product

Though blades have been found in earlier archaeological sites in Africa, Dr. Barkai and Prof. Gopher say that the blades found in Qesem Cave distinguish themselves through the sophistication of the technology used for manufacturing and mass production.

Evidence suggests that the process began with the careful selection of raw materials. The hominins collected raw material from the surface or quarried it from underground, seeking specific pieces of flint that would best fit their blade making technology, explains Dr. Barkai. With the right blocks of material, they were able to use a systematic and efficient method to produce the desired blades, which involved powerful and controlled blows that took into account the mechanics of stone fracture. Most of the blades were made to have one sharp cutting edge and one naturally dull edge so it could be easily gripped in a human hand.

This is perhaps the first time that such technology was standardized, notes Prof. Gopher, who points out that the blades were produced with relatively small amounts of waste materials. This systematic industry enabled the inhabitants of the cave to produce tools, normally considered costly in raw material and time, with relative ease.

Thousands of these blades have been discovered at the site. "Because they could be produced so efficiently, they were almost used as expendable items," he says.

Prof. Cristina Lemorini from Sapienza University of Rome conducted a closer analysis of markings on the blades under a microscope and conducted a series of experiments determining that the tools were primarily used for butchering.

Modern tools a part of modern behaviors

According to the researchers, this innovative industry and technology is one of a score of new behaviors exhibited by the inhabitants of Qesem Cave. “There is clear evidence of daily and habitual use of fire, which is news to archaeologists,” says Dr. Barkai. Previously, it was unknown if the Amudian culture made use of fire, and to what extent. There is also evidence of a division of space within the cave, he notes. The cave inhabitants used each space in a regular manner, conducting specific tasks in predetermined places. Hunted prey, for instance, was taken to an appointed area to be butchered, barbecued and later shared within the group, while the animal hide was processed elsewhere.

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Expedição no Amazonas vai divulgar astronomia indígena na Semana Nacional de C&T (Jornal A Crítica, de Manaus)

🕒 17/10/2011 📁 Uncategorized 🔖 Antropologia, Astronomia, Índios, Calendário, Clima, Conhecimento tradicional, Cultura, Memória, Meteorologia, Mudanças climáticas 👤 renzotaddei

JC e-mail4365, de 17 de Outubro de 2011.

Calendário indígena do povo dessana associa constelações às mudanças do clima e ao ecossistema amazônico.

Surucucu não é apenas a mais perigosa serpente da Amazônia. Para os povos indígenas da etnia dessana, também é uma das inúmeras constelações que os ajudam a identificar o ciclo dos rios, o período da piracema, a formação de chuvas e

sugere o momento ideal para a realização de rituais.

Na astronomia indígena, outubro é o mês do desaparecimento da constelação surucucu (añá em língua dessana) no horizonte oeste – o equivalente a escorpião na astronomia ocidental. O desaparecimento da figura da cobra está associado ao fim do período da vazante. Os dessana têm outras 13 constelações, sempre associadas às alterações climáticas.

Para divulgar a respeito da pouco conhecida astronomia indígena, um grupo de estudiosos promoverá no próximo dia 19 uma expedição de dois dias a uma aldeia da etnia dessana localizada na Reserva de Desenvolvimento Sustentável Tupé, em Manaus.

Expedição – A comunidade é composta por famílias dessana que se deslocaram da região do alto Rio Negro, no Norte do Amazonas, e ressignificaram suas tradições, cosmologias e rituais na comunidade onde se estabeleceram na zona rural de Manaus. O astrônomo Germano Afonso, do Museu da Amazônia (Musa), que desenvolve há 20 anos estudo sobre constelações indígenas no país, coordenará a expedição. Com os dessana, o trabalho de Germano Afonso é desenvolvido há dois anos.

Ele descreve a programação como um “diálogo” entre a astronomia indígena e o conhecimento científico. “Será um diálogo entre os dois conhecimentos. Vamos escutar os indígenas e ao mesmo tempo levar uma pequena estação meteorológica que mede temperatura e velocidade. A ciência observa com equipamentos, o indígena vê isso empiricamente”, explicou.

Uma embarcação da Secretaria Municipal de Educação (Semed) levará as pessoas interessadas em participar da experiência. “Vamos fazer atividades de astronomia, meteorologia e química com os indígenas. Será uma atividade integrada à Semana de Ciência e Tecnologia”, explica Afonso.

