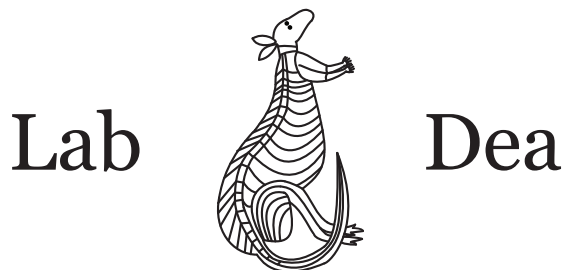




Università
Ca' Foscari
Venezia

Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici

Laboratorio demo-etno-antropologico



Lunedì, 25 marzo ore 14.30-16.30

RAMON SARRÓ

(University of Oxford),

terrà una conferenza su:

On Remote Landscapes: An Exploration on the Indeterminacy of Place

Abstract

Based on fieldwork on religious and political transformation in Mbanza Kongo (Northern Angola) conducted first in 1914-16 and more recently in 2022-23, this seminar will reflect on the difficulties on pinning down specific places where significant historical events took place. While everybody in the region agrees on the importance of those events (and on their historical veracity), and there is solid consensus about specific dates, there are many disagreements as to where to situate them geographically. Where was the famous Kongo prophetess Kimpa Vita burned alive on 2nd July, 1706? Where was the Italian Capuchin missionary brother Graziani killed (and buried) on 15 March 1961? Where exactly is "the village of the women alone" whose postwar existence was told to us in great detail? Where was the liberation struggle hero Deolinda Rodrigues killed? Such indeterminacy indicates how poorly researched some events have remained, but it also testifies to how traumatic such research could be. However, I will not look at it exclusively from the angle of suffering (even if such places are all connected with violent memories) but from the angle of an anthropology of imagination, arguing that by keeping things vague and remote people who have suffered centuries of dispossession allow themselves to live in worlds of relative freedom and control beyond oppressive structures of domination.

Nota biografica

Ramon Sarró is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Oxford. He has conducted fieldwork on the anthropology of religion and material culture, focussing mostly on prophetic cultures, especially in West and Central Africa as well as among Central African religious diasporas in Portugal. He is the author of several works, including the books *O Museu Nacional de Guiné-Bissau: Imagens para uma história*, co-authored with Albano Mendes and Ana Temudo (Porto 2018), *The Politics of Religious Change on the Upper Guinea Coast: Iconoclasm Done and Undone* (Edinburgh 2009) and *Inventing an African Alphabet: Writing, Art, and Kongo Culture in the DRC* (Cambridge, 2013). In 2021 he was invited to deliver the "Jorge Dias Memorial Lecture" at the University of Lisbon and the "Conférence Lévi-Strauss" at the EHESS in Paris. He currently directs the research project "Kongo Prophets and UNESCO Technocrats: Ruins, Forests, and Heritage in Northern Angola" (funded by the Leverhulme Foundation) in which he combines his interests in prophetic imagination, history, and ethnography.

Partecipazione libera - Seminario valido per il tirocinio DEA/ACEL. Coordinatrice: Franca Tamisari: tamisari@unive.it