

# GENDER, MUSEUMS AND SCIENCE: WANDA HANKE'S ETHNOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS (1933-1958)

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**Abstract:** *This paper will explore the significance of the expeditions undertaken by Wanda Hanke (1893-1958) in South America, of the networks she established in the region, as well as of her contributions to ethnological studies, in particular her compilation of extensive data and collections. Through Hanke's experience, it is possible to elucidate aspects of the history of ethnology and that of the history of museums in Brazil, as well as to emphasize the status of female participation in these areas. Wanda Hanke spent 25 years of her life studying the indigenous groups of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil and Paraguay and collecting ethnological objects for natural history museums. Trained in medicine and philosophy, she began to dedicate herself to ethnological studies in her forties, and she travelled alone, an uncommon characteristic among female scientists in the 1940s, in Brazil.*

**Keywords:** Wanda Hanke, ethnology, scientific expeditions, collections, gender, museology.

## Finding a place for female scientists in the History of the Sciences

Currently, science could be defined as a set of practices and methods that seek to prove the accuracy of arguments and theories through experimental verification, and the provision of sound evidence and logical arguments. Social groups that participate in scientific institutions are given the authority to decide what it means, what is interesting to be studied, and the research lines to be followed and they certainly influence the maintenance of these consensual truths. This is also why, from time to time, these truths are subject to change as well as those concerning society and people.<sup>1</sup>

Since the first half of the twentieth century, history studies contradicting the hegemonic ideal of science have begun to appear, and such concepts as objectivity and universality have started to be challenged. Historians have turned their attention to new subjects like the philosophical categories of naturalists of the past, their collections and their classification systems, horticulture, the curatorial activities of naturalists and the changing of the perspectives usually held at that moment.<sup>2</sup> From the mid-1960s, the importance of understanding the production of knowledge in its entirety was reinforced, by emphasizing the priority of local and tacit knowledge in the making of scientific paradigms.<sup>3</sup>

Since the 1970s, with the consolidation of social studies of Science and Technology, following the influence of the so-called New Cultural History,<sup>4</sup> research has been directed more toward understanding women's incorporation into scientific practice and the ways in which social meanings have been attributed to different genders, which were assimilated by these institutions.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Pestre, Dominique. "Por uma nova História Social e Cultural das Ciências: Novas Definições, Novos Objetos, Novas Abordagens". In *Cadernos IG/Unicamp*, Vol. 6, N 1, Campinas, 1996, pp. 3–56.

<sup>2</sup>Nicholas Jardine, James Secord and Emma Spary, eds. *Cultures of Natural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 3–15.

<sup>3</sup>Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962).

<sup>4</sup>The New Cultural History prioritized topics of study and groups previously excluded from historiographical narratives, like women, slaves and working class. Lynn Hunt, ed. *The New Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989); Michelle Perrot, *Os Excluídos da História – operários, mulheres e prisioneiros* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1988).

<sup>5</sup>Peter Burke. *O Que é a História Cultural?*, transl. Sérgio Goes de Paula and Jorge Zahar (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Rio de Janeiro, 2005); Evelyn Fox Keller, *Reflexiones sobre Género y Ciencia*, transl. Ana Sánchez (Valencia: IVEL, Edicions Alfons el Magnànim, 1989); Margaret Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America – Struggles and Strategies to 1940*

The feminist studies of science are still an unexplored field in some countries. Lopes and Costa point out that, in Brazil, it is still important to discuss the role that gender studies and feminist historiography have played in creating the visibility of gender and of the related scientific issues within the context of the history of sciences underappreciation in Brazil and several Latin American countries.<sup>6</sup>

The studies of gender and science began to consolidate through the work of feminist scholars who criticized the biological determinism and socio-biological precepts that influenced scientific doctrines about the inferiority of women. Further analysis produced within the History of Sciences field stimulated reflections on gender as a significant factor structuring institutions and scientific practices, and on the ways that gender hierarchies had directed and shaped research priorities and scientific theories.<sup>7</sup>

Throughout the history of Science and Technology the presence of women has been out of balance; however, some authors argue that their number is not as small as it seems. Their participation is also hidden by the concepts of science and technology, as well as by the devaluation of activities carried out by women. The lack of access to intellectual property also caused the records of female participation in scientific discoveries to remain hidden under their fathers, husbands or other family members' names, thereby excluding evidence of these women's participation from these documents.<sup>8</sup> By recovering stories and biographies of women in science, feminist historians and other researchers have emphasized the social, family or economic conditions that made it possible for these women to excel in an environment that was particularly hostile to them.

British and American historians analysed gender implications within the History of Science facing, among other things, the issue that women's activities remained outside Western culture mainstream analyses, unlike the activities carried out by men. This underrepresentation of women has meant that their activities were afforded less importance and that historians acknowledged few records of their achievements.<sup>9</sup>

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(Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984).

<sup>6</sup>Margaret Lopes and M. C. Costa, "Problematizando Ausências: mulheres, gênero e indicadores na História das Ciências," in *Gênero nas fronteiras do Sul*, ed. Maria Lygia Quartim de Moraes (Campinas: Pagu/Unicamp Campinas, 2005) 75–85.

<sup>7</sup>Londa Schiebinger, *Has Feminism Changed Science?* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

<sup>8</sup>Marta I. G. Garcia and Eulália Sedeño, "Ciência, Tecnologia e Gênero," in *Ciência, Tecnologia e Gênero: desvelando o feminino na construção do conhecimento*, ed. L. W. Santos et al. (Londrina: IAPAR, 2006) 31–76.

<sup>9</sup>H. Longino and S. G. Kohlstedt, "The Women, Gender and Science Question –

One of the key goals of feminist theorists has been the questioning of the absence of women in the history of social, scientific and political thought. Through this questioning, feminists who were engaged in social studies sought to establish a level playing field between men and women in science, emphasizing the need for certain aspects of scientific culture to be open to gender analysis and arguing that the problem could reside more in the structure of “Science” than in the quality of women’s performance. In this critical context, “gender and science studies” began to appear in the 1970s and focussed at first on the problem of developing strategies to increase the number of women working in science.<sup>10</sup> The term first appeared in 1978 as the title of an article by Evelyn Fox Keller; this would later lead to the publication of her book *Reflections on Gender and Sciences*, one of the most important texts on this particular field of study up to the present day.<sup>11</sup>

The emergence of these studies was also influenced by academic reflections on the consolidation of various feminist movements in the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries, and on their achievements and social transformations. Considering that even with the strengthening of feminist activities during the twentieth century, the situation of women in science still remained most unsatisfactory. Hence, feminists strove to build a new research design in the 1970s, which would be capable of breaking down the barriers caused by the traditional division between genders, and supporting the idea that the underpinnings of strongly established fields of knowledge should be probed.

Since the 1970s, gender and science studies have been expanded and have reached a wide variety of domains, including gender relations and the policies of the world’s museums. In the first decades of the twentieth century in Brazil, science was developed mainly in museums following the tradition of natural history. The most prominent ones were the National Museum of Rio de Janeiro (Museu Nacional), the São Paulo Museum (Museu Paulista), the Emílio Goeldi Museum (Museu Paraense Emílio Goeldi), and the Paraná Museum (Museu Paranaense). Collections were organized for classification purposes and the boundaries between the disciplinary fields were loose. For

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What do Research on Women in Science and Research on Gender and Science have to do with Each Other?,” *Osiris – Women, Gender and Science*, 12 (1997): 3–15; Maria Margaret Lopes, “Sobre convenções em torno de argumentos de autoridade,” *Cadernos Pagu/Unicamp* 27 (2006): 35–61.

<sup>10</sup>Londa Schiebinger, *Has Feminism Changed Science?* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001).

<sup>11</sup>Fox-Keller, *Reflexiones*.

example, zoology, botany, archaeology and ethnology, among others, were all disciplines that evolved within the scope of natural history.

Past studies of gender and of museums have attempted to analyze the experiences, biographies and positions occupied by females within these institutions, and have included androcentric biases, colonialist perspectives, and the reproduction of heterosexuality, class distinction and white privilege in museums displays, among others subjects.<sup>12</sup> Social historians and feminist scholars have highlighted the absence of women scientists in the traditional historical narratives and have called attention to the importance of biographies addressing the issues surrounding ordinary scientists, technicians, assistants, instrument makers and collectors as well as those focusing on disciplinary settings.<sup>13</sup> These new subjects, points of view, and theoretical propositions created an opportunity to incorporate more women into the history of science. Within this context, this paper intends to highlight Wanda Hanke's (1893–1958) experiences with respect to museum practices at the time. Hanke was an Austrian ethnologist who worked primarily in South America during the mid-twentieth century, and while on her scientific journeys, established connections with various museums in Brazil and in other countries—especially the Paraná and Vienna museums—leaving a significant legacy behind.