O traço identificado como surucuru pelos indígenas é mais visível por volta de 19h, pelo lado oeste. Depois da surucuru, é a vez do tatu – outra espécie comum na fauna amazônica.

Desastres – Germano Afonso conta que os povos indígenas observam o céu, a lua, as constelações e sabem exatamente qual a época ideal para fazer o roçado, para se prevenir de uma cheia ou de uma seca. Também sabem qual o momento ideal para realizar um ritual.

A diferença em relação ao conhecimento científico, ocidental, é que não utilizam equipamentos e tecnologia para prever alterações do tempo e mudanças do clima. Mas há uma diferença mais significativa: os indígenas não caem vítimas de desmoronamentos, de grandes cheias ou de uma vazante extraordinária.

“Quem tem mais cuidado com o meio ambiente e evitar os desastres ambientais? Os índios sabem exatamente quando vai cair uma chuva forte e teremos uma grande enchente. Mas eles não morrem por causa disso”, destaca Afonso, que tem ascendência indígena guarani.

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Trading Knowledge As A Public Good: A Proposal For The WTO (Intellectual Property Watch)

 15/10/2011  Uncategorized  Capitalismo, Conhecimento tradicional, Cultura, Economia  renzotaddei

Published on 14 October 2011 @ 2:23 pm

By Rachel Marusak Hermann for Intellectual Property Watch

Years of deadlock in the Doha Round of trade negotiations at the World Trade Organization (WTO) has prompted some to question the institution's effectiveness, and even, its relevance. But for others, the stalemate seems to be favourable for new ideas and new ways to think about global trade.

During the 19-21 September [WTO Public Forum 2011](#), Knowledge Ecology International (KEI) and IQsensato, both not-for-profit organisations, held a joint panel session on a proposal to the WTO entitled, “An Agreement on the Supply of Knowledge as a Global Public Good.” The 21 September session provided a space to debate the feasibility of adding the supply of public goods involving knowledge as a new category in negotiated binding commitments in international trade.

James Love, director of KEI, presented the idea. “The agreement,” he explained, “combines voluntary offers with binding commitments by governments to increase the supply of heterogeneous public goods. It would be analogous to existing WTO commitments to reducing tariffs, subsidies, or liberalising services.”

Limited access

The idea of “public goods” has been around for a while. A [KEI 2008 paper on the proposal](#), John Kenneth Galbraith’s 1958 book, *The Affluent Society*, which created a stir about society’s over-supply of private goods versus a growing under-supply of public goods. The KEI paper also cites the contribution to the debate made by Joseph Stiglitz, who identified five global public good categories: international economic stability, international security (political stability), the international environment, international humanitarian assistance, and knowledge.

It’s this last category that KEI would like to see put up for negotiation. According to its 2008 paper, “In recent decades, an influential and controversial enclosure movement has vastly expanded the boundaries of what knowledge can be ‘owned,’ lengthened the legal terms of protection and enhanced the legal rights granted to owners of the collection of legal rights referred to as “intellectual property.”

Proposal advocates argue that in the wake of such knowledge protection, the global community faces an under-supply of public goods, including knowledge. Shandana Gulzar Khan, of the permanent mission of Pakistan to the WTO, seconds this sentiment. “I feel that an acute restriction of access to public goods and services is indeed a reality for the majority of the world’s population.”

Love argued that the WTO is the right international institutional to contribute to the solution. He cited a description of the WTO found on its website: “Above all, it’s

a negotiating forum...Essentially, the WTO is a place where member governments go, to try to sort out the trade problems they face with each other.... Although negotiated and signed by governments, the goal is to help producers of goods and services, exporters, and importers conduct their business, while allowing governments to meet social and environmental objectives.”

Defining Good

When it comes to defining what qualifies as a global public good, Love mentioned how the International Task Force on Global Public Goods describes them as goods that “address issues that are deemed to be important to the international community; and that cannot, or will not, be adequately addressed by individual countries acting alone.” The list of such priorities is long and far-reaching.

Examples of potential ask/offers includes collaborative funding of inducement prizes to reward open source innovation in areas of climate change, sustainable agriculture and medicine; agreement to fund biomedical research in areas of great importance, such as new antibiotics, avian influenza, and the development of an AIDS vaccine; funding of projects to improve functionality and usability of free software; and new open public domain tools for distance education.

Some experts cautioned that deriving a universal definition of what constitutes global public goods is a tall task. Panel speaker Antony Taubman, director of the Intellectual Property Division at the WTO, cautioned that public goods do not bring with them an idea of prioritization. “One of the underlying challenges, of course, is how to multi-lateralise the concept of public goods.... What might be considered a high priority public good from one country’s perspective would possibly be even rejected by another country.”

