

CLAS Events - Easter Term 2025

Tuesday 27 May - 12:30pm | Lunchtime Seminar

Room S1 - First Floor, Alison Richard Building

Recreating the World: Crisis and Historical Projects in Indigenous Amazonia

[Maria Luísa Lucas](#) (University of São Paulo)

Chair: [Natalia Buitrón](#) (University of Cambridge)

Abstract: In the early 20th century, over approximately three decades, the Bora and other neighbouring Indigenous peoples in Colombian Amazonia experienced a demographic decline of more than 90%. This crisis, driven by the rubber extraction industry, profoundly unsettled the lives of these communities. A century later, rather than speaking directly about the violence of the past, the Bora are particularly interested in reflecting on how they recreated a new lived world in the aftermath of the catastrophe. This is the story I seek to explore in my book, which is currently in its final stages of writing.

In this presentation, drawing on an analysis of the local regime of historicity and what I refer to as "historical projects," I will propose some hypotheses for thinking about other cases in which Indigenous historical agency and decision-making processes do not align with Euro-North American narratives that understand change as mere consequences of the actions of colonial power.



Maria Luísa Lucas is an assistant professor in Indigenous ethnology at the University of São Paulo (Museum of Archeology and Ethnology - MAE/USP). Her research is mainly concerned with Indigenous historical agency and the anthropology of art, museums, and collaborative processes.