## Collecting practices and female underrepresentation

The majority of nineteenth-century foreign expeditions conducted in Brazil served to enrich the collections of European museums and botanical gardens. Concomitantly, the scope of museum and collecting practices also broadened in Brazil and in South America. The collections from expeditions from the nineteenth century reveal a will to discover, identify, categorize, and retrieve prizes in the form of specimens and strategic information. As a result, natural history and national histories were deeply connected. Even if the purpose of an expedition was not purely scientific, these practices were usually part of the travel programme, including the keeping of accurate observation records. The practices of these travellers, however, were not limited to introducing new elements to the existing body of literature or to gathering

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<sup>12</sup>Amy K. Levin, ed. *Gender, Sexuality and Museums: a Routledge Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

<sup>13</sup>Mary Jo Nye, "Scientific Biography: History of science by another means?," *Isis* 9 (2006): 322–329.

specimens for their collections. They also contributed to the development of fresh philosophical ideas about gender diversity and of different ways of thinking.<sup>14</sup>

Hence, the museums' social movement expanded in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, spreading new classification practices demanded by this evolutionary research. Collecting was also enhanced at the institutional level. In Brazil, the presence of official foreign expeditions became more acceptable in the nineteenth century and a significant number of institutions were built to enhance the body of scientific knowledge in the country, such as the Botanical Garden and the National Museum, both located in Rio de Janeiro. According to the scientific travel tradition, scientific exchanges around the globe were intensified and the work of researchers in the form of collections, and information catalogues established a lasting relationship with the museum world.<sup>15</sup>

Some studies analysed the associations between scientific expeditions, field research, heroism and masculinity images, especially during the nineteenth century, arguing that these ideas were responsible for diminishing the acceptance of women in several scientific areas, most notably those related to field research. The heroic narratives of scientific expeditions were central to the construction of masculine identities and made it difficult for women to be accepted in those roles. Relegated to the domestic environment, the adverse conditions and dangers that were an integral part of scientific journeys did not comply with the then existing image of a woman. Moreover, the concept of an appropriate gender to be a scientist was not peculiar to the field; it was present in all areas of scientific production.<sup>16</sup>

The past and current realities, however, are quite different. Nevertheless, these narratives still influence the categorization of scientists, the loose assumptions surrounding their characteristics and the popular notion of who is capable of being a scientist. Hence, they serve to further reinforce the masculinising portrayal of these practices. Women, historically associated with the domestic environment, did not seem suitable for such activities as field research, a very important part of the work in several scientific fields such as ethnology, zoology, botany and geology, among others. Schiebinger,

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<sup>14</sup>Jean-Marc Drouin, "De Linneo a Darwin: los viajeros naturalistas," in *Historia de las Ciencias*, ed. Michel Serres (transl. Madrid: Ediciones Catedra, 1991) 364–379.

<sup>15</sup>Maria Margaret Lopes, *O Brasil descobre a pesquisa científica: as ciências naturais e os museus no século XIX* (São Paulo: HUCITEC, UNB, 2009).

<sup>16</sup>H. Kuklick and E. Kohler, "Introduction," *Osiris—Science in the Field* 11 (1996): 1–14; Naomi Oreskes, "Objectivity and Women in Science," *Osiris—Science in the Field* 11 (1996): 87–113, 1996.

for example, highlighted how medical discourse in past centuries focused on the negative effects of travelling to the tropics on women's bodies:<sup>17</sup>

More often, however, physicians emphasized the grave dangers of travel to the Torrid Zone. In the seventeenth century, many taught that crossing the equator led to infertility. For this reason Dutch women were reluctant to migrate to Brazil. Summing up medical opinion at the end of eighteenth century, Johann Blumenbach, a German physiologist, emphasized that white women taken to very warm climates succumbed to "copious menstruation, which almost always ended, in short space of time, in fatal haemorrhages of the uterus." Many women feared that if they gave birth in the tropics, they would deliver children resembling the native peoples of those areas.

Some studies indicate that this notion began to fade at the end of the eighteenth century. And, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, some of the sciences that rely heavily on field research—such as botany, ethnology and anthropology—were particularly receptive to women who had achieved parity with men in field research more easily than they did within the scientific institutions.<sup>18</sup>

Field research was one of the practices that accompanied the consolidation of modern science, having been allied first with imperialism in European countries and later in the United States. During the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries, a debate concerning what would be the privileged space for the development of scientific knowledge surfaced. On the one hand, researchers inside the institutions relied on the opportunity to extensively analyse the specimens that came to their hands, using catalogues and libraries to gather information that provided a basis for comparisons and classification according to the knowledge base previously established by other scientists. On the other, field scientists had the advantage of observing subjects, objects and research specimens in their natural habitats and thus were capable of making contextualized observations. However, they lacked the infrastructure of an institution that could provide the comparison tools to carry out an in-depth analysis.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup>Londa Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004), 32.

<sup>18</sup>Kuklick and Kohler "Introduction," 12.

<sup>19</sup>Dorinda Outram, "New Spaces in Natural History," in *Cultures of Natural History*, ed. Jardine, Secord and Spary, 249–265.

The discussion behind these two arenas is actually about the concept of scientific objectivity and the questioning surrounding the issue of who would be the most able to conduct in-depth analyses more accurately. From the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth century, the practice of scientific analysis moved increasingly into laboratories and public institutions, the policies of which discouraged the participation of women. This was in spite of the fact that the more relaxed limits of the practice of field research could have, in a way, facilitated the incorporation of women into these activities. Thus, the strong institutionalization of science, which occurred in the nineteenth century, contributed to the official exclusion of women from scientific practices, while in field research they did not need to gain entry to a closed institution.<sup>20</sup> An example of this trend was the tradition of women botanists in England in the early nineteenth century, which was facilitated by the conventional view of women's natures and roles and by the accepted view of women as gardeners in the fields and woods surrounding their family homes. As a result, women were viewed as only being capable of collecting, identifying and illustrating plants, but not of participation in public institutions.<sup>21</sup>

Recently, scientific travels were reassessed by historiography focusing on issues such as the circulation of knowledge and the trading of specimens and objects. This trend characterizes a new period in the travel literature.<sup>22</sup> It also serves to include more elements within these new areas of study that provide a different perspective on how to explore new aspects and particulars never before considered in the development of science. These new points of view extended the established body of knowledge and amplified the existing definition of who is capable of performing scientific research. Gender analysis has consequently shown its potential to offer new avenues of thinking and can contribute to better ways of knowing the world precisely because it offers fresh perspectives, asks new questions and provides a broader view of the world.<sup>23</sup>

With regard to Brazil, changes in social and scientific practices occurred in the twentieth century, which promoted a significant advancement in the

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<sup>20</sup>Schiebinger *Has Feminism Changed Science?*; Oreskes. "Objectivity and Women in Science," 87–113.

<sup>21</sup>Ann B. Shteir, *Cultivating Women, Cultivating Science: Flora's Daughters and Botany in England 1760 to 1860* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

<sup>22</sup>Maria Margaret Lopes and Alda L. Heizer, *Colecionismo, práticas de campo e representações* (Campina Grande: EDUEPB, 2011).

<sup>23</sup>Londa Schiebinger, *Gendered Innovations in Science and Engineering* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 4.

nature of women's activities that is evident, for example, in the expansion of women's access to higher education<sup>24</sup> and in the significant number of female travellers engaging in scientific expeditions across the country.<sup>25</sup> The professionalization and institutionalization of science, which increased the demand for people working in these areas, and the influence of the feminist movement, fostered these changes.<sup>26</sup>

To better understand women's role in scientific expeditions in the first half of the twentieth century, a survey was conducted on the documentation of the Brazilian Inspection Council of Artistic and Scientific Expeditions (1933–1968).<sup>27</sup> Thirty-eight female names were found among the requests for scientific journeys in Brazil and most of them involved expeditions in the field of ethnology (nine cases).<sup>28</sup> In this survey, one name stood out for her impressive work, which was conducted in Brazil and in some other South American countries. The name was that of the ethnologist Wanda Hanke, who dedicated herself to the study of different indigenous groups. Ethnological collections were of great interest to Brazilian natural history museums at the time and she was able, in some way, to enter this world.

The large number of women who entered this area of research indicates that female scientists had found opportunities to work there. This trend had already been addressed in studies of female anthropologists and in the consolidation of this field of study in Brazil.<sup>29</sup>

Ethnological research was developed within the scope of Natural History and was intertwined with linguistic, biological, medical and geographic studies. Arguing about the history of Ethnology in the eighteenth century, Bravo differentiates it from Anthropology stating that, within that context, the first was more connected to linguistic evidence and the latter was usu-

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<sup>24</sup>Nara Azevedo and Luiz Otávio Ferreira, "Modernização, políticas públicas e sistema de gênero no Brasil: educação e profissionalização feminina entre as décadas de 1920 e 1940," *Cadernos Pagu/Unicamp* 27 (2006): 213–254.

<sup>25</sup>Mariana M. O. Sombrio, "Em busca pelo campo: Ciências, coleções gênero e outras histórias sobre mulheres viajantes no Brasil em meados do século XX" (PhD diss., University of Campinas, 2014).

<sup>26</sup>Margaret Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America – Struggles and Strategies to 1940* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984).

<sup>27</sup>Sombrio, "Em busca pelo campo."

<sup>28</sup>Followed by botany and zoology (seven cases), astronomy (six cases), geology (two cases), archaeology (two cases), and others (twelve cases). Sombrio, "Em busca pelo campo," 36.

<sup>29</sup>Mariza Corrêa, *Antropólogas e Antropologia* (Belo Horizonte: Editora UFMG, 2003); Adélia Maria Miglievich Ribeiro, "Heloísa Alberto Torres e Marina São Paulo de Vasconcelos: Entrelaçamento de círculos e formação das ciências sociais na cidade do Rio de Janeiro" (PhD diss., Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, 2000).

ally associated with the material evidence of human remains. He also stated that:

The success of ethnological research was dependent on gaining reliable access to information about the people of other nations . . . Individual ethnologists took advantage of natural history correspondence networks to exchange information about vocabularies and to acquire artefacts [...]<sup>30</sup>

Ethnology was one of those possible forms of anthropology practiced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In a study concerning the History of Fieldwork on Sociocultural Anthropology, Kuklick mentions these various types of and possibilities for anthropological studies in this period:<sup>31</sup>

Unless otherwise specified, my references to “anthropology” are to its sociocultural subspecies, not other subspecies (in the United States, biological anthropology, linguistic anthropology, and archaeology; disciplinary arrangements vary from one country to another). In Britain and British-influenced places, this was called “ethnology” in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; “cultural anthropology”, “social anthropology” and sometimes “sociology” during the interwar period, and (usually) “social anthropology” after the association of Social Anthropologists was founded in 1946 [...]. The word “ethnography” denotes straightforward data collection. At different moments, there have been distinctly different analytic emphases in different national contexts.