Taubman mentioned hormones for beef or genetically modified crops as current examples of controversial public goods. “Would one country’s contribution of a new drought resistant genetically modified crop really be considered a valuable public good by countries that regarded that as an inappropriate technology?”

Another panellist, José Estanislau do Amaral from the permanent mission of Brazil to the WTO and other economic organisations in Geneva, suggested ways to take

the proposal forward.

“There seems to be a double objective in the proposal,” he said. “One is to support the creation of certain public goods and the other one is to increase access to those goods. Both of course are interlinked and they are mutually reinforcing. But they are objectives in themselves.... I am inclined, at this stage, to suggest that there might be benefits in those two objectives being pursued separately. Access to existing knowledge must not be required to wait for the supply of new knowledge.”

The Brazilian official suggested that KEI construct a structured draft treaty of the proposal so there could be a more advanced debate on the idea. Love said that a draft agreement should be ready by the end of February 2012.

Related Articles:

- [WTO Forum Looks At 21st Century Trade Challenges](#)
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Can indigenous peoples be relied on to gather reliable environmental data? (Stanford University)

🕒 15/10/2011 📁 Uncategorized 🔖 Antropologia, Índios, ciência, Cidadania, Cultura, Discriminação, discurso ambiental, Racismo 👤 renzotaddei

Public release date: 13-Oct-2011

Contact: Louis Bergeron

Stanford University

No one is in a better position to monitor environmental conditions in remote areas of the natural world than the people living there. But many scientists believe the cultural and educational gulf between trained scientists and indigenous cultures is simply too great to bridge — that native peoples cannot be relied on to collect reliable data.

But now, researchers led by Stanford ecologist Jose Fragoso have completed a five-year environmental study of a 48,000-square-kilometer piece of the Amazon Basin that demonstrates otherwise. The results are presented in a paper published in the October issue of *BioScience* and are available online.

The study set out to determine the state of the vertebrate animal populations in the region and how they are affected by human activities. But Fragoso and his colleagues knew they couldn't gather the data over such a huge area by themselves.

“The only way you are going to understand what is in the Amazon in terms of plants and animals and the environment, is to use this approach of training indigenous and the other local people to work with scientists,” Fragoso said.

“If I had tried to use only scientists, post docs and graduate students to do the work, it would not have been accomplished.”

Fragoso and his colleagues worked in the Rupununi region in Guyana, a forest-savanna ecosystem occupied by the Makushi and Wapishana peoples. They support themselves primarily through a mix of subsistence hunting, fishing and agriculture, along with some commercial fishing, bird trapping and small-scale timber harvesting.

The researchers recruited 28 villages and trained more than 340 villagers in methods of collecting field data in a consistent, systematic way. The villagers were shown how to walk a transect through an area, recording sightings and signs of animals, noting the presence of plants that animals feed on and marking their observations on a map.

The training was not without its challenges. Many of the older villagers were expert bushmen, but could not read, write or do arithmetic. Many of the younger villagers,

who had received some formal education, were literate but lacked knowledge of the animals and plants in the wilds around their communities. So researchers paired younger and older villagers to go into the field together. All the villagers were paid for the work they did.

Part of any scientific study is validating the accuracy of the data and Fragoso's team knew that no matter how well they trained their indigenous technicians, they would have to analyze the data for errors and possible fabrications.

The researchers used a variety of methods, including having a different team of technicians or researchers walk some transects a second time, to verify that they were regularly walked by technicians, that data were accurate and that reported animal sightings were plausible. They also had technicians fill out monthly questionnaires about their work and did statistical analyses for patterns of discrepancy in the data.

The most consistently accurate data was recorded by technicians in communities that had strong leadership and that were part of a larger indigenous organization, such as an association of villages. Fabricated data was most common among technicians from villages unaffiliated or loosely affiliated with such an association, where there was less oversight.

The other main factor was whether a technician's interest in the work went beyond a salary, whether he was interested in acquiring knowledge.

After all the data verification was done, the researchers found that on average, the indigenous technicians were every bit as able to systematically record accurate data as trained scientists. They were also probably better than scientists at detecting animals and their signs.

"This is the first study at a really large scale that shows that consistently valid field data can be collected by trained, indigenous peoples and it can be done really well," Fragoso said. "We have measured the error and discovered that 28 percent of villages experienced some data fabrication. This originated from about 5 percent (18 out of 335) of technicians fabricating data, which may not be much different than what occurs in the community of scientists."

