From the Ionian Coast to Brazil's Southern Seