

Afro-Brazilian Studies from Psychoanalysis to Cultural Anthropology: An Intellectual Portrait of Arthur Ramos

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Introduction

Arthur Ramos (1903-1949) was one of the most prominent Brazilian anthropologists of the first half of the 20th century, [1] with a vast intellectual production dealing mainly with Afro-Brazilian populations. His work can be divided into two phases, one marked by the decisive influence of the physician Raimundo Nina Rodrigues (1862-1906) [2], as well as psychoanalysis, and a second in which there is an adoption of concepts and methods from cultural anthropology (Motta, 2011). His role in the institutionalization of anthropology in Brazil is also well known (Azeredo, 1986), including the foundation of the Sociedade Brasileira de Antropologia e Etnologia (Brazilian Society of Anthropology and Ethnology) in 1941.

Ramos was a promoter of the scientific debate in the field of social sciences [3] with significant connections with Brazilian and foreign intellectuals, among them Gilberto Freyre (1900-1987), Anísio Teixeira (1900-1971), Heloísa Alberto Torres (1895-1977), Roger Bastide (1898-1974), Édison Carneiro (1912-1972), Fernando Ortiz (1881-1969), Melville J. Herskovits (1895-1963), Rüdiger Bilden (1893-1980), and others (Oliveira, 2019a).

Institutionally, Arthur Ramos first assumed the chair of social psychology at the Universidade do Distrito Federal– UDF (University of the Federal District), in Rio de Janeiro, capital of Brazil until 1960. After the extinction of this University in 1937, he occupied the chair of anthropology and ethnography in 1939 at the Faculdade Nacional de Filosofia–FNF (National Faculty of Philosophy) of the newly created Universidade do Brasil – UB (University of Brazil). [4] Herskovits refers to him as the only full professor in anthropology in Brazil at his time (Guimarães, 2008).

UDF was one of the first university experiences in Brazil, having been inaugurated in July 1935, the result of a joint effort by the municipality of Rio de Janeiro, the Brazilian Education Association, the Brazilian Academy of Sciences and, above all, the Director of Public Instruction of the then Federal District, Anísio Teixeira. The UDF academic project was highly original at that time, and incorporated important intellectuals in its activities, such as Gilberto Freyre, Mário de Andrade (1893-1945), Cecília Meireles (1901-1964) and Sérgio Buarque de Holanda (1902-1982), among other Brazilian and foreign scholars. At this institution, Ramos created one of the first graduate courses on anthropology in Brazil. [5] Marina de Vasconcellos (1912-1973), [6] one of his former students on this course, became Arthur Ramos' assistant and later his successor in the chair of anthropology and ethnography (Miglievich-Ribeiro, 2015). Ramos was also a special lecturer at Louisiana State University from September 1940 to January 1941, where he taught a course on races and cultures in Brazil.

Also noteworthy in his career is the fact that he became the first head of the Department of Social Sciences at UNESCO in 1949. He held this position for only a short time, as he died a few months after his arrival in Paris; however, his passage was of significant importance, as he outlined a research agenda on race relations, subsequently implemented (Maio, 1999, 2011; Oliveira, 2019b). This research was called the 'UNESCO Project' in Brazil and had the participation of another generation of social scientists, among them Florestan Fernandes (1920-1995) and Luiz de Aguiar Costa Pinto (1920-2002).

Arthur Ramos: From Medicine to Anthropology

Arthur Ramos de Araújo Pereira, better known as Arthur Ramos, was born in 1903 in the city of Pilar – a small city in the interior of the state of Alagoas, Brazilian Northeast – in a family of physicians. In 1921 he entered the prestigious Faculdade de Medicina da Bahia (Faculty of Medicine of Bahia), and in 1926 defended the thesis *O Primitivo e a Loucura* (Primitive man and madness), receiving the title of doctor in medical sciences in the same year. In this thesis, Ramos used the theoretical arsenal from psychoanalysis, building on the theories of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) and Lucien Lévy-Bruhl (1887-1939), whose references persist in his thesis entitled *Sordície nos alienados: ensaio de uma psicopatologia da imundície* (The squalor of the alienated: an essay on a psychopathology of filth), presented in 1928, for the application as associate professor of clinical psychiatry at the same faculty. He initially worked at the Legal Medical Service of the state of Bahia, [7] where he had his first contact with the issues of

Black culture through the ethnographic material accumulated by Nina Rodrigues. [8]

During this period, his engagement in the process of disseminating psychoanalysis stands out, as we can see in his publications in some medical journals in the 1930s. [9] Later, he moved to Rio de Janeiro in 1933, where he took the direction of the Orthophrenic and Mental Hygiene Service at the request of Anísio Teixeira, who held the position of Secretary of Education at the prefecture of the Federal District, and created the UDF in 1935. Ramos remained in charge of the position until 1939, and, in this period, he researched on experimental schools, investigating the causes of maladjustment to school education, and elaborating the concept of the 'problem child' (Ramos, 1950).