The early twentieth century was a time of displacement in the history of anthropology. There were major changes in the theoretical orientation, because the discipline had been linked to medical departments, to certain biological aspects and to the development of racial theories, and had started to clearly move in the direction of a new endeavour within the scope of social sciences, which was focussed on the analysis of cultural aspects, the diversity of groups and societies, new concepts and ways of organization, and on leading to a new understanding of diversity as something not to be

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<sup>30</sup>Michael T. Bravo, “Ethnological encounters,” in *Cultures of Natural History*, ed. Jardine and Spary, 342.

<sup>31</sup>Henrika Kuklick, “Personal Equations: Reflections on the History of Fieldwork, with Special Reference to Sociocultural Anthropology,” *Isis* 12 (2011): 2.

hierarchized but rather to be understood. During the twentieth century, ethnological studies were gradually incorporated and transformed by these new anthropological theories.

In Brazil, anthropological institutionalization began to occur in the second half of the nineteenth century. In 1876, the first anthropology section was created at the National Museum of Rio de Janeiro, which was divided into the studies of zoology, anatomy and palaeontology.<sup>32</sup> It was also in this year that the first course in anthropology was created in Brazil, at the same Museum. The course covered the study of human anatomy and physiology, as well as addressed some social issues.<sup>33</sup>

The next section will explore the expeditions carried out by Wanda Hanke, describing her work in South America and the ways in which it was received by the museums and by the scientific community. Her experiences can elucidate aspects of the history of ethnology in Brazil, and advance various concepts held in this field of study. Connections were also established between public policies and the issues related to various indigenous peoples, which served to emphasize female participation in this area.

Hanke's story and work are still not widely circulated. Most of the data presented here comes from the Paraná Museum, where a large collection of letters that she exchanged with Loureiro Fernandes, the Museum's Director at the time, can be found. These documents allowed the author to retell some aspects of her travels and her collecting practices in Brazil, Bolivia, Argentina and Paraguay. Given the scarcity of biographies on female scientists, this kind of information provides an important contribution toward incorporating more women into the collective memory of science.

## Wanda Hanke's place in ethnology museums in Brazil

Wanda Hanke was an Austrian researcher who dedicated 25 years of her life to the study of indigenous groups in South America. According to her letters and other documents, she engaged in expeditions on her own in at least four different countries: Brazil, Bolivia, Argentina, and Paraguay. She was born in 1893 in Opava, Silesia, a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, now belonging to the Czech Republic, and died in the city of Benjamin Constant, Amazon, Brazil, in 1958, while on one of her trips.

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<sup>32</sup>Lopes, O Brasil.

<sup>33</sup>Adriana Keuller, "Os Estudos Físicos de Antropologia no Museu Nacional do Rio de Janeiro: Cientistas, objetos, ideias e Instrumentos (1876–1939)" (PhD diss., University of São Paulo, 2008), 66.

Prior to coming to South America, Wanda Hanke had completed degrees in Philosophy, Medicine and Law, and only started to devote herself to ethnological studies in her forties. Despite the fact that she had no specific training in the field of ethnology and her late entrance into that field, her work as an independent collector made a substantial contribution to the expansion of various museum collections in both South America and Europe. Her unconventional experience also provides historians with materials relevant to the study of the participation of women in scientific practices during the first half of the twentieth century.

By the time Hanke had collected her indigenous artefacts, a significant reorganization of scientific work was under way. The previous division of labour, for example, between collectors and theorists was eroding: “the once-separate tasks of accumulating and interpreting evidence were increasingly likely to be joined in the persons of professional-formally trained and formally employed scientists.”<sup>34</sup>

Therefore, Wanda Hanke was not well accepted in museums and other scientific institutions in Brazil. The work of independent collectors, which was usual in the past two centuries, was being transformed by the institutionalization and professionalization of sciences. As mentioned above, the first half of the twentieth century was a period of changes for anthropological studies. Besides the circumstances described above, Hanke’s difficulty in regard to being accepted can also be related to the fact that she was a single woman travelling alone for research purposes in the 1930s and 1940s, without solid institutional support, in a very sexist world (figure 1).

There were also other independent collectors working in Brazil at that time. Curt Nimuendajú (1883–1945), for example, became well known and was recognized for his contribution to ethnological science. Concerning Nimuendajú, Grupioni has argued that his devotion to collecting was not just a way to finance his expeditions, but was also a significant part of his ethnographic studies, which subsequently produced meaningful sets of materials and information on indigenous people with whom he had had contact in Brazil.<sup>35</sup> With the support of the Brazilian scientific community, he sent collections on various indigenous people to the National Museum of Rio de Janeiro, to the Emilio Goeldi Museum and to the Berlin Museum; he also worked for the São Paulo Museum and for the Indigenous Protection Service (SPI).<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Kuklick, “Personal Equations,” 2.

<sup>35</sup>Luis D. B. Grupioni, *Os etnólogos no Conselho de Fiscalização das Expedições Artísticas e Científicas do Brasil* (São Paulo: Editora HUCITEC, ANPOCS, 1998).

<sup>36</sup>In Portuguese: Serviço de Proteção aos Índios (SPI), Brazilian federal organization



Figure 1: Wanda Hanke and a Kaingang couple, in Faxinal-PR, Brazil. Courtesy of Museu Paranaense (Paraná Museum), Secretaria de Estado da Cultura, Governo do Estado do Paraná, Brazil.

Because Wanda Hanke was not institutionally affiliated, she had to fund her own fieldtrips with resources generated from the sale of her collections. Her financial arrangements made her unpopular among some Brazilian museums and other institutions because the Brazilian government was then struggling to prevent the illegal collecting of indigenous artefacts and natural specimens. Beginning in 1933, all travellers on scientific journeys, both men and women, were required to have special permission to collect specimens or artefacts in Brazil.

Hanke never obtained this license, which was granted by the Brazilian Inspection Council of Artistic and Scientific Expeditions (CFE, 1933–1968)—the federal organization in charge of reviewing foreign scientific expeditions, in charge of the requesting of duplicates of those objects collected by individual travellers, and of those persons conducting scientific missions. Wanda Hanke attempted to obtain her license twice, in 1933 and in 1940, but the Council refused to provide her with the required permission to work and travel around the country.<sup>37</sup>

As noted above, in those days, the Brazilian government as well as var-  
now extinct, having been replaced by the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI – Fundação Nacional do Índio).

<sup>37</sup>Mariana M. O. Sombrio, “Traços da Participação Feminina na Institucionalização de Práticas Científicas no Brasil: Bertha Lutz e o Conselho de Fiscalização das Expedições Artísticas e Científicas do Brasil, 1939–1951” (MA diss. , Campinas University, 2007).

ious groups of scientists, and university professors were striving to create new laws and guidelines to improve the development of the national sciences and to protect the country's artistic and natural heritage. Since 1930, President Getúlio Vargas and his government had already launched strong nationalistic policies including the consolidation of different State organizations devoted to the protection of Brazil's national heritage, such as the above mentioned CFE.

Although the practice was illegal, for many years Hanke travelled to different Brazilian regions and negotiated the purchase of many ethnical artefacts and archaeological materials, as well as taking pictures of the indigenous peoples she visited; she later published articles based on her investigations. The Council's refusal to provide her with the necessary license caused her numerous difficulties, but it did not prevent her from carrying out her intended work. For example, she often faced problems regarding the transportation of her newly acquired materials and her lack of acceptance by the local scientific community. Her failure to obtain a license was not enough to stop her work, but it resulted in a lack of credibility in scientific circles that could have facilitated her entrance to various areas for research. At the same time, she benefitted from the difficulties faced by the government in controlling the influx of foreign visitors to the vast Brazilian territory, and she was able to rely on the collaboration of some Brazilian people, especially in locations that were distant from the major cities.

Today, a significant collection of documents and of other source materials provides sound evidence of Wanda Hanke's ethnological work. In Brazil, she collaborated to a considerable extent with the Museum of Paraná (Museu Paranaense), which is located in Curitiba, where a variety of ethnographic objects and photographs supplied by her are kept to this day (figure 2 and 3).

The correspondence she exchanged with the anthropologist Loureiro Fernandes (1903–1977), then the director of the Museum, and the articles she published in the Museum's journal<sup>38</sup> in the 1940s serve to elucidate her contribution to the study of indigenous groups and can still be used as a source for linguistic, historiographical, anthropological and indigenous research.

According to the CFE's legislation, every foreign expedition seeking to collect natural species or material objects had to supply duplicates for each specimen collected, which would then be given to various Brazilian institutions. Normally, these samples were sent to the National Museum of Rio de Janeiro, then the most influential scientific institution, which was directly

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<sup>38</sup> "Arquivos do Museu Paranaense."



Figure 2: Maccá men, in Paraguay (Estero Patiño – Chaco Boreal). Photo taken by Wanda Hanke, Paranaense Museum collection. Courtesy of Museu Paranaense (Paraná Museum), Secretaria de Estado da Cultura, Governo do Estado do Paraná, Brazil.



Figure 3: Young Maccás, in Paraguay (Estero Patiño – Chaco Boreal). Photo taken by Wanda Hanke, Paranaense Museum collection. Courtesy of Museu Paranaense (Paraná Museum), Secretaria de Estado da Cultura, Governo do Estado do Paraná, Brazil.

linked to the CFE through its representatives and political influence.