“The indigenous technicians are no more corrupt, sloppy, or lazy than we are,” he said, noting that every year papers published in peer-reviewed science journals have to be withdrawn because of falsified or inaccurate data.

In all, the technicians walked over 43,000 kilometers through the wild, recording data. That’s once around the world and then some. They logged 48,000 sightings of animals of 267 species. They also recorded over 33,000 locations of fruit patches on which various species of animals feed.

Working with indigenous technicians enables researchers to gather far more data over a much larger area than would otherwise be possible, Fragoso said. Such data can be used by governments, scientists and conservation organizations to get an understanding of remote areas, from tropical forests to the Arctic tundra.

Fragoso is optimistic about how the results of the study will be received by the scientific community.

“I have presented this study to some pretty unreceptive groups, such as at scientific meetings, but by the end of the presentation audience members are either convinced, or at least they doubt their argument, which is a major achievement in itself,” he said.

“One thing about the scientific community – if you have enough solid data and the analysis is well done, there is very little you can argue against.”

* * *

[One should ask as well: Can scientists be relied on to gather reliable environmental data? Or journalists? Or politicians?]

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Saber tradicional e lógica científica beneficiam a pesca (Agência USP)

Por Sandra O. Monteiro

Publicado em 13/outubro/2011



Cotidiano e tradições são relevantes para pesca e políticas regionais

Na Lagoa dos Patos, no Rio Grande do Sul, um desacordo entre a forma de exploração de uma comunidade de pescadores e a maneira de pensar a exploração de alguns pesquisadores das ciências naturais impede que políticas públicas para a região sejam efetivas. Isso estimula movimentos sociais de desobediência civil contrários a normas estatutárias firmadas apenas em conceitos “científicos”.

A comunidade em questão está localizada na Ilha dos Marinheiros, segundo distrito da cidade de Rio Grande (RS), na Lagoa dos Patos. O local foi base de um estudo etnográfico desenvolvido pelo oceanógrafo Gustavo Moura, desenvolvido durante seu mestrado no Programa de Pós-graduação em Ciência Ambiental (Procam) da USP. Segundo o pesquisador, as comunidades locais denominam “nosso mar” o pedaço da Lagoa dos Patos em que cada grupo vive e desenvolve sua pesca. “Tal desentendimento impede que políticas públicas para a região sejam efetivas e atuem realmente na conservação dos recursos naturais ou na expansão das liberdades de quem vive da pesca na região”, observa Moura.

A pesquisa foi realizada por meio da vivência (observação de fenômenos naturais e sociais) e de entrevistas com os moradores locais. Para o pesquisador, a ciência por meio de suas metodologias e cálculos não consegue respostas para todos os fatos ou para dar a efetiva precisão a dados sobre fenômenos naturais. E as respostas que a ciência oferece é apenas uma das formas culturais de ver o mundo. A oceanografia clássica, por exemplo, preocupa-se em preservar o ambiente dentro de uma perspectiva exclusiva de análise técnica de um suposto comportamento matemático da natureza. Esquece, no entanto, que nem tudo é exato e exclui, da

sua busca por respostas, o diálogo com as ciências humanas e as culturas tradicionais por considerá-las imprecisas. À respeito disto, Moura diz que a ciência oceanográfica não deve ser desconsiderada, mas experiências e valores humanos também são relevantes no estudo de fenômenos naturais e na formulação de políticas públicas.

Oceanografia Humana e Políticas Públicas

A etnoceanografia, uma das linhas de pesquisa da Oceanografia Humana, considera as tradições e observações sobre a natureza, que passam de pai para filho, que levam em conta o tempo cíclico da natureza (o vento, a lua e as chuvas, por exemplo). Além disso também observam a forma como cada comunidade interage com o “seu próprio mar” a partir de situações de comércio e em datas religiosas como a Páscoa “em que muitos pescadores não trabalham”, relata o pesquisador.



Oceanografia e antropologia favorecem conservação de recursos pesqueiros

Uma das questões polêmicas relaciona-se à melhor época para se pescar uma determinada espécie. Tem a ver com o tamanho do camarão-rosa, por exemplo. Nem sempre a melhor época para se pescar é de 01 de fevereiro a 31 de maio, como determina a lei de defesa do Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e dos Recursos Naturais (Ibama). “Pois a natureza vista pelos pescadores tem uma lógica diferente da lógica científica. Uma espécie atinge o tamanho considerado bom pelos pescadores, frequentemente, numa data diversa da prevista em lei em quase todos os anos, antes ou depois de primeiro de fevereiro”, reflete o Moura.

