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*'Homenagem ao Prof. Milton Santos'. Maria Adélia
Aparecida de Souza. 1997. Revista do Departamento
de Geografia, n. 11.*

*James Esson, Patricia Noxolo, Richard Baxter, Patricia
Daley, and Margaret Byron. 2017. 'The 2017 RGS-IBG
Chair's Theme: Decolonising Geographical Knowledges,
or Reproducing Coloniality?' Area 49 (3): 384–88*

- 1 In this brief introduction I outline why we have decided to translate this pair of texts respectively into and out of Portuguese and English. The first is a speech made by the Brazilian geographer Maria Adélia Aparecida de Souza on the event of her friend and teacher, Milton Santos, being made Professor Emeritus of the University of São Paulo in 1997. The second is a response by a group of British geographers to the 2017 Royal Geographical Society / Institute of British Geographers annual conference, which had taken as its theme the notion of 'decolonising geography'. Both stand alone as snapshots of the state of geography in their own contexts, but I want to draw out some connections which presenting them together suggests.
- 2 Translating Maria Adélia Aparecida de Souza's text raises questions about national traditions, language and the history of geography. It provides an insight into two important Brazilian geographers at the end of the twentieth century: focusing on Milton Santos's major conceptual achievements it tells us, too, about Maria Adélia Aparecida de Souza's intellectual priorities. Souza's text provides a glimpse into how other Brazilian geographers saw Santos by the end of his career, and which of his intellectual achievements stand out. Of these, the importance of Santos' notion of

geography as the “philosophy of technics” is absolutely clear. This is just one partial and motivated interpretation of his work, but it shows the construction of his legacy in action in praxis.

- 3 The speech is an intriguing moment of one major Brazilian geographer commenting on another, but, importantly, it is also a snapshot of a moment in time. More than other kinds of academic texts, this sort of homage is tied to space and time: the *Salão Nobre* of the Faculty of Philosophy, Letters and Human Sciences. We know who was in the audience, and we know why this speech was addressed to them. It also attests to the importance of intellectual friendship, a sometimes-overlooked aspect of the history of geographical thought (Craggs and Neate, 2019). Though the speech was later published in a journal, it is a textual artefact of an event. So too, in a different way, is Esson, Noxolo, Baxter, Daley and Byron’s piece, in that case the 2017 edition of the largest British geographical conference. Their text recalls and reflects on not only the conference event itself, but events leading up to it. Moments like conferences and investitures are significant in the life and reproduction of academic institutions: universities, faculties and departments. Their archives can be a powerful means to capture movements, progressions and stases in disciplinary histories (See Livingstone, 2005; Lamego, 2020). The textures of these occasions are familiar to all who work, or have studied, in universities. From the University of Pernambuco to the University of Oxford, their recognizably place-bound and idiosyncratic qualities are uncanny to witness. Why this is, and these universities’ inter-connected, colonial *and* decolonial, institutional histories, is not my concern here. Rather I want to emphasize the discipline-making qualities of these events, and the way they focus our attention on the structures and boundaries of academic knowledge production. In its forms of address, reference points and modes of politesse and gentle critique, the text speaks to the textures and qualities of Brazilian academic life. More specifically, it provides a fleeting insight into the debates and machinations of one important site in Brazilian academic history, the University of São Paulo and its faculty of humanities.
- 4 The installation of Santos as a Professor Emeritus is not only an important moment in his career, but a significant marker of canonization, and a reminder that the process of creating canons is not only textual, but practiced and social. This, then, is another reason we wanted to translate this text here, to speak to the commentaries on ‘on canonical geographies’ and offer a slice through a moment in the more-than-textual making of such canons.
- 5 Finally, the text captures a major quality of Santos’ legacy in Brazil: his hugely dominant status in late twentieth-century Brazilian geography. It is not only his body of work that is important, but his character, and his position in the discipline, as well as his movement through it. The text narrates Milton Santos’ journey from youthful politics, to global errancy, to outsider, to undisputed intellectual figurehead, and in so doing offers an important account of Brazilian geography and its recent history. But in translating it, we hope to make it available to scholars working in the different, anglophone contexts in which Santos is re-emerging as an important figure and being recruited to some parts of the project of ‘decolonising’ contemporary geography (Melgaço 2017). Translating this text therefore raises important questions about the relationship between canons, disciplinarity and ‘decolonising’ knowledge. Santos may well be an important thinker, whose work offers Northern, anglophone geography paths to decolonize its own history, but this can only be the case if we reckon with the

hegemony that he achieved by the end of his career in Brazilian geography. This text shows the intellectual enthronelement of a black scholar in a conservative discipline, in a country in which racism still structures social power and academic traditions.