In 1933, when Wanda Hanke first attempted to obtain permission to

carry out her expeditions, the National Museum's representative in the CFE was Heloísa Alberto Torres (1895–1977), an anthropologist who became famous for being the first woman to become the director of this Museum, in 1938. After leaving the CFE in 1938, Torres was succeeded by the zoologist and botanist Bertha Lutz (1894–1976), who had also worked in the National Museum and who was the most important suffragette leader in Brazil.<sup>39</sup>

The presence of Lutz and Torres in the Brazilian scientific community was indicative of the changes in the professional status of women. Both were highly respected professionals and were responsible for developing extensive networks in their respective disciplinary fields. Lutz is well known for her feminist militancy in Brazilian historiography and Torres was supportive of women's emancipation, despite not having made the issue a public struggle, as did Bertha Lutz.<sup>40</sup> Their refusal to accept Wanda Hanke's requests for a license was probably more related to her lack of institutional affiliation, the isolated conditions of her work, and the institutional disputes among Brazilian Museums.

Among the scientists who visited Brazil to carry out scientific research in the early decades of the twentieth century there were many couples, such as Claude Levi-Strauss (1908–2009) and Dinah Levi-Strauss (1911–1999), both of which were anthropologists; the archaeologists Betty Meggers (1921–2012) and Clifford Evans (1920–1981), and the Herkovitz couple.<sup>41</sup> There were also cases in which the scientists' wives played the role of research assistants, e.g., the role played by Cecilia (unknown dates of birth and death), the wife of Charles Weagley (1913–1991).<sup>42</sup> All of these couples obtained the CFE's permission to carry out scientific expeditions.

According to Corrêa, who studied the presence and work of female anthropologists in Brazil, in the beginning of the twentieth century, most of

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<sup>39</sup>Maria Margaret Lopes, Lia Souza and Mariana Sombrio, "A construção da invisibilidade das mulheres nas ciências: a exemplaridade de Bertha Maria Júlia Lutz (1894-1976)," *Revista Gênero* 5 (2004): 97–109.

<sup>40</sup>Maria Margaret Lopes, "Proeminência na mídia, reputação em ciências: a construção de uma feminista paradigmática e cientista normal no Museu Nacional do Rio de Janeiro," *História, Ciências, Saúde-Manguinhos*, 15 (2008): 73–95; Mariza Corrêa, "Dona Heloísa e a pesquisa de campo," *Revista de Antropologia* 40 (1997): 11–54.

<sup>41</sup>Melville Jean Herskovits (1895–1963) and Frances S. Herskovits (1898–1972) were both American anthropologists. The Herkovitz expedition is also recorded in CFE documents.

<sup>42</sup>"In 1941 Wagley married Cecília Roxo, whom he met at Columbia where she was studying library sciences. Cecília was from a prominent Brazilian family and through her family ties Wagley was able to maintain multiple connections with Brazilian intellectuals and literary figures of the era [...]." Richard Pace, "The legacy of Charles Weagley: an introduction," *Boletim do Museu Paraense Emílio Goeldi-Ciências Humanas* 9 (2014), 597–615.

these were wives of well-known anthropologists, e.g., “Donald Pierson’s wife, David Maybury-Lewis’s wife, Darcy Ribeiro’s wife, Eduardo Galvão’s wife [...]”<sup>43</sup> And the list goes on. Those who adopted their husband’s names easily vanished from the historiographical narratives, making their rediscovery difficult: “The practice of collaboration clearly has profound implications for the work and careers of both partners, but historically it has been the women in such partnerships who have carried the burden of society’s asymmetric evaluation of the genders.”<sup>44</sup> But this was not so in Hanke’s case.

A significant aspect of Hanke’s situation was her independence, both economic and otherwise. She usually travelled to unfamiliar regions unaccompanied by any employee, family member, partner or other scientists, which was then uncommon (and still is).<sup>45</sup>

One recipient of her work was the Ethnological Museum of Vienna, which received various indigenous artefacts and documents supplied by Hanke.<sup>46</sup> It was there that she established contact with another female ethnologist traveller, Etta Becker Donner (1911–1975),<sup>47</sup> who also carried out ethnological expeditions in Brazil, in the 1950s. By the time Donner came to Brazil, she was a widow and the curator at the Vienna Ethnological Museum, in charge of the American section. Information on both expeditions was recorded in the Brazilian CFE archive, which was the starting point of the research underlying this article.<sup>48</sup>

## Wanda Hanke’s ethnological expeditions in South America (1933–1958)

According to Liener,<sup>49</sup> Wanda Hanke first came to South America on a visit to Argentina in 1934. She spent a month in Buenos Aires to learn Spanish and, subsequently, went to the north of the country to meet with and study

<sup>43</sup>Corrêa, *Antropólogas e Antropologia*, 21.

<sup>44</sup>Helena Pycior, Nancy Slack and Pnina Abir-AM eds., *Creative Couples in the Sciences. Lives of Women in Science* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1996), ix.

<sup>45</sup>Corrêa, Mariza. *Antropólogas e Antropologia*, Editora UFMG, Belo Horizonte, 2003.

<sup>46</sup>Stefanie Maria Liener, *Wanda Hanke (1893–1958)–Eine österreichische Ethnologin in Südamerika* (Diplomarbeit, Universität Wien, Austria, 2010).

<sup>47</sup>Etta Becker-Donner served as director of the Vienna Ethnology Museum from 1955 to 1975. As the first (and for many years the only) female director of a state museum she was a well-known and highly respected personality in the Austrian and international museum scene (Source: <http://www.weltmuseumwien.at>; accessed on 09.17.2015).

<sup>48</sup>CFE.T.2.303, MAST – RJ (Etta Becker-Donner).

<sup>49</sup>Liener, Wanda Hanke.

the Caingúá Indians. From there she went to Paraguay and worked as a doctor for a while to finance expeditions among the Guayaki people. In June 1936, she returned to Buenos Aires and three months later returned to Europe. While in Vienna, she tried to raise funds for her expeditions and sent a proposal for a research project to the *Museum of Ethnology* (*Museum für Völkerkunde*), but to no avail.

In 1937, she returned to Argentina. Initially, her plan was to engage in a two-year expedition there, and she did not return to Europe for the next eighteen years. During this second time in Argentina, Hanke mainly devoted her work to archaeology, but she also collected objects from the Matakó people, the Toba and from other Argentine ethnic groups.

Hanke visited the Caingúá Indians once again before travelling to Santa Catarina, Brazil, in 1939, to collect artefacts and study groups of Botocudos, despite the CFE's resistance. To conduct this study, employees of the SPI<sup>50</sup> helped her and she stayed in a Brazilian government station called Duque de Caxias while she collected ethnical objects and anthropometric data. She also recorded the group's language and a Botocudo myth. Her linguistic notes would later become her main work.<sup>51</sup>

Until the 1950s, linguistic and anthropological studies were really interconnected, and, in spite of the distance that developed over the following years, these disciplines kept some research contacts.<sup>52</sup> Today, in Brazil, it is still possible to find numerous quotations taken from Wanda Hanke's papers especially those related to her studies of indigenous linguistics.<sup>53</sup>

CFE documents currently retain two requests from Hanke to obtain permission to conduct research on Brazilian indigenous groups, the first dating

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<sup>50</sup>In Portuguese: Serviço de Proteção aos Índios (SPI), Brazilian federal organization now extinct, having been replaced by the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI – Fundação Nacional do Índio).

<sup>51</sup>Liener, Wanda Hanke, 106–108.

<sup>52</sup>Mariza Corrêa, *História da Antropologia no Brasil (1930–1960)*, testemunhos (São Paulo: Vértice, Editora Revista dos Tribunais (Campinas-SP) and Editora da Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 1987).

<sup>53</sup>For example, she is mentioned in: D'Angelis, Wilmar. "O Primeiro Século de registro da língua Kaingang (1842-1950): valor e uso da documentação etnográfica," Portal Kaingang (<http://www.portalkaingang.org>; accessed on 09.17.2015), 2003; L. Almeida Santos, "Classes de palavras Kaingang: Nome," in *Anais do 6º Encontro Celsul – Círculo de Estudos Linguísticos do Sul*, n.d. ([www.celsul.org.br/Encontros/06/Coordenadas/20.pdf](http://www.celsul.org.br/Encontros/06/Coordenadas/20.pdf); accessed on 09.17.2015); Gudschinsky, S. "Fragmentos de Ofaié - A descrição de uma língua extinta," n.d. ([www.sil.org/americas/brasil/publicns/ling/OFFrag.pdf](http://www.sil.org/americas/brasil/publicns/ling/OFFrag.pdf); accessed on 09.17.2015); Rodrigues, Aryon D. "Review: Hanke, W. Völkerkundliche Forschungen in Südamerika," *American Anthropologist* 69 (1967): 529–530.

from 1933 and the second from 1940. They were refused on both occasions. The first time,<sup>54</sup> her request was sent through the Austrian embassy and in the research description she appended her objectives: exploring unknown regions of the Xingu Rivers, notably the Tapajós River and its tributaries, and undertaking a wide variety of psychological, ethnic, linguistic, astronomical, meteorological and cartographic research in the same region. She also mentioned that two other scientists would take part in the expedition, Franz Schmuckerschlag, an ethnologist and philologist, and Sigmund Buchberger, a geographer.<sup>55</sup>

Hanke added that the mission had been in preparation since 1932, had the support of the Austrian leading scientific institutions, and had a financial grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. The planned itinerary included various cities and rivers, described in the following order: “Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Bauru, Porto Esperança, Corumbá, Cuiabá, Rosario, Diamantina, Paranatinga River, Kuliseu River, Kuluene, Xingú River [...] Souzel, Porto Moz, Amazon River and Belém do Pará.”<sup>56</sup> She also requested that the Brazilian government provide her with free transportation on railways and Brazilian ships and, if possible, further financial support.

The first official response was written by the Brazilian scientist Paulo Campos Porto (1889–1968), a CFE member. Porto made a positive evaluation of Hanke’s request, especially since she claimed to have the support of leading Austrian scientific institutions, but he recommended that the financial support to her mission should not be granted as there was no basis to consider her expedition as one of national interest; he also added that national scientists were capable of carrying out similar research. He pointed to the need to adapt her official request to the formalities of Brazilian law, that is, to CFE rules, notably by filling in correctly the application and providing the required information, otherwise the license could not be granted.