A troca de informações diárias entre os próprios pescadores é outra situação que alguns pesquisadores e agentes de fiscalização locais não entendem e discriminam pela fato de ocorrerem em festas e bares. Estas trocas de informação tem relação, por exemplo, com a construção das decisões de quando, como e onde pescar dentro do território tradicional de pesca e com um conjunto de relações sociais instituídas pela posse informal de “pedaços de mar”.

Segundo Moura, quando regras tradicionais de uso dos recursos naturais são incorporadas nas políticas públicas, elas podem trazer menores prejuízos ambientais do que se baseadas em pura lógica científica. “Além disso, pode trazer mais liberdade para os pescadores trabalharem, em vez da castração de liberdades como ocorre com a política atual.”

A dissertação *Águas da Coréia: pescadores, espaço e tempo na construção de um território de pesca na Lagoa dos Patos (RS) numa perspectiva etnoceanográfica* foi orientada pelo professor Antonio Carlos Sant’Ana Diegues. O estudo será publicado na forma de livro pela editora NUPEEA, em 2012. “Águas da Coréia...” será o primeiro livro de etnoceanografia já publicado dentro e fora do Brasil, e uma das poucas publicações disponíveis na área de Oceanografia Humana.

Com informações da Agência Universitária de Notícias (AUN)

Fotos cedidas pelo pesquisador

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Some issues with an anthropology of climate change (Imponderabilia)

🕒 01/10/2011 📁 Uncategorized 🔖 Antropologia, ciência, Clima, Cultura, Enquadramento, Incerteza, Meteorologia, Mudanças climáticas, Opinião pública, Previsão, Visualidade 👤 renzotaddei

By Heid Jerstad

Imponderabilia

Spring '10 – Issue 2

Introduction: *Climate change is something everyone comes across in their personal and day-to-day lives. This article explores some of the possible reasons why anthropology has been slow in taking up this issue and analogies are drawn with the postcolonial and feminist critiques of anthropology.*

Some issues with an anthropology of climate change

Is there a stigma in anthropology about climate issues? Do you see this title and think 'well, I switch off my lights, but this has no place in academia?' I would like to reflect a little on why this might be so. As students we learn about the 'personal as political' in gender theory. I think the issue of climate change (and the related, but not identical, issue of peak oil) may be a fairly close parallel to the attention given to gender issues in anthropology during the 1980s. Both feminism and the climate change movement are political movements in society, wanting to change the way people live their lives. So why is climate change only present on the margins of anthropological research?

Several scholars have issued calls to action, arguing that this area needs further research (Rayner 1989, Battersbury 2008, Crate and Nuttall 2009). So far, however, it has been hard for anthropologists to directly engage with the issue of climate change. I propose in the following to discuss and examine several reasons for this.

Firstly, anthropology has in the past few decades focused on subjectivities of difference (Moore 2009). That is to say on minorities, colonial power imbalances and sexualities, to give a few examples. The theory developed to deal with these identity and power issues is then perhaps badly suited to address phenomena that are affecting the entire globe. All human societies seem to be experiencing some impact, regardless of which categories of difference they might fall into. In some cases, the social, economic and ecological impact of other, non-climatic changes – for instance the effect of mining and tubewells on the groundwater in Rajasthan (Jerstad 2009) – combines with climatic effects to 'exacerbate . . . existing problems' (Crate and Nuttall 2009:11). To comprehend this interaction, socially oriented analysis is required. The ethnographic focus of the anthropologist, sharpened as it has been by highlighting issues of difference, can contribute to more complete understandings of the complex agricultural, linguistic, ritual, local-global, differentiated forces and effects operating on various scales and infrastructures. Such research – on the societal effects of climate change – can benefit from the theory base of anthropology, and subjectivities of difference would certainly have their place in such an analysis.

Secondly, the issue of climate change forces contact between academic

anthropology and the 'hard' sciences and 'development.' Each of these points of contact proves problematic in its own way.

'Science' has been set aside by mainstream anthropology to the degree that there is a set of 'replacement' parallels within the discipline – such as medical anthropology and ethnobiology. But it is within western science that the majority of the research on climate change has been done. Here scientists have become activists and found their scientific material to have ethical relevance. What they lack is an understanding of how climatic effects will impact human societies around the world existing under very different ecological and social conditions.