- 6 The text also speaks clearly to the power of institutions, and the deeply traditional modality of academic formality. Meaningful decolonization of the discipline requires not only widening reading lists to include more black, indigenous and women scholars, but a deeper critique of the structures of power and knowledge of which academic disciplines are manifestations. Here Maria Adélia Aparecida de Souza's final comments on Santos suggest an important link between this text, and the one we have made its companion here: Esson, Noxolo, Baxter, Daley and Byron's 2017 essay. Souza makes clear that Santos was a prickly colleague, constantly pushing against the institutional structures of the university, unhappy with its management and its cooptation by outside interests and market logics. This restless and resistive relationship with academic institutions and with academic disciplinarity resonates with that second essay, translated into Portuguese here by Katielle Susane do Nascimento Silva. The echo of Santos' own practice in the university speaks to those authors' insistence that 'the discipline needs to ensure that the terms on which geographers start debates about decolonisation and decoloniality are determined by those on the margins who have been racialised as Indigenous and non-white by coloniality'.
- 7 The text raises and refracts a number of the dimensions of Souza's homage to Santos. Written over twenty years later, like Souza's text, it too is a snapshot of a moment in time, but unlike hers it is not written in a celebratory, but rather in a necessarily challenging, tenor. It critiques the structures of power, hierarchy and normativity which persist through university institutions. The paper offers a corrective to efforts to decolonize geography which do not reckon with white supremacist structures of power. The authors reposition the decolonization of knowledge from end to means, and intervene against what Tuck and Yang call 'moves to innocence' (Tuck and Yang, 2012): 'strategies and positionings that aim to relieve those who benefit from coloniality of feelings of guilt or complicity, without having to change their privileged position at all'. The paper is articulated in particular in relation to the UK, but its insistence on the need to challenge white supremacy across academic practice has resonance in other contexts, not least in Brazil. Its emphasis on what the authors call the '(non)status of race and indigeneity in the discipline' can speak, too, to debates over the history and present of Brazilian geography (Ratts, 2020; Santos, 2020).
- 8 In juxtaposing these two texts, and in translating each out of their original contexts, we suggest that their particularities and historical specificities can speak to one another. By reading them with and against one another, across languages, they offer a comparative perspective on geographical disciplinarity and enable insights on how to dismantle the hierarchies which underpin geographical knowledge production, practice and teaching in different spaces and times.

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ABSTRACTS

In this section we present two texts in translation. The first, translated out of Portuguese into English, is a homage to Milton Santos, on the occasion of his appointment as a Professor Emeritus in the University of São Paulo. The second, translated into Portuguese from English, is a 2017 challenge by a group of British geographers to confront white supremacy in the structures that configure and enable geographical knowledge production. Together they open up a debate about geography's disciplinarity and encourage us to interrogate not only the intellectual content of what makes geography, but the structures of power which run through geographical knowledge within and beyond universities.

Dans cette section, nous présentons deux textes traduits. Le premier, traduit depuis le Portugais vers l'Anglais, est un hommage à Milton Santos, à l'occasion de sa nomination en tant que Professeur émérite de l'Université de Sao Paulo. Le second, traduit à l'inverse de l'Anglais vers le Portugais, est un article écrit en 2017 par un groupe de géographes britanniques, qui confronte la suprématie blanche au sein des structures qui modèlent et conditionnent la production de connaissances géographiques. Ensemble, ces deux textes ouvrent un espace de débat autour du caractère disciplinaire de la géographie. Ils nous encouragent aussi à interroger non seulement le

contenu intellectuel de ce qui fait la géographie, mais aussi les structures de pouvoir qui structurent la production de connaissances géographie au sein et en dehors des universités.

Apresentamos nessa seção duas traduções: a primeira (do português para o inglês) é a homenagem a Milton Santos por ocasião de sua eleição como Professor Emérito na Universidade de São Paulo; a segunda (do inglês para o português) é o desafio de um grupo de geógrafos britânicos de confrontar as estruturas da hegemonia branca que configuram e habilitam a produção de conhecimento geográfico. Analisadas em conjunto, elas abrem um debate sobre disciplinaridade em geografia encorajando-nos a interrogar não apenas seu conteúdo intelectual, mas as estruturas de poder que as constitui dentro e fora das universidades.

En esta sección presentamos dos traducciones: la primera (del portugués al inglés) es un homenaje a Milton Santos con motivo de su elección como profesor emérito de la Universidad de São Paulo; el segundo (del inglés al portugués) es el desafío de un grupo de geógrafos británicos para enfrentar las estructuras de hegemonía blanca que configuran y posibilitan la producción de conocimiento geográfico. En conjunto, abren un debate sobre la disciplinariedad en geografía, animándonos a cuestionar no solo su contenido intelectual, sino las estructuras de poder que las constituyen dentro y fuera de las universidades.

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