In 1934, he assumed the chair of social psychology at the UDF, [10] the same year he published *O negro brasileiro: etnografia religiosa e psicanálise* (The Black Brazilian: religious ethnography and psychoanalysis [11]), which had a second edition in 1940, revised and increased by the author, considered as its definitive version. As a result of the social psychology course, Ramos published the book *Introdução à Psicologia Social* (Introduction to Social Psychology) in 1936.

Arthur Ramos was one of the pioneers in the field of psychoanalysis in Brazil and published works such as *Estudos de psicanálise* (Psychoanalysis studies) in 1931, *Freud, Adler, Jung...* in 1933, *Psiquiatria e psicanálise* (Psychiatry and psychoanalysis) in 1933, and *Educação e psicanálise* (Education and psychoanalysis) in 1934. He corresponded with Sigmund Freud, sending some of his work to the famous Austrian psychoanalyst. In one letter Freud affirmed that Ramos' conclusions were in line with the psychoanalytic works known so far. [12] For Guilherme Gutman (2006), as ethnography began to appear in his writings of the early 1930s, psychoanalysis lost prominence, disappearing almost completely from the end of that decade.

Although it may seem that Arthur Ramos conventionally followed a more established career in the area of medicine, it is worth recalling two points: a) since 1926 he had been interested in Nina Rodrigues' work on Black cultures (Ramos, 1971); and b) many Brazilian anthropologists came from medicine in this period (Corrêa, 2013), such as Edgard Roquette-Pinto (1884-1954), Oswaldo Rodrigues Cabral (1903-1978), Theotônio Brandão (1907-1981), René Ribeiro (1914-1990) and Thales de Azevedo. [13]

The transition from psychology to anthropology occurred through the activation of a series of social, academic, and political resources. This movement is even more evident in the prefaces he writes for some works by Nina Rodrigues published in the second half of the 1930s, when Ramos began an intense review of the works of 'his master', such as *O animismo fetichista dos negros baianos* (The fetishist animism of black Bahians) in 1935 and *As coletividades anormais* (The abnormal collectivities) in 1939, publications promoted by Ramos (Campos, 2004). It is worth noting that *O animismo fetichista dos negros baianos* was initially published in the *Revista Brasileira* (Brazilian Journal) between 1896 and 1897, in four different chapters, and was published as a book in French in 1900. The publication as a book in Portuguese is

therefore the result of the action of Arthur Ramos, who wrote the preface to this work.

However, Mariza Corrêa (2013) questions this intellectual affiliation alleged by Ramos, because he would not take Nina Rodrigues' work as a starting point for his research. Despite claiming Nina Rodrigues' pioneering spirit, Ramos ends up incorporating other versions of the theme.

The anthropological aspect of the Nina Rodrigues School was represented almost exclusively by the work of a single author, Arthur Ramos. What seems to have happened with this school is that parts of Nina Rodrigues' more extensive work were detached from their context in order to confer an identity principally on Arthur Ramos' work, distinguishing it from Gilberto Freyre's (Corrêa, 2013, p. 219). [14]

Ramos' relation with the work of Nina Rodrigues is fundamental to an understanding of the constitution of his identity as an anthropologist and his scientific formulations. Ramos attributed a pioneering understanding of acculturation to Nina Rodrigues, a central anthropological category in the further developments of Ramos' work. According to Ramos (1942: 5):

Nina Rodrigues, the great pioneer, gave us the first descriptions of this mechanism that today modern anthropologists prefer to call acculturation. We can say that the study of acculturation is one of the achievements of Brazilian anthropology, especially concerning Black cultures. A quick examination of the work of the Bahian master proves it. In the chapter on Afro-Bahian religious beliefs, the first studies by Nina Rodrigues since 1896, when the first results of his observations on Black Bahians were published, the tendency was seen to form a compromise between the primitive manifestations of African religions and the new beliefs, especially those of Catholics, which slaves found in the new environment (Ramos, 1942: 5). [15]

In sum, the 'Escola Nina Rodrigues' was an invention created in the 1930s by Afrânio Peixoto (1876-1947) and Arthur Ramos to give greater credibility to their activities in the field of forensic medicine (Maio, 1995). The idea that there was a continuation between Africa and Brazil and an adaptation in the New World was central to Ramos' work (Leal, 2020). Nina Rodrigues' work was incorporated in his own work, substituting the terms *race* for *culture*, and *miscegenation* for *acculturation*, which would make his conceptions completely current (Ramos, 1939).