'Development' – though sometimes the site of fruitful collaboration with anthropology – operates under very different assumptions from anthropology (Mosse 2006). The tendency in development is to use climate change as an excuse to deal with existing problems such as drought or extreme weather events. Yet here there is a risk that climate change will be sidelined by governments and other internal social institutions as 'just another issue' for the development agencies to deal with.

Thirdly, a reluctance to engage politically, which is not new in the discipline, seems to contribute to anthropologists' reluctance to tackle climate change as an issue. Could doing fieldwork today while ignoring ecological issues be seen as equivalent to doing fieldwork in the 1930s while ignoring the colonial presence? Both situations are political, placing anthropologists between the countries that fund them and those that provide the data for their work – countries that are themselves caught up in global power relationships. In the colonial instance, the anthropologist was often from the country colonising their area of study. Today issues of power relations are far more complex, but this is all the more reason not to ignore them. I am suggesting not only to place climate change in the ethics or methodology section of a monograph with reference to political relationships and logistical issues, but also to reflect on cultural relationships with the 'weather,' how it is changing and how these relationships in turn may be affected. In Crates' work with the Sakha people of Siberia (2008), she introduces her call for anthropologists to become advocates with a story of the 'bull of winter' losing its horns and hence its strength, signalling spring. This meteorological model no longer meshes with experienced reality for the Sakha, highlighting the cultural implications of climatic change beyond

'mere' agricultural or economic effects (Vedwan and Rhoades 2001).

Another analogy, touched on in the introduction, is with gender. Problematizing the gendered dimension of societies is a political act, but a necessary one in order to avoid the passive politics of unquestioningly reinforcing the status quo. An anthropological study of Indian weddings without mention of the hijras – cross-dressing dancers (Nanda 1990) – for instance, might leave the reader with the general impression that gender/sexuality in India is uniformly dualistic. In the same way, leaving energy relations to economists and political scientists is itself a political act. The impacts of climate change on humans, though mediated by wind and weather, are as social as gender relations, and are products of a particular set of power relations (Hornborg 2008). By ignoring them, anthropologists risk becoming passive supporters of this system.

An anthropology of climate change is emerging (Grodzins Gold 1998, Rudiak-Gould 2009), and anthropologists must reflect on and orient themselves in relation to this. Villagers and other informants are affected by drought, floods, storms and more subtle meteorological changes that are hard to pinpoint as climate-change caused but can be assumed to be climate-change exacerbated. Would anthropological work in these areas and on these issues primarily benefit aid organisations? I don't think so. Giving academic credibility to problems people are facing can allow governments, corporations and other bodies to act and change policy in a world where the word of a villager tends to carry very little weight.

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Tim Ingold – To Learn is to Improvise a Movement Along a Way of Life

🕒 01/10/2011 📁 Uncategorized 🔖 Antropologia, Cultura, Educação, Incerteza, Interatividade, Memória, Psicologia, Visualidade 👤 renzotaddei

Tim Ingold speaking at LSE, 27 April 2010

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Climatic fluctuations drove key events in human evolution (University of Liverpool)

🕒 21/09/2011 📁 Uncategorized 🔖 ciência, Clima, Cultura, Evolução, História, Incerteza, Mudanças climáticas 👤 renzotaddei

21-Sep-2011 – University of Liverpool

Research at the University of Liverpool has found that periods of rapid fluctuation in temperature coincided with the emergence of the first distant relatives of human beings and the appearance and spread of stone tools.

Dr Matt Grove from the School of Archaeology, Classics and Egyptology reconstructed likely responses of human ancestors to the climate of the past five million years using genetic modelling techniques. When results were mapped against the timeline of human evolution, Dr Grove found that key events coincided with periods of high variability in recorded temperatures.

Dr Grove said: “The study confirmed that a major human adaptive radiation – a pattern whereby the number of coexisting species increases rapidly before crashing again to near previous levels – coincided with an extended period of climatic fluctuation. Following the onset of high climatic variability around 2.7 million years ago a number of new species appear in the fossil record, with most disappearing by 1.5 million years ago. The first stone tools appear at around 2.6 million years ago, and doubtless assisted some of these species in responding to the rapidly changing climatic conditions.

“By 1.5 million years ago we are left with a single human ancestor – Homo erectus. The key to the survival of Homo erectus appears to be its behavioural flexibility – it is the most geographically widespread species of the period, and endures for over one and a half million years. Whilst other species may have specialized in environments that subsequently disappeared – causing their extinction – Homo erectus appears to have been a generalist, able to deal with many climatic and environmental contingencies.”