Prior to Porto’s evaluation, a confidential document signed by the Director of the National Department of Plant Production (DNPV)<sup>57</sup> was sent to Porto, warning CFE about new information obtained at the Consulate of Vienna. This letter reads:

[...] For about two years Mrs. Hanke had been hospitalized in a special mental hospital in order to get rid of her morphine ad-

<sup>54</sup>CFE.T.2.002, MAST (Document of the Museum of Astronomy and Related Sciences) – Rio de Janeiro-RJ, Brazil.

<sup>55</sup>Besides the CFE documents, no further reference on these two men was found; not even their birth and death dates.

<sup>56</sup>CFE.T.2.002, MAST, RJ, doc. 1.

<sup>57</sup>In Portuguese: Departamento Nacional de Produção Vegetal (DNPV).

diction. Her current health status still presents abnormal mental symptoms.

It is worth noting that Mrs. Hanke told the Consul of Brazil in Vienna that she lacked resources to fund her expedition and only a grant from a German publishing agency and another from a Viennese radio company were available, the latter having requested her to deliver a lecture upon her return to Austria. She hoped to get some funding from the Rockefeller Foundation and the Brazilian government, but she was still waiting for a response.

These facts inspire little confidence in her scientific expedition, which in addition does not include recognized scientists, nor has the human resources fit to carry out the technical work [...]

All things considered, I have already sent a note to the Austrian Embassy, expressing our regret that the information on Mrs. Hanke does not allow our government to grant her permission to carry out the above mentioned expedition.<sup>58</sup>

No trace of the presence of the two men mentioned by Hanke as expedition members, an ethnologist and a geographer, was ever found. In all of the articles she has published, she is described as the single author and the two names mentioned above do not appear in any of her letters.<sup>59</sup> After the intervention of the DNPV's director and the disclosure of the information questioning her mental health, her request was denied.

Notwithstanding these issues, the lack of sufficient means to fund her expedition was of paramount importance in CFE's refusal to grant her permission for her expedition. Subsequently, financial hardship was one of the main obstacles faced by Hanke in the years during which she lived in South America. Her letters reveal that most of the time she survived only on the money earned from selling items from her collections. The verbal support she claimed to have had from Austrian museums and other scientific institutions was, indeed, informal, and the sum that she received from the radio company mentioned in the letter above was small, which together with the lack of an institutional framework made it very difficult for her to get the CFE's permission. In addition, requesting funds from the Brazilian government was at that time unusual, as most scientific expeditions did not

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<sup>58</sup>CFE.T.2.002, doc. 4 (original version in Portuguese, 1933), MAST (Document of the Museum of Astronomy and Related Sciences) – Rio de Janeiro-RJ, Brazil.

<sup>59</sup>Letters between Wanda Hanke and Loureiro Fernandes, Paraná Museum Archives (Museu Paranaense), Paraná State Government, Curitiba-PR, Brazil.

address the Brazilian government for that purpose. Concomitantly, it was revealed that she effectively lacked Austrian institutional support.

The objects, which Hanke had collected were sold to institutions such as the museums of Paraná, São Paulo and Vienna and sometimes they were even donated. Selling ethnological artefacts to museums was then a common practice, but in the first decades of the twentieth century, especially in the 1930s, the Brazilian government was tightening its control of indiscriminate collecting, as mentioned before, and demanding that the results of foreign expeditions should also contribute to the development of national institutions.

In September 1940, Hanke sent a new request to the CFE. This time she tried to get permission to personally conduct a two-year expedition for the purpose of studying the indigenous people of Bananal Island and of the Araguaia River region. She also planned to collect materials used by the natives to hunt snakes, centipedes and insects, which supplied the Butantan Institute.<sup>60</sup> The plan was that the vast majority of these materials would be offered to the National Museum of Rio de Janeiro and the remainder to both the Butantan Institute and the Museum of the College of Philosophy,<sup>61</sup> in São Paulo. She also stated her wish to donate some of the materials to the Museum of La Plata, in Argentina.<sup>62</sup>

In this second request, Hanke described her relationships with various scientific institutions of São Paulo. And in fact, there are numerous ethnological objects supplied by Hanke in the 1940s in the São Paulo Museum. Her name appears in the 1949 annual report of the Ethnology Section as a donor of various indigenous objects.<sup>63</sup> Also, in a letter written to Fernandes,<sup>64</sup> then the Director of the Paraná Museum, she described her friendship with the zoologist Wolfgang Buecherl (1911–1985), who worked at Butantan in the 1940s, and asked Fernandes to send to Buecherl's copies of the articles that she had published in the Museum's journal.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>Butantan is an important Brazilian scientific institution located in São Paulo-SP.

<sup>61</sup>In Portuguese: Museu da Faculdade de Filosofia de São Paulo.

<sup>62</sup>CFE.T.2.170, MAST – RJ.

<sup>63</sup>São Paulo Museum Archives: Arquivo Permanente do Museu Paulista, Fundo Museu Paulista, Série: Relatórios de Atividades, Data: 1949.

<sup>64</sup>Letter from Wanda Hanke to Loureiro Fernandes, Assunción, 09 September, 1947, Paraná Museum Archives.

<sup>65</sup>Articles published by Wanda Hanke in 1947, at Paraná Museum Journal (named *Arquivos do Museu Paranaense*): “Los índios Botocudos de Santa Catarina Brasil” (The Botocudos Indians of Santa Catarina Brasil), “Apuntes sobre el idioma caingangue de los Botocudos de Sta. Catarina, Brasil” (Notes on caingangue language of Botocudos Indians, Santa Catarina, Brasil), “Vocabulario del dialecto caingangue de la Serra do

Hanke's second attempt to obtain official permission was also rejected on bureaucratic grounds. According to CFE regulations, all applications from foreigners should be sent through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Despite the support from the Paraná Museum, Hanke's relationships were still too informal and only Fernandes addressed the CFE on her behalf. In a letter to CFE he acknowledged Hanke's links to the Paraná Museum as an independent researcher and collector who had supplied collections to the Museum.<sup>66</sup> In addition, in the 1940s, the Second World War completely altered the international scene. Because Brazil was aligned with the Allies, it was cautious with respect to its relationship with Germany and with the countries under Germany's influence and control. CFE's official papers pointed to the absence of documents from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the reason to deny Hanke her permission, but in their report they also mentioned the diplomatic subtleties involved.

In addition, her letters also reveal that she had established contact with Herbert Baldus (1899–1970), a well-known German anthropologist who had moved to São Paulo in the 1930s. He had first worked in the Free School of Sociology and Politics,<sup>67</sup> and then became a researcher at the São Paulo Museum. In a letter sent to Fernandes, Baldus wrote about his contact with Hanke:<sup>68</sup>

According to my suggestion, Dr. Wanda Hanke travelled to study the Opaie, South-eastern Indians of Mato Grosso, a group we do not know much about and whose existence she, like many others, ignored completely. Recently, she sent me the results of her investigations to be published in the journal of the São Paulo Museum. Her studies were, however, mainly linguistic, not suitable to our journal, which is not devoted to linguistics. I suggested Dr. Wanda Hanke to publish in the journal of the Paraná Museum and I have just received another letter from her asking me to send you the manuscript. In fact, she requested a sum amounting to 2,000 *cruzeiros*<sup>69</sup> for her work. I think she deserves some financial aid because she is apparently very dedicated to the indigenous and ethnological studies and, besides

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Chagu, Paraná" (Vocabulary of Caingangue Dialect, from Serra do Chagu, Paraná).

<sup>66</sup>Letter from Loureiro Fernandes to Wanda Hanke, Curitiba, 20 December, 1941, Paraná Museum Archives.

<sup>67</sup>In Portuguese: Escola Livre de Sociologia e Política.

<sup>68</sup>Letter from Herbert Baldus to Loureiro Fernandes, São Paulo, 22 October, 1948, Paraná Museum Archives.

<sup>69</sup>The Brazilian currency.

that, according to her last letter, she has been very sick.

Her address is the Paraguayan Consulate, in Ponta Porã.

Baldus was much sought after by German researchers who travelled to Brazil and was a prolific contributor to numerous ethnological publications in the German-speaking countries. He had established contacts with many anthropologists from those countries creating a “kind of German connection in the second half of the twentieth century in Brazil” and had established then as an important international network.<sup>70</sup> As the letter quoted above suggests, Hanke was also one of his correspondents and followed some of his research instructions, notably when he advised her regarding the publication of her work in the journal of the ParanáMuseum.

As director of the ethnological department at the São Paulo Museum, Baldus organized and expanded the ethnographic collections, turning this Museum into one of the most significant in Brazil. Today, these collections are in the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at the University of São Paulo (USP).

Until the 1960s in Brazil, when anthropological research was relegated to graduate courses within universities—both ethnographic and botanical—among the other collections were the most evident products of various scientific expeditions (figures 4 and 5). From then on, the number of monographic studies involving such subjects as cultural change, kinship studies, mythology and social structures increased, and interest in research based on material culture declined.

The ethnological scientific expeditions carried out in the first decades of twentieth century, like those of Hanke, were focussed on the need to explore isolated territories and populations and to preserve those cultures threatened by urbanization and industrialization. Ethnological collections became a principal focus of museum science in Brazil, which had prevailed until it was replaced by university research. The study of ethnological collections had always been a part of anthropological research, and deeply influenced the genesis of this discipline. Thus, it enabled theoretical development. Brazil now figures as one of the major contributors to German museums and Hanke’s labour is a part of this process.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup>Luiz Henrique Passador, *Herbert Baldus e a antropologia no Brasil* (MA diss., IFCH – University of Campinas, 2002), 28.