Arthur Ramos, professor of anthropology

To better understand the role of Arthur Ramos in the institutionalization of Brazilian anthropology, we must turn to his performance as a professor of anthropology and ethnography, which began in 1939 with his appointment as an interim professor at the FNF [16] (Barros, 2008; Tamano, 2018). As Barros (2008, p. 66) points out: 'His conception of anthropology crystallizes in the organization of the chair created at the National Faculty of

Philosophy'. [17]

The selection of professors at the FNF has always been controversial (Lippi de Oliveira, 1995). [18] There were numerous lists with names sent to the Minister of Education, some with additional information. In at least one list of nominations, there was the name of Arthur Ramos for the anthropology chair, which was an indication from Heloísa Alberto Torres, [19] the director of the National Museum at that time. It is important to note that the same list contains other names for anthropology, also indicated by Heloísa Alberto Torres (Lippi de Oliveira, 1995). However, Ramos' name persisted, and he became an interim professor (Barros, 2008; Tamano, 2018).

Arthur Ramos taught the chair of anthropology in the undergraduate degree in geography and history and the chair of anthropology and ethnography in the undergraduate degree in social sciences. It should be noted that, at that time, the chair of anthropology in Brazil had a robust approach to physical anthropology. In his courses, Ramos made an intense link between cultural and physical anthropology, and some categories such as 'races' and 'ethnic types' are often found in his programmes (Oliveira, 2019c).

It is worth mentioning the fact that the third topic of the Brazilian ethnography course was: 'Studies on the Negro: Nina Rodrigues' School'. This topic demonstrates one of the central points for understanding Arthur Ramos' position in the process of institutionalizing Brazilian anthropology, since we find at least two relevant issues: the overlap between Black studies and studies of race relations, as well as the affirmation of the pioneering spirit of Nina Rodrigues' work in Brazil. In *Introdução à Antropologia Brasileira Vol 1*. (1943), Ramos affirmed that anthropological studies on Black populations were created by Nina Rodrigues.

In his course in anthropology and ethnography for the undergraduate course in social sciences, Arthur Ramos also addressed the following topics: the evolutionary method of culture; criticism of the evolutionary methods of culture; psychological schools of culture; the geographical currents of culture; the Le Play monographic school; the historical-cultural method; English diffusionists, the Elliot Smith school; the functionalist method; and American methods of studying culture.

Although studies on indigenous populations were also highlighted in his programmes, [20] it is only in the topic of studies on Black populations that there is a clearly defined theoretical delimitation. In the course of ethnography, there were 20 topics, eight topics related to African and Black populations, and one on the influence from the Black populations in Brazilian folklore. [21]

The anthropology course was more theoretical, with explanations about the evolutionary method of culture, the historical-cultural method, the functionalist method, and the North American methods of studying culture.

This debate was also developed in the course on 'Races and Cultures in Brazil' that Arthur Ramos taught as a 'special lecture in sociology' at Louisiana State University, at the invitation

of Thomas Lynn Smith (1903-1976). In this course, Ramos covered 30 topics: 1) race contacts. Miscegenation and intermarriage; 2) pure and mixed stocks; 3) human hybridism; 4) results of interbreeding; 5) classical observations; 6) the Rehoboth bastards; 7) the Kisar hybrids; 8) descendants of Pitcairn; 9) New World 'mestizoes' and mulattoes; 10) studies by North American observers; 11) the Brazilian experience; 12) Indian and European crossings; 13) European and negro crossings; 14) comparative studies of miscegenation and intermarriages in several American countries; 15) contacts of races in Brazil; 16) doctrinal discussion; 17) statistical data on the Brazilian population; 18) anthropometric research; 19) types resulting from crossings; 20) the Caboclos area; 21) the Negro area; 22) the White area; 23) Brazilian types in their physical and cultural aspects; 24) cultural contacts; 25) the acculturation problem; 26) the acculturation process and results; 27) examination of these processes in Brazil; 28) the Indian, Negro and the European acculturation; 29) cultural survivals from the Indians; 30) Negro cultural survivals.