Dr Grove’s research is the first to explicitly model ‘Variability Selection’, an evolutionary process proposed by Professor Rick Potts in the late 1990s, and supports the pervasive influence of this process during human evolution. Variability selection suggests that evolution, when faced with rapid climatic fluctuation, should respond to the range of habitats encountered rather than to each individual habitat in turn; the timeline of variability selection established by Dr Grove suggests that Homo erectus could be a product of exactly this process.

Linking climatic fluctuation to the evolutionary process has implications for the

current global climate change debate. Dr Grove said: “Though often discussed under the banner term of ‘global warming’, what we see in many areas of the world today is in fact an increased annual range of temperatures and conditions; this means in particular that third world human populations, many living in what are already marginal environments, will face ever more difficult situations. The current pattern of human-induced climate change is unlike anything we have seen before, and is disproportionately affecting areas whose inhabitants do not have the technology required to deal with it.”

The research is published in The Journal of Human Evolution and The Journal of Archaeological Science.

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Science and religion do mix (Rice University)

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9/20/2011 – News & Media Relations

Rice University study reveals only 15 percent of scientists at major research universities see religion and science always in conflict

Throughout history, science and religion have appeared as being in perpetual conflict, but a new study by Rice University suggests that only a minority of scientists at major research universities see religion and science as requiring distinct boundaries.

“When it comes to questions about the meaning of life, ways of understanding reality, origins of Earth and how life developed on it, many have seen religion and science as being at odds and even in irreconcilable conflict,” said Rice sociologist [Elaine Howard Ecklund](#). But a majority of scientists interviewed by Ecklund and colleagues viewed both religion and science as “valid avenues of knowledge”

that can bring broader understanding to important questions, she said.

Ecklund summarized her findings in “[Scientists Negotiate Boundaries Between Religion and Science](#),” which appears in the September issue of the [Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion](#). Her co-authors were sociologists Jerry Park of Baylor University and Katherine Sorrell, a former postbaccalaureate fellow at Rice and current Ph.D. student at the University of Notre Dame.

They interviewed a scientifically selected sample of 275 participants, pulled from a survey of 2,198 tenured and tenure-track faculty in the natural and social sciences at 21 elite U.S. research universities. Only 15 percent of those surveyed view religion and science as always in conflict. Another 15 percent say the two are never in conflict, and 70 percent believe religion and science are only sometimes in conflict. Approximately half of the original survey population expressed some form of religious identity, whereas the other half did not.

“Much of the public believes that as science becomes more prominent, secularization increases and religion decreases,” Ecklund said. “Findings like these among elite scientists, who many individuals believe are most likely to be secular in their beliefs, definitely call into question ideas about the relationship between secularization and science.”

Many of those surveyed cited issues in the public realm (teaching of creationism versus evolution, stem cell research) as reasons for believing there is conflict between the two. The study showed that these individuals generally have a particular kind of religion in mind (and religious people and institutions) when they say that religion and science are in conflict.

The study identified three strategies of action used by these scientists to manage the religion-science boundaries and the circumstances that the two could overlap.

- **Redefining categories** – Scientists manage the science-religion relationship by changing the definition of religion, broadening it to include noninstitutionalized forms of spirituality.
- **Integration models** – Scientists deliberately use the views of influential scientists who they believe have successfully integrated their religious and

scientific beliefs.

- **Intentional talk** – Scientists actively engage in discussions about the boundaries between science and religion.

“The kind of narrow research available on religion and science seems to ask if they are in conflict or not, when it should really ask the conditions under which they are in conflict,” Ecklund said. “Our research has found that even within the same person, there can be differing views. It’s very important to dispel the myth that people believe that religion and science either do or don’t conflict. Our study found that many people have much more nuanced views.”

These nuanced views often find their way into the classroom, according to those interviewed. One biologist, an atheist not part of any religious tradition, admitted that she makes a sincere effort to present science such that “religious students do not need to compromise their own selves.” Although she is not reconsidering her personal views on religion, she seeks out resources to keep her religious students engaged with science.

Other findings:

- Scientists as a whole are substantially different from the American public in how they view teaching “intelligent design” in public schools. Nearly all of the scientists – religious and nonreligious alike – have a negative impression of the theory of intelligent design.
- Sixty-eight percent of scientists surveyed consider themselves spiritual to some degree.
- Scientists who view themselves as spiritual/religious are less likely to see religion and science in conflict.
- Overall, under some circumstances even the most religious of scientists were described in very positive terms by their nonreligious peers; this suggests that the integration of religion and science is not so distasteful to all scientists.