<sup>71</sup>Luis D. B. Grupioni, *Os etnólogos no Conselho de Fiscalização das Expedições Artísticas e Científicas do Brasil*, (São Paulo, Hucitec/ANPOCS, 1998).



Figure 4: Bororo man in Mato Grosso, Brazil. Photo taken by Wanda Hanke, Paranaense Museum collection. Courtesy of Museu Paranaense (Paraná Museum), Secretaria de Estado da Cultura, Governo do Estado do Paraná, Brazil.

## Museums' collections

From the extensive correspondence between Hanke and the director of the Paraná Museum, it is possible to trace her travels and to learn more about her work in South America as well as learn about the difficulties she faced.<sup>72</sup> Some letters written by Hanke in 1940 and 1941 described her problems with the CFE, as described below.

In 1941, she was forced to leave Bolivia and to take with her the ethnological items that she had collected there. When she arrived in Brazil, she faced new problems on the border because she did not have the necessary license to collect and transport such objects. The CFE was informed about her situation, but argued that, because the collection was coming from another country, it, therefore did not have to be inspected by Brazilian

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<sup>72</sup>In the Paraná Museum Archives there are also letters exchanged with other researchers who worked in the Museum, but most were addressed to Loureiro Fernandes.



Figure 5: Bororo woman in Mato Grosso, Brazil. Photo taken by Wanda Hanke, Paranaense Museum collection. Courtesy of Museu Paranaense (Paraná Museum), Secretaria de Estado da Cultura, Governo do Estado do Paraná, Brazil.

government officials.

In practice, however, the CFE faced too many difficulties in controlling the flow of traffic of independent collectors and their expeditions. The country was too large and there were too few employees. Furthermore, in the field, scientific travellers often relied on the help from local residents and from other scientists who were working far from the capital (then Rio de Janeiro) and from the government officials from other agencies (police, customs, the SPI, among others). The CFE came to adopt the practice of sending to the National Museum of Rio de Janeiro the majority of the collections seized in their inspection process. Other institutions were excluded from this process and ended up negotiating with independent collectors, even without official permission, as was the case with Hanke, who had established this kind of questionable relationship with the Paraná Museum.

Fernandes was interested in obtaining the Bolivian ethnological collection and wrote to Hanke informing her that, as it was collected abroad, the Paraná Museum could receive it without further complications because he

had already spoken to the CFE about the matter. However, he advised her to resolve her issues with the Brazilian consular authorities in Bolivia, in order to facilitate her bringing the material into Brazil. Unlike the scientists who were CFE members, Fernandes held Hanke's ethnological work in high esteem and had always tried to assist her.

Hanke's troubles in Bolivia began in 1941, when she was working in Santa Cruz de La Sierra, a region populated by the Sirionó Indians. She was arrested in this region by the Bolivian authorities and held in captivity for three weeks.<sup>73</sup> In a letter to a Brazilian friend, Eugene George, who also collaborated with the Paraná Museum, Hanke explained the reason of her imprisonment: the Bolivian authorities claimed that her permit to be in the country had expired, but she had defended herself by arguing that this was not true.<sup>74</sup> Her arrest and subsequent release prompted her to leave Bolivia and to return to Brazil. A few weeks later she settled in Corumbá city, in the State of Mato Grosso do Sul, where she studied the language of Kadiwéus Indians.<sup>75</sup>

The mayor of Santa Cruz de La Sierra assisted with her release and with the shipping of part of her collection to Argentina. In order to facilitate the bringing of the other part of this collection to Brazil, Hanke made a request to the Brazilian Consul in Bolivia, but to no avail. Her collection was retained by the Bolivian Customs, which prompted her to turn to Fernandes for help. Fernandes subsequently asked the Secretary of Interior and Justice to intercede for her with the General Consul of Brazil concerning the release of the collection.

Back in Brazil, Hanke faced new difficulties with respect to delivering the collection to the Paraná Museum, and once again these difficulties were due to the fact that she did not have the official permission from the Brazilian authorities (CFE). Once more Fernandes intervened on her behalf, and the Bolivian collection was eventually sent to the Paraná Museum. The size of the collection of documents—notably fieldwork notes, articles, photos, letters and collections—indicates that she continued to engage in expeditions and in the practice of collecting in Brazil, despite the absence of a license.

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<sup>73</sup>Liener, Wanda Hanke, 106.

<sup>74</sup>Letter from Wanda Hanke to Eugênio George (unkown dates of birth and death), Sta. Cruz, 27 September, 1941, Paraná Museum Archives.

<sup>75</sup>Kadiwéus is the current spelling adopted for this ethnic group, but it appears in other several forms in books and documents referring to this group in the past, among them: Caduvei, Caduvéio, Cadiuveos, Cadiuéu, Cadioéos, Cadiuéos, Cadivéns, Kadiueu, Kadiuéo. A. L. Herberts, "História dos Mbayá-Guaicurú: panorama geral," *Fronteiras – Revista de História* 2 (1998): 39. Wanda Hanke adopted Cadivéns.

In 1941 and 1942, following her departure from Bolivia, Hanke constantly crossed the borders between Brazil and Paraguay, according to her letters to Fernandes. She obtained Paraguayan citizenship and was officially appointed as a researcher at the National Park of Assunción, Trinidad, between 1942 and 1947.<sup>76</sup>

Meanwhile, she sent to the journal of the Paraná Museum one of the first articles to appear in their periodical,<sup>77</sup> which focussed on the language of the Sirionó Indians of Eastern Bolivia. It was published in 1942, along with others on the Kadiwéus and Terenos, indigenous people from the southern State of Mato Grosso, Brazil.<sup>78</sup> She wrote to Fernandes about these studies and mentioned that she had been working on a Kadiwéus dictionary: “I already have a thousand words, but wanted to include c. 4,000-5,000; the grammar is difficult, all the verbs seem irregular.”<sup>79</sup> She had learned the Kadiwéus language with the help of an indigenous woman and considered it to be similar to the language of the Toba and Pilaga groups.

The article that Hanke sent to the Paraná Museum in 1942 was more than about Kadiwéus and Terenos language, as it focussed on their culture and habits, and was based on her field observations and the information provided by the indigenous people.<sup>80</sup> She highlighted the fact that at the time the Terenos still retained their pottery art, but in their other cultural aspects, traces of their traditional culture were scarce, such as those of their religious beliefs, which had already become mixed with Catholic traditions. Her paper also described the Kadiwéus migrations and their possible miscegenation with the Toba and the Pilaga indigenous groups, which she observed based on the linguistic similarities to be found among these ethnicities, as mentioned above. Although a predominant Eurocentric point of view, it is an interesting accounting of the habits of the various indigenous groups in the early 1940s.

On this occasion, she offered to send numerous ethnological objects gathered from within these groups to the Museum, but due to her troubles with the CFE, Fernandes was reluctant to accept, as the donation required the prior approval of the Museum’s administration, which she did not have.

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<sup>76</sup>Letter from Wanda Hanke to Loureiro Fernandes, Assunção, September 09, 1947, Paraná Museum Archives.

<sup>77</sup>Arquivos do Museu Paranaense.

<sup>78</sup>Wanda Hanke, “Cadivéns y Terenos,” Arquivos do Museu Paranaense (Curitiba) 2 (1942): 79–87; Hanke, Wanda. “Los índios Sirionó de la Bolivia Oriental,” Arquivos do Museu Paranaense (Curitiba) 2 (1942): 87– 96.

<sup>79</sup>Letter Wanda Hanke – Loureiro Fernandes, Campo Grande, 26 December, 1941, Paraná Museum Archives.

<sup>80</sup>Hanke, “Cadivéns,” 79-87.

Despite the Museum's refusal to buy Hanke's other collection, Fernandes provided her with financial support in the form of 600,000 *mil réis*,<sup>81</sup> "taking into account her competence and financial situation."<sup>82</sup> He sent her the money expecting that in the future she could collect more objects for the Paraná Museum. Hence, these sums were to be considered as a kind of loan. Her debts included the charges for her room at the hotel in Corumbá, and post office fees as well as those expenses associated with her attempts to obtain a permit to work in Brazil and the acquisition of new collections. References in Hanke's letters indicate that she sent Kadiwéus and Brazilian Terenos objects to the Museum, in 1942, along with a list of Kadiwéus objects: bags, hats, baskets, fabric strips and woodcarvings, which were accompanied by their respective prices. While working as an ethnologist in South America, Hanke struggled continuously with financial difficulties and often resorted to assistance from Fernandes. In fact, she often was driven to the point of exchanging her own clothes and personal items for ethnological artefacts.

In 1942, as noted above, Hanke returned to Paraguay and attempted to obtain a Paraguayan citizenship and by so doing bypass her bureaucratic and customs-related troubles. She asked Fernandes for a document stating that she was a "person of science," with scientific work that was in the process of publication and attesting that the museum was a regular customer of her ethnological collections. With Fernandes' support she successfully obtained a Paraguayan passport. Hanke remained in Paraguay until the end of 1943, working as an employee of the Ministry of Agriculture, in Asuncion, and for the city's touristic magazine. She found it easier to deal with Paraguayan authorities than with those of Bolivia and from there she continued to travel to Brazil.

Between 1944 and 1946, her correspondence ceased and not much is known about her in this period. She probably kept working in the Paraguayan Chaco region. In 1947, her letters reappeared in the Paraná Museum indicating that she had continued to work in Paraguay, but in that year, she left.<sup>83</sup> Negotiations between Hanke and the Museum were restarted and she attempted to sell photos as well as various ethnological and archaeological objects; she also offered to write articles to be published in the Museum's journal.<sup>84</sup> Fernandes bought many of these artefacts on the Museum's be-

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<sup>81</sup>Brazilian currency at the time.

<sup>82</sup>Letter from Wanda Hanke to Loureiro Fernandes, Miranda, 14/01/1942, Paraná Museum Archives.

<sup>83</sup>Liener, Wanda Hanke, 106.