His consolidation as a professor took place in 1945 when he became a full professor at the FNF. He underwent an exam for this position and presented the thesis *A organização dual entre os índios brasileiros* (The dual organization among Brazilian Indians). It is interesting to realize that Ramos had chosen to present an original thesis on indigenous populations in Brazil, although he was better known for his work in the field of Afro-Brazilian studies. A hypothesis for this is that Ramos had chosen a more traditional theme in the field of anthropology. In the preface of his thesis, he affirmed:

The interpretation I propose for the dual organization does not preclude other methods of understanding, such as historical and diffusionist. In some way, it completes them, remembering that a historical or geographical criterion does not explain a human phenomenon, presenting it only in its descriptive structure. Functional interpretation is, on the contrary, a comprehensive attempt, as we say in psychology (Ramos, 1945: 4). [22]

The thesis had four chapters and a conclusion; although he tried to present general knowledge on indigenous populations in Brazil, his thesis was specially dedicated to the "Gê" group. According to Ramos, "The Gê, especially the Gê tribes of northern Brazil, today offer splendid material for the study of social organization and especially the dual organization" (1945: 18). [23]

By 1945, Ramos had more than a thousand publications, including books, articles in scientific journals, newspapers, reviews, and conferences, [24] in addition to affiliation to international scientific associations, and experience as a visiting professor in the United States. However,

Testimonies of the time refer to the malaise involved in the defence of the PhD thesis. Because of a detail of an error in the translation of an English term, the examiner severely criticized the candidate, although the latter, affirming that the typist caused the mistake, claimed the testimony of colleagues that he had spoken, read and written in French, English and

German since his student days (Barros, 2008, p. 173). [25]

Part of what happened would be explained as a result of a specific dispute between the different training institutions, the FNF and the National Museum (Barros, 2008). In some publications, Arthur Ramos had made it clear that FNF would be responsible for training professionals in higher education in anthropology and the National Museum for training “technicians”. As Corrêa indicates:

The conflict expressed by that anecdote goes far beyond a mere ‘factionalism’ between two institutions – one for teaching, the other for research – and shows that the strained relations between the director of the Museum and the professor at the Faculty of Philosophy also defined the terms of an internal dispute in the field of discipline: its object, its research method, and its ‘social identity’, that is, the institutional place of the new discipline. (1997 p. 28)

These conflicts became more evident in 1949 when Ramos was invited to become the head of the Department of Social Sciences at UNESCO in Paris. Thus, a dispute was established between Heloísa Alberto Torres and Marina de Vasconcellos over who should temporarily take the chair of anthropology and ethnography. In the selection for the position, Heloísa Alberto Torres had her application rejected, since, despite the recognition of her knowledge, she did not have the prerequisite outlined in the FNF Rules. This required the presentation of a higher education degree, the curriculum of which contained a discipline corresponding to the chair for which she was applying. Marina de Vasconcellos became Ramos’ replacement during this period.



Fig. 1

Arthur Ramos in Paris, 1949.

Fundação Biblioteca Nacional-Rio De Janeiro.

Arthur Ramos and Afro-Brazilian Studies

As already indicated, Ramos considered himself to be continuing Nina Rodrigues’ work in many aspects, as in his appropriation of the comparative method to understand Afro-

Brazilian populations [26] (Carneiro, 1951). Ramos replaced the evolutionary perspective present in Nina Rodrigues' work with culturalist concepts (Ferretti, 2001). This phenomenon can be interpreted as a reflection of the paradigm changes that were occurring in anthropology. For Ramos (1942), what Nina Rodrigues interpreted as a juxtaposition in the Black population was, in fact, the process of acculturation.

In his process of reviewing the work of Nina Rodrigues, Arthur Ramos points out three false postulates (Ramos, 1942, p. 208) that marked a real rupture with Nina Rodrigues' work: 1) the importance of racial inequalities; 2) the inferiority and degeneration of the Brazilian mestizo; and 3) the attenuated responsibility of Blacks, Indians and mixed-race Brazilians resulting from the two initial postulates.