Ecklund said the study’s findings will go far in improving the public’s perception of science. “I think it would be helpful for the public to see what scientists are actually saying about these topics, rather than just believe stereotypes,” she said. “It would definitely benefit public dialogue about the relationship between science and religion.”

Ecklund is the author of “[Science vs. Religion: What Scientists Really Think](#),” published by Oxford University Press last year.

The study was supported by a grant from the John Templeton Foundation and additional funding from Rice University.

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Witch tax hits Romanian witches and fortune tellers (The Christian Science Monitor)

🕒 17/09/2011 📁 Uncategorized 🔖 Bruxaria, Cultura, Psicologia, Religião 👤 renzotaddei

Witch tax: Superstitions are no laughing matter in Romania and have been part of its culture for centuries. President Traian Basescu and his aides have been known to wear purple on certain days, supposedly to ward off evil.

By Alison Mutler, Associated Press / January 7, 2011



Romanian witch Mihaela Minca deals cards during an interview with The Associated Press in Mogosoia, Romania, Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2011. Trouble is brewing for Romania's witches, whose toil is being taxed for the first time despite their threats of

putting curses on the government. Also being taxed for the first time are fortune tellers, who probably saw this coming. Vadim Ghirda/AP

CHITILA, ROMANIA

Everyone curses the tax man, but Romanian witches angry about having to pay up for the first time hurled poisonous mandrake into the Danube River on Thursday to cast spells on the president and government.

Romania's newest taxpayers also included fortune tellers — but they probably should have seen it coming.

Superstitions are no laughing matter in Romania — the land of the medieval ruler who inspired the “Dracula” tale — and have been part of its culture for centuries. President Traian Basescu and his aides have been known to wear purple on certain days, supposedly to ward off evil.

A witch at the Danube named Alisia called the new tax law “foolish.”

“What is there to tax, when we hardly earn anything?” she said, identifying herself with only one name as many Romanian witches do.

Yet on the Chitila River in southern Romania, other witches gathered around a fire Thursday and threw corn into an icy river to celebrate Epiphany. They praised the new government measure, saying it gives them official recognition.

Witch Melissa Minca told The Associated Press she was “happy that we are legal,” before chanting a spell to call for a good harvest, clutching a jar of charmed river water, a sprig of mistletoe and a candle.

The new tax law is part of the government's drive to collect more revenue and crack down on tax evasion in a country that is in recession.

In the past, the less mainstream professions of witch, astrologer and fortune teller were not listed in the Romanian labor code, as were those of embalmer, valet and driving instructor. People who worked those jobs used their lack of registration to evade paying income tax.

Under the new law, like any self-employed person, they will pay 16 percent income tax and make contributions to health and pension programs.

Some argue the law will be hard to enforce, as the payments to witches and astrologers usually are small cash amounts of 20 to 30 lei (\$7-\$10) per consultation.

Mircea Geoana, who lost the presidential race to Basescu in 2009, performed poorly during a crucial debate, and his camp blamed attacks of negative energy by their opponent's aides.

Geoana aide Viorel Hrebenciuc alleged there was a "violet flame" conspiracy during the campaign, saying Basescu and other aides dressed in purple on Thursdays to increase his chances of victory.

Romanian officials still wear purple clothing on important days, because the color supposedly makes the wearer superior and wards off evil.

Such spiritualism has long been tolerated by the Orthodox Church in Romania, and the late Communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife, Elena, had their own personal witch.

Queen witch Bratara Buzea, 63, who was imprisoned in 1977 for witchcraft under Ceausescu's repressive regime, is furious about the new law.

Sitting cross-legged in her villa in the lake resort of Mogosoaia, just north of Bucharest, she said Wednesday she planned to cast a spell using a particularly effective concoction of cat excrement and a dead dog.

"We do harm to those who harm us," she said. "They want to take the country out of this crisis using us? They should get us out of the crisis because they brought us into it."

"My curses always work!" she cackled in a smoky voice, sitting next to a wood-burning stove, surrounded by potions, charms, holy water and ceramic pots.

But not every witch threatened fire and brimstone.

"This law is very good," said Mihaela Minca, sister of Melissa. "It means that our magic gifts are recognized and I can open my own practice."

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