<sup>84</sup>Arquivos do Museu Paranaense.

half, thereby increasing the size of its ethnological collections.

In 1947, Fernandes left the Museum's direction and was succeeded by Carlos Stellfeld (1900–1970). Stellfeld then became the director of the Paraná Museum replacing Fernandes who had meanwhile been appointed as State Secretary of Education and Culture of the State of Paraná. Hanke continued her dealings with his successor, and, in the late 1940s, according to her correspondence, she apparently faced fewer complications with regard to the selling of her collections.

By taking into account that Hanke had an official job in Paraguay, her professional situation was relatively improved, but she also faced other difficulties, which were repeatedly reported to Fernandes. According to one of her letters, she worked in the Asuncion National Park, in Trinidad, where she held the position of Head of Scientific Research.<sup>85</sup> In October 1947, she left this position and was preparing to leave Asuncion due to having disagreements with the people with whom she worked, and even accused a museum employee of slapping her:

Today I am sending additional photos. I am late because a lot has changed and I am preparing my way out of Asuncion and Paraguay. I resigned my position because I was mistreated and it got to the point that another Museum employee slapped me. I immediately resigned and I do not want to even consider any other position in Paraguay.<sup>86</sup>

While she was preparing to leave Paraguay, Hanke sold objects that she had collected to an employee of the American Embassy and used the money to collect further artefacts, which she had left in various places while doing fieldwork. A prime characteristic of her working methods was that, after collecting various ethnological or archaeological items, she would leave them with acquaintances living close to the sites from which the objects had originated. In the expectation of finding potential buyers; she would then return to collect the artefacts and to sell them. Despite her troubles in Paraguay, she was able to engage in fieldwork throughout the country, and to gather various collections and to study many of them.

In the same year in which she left Paraguay, Hanke sent four articles to the journal of the Paraná Museum. These papers became the object of

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<sup>85</sup>Letter from Wanda Hanke to Loureiro Fernandes, Asuncion, 09 September, 1947, Paranaense Museum Archives.

<sup>86</sup>Letter from Wanda Hanke to Loureiro Fernandes, Asuncion, 20 October, 1947, Paranaense Museum Archives.

analysis by a linguist by the name of Mansur Guérios (1907–1987), who was also a researcher of indigenous languages at the same museum and who had recommended their publication by emphasizing the importance of their being the first to focus on the linguistic material of the Caingangues from Apucarana, Brazil. However, only one of these was actually published: “Ensayo de Una Gramática del idioma de los Caingangues de la Serra do Apucarana” (Essay on Grammar of Caingangues language of the Serra do Apucarana).<sup>87</sup>

By November 1948, Hanke had spent four months travelling around the State of Mato Grosso, Brazil, to study the Caiuás Indians, and she exchanged letters with Stellfeld about a collection that she had supplied to the Museum. In that same year, she went to Curitiba, the capital of the Paraná State, and met with Steffeld to discuss her work and dealings. She was then suffering from arthritis, and remained in Curitiba for a while to be treated. In 1949, she wrote about selling objects from another indigenous group, the Caingangues from Ivaí, Paraná, Brazil.

By the end of 1949, Wanda Hanke had travelled through the region of the Madeira and Solimões Rivers searching for unknown ethnicities, and she eventually arrived at the Amazon River for the first time, which had long been one of her dreams. There are also indications that she worked among the Tucunas in the Amazon region.<sup>88</sup>

There is little further information about her, or of her whereabouts, between 1950 and 1952. In 1950, she published three new articles in the journal of the Paraná Museum, but there was no further correspondence with this institution after this.<sup>89</sup>

Between 1953 and 1958, Hanke corresponded with the Bolivian historian Eduardo Ocampo Moscoso (1907–1989). He published these letters in a book, in which he praised her work. These letters show that in 1953 she was researching in various Bolivian cities, and between 1955 and 1956 she

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<sup>87</sup>Wanda Hanke, “Ensayo de una gramática del idioma caingangue de los Caingangues de la ‘Serra de Apucarana’, Paraná, Brasil,” *Arquivos do Museu Paranaense* 3 (1950): 65–220. The unpublished papers were entitled: “Los Índios Opaié del Río Samambaya” (Opaié Indians of the Samambaya River), “Dicionário e notas gramaticais—Idioma Cadiveus” (Dictionary and Grammar, notes on Cadiveus Language), “Ensayo de Una Comparación del Idioma Toba con el Cadiveus” (Comparative Essay between Toba and Cadiveus Language).

<sup>88</sup>Liener, Wanda Hanke, 107.

<sup>89</sup>Hankem “Ensayo” 65–220; “Estudios complementares sobre a cultura espiritual dos índios caingangues,” *Arquivos do Museu Paranaense* 8 (1950): 137–145; “La cultura material de los Guarayos Modernos” *Arquivos do Museu Paranaense* 8 (1950): 215–220.

returned to Europe.<sup>90</sup>

In these last research years, her health declined and her financial difficulties worsened. Her travels became increasingly more difficult and her requests for financial aid seemed to have become more desperate. Despite these adverse conditions, she continued her work and described in her letters her impressions of the indigenous groups that she had encountered.

Throughout the 1950s, she had support from the Culture Department of the University of San Simón, Cochabamba, Bolivia (Universidad Mayor de San Simón de Cochabamba) where Eduardo Moscoso was the director. In 1952, this Department formalized an agreement with her to acquire arrows, bows, fabrics, canoes and other objects made by the indigenous groups living in the regions that she had visited. These objects were given to the University's Archaeological Museum.

While in the City of Cochabamba, Hanke delivered numerous lectures. Her efforts to study and record her ethnographic experiences with the indigenous groups inhabiting the border areas between Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay were also focussed on promoting more humane treatment of these isolated Indians.

In a letter dated 27 March 1953, Hanke wrote about the indigenous groups who were being persecuted and murdered in Eastern Bolivia. She also sought help because her research conditions had become further impaired and she had no money to buy anything, nor had she any belongings left to sell. She promised to send an article denouncing all the atrocities committed against the indigenous people in that region, but in order to do so she needed further resources.<sup>91</sup> Like Fernandes, Moscoso also provided her with considerable support by purchasing her collections and various other items.

During all these years, the conditions in which she travelled changed a great deal. In the beginning, while living in Paraguay, she had the benefit of collaborators and of an official job. But in her final years, she was travelling alone, was afflicted by poor health—arthritis and a broken leg that left her immobilized for a while—and was nearly penniless. In each region where she worked, she would find a place to serve as her research base. These were usually hotels, the homes of acquaintances, missionary buildings, or government stations. And it was from these places that she would depart for a few days to stay among the Indians. At first, her transportation included horses and boats; later she used airplanes and cars. She claimed to feel more

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<sup>90</sup>Eduardo Ocampo Moscoso, *Wanda Hanke en La Etnografía Boliviana* (La Paz, Bolivia: Librería Editorial Juventud, 1982).

<sup>91</sup>Hanke quoted in Moscoso, *Wanda Hanke*, 34.

at home among the indigenous people than in the cities where she did not like to stay, and was more fond of the small communities in South America than of the European cities, where she had once lived.<sup>92</sup> Once she wrote to Moscoso:

[...] in the years of 1957 and 1958 I will stay in the Amazon region and in Eastern Bolivia. A lot to do in these places and for me they are a comfort and joy after being in Europe. If you have any relations in Rio, I would appreciate if you send a recommendation on my behalf [...]<sup>93</sup>

In the years Hanke spent in Europe, 1955 and 1956, she published articles in various German journals, received support from the Ethnographic Museum in Munich and became a correspondent for a Spanish institute devoted to Hispanic-American history studies, the Instituto Gonzalo Fernandez de Ovideo, which was in Madrid.<sup>94</sup> When she returned to South America, in 1956, she first went to São Paulo, then to Curitiba, and lastly to Rio de Janeiro, again trying to obtain permissions, but with no success. In February 1957, she wrote to Moscoso saying that she had faced humiliations and that the “recommendations for Rio had no results” because there “everything was bound to politics and corruption—an amazing thing.”<sup>95</sup> Despite these difficulties, the Brazilian SPI helped her mainly due to the fact that her practical knowledge was of interest to them, according to her. She then travelled by plane to Belém, in the State of Pará, Brazil.

Hanke had learned to speak both Portuguese and Spanish, but in her letters, she mixed the two languages making her narratives quite confusing to the reader. Moreover, her many requests for funding made her unpopular with the various museums and with the Austrian embassy.<sup>96</sup> When she went to Rio de Janeiro in 1957, she attempted to establish a relationship with the National Museum, an institution directly connected to the CFE, which failed to respond positively to her requests.

Her last letter, which was written on the 10 March 1958 was the one addressed to Moscoso. In January, prior to writing this letter, she had been in Itacoatiara, Brazil, and had finished her work on the Indians of the Nhamundá and Yatapú Rivers, which contained 50 photos and was sent

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<sup>92</sup>Liener, Wanda Hanke, 108.

<sup>93</sup>Hanke quoted in Moscoso, Wanda Hanke, 72.

<sup>94</sup>Hanke quoted in Moscoso, Wanda Hanke, 70.

<sup>95</sup>Hanke quoted in Moscoso, Wanda Hanke, 74.

<sup>96</sup>Liener, Wanda Hanke.

to Germany for publication.<sup>97</sup> Wanda Hanke is believed to have died on 30 August 1958, in the city of Benjamin Constant, Amazon. She was a victim of malaria, the effects of which were complicated by her various other diseases.<sup>98</sup>

Most of the collections that she had gathered were sold to museums located in South America and Europe. For example, she sent many objects by mail to the Paraná Museum and the Ethnological Museum of Vienna, but often her descriptions of these objects were incomplete. According to Liener's study of Hanke's collections, which were located in the Vienna Museum, many of the objects that she sent to Austria had no information regarding the sites from which they were gathered or the characteristics of the ethnic groups from which they had been taken. These omissions constitute one of the major issues with regard to working on Hanke's collected objects.<sup>99</sup> Fernandes also wrote in one of his letters in 1941, that some of the objects, which she had sent to the Paraná Museum, were missing the necessary identification.<sup>100</sup> Unfortunately, the absence of this information diminished the possibilities of working with these artefacts. Nevertheless, her studies and collections are considered to be valuable and to comprise an important record on different South American ethnicities that still have the potential for ethnological research today.