This rupture, as already pointed out, was only possible through a closer approximation between Ramos and culturalist theories, which had direct influence from Freyre and Herskovits. Gilberto Freyre claims to be the one who introduced Ramos to American anthropology and culturalist theories (Freyre, 1968). However, it is essential to realize that Ramos also maintained an intense intellectual exchange with Melville Herskovits and Rüdiger Bilden, who were students of Franz Boas (1858-1942) at the University of Columbia. Arthur Ramos used to exchange works with Herskovits and Bilden, in addition to critical reviews, information related to conferences and new publications. Herskovits, as professor at the Northwestern University, had the opportunity to invite Ramos to some academic activities during his sojourn in the US. [27]

Despite the fact that Ramos signed and organized several manifestos against racism, [28] the theoretical movement which he carried out did not imply an absence of racist elements in his analyses; this could be observed by the fact that Ramos scales Black populations according to degrees of intelligence that appear to be associated with physical characteristics (Dantas, 1988). In fact, in *O Negro na Civilização Brasileira* (1971 [1956]), Ramos affirms that the Nagô [of Yoruba descent] '[...] were tall, stocky, brave, hardworking, of the best nature and the most intelligent of all', while the Angolans '[...] were physically weaker than the Sudanese. Talkative, indolent [and] very festive' (Ramos, 1971, pp. 36-37).

It is essential to realize that in Ramos' work, an idea of cultural contacts prevailed harmoniously, although he recognized that these contacts did not always occur in a harmonic and non-conflicting way, especially in contexts of colonization and slavery. [29]

In some of his works, Ramos shares the belief in the so-called 'myth of racial democracy', [30] which would be a distinctive characteristic of Brazilian society (Ramos, 1943, p. 179). However, Ramos recognized the existence of inequalities between Blacks and whites in Brazil, as well as the existence of 'colour prejudice' (Ramos, 1938, pp. 124-126). In later works, Ramos also indicated the insertion of the Black population in the nation as a social issue which needed to be solved (Ramos, 1947, p. 132, and 1951, p. 146).

Ramos contributed to Afro-Brazilian studies with an intense dialogue with Gilberto Freyre

and Edison Carneiro, among others. As is well known, the 1st Afro-Brazilian Congress was organized by Gilberto Freyre in 1934 in Recife, and he made harsh criticisms about the 2nd Congress organized by Édison Carneiro in Salvador in 1937. In an interview with the newspaper *Diário de Pernambuco*, in 1936, Freyre says he was concerned with the organization of the 2nd Afro-Brazilian Congress, fearing that academic issues would be left in the background. Freyre still conducted a direct criticism of the work of Nina Rodrigues, indicating that the 1st Congress distanced itself from the view that this researcher had about the Black population (Freyre, 1987). This criticism of Nina Rodrigues can also be interpreted as a criticism of Ramos' work, who proclaimed himself to be continuing Nina Rodrigues' work.

The relationship between Ramos and Freyre, and also between Ramos and Carneiro, was very complex, because they were part of the small academic community of social scientists in Brazil in the 1930s and 1940s, which implied that they needed to collaborate at certain moments, despite their disputes. One example of this kind of situation is that Freyre had presented Bilden to Ramos, Bilden presented Landes to Ramos, and Ramos presented Landes to Carneiro. Despite his proximity to Édison Carneiro and his disagreements with Ruth Landes' work in *The City of Women* (1967 [1947]), in which Carneiro played a central role, it is relevant to emphasize that:

Edison Carneiro approached the theme of Afro-Brazilian religions, of Africa in Brazil, from a perspective centred more on comprehending the paths and transformations that this Africa underwent from the original continent of the slaves to Brazil. His debut book – *Religiões Negras* (1936) – is strongly influenced by communist ideology. It initiates a trajectory that to some extent distinguishes him from many of his contemporaries. During the same decade, Arthur Ramos was the leading exponent of studies on African-based religions in Brazil and was involved in searching for the origins and producing a history of what was defined by him as the 'transplantation of African culture' to Brazil. Arthur Ramos was a follower of Melville Herskovits, an anthropologist who invested in the search for African origins in the Americas. Ramos became the most important scholar of African religions in Brazil and, like Herskovits, sought an 'authentic Africa,' defined as Nagô Africa, that had been 'transplanted' to Brazil. (Maggie, 2015: 114)

In this context, still according to Yvonne Maggie (2015), it is possible to affirm that Edison Carneiro was caught between the two poles: the first, represented by Ruth Landes, that preferred to describe the customs and beliefs of the Black population of Bahia without searching for origins; and, the second, represented by Arthur Ramos, that emphasized the idea of survivals, which valued the cultural vestiges seen to be authentically African.

Ramos, like Herskovits, refuted Landes' interpretation of the central role of women and homosexuals in candomblé (Ramos, 1942; Herskovits, 1948). This interpretation was also present in some works by Carneiro (Carneiro, 1940) but did not suffer the same reprisals as Landes (Oliveira, 2019d). In a letter dated March 10, 1938, Bilden, who presented Landes to

Ramos and asked him to help her and introduce her in Brazil, rectified his opinion about Landes. According to him:

Some time ago I wrote you about the forthcoming visit of Dr. Ruth Landes to Brazil for purpose of making studies about the Negro in Bahia. I believe that she will depart soon. However, I am forced to retract my recommendation of her to you, as I am not impressed with her personality, seriousness of purpose, and preparation for the task. At the time I wrote you she had been referred to me by my friends in the Department of Anthropology of Columbia University with the request that I direct her preparation, as she was wholly ignorant of any subject pertaining to Brazil. In the year that has elapsed she has not prepared herself adequately and is in my opinion unfitted for a sound study of the Bahia Negro, in spite of a misleading superficial ability. I wrote you at the time as I did in spite of the warnings of you and my friend Melville Herskovits, who, as well as other anthropologists, expressed an unfavorable opinion of her. I realize now that Herskovits was right. You are, of course, free to treat her as you deem best. And I do not wish to place obstacles in her way. But I cannot endorse her or recommend her.

Herskovits also criticized Landes' work, affirming that she overstressed the homosexuality of male priests (Herskovits, 1948). Ramos (2010 [1942]), referring to foreign research on Brazilian Blacks, indicated that:

All the data from Brazil and Africa invalidate Dr. Landes' fantastic conclusions about a matriarchal cult and male ritual homosexuality among Black Brazilians. She merely generalized from isolated observation, thus compromising people as individuals or even probably members of perverted groups—which must be carefully verified—but who are not related to any cultural phenomenon whether derived from African culture or developed in Brazil as a result of cultural change and acculturation. (Ramos, 2010: 19).

Ramos had not only a different interpretation about the Afro-Brazilian culture, but also a different methodological approach. To refute Landes' ideas, Ramos (and Herskovits) analysed Afro-Brazilian culture from a comparative perspective with African culture.

In later works, Carneiro accused Ramos of distorting information from Landes' work (Carneiro, 2010 [1964]). According to Carneiro (2010):

I do not find the statement that the homosexuality of the father was "ritual" anywhere in Ruth Landes' article. Instead of this, the author tries to show that fathers react psychologically to the repugnance against male cult leaders by reacting psychologically adapting to the "ideal" type of mother, respected, full of prestige, great lady, veritable matriarch. In the great majority of cases this psychological reaction leads to homosexuality. I am explaining, not endorsing the thought of Ruth Landes. Her article was an interpretation which only psychologists may say whether it is correct or not. But the facts on which she based her argument were at the time real enough. Artur Ramos, who throughout his entire life made use of psychology (and of its branch then in vogue, psychoanalysis) could

reject Landes' argument but he did not have the right to do so purposefully twisting the thought of the author and insinuating vulgarities between the lines (Carneiro, 2010: 23).

As Rossi (2015) points out, although Carneiro had a very ambiguous relationship with Gilberto Freyre and Arthur Ramos – considered the main researchers on Black populations between the 1930s and 1940s – he developed a closer relationship with Ramos, but with a quite critical reading of his work, despite the academic partnership.

This data must be highlighted to understand that Ramos was directly involved in the disputes over the interpretations of Afro-Brazilian studies, as he was considered the leading Brazilian specialist in this field at his time (Corrêa, 2003). His relations with Gilberto Freyre and Édison Carneiro, and also with other researchers, were marked by alliances and disputes, which were also conditioned by the fact that the field of anthropology in Brazil was still undergoing a process of institutionalization at that time.

In Ramos' work, the acculturation category gained centrality and was one of the main points of approximation with the work of Herskovits, although he incorporated this category few years before he travelled to the USA. According to Ramos' definition (1942, pp. 219-220):

The committee for the study of acculturation, made up of Robert Redfield, from the University of Chicago, Ralph Linton, from Columbia, and Melville J. Herskovits, from Northwestern University, reached an agreement on the definition of the process: 'acculturation comprises those phenomena that result when groups of individuals from different cultures come into contact, continuous and first-hand, with consequent changes in the original culture patterns of one or both groups'.