## Conclusions

Despite having assembled numerous collections that she subsequently supplied to different museums, having published many articles and books, and having delivered countless lectures, Hanke's status in the Brazilian anthropological community during her lifetime was secondary and her work is still little known. Possible explanations include the fact that she had no formal training in ethnology, and that she had received no support from the CFE. Furthermore, most of her work was carried out in the field, while travelling from one place to another, and was outside the jurisdiction of the scientific institutions such as museums and universities. With the exception of her relationship with the Paraná Museum, her problems with the Brazilian government severely damaged her relationship with the Brazilian scientific

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<sup>97</sup>Hanke quoted in Moscoso, Wanda Hanke, 83.

<sup>98</sup>Liener, Wanda Hanke.

<sup>99</sup>Liener, Wanda Hanke .

<sup>100</sup>Letter from Loureiro Fernandes to Wanda Hanke, Curitiba, unknown date, Paraná Museum Archives.

community. While she also sent some of her objects to the São Paulo Museum, little evidence of her work could be found there. In Rio she was never accepted at the National Museum, the most prestigious scientific institution in the country and a major beneficiary of CFE activities.

Nevertheless, she established numerous contacts with important figures who were engaged in anthropological and linguistic research at the time, such as Loureiro Fernandes, Mansur Guérios, Herbert Baldus and Aryon Rodrigues, who later wrote a review of one of her books, which was published in Germany. She was often assisted by employees of the SPI and was recognized as an important ethnologist in Bolivia.<sup>101</sup> Her efforts were responsible for preserving valuable memories and evidence of the material culture of various South American ethnicities. In addition, her papers notably advocated a more humane treatment for those populations, which were severely affected by the advancement of urban societies. In addition to her licensing problems and her failed attempts to gain entrance to or recognition from the scientific institutions in Brazil, some of her contemporaries described her as being a tough person, as sometimes being arrogant and unpleasant.<sup>102</sup>

Another reason for her invisibility in the field of ethnology can be related to gender issues because it was more difficult for a woman to be accepted in these scientific circles. As already mentioned, Hanke began to dedicate herself to ethnological studies in her 40s, and start to practice sciences later could be a common characteristic among women, but not so much for men in scientific circles, who usually initiated their careers earlier.<sup>103</sup> It is a known truth that a researcher's career demands considerable time studying, working in the field, and writing. Also much effort is required to establish scientific networks. For women, all of these conditions are more affected by their personal lives, since the tasks associated with family care and the domestic environment are usually assigned to females. Moreover, they face more prejudice in their working environments (for example, because they are considered to be less objective and more sentimental than men), because they tend to stop working to take care of children, and because marriage

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<sup>101</sup>As mentioned in Moscoso, Wanda Hanke.

<sup>102</sup>Liener, Wanda Hanke.

<sup>103</sup>Information about gender differences in age and marital status among scientific travellers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are mentioned in Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire*. Another traveller quoted in this paper, Etta Becker Donner, started to dedicate herself to scientific journeys in pursuit of her own career after becoming a widow. Many women who engage in these activities in the first half of twentieth century were wives of scientists and did not travel unaccompanied.

could mean the end of a woman's career. For all these reasons it was (and still is) not unusual for a woman to start working later in life than a man in scientific areas. Hence, the sexual division of labour strongly influences women professionalization in the history of sciences.

By the time Hanke came to South America, she was a widow and had an eleven year-old son, Ernst Fritz (1923–2001). He remained in Vienna with Hanke's mother. It was (and still is) more usual for male scientists to have wives who would take care of their children when they needed to travel for research purposes. The opposite situation was much rarer. The scientific institutions were constructed under this basis: that a scientist would have a person (generally a wife) to take care of their personal lives (raising children, caring for the elderly, maintaining a home). Women, in general, did not have the privilege of personal freedom and their performances were more affected by these social implications.

Hanke also used to travel alone to remote places, an activity that could easily be misinterpreted by other people for its moral implications, and to worsen her situation she had a history of mental disease.<sup>104</sup> Because travelling alone could be harder for women, a marriage to another scientist was a way for female scientists to continue their careers after marriage. In the field of ethnology in the beginning of twentieth century, this was a common situation among travellers to Brazil due to the influx of scientific couples.<sup>105</sup>

All of the female names, which appear in this paper, were in some way a part of the scientific community at the time, and these women played important roles. Examples include the Brazilian scientists Heloísa Alberto Torres and Bertha Lutz, who participated directly in the development of numerous Brazilian scientific institutions; the Austrian ethnologists Wanda Hanke and Etta Becker Donner, who dedicated a large portion of their lives to the study of different indigenous groups; the numerous anthropologists who were also the wives of renowned scientists, such as Dinah Levi-Strauss and Frances S. Herskovits who made considerable contributions to their husbands' research, among others.

Despite all of the social issues and their invisibility in the history of science, many women were engaged in scientific professions, as we can see in all of these examples. However, to locate their stories it is necessary to

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<sup>104</sup>Besides the letter addressed to CFE members where some of these problems were mentioned, Liener (2010:19) also stated that before coming to South America Hanke faced depression issues and tried once to commit suicide.

<sup>105</sup>Corrêa, Antropólogas; Pamela Henson, "A Invasão da Arcádia: As Cientistas no Campo na América Latina, 1900-1950," *Cadernos Pagu* 15 (2000): 165-197.

extend our analysis and to also examine those experiences that were outside the mainstream circles of sciences. We must also come to understand the practice of science as a collective effort for the production of knowledge that is influenced by numerous social rules and is composed of large and diverse groups of people, which extends the very definition of what is science.

To deconstruct traditional ideas, which formerly placed the practice of science in the male realm, it is important to gather information about the work of females who worked as scientists and to explore their experiences. This research on the work of Wanda Hanke had the three-part purpose of bringing her scientific research activities to light, and to gain a better understanding of where she should be placed in the ethnological field of her time as well as to contribute to the incorporation of women's experiences into the history of science.

Women are not a homogeneous group that should be relegated to similar tales of privation and an existence within domestic environments, even though historic narratives provide this impression.<sup>106</sup> Their unequal condition in relation to men, their predominant presence within the domestic environment, the responsibilities of motherhood and marriage are still constants in women's lives. But their lives were and are much broader than that. By uncovering these different experiences, we deepen our understanding of social history and gain new perspectives on the collective history of women in science by connecting them to those practices.

Wanda Hanke was responsible for producing a large body of information and producing extensive collections from various ethnicities in Brazil, Bolivia, Paraguay and Argentina: Cainguá, Guayaki, Matakó, Toba, Botocudos, Sirionó, Kadiwéus and Terenos. Some of the information about these groups in the past came from her preserved notes. Her expeditions were not trivial excursions and her presence in this disciplinary field is noteworthy. Following her path, has enabled us to unearth aspects of the institutionalization of ethnology in Brazil, and has highlighted the efforts taken by the Brazilian government to consolidate new scientific policies and preservationist laws.

The CFE's inspection policies were not capable of preventing the unauthorized work of all those travellers who intended to explore something in Brazil, but it was responsible for preserving a large amount of information about scientific expeditions, which can still be accessed today. CFE's work facilitated the development of networks between foreign and national

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<sup>106</sup>Michelle Perrot, *As mulheres ou os silêncios da história*, transl.Viviane Ribeiro (Bauru, SP: EDUSC, 2005).

scientists and provided Brazilian museums with various valuable collections, which were the major product of the scientific expeditions of the time. These documents provide records of famous collectors, such as the already mentioned German ethnologist, Curt Nimuendajú, who obtained a license from the CFE and whose work was broadly accepted in Brazilian Museums, and about the less famous ones, such as Wanda Hanke, who struggled with all the difficulties previously mentioned, but who still managed to be an important contributor to several museums.

The profound changes, which have taken place in the study of history and the social sciences since the 1970s brought about a new perception of the story of the world by emphasizing the microhistories, and by exploring the environments and the persons who were relegated to oblivion. Gender, race, ethnicity, among other markers of difference have begun to influence and reconstruct historical narratives. Within this context, the experiences of women who did not fit in with the existing majority's standards, such as Wanda Hanke, and the enhancement of the study of women's activities, which were often neglected, began to receive due attention from historians.<sup>107</sup>

Wanda Hanke is another character who transgressed the boundaries of the traditional classifications of female experiences. She was one of the many women who travelled and worked as scientists during the first half of the twentieth century. Working without any institutional affiliation, she undertook numerous scientific and commercial activities, gathering and selling collections, writing scientific articles, and photographing her travels, Wanda Hanke explored the territories of several indigenous nations in South America. At the time, a woman doing field research alone in the interior of Brazil was uncommon, especially without any solid institutional bond that could provide more financial and personal security, was unlikely but not impossible. Despite all these constraints she forged on, and, notwithstanding the controversial opinions about her ethnological work, her long expeditions resulted in valuable artefact collections, considerable linguistic data, revealing narratives, comprehensive studies and an enriched knowledge of a large variety of South American indigenous groups.

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<sup>107</sup>Joan W. Scott, *Gender and Politics of History*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988); Michelle Perrot, *Os Excluídos da História – Operários, Mulheres e Prisioneiros*, transl. Denise Bottmann (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1988); Peter Burke *O Que é História Cultural?*, transl. Sérgio Goes de Paula (Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editora, 2005).