As is evident in the excerpt above, Ramos starts mainly from the definition of acculturation by American anthropologists, which he also reaffirmed in his classes in Brazil and the United States, according to material consulted in the Arthur Ramos Archive. Ramos was interested in understanding the cultures of Black populations in their dynamics, mainly from contact with other cultures, which would be exceptionally evident in Brazilian society.

Analysing the material of his classes at Louisiana State University in the 1940s, the emphasis that Ramos places on interracial contacts and miscegenation in Brazil can be observed, highlighting its uniqueness in opposition to the reality of the southern states, where the anti-miscegenation laws were legal until 1967.

These interpretative elements of his work are still combined in its later phase when he begins to focus more intensely on the role of social sciences, anthropology in particular, in the contemporary world, engaging in an agenda to combat racism, especially in the post-war context. These objectives, however, could only be achieved through an accumulation of research that had not yet been fully realized in Brazil (Ramos, 1948). In this sense, it could be affirmed that his concerns with anthropology's institutionalization were also a political concern, engaged with a societal project to combat racism, in line with many anthropologists

at this time, such as Fernando Ortiz, Melville Herskovits, and others.

During this period, Ramos was appointed to become the head of the Department of Social Sciences at UNESCO in 1949. Despite his early death on 31 October 1949 in Paris, Ramos participated in important activities, such as the inaugural conference of the International Sociological Association in Oslo [31], in addition to having outlined a research agenda that should be developed by this institution, in partnership with researchers from different parts of the world (Oliveira, 2019b). After his death in June 1950, the 5th session of the UNESCO General Conference, held in Florence, approved the realization of research on race relations in Brazil, incorporating his ideas.

Final considerations

Arthur Ramos' extensive network of contacts and collaborators, in Brazil and abroad, helps to understand the capacity he had to mobilize his academic and political capital to institutionalize anthropology in Brazil, as well as Afro-Brazilian studies.

Ramos' effort to found in 1941 the Brazilian Society of Anthropology and Ethnology (SBAE), as well as to train experts in anthropology at the FNE, made his academic performance stand out, even though not all of his projects were successful over time. The SBAE had a short life; however, it had significant relevance for scientific associations in Brazil, such as the Brazilian Association of Anthropology, created in 1955 and still in operation.

Also concerning the marks Ramos left at the Department of Social Sciences at UNESCO, it is interesting to recognize, on the one hand, that his plans came to fruition later, unfolding in the so-called 'UNESCO Project,' developed in the 1950s, initially only in Bahia, but which later also incorporated São Paulo as a research field.

Its role in the collaboration network between Brazilian and American researchers formed between the 1930s and 1940s (Sansone, 2012) should also be highlighted, in which he subverts the meaning of this collaboration, providing not only 'ethnographic material' for American researchers, but also acting as a scholar in the United States.

Arthur Ramos played a fundamental role in the consolidation of Afro-Brazilian studies, as part of a relevant network of researchers on the African Diaspora in the Americas. His research on Black populations in Brazil, developed from a cultural perspective, marks his originality. Reading his work is fundamental for understanding Brazilian anthropology's debate about Black populations and cultures in Brazil, maintaining it as one of the fundamental milestones in this field.

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[1] Arthur Ramos had a medical degree, and was also interested in the fields of psychology and psychoanalysis. His training as a medical anthropologist was common to other researchers in the same period, who became anthropologists through medicine.

[2] Nina Rodrigues was a Brazilian physician and pioneer in the study of Afro-Brazilian populations.

[3] It is relevant to indicate that in Brazil the field of social sciences is more specific than in other countries. Although this term originally referred to a broad sense of the social sciences (anthropology, economics, history, psychology, sociology, etc.), from the second half of the 20th century, it began to designate anthropology, political science and sociology.

[4] In 1939 the UDF was incorporated into the UB, as part of the transformations carried out by Gustavo Capanema (1900-1985), Ministry of Education in this period. The professors and students in the area of Social Sciences were incorporated into the National Faculty of Philosophy, as part of the University of Brazil.

[5] In 1939, at the initiative of Arthur Ramos, the improvement course in anthropology and ethnography was created, with first students in 1940 (Miglievich-Ribeiro, 2015). The rules of the University of Brazil conferred the title of Ph.D. to students who completed a thesis after two years of study in an improvement course, approved by an examining board of three professors.

[6] Marina de Vasconcellos was the first woman to become a professor in the undergraduate course in social sciences at the *Faculdade Nacional de Filosofia* (National Faculty of Philosophy). She was director of the *Instituto de Filosofia e Ciências Sociais* (Institute of Philosophy and Social Sciences) at the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro), but her position was revoked in 1969 by the military dictatorship.

[7] Duarte (2018) specifies that Ramos worked as a psychiatrist at the local asylum, as well as forensic

physician in the service of the State of Bahia.

[8] It is interesting to say that Ramos' earliest writings were on black populations, some examples are "Tradições Africo-Brasileiras" (Afro-Brazilian Traditions), published in 1922; "A Decadência de Olorun – sobre a mitologia yorubana" (Olorun's decline - on Yoruba mythology), published in 1923.

[9] Some of these publications: *Estudos de Psychanalyse*, 1931; *Freud, Adler, Jung*, 1933; *Psiquiatria e Psychanalyse*, 1933; *Educação e Psychanalyse*, 1934; *Introdução à Psychologia Social*, 1936; *Loucura e Crime*, 1937; *A Criança Problema*, 1939; *A Saúde do Espírito*, 1939.

[10] This was the second course in Social Psychology taught in Brazil; the first was taught by Raul Briquet (1887-1953) in 1933 at the *Escola de Sociologia e Política de São Paulo* (School of Sociology and Politics of São Paulo) (Santos, Schucman, Martins, 2012).

[11] This book was published in English in 1939.

[12] There are four letters from Freud to Ramos in the Arthur Ramos Archive, from 1927 to 1932.

[13] It is also relevant to indicate that many anthropologists in this period had a law degree.

[14] Author's translation.

[15] Author's translation.

[16] Ramos became full professor in Anthropology at the FNF after 1945. According to Ferreira (2012) many professors were indicated as "*catedráticos interinos*", that means that they were not in a permanent position.

[17] Author's translation.

[18] Fávero (1989), in a careful analysis of the FNF staff, indicates the strong clientelism that was practiced to select the professors, as well as the intense ideological disputes involved in this process. Therefore, the criteria for selecting professors seemed to be strongly linked to personal relationships and local power, even though academic criteria did not wholly disappear. The fact is that Arthur Ramos was invited to be part of this new academic experience in Brazil.

[19] Heloisa Alberto Torres was the daughter of Alberto Torres (1865-1917), a politician and social thinker on Nation building and social organization in Brazil. She started her training as a 'naturalist' at the National Museum with Roquette-Pinto, who was the chief professor of the Anthropology and Ethnography Division. She became a substitute professor at the National Museum in 1925, and director of this institution between 1938 and 1955.

[20] Some of the aspects that Ramos introduced in his programmes were a the indigenous populations in Brazil today: linguistic and cultural classification; the gupi-Guarani group; the gê group; the garib-Aruak group; and other indigenous groups.

[21] The programmes can be consulted at the National Library (Rio de Janeiro) and are part of the Arthur Ramos Archive.

[22] Author's translation.

[23] Author's translation.

[24] A full list of his publications is available in the Boletín Bibliográfico de Antropología Americana (1937-1948) Vol. 10 (enero-diciembre 1947).

[25] Author's translation

[26] The comparative method in this context refers to the comparison between African populations and their descendants in Brazil.

[27] In 1940 Herskovits had invited Ramos for a seminar on races and people in Brazil at the Northwestern University, and in the next year he made a new invitation for a seminar on racial issues in Brazil.

[28] In 1935 together with other intellectuals, he signed the Manifesto of Brazilian intellectuals against racial prejudice and, in 1937, the Manifesto to Spanish Republicans. In 1942, he signed with the *Sociedade Brasileira de Antropologia e Etnologia* –SBAE (Brazilian Society of Anthropology and Ethnology), the Manifesto of the Brazilian Society of Anthropology and Ethnology and, in 1943, the SBAE Message to anthropologists in Great Britain.

[29] The process of acculturation could be divided into three phases a) acceptance; b) adaptation; c) reaction (Ramos, 1937). In these terms we can realize that Ramos perceived the non-harmonious cultural contact.

[30] Ramos was the first scholar to use the expression racial democracy in 1941 in an article for the *Journal of Negro Education* (Brochier, 2014). Racial democracy had at least three different meanings during the 20th century in Brazil: a) an ideal of equal rights between races in a political democracy; b) a hierarchy of races in a limited and hierarchical citizenship; b) the transit, mixing, intimacy and coexistence between races, having in this sense the name 'social democracy' in Freyre, that Ramos changed to 'racial democracy' (Guimarães, 2019).

[31] Ramos was the only Brazilian at this Conference, but he was representing the UNESCO Social Science Department (ISA, 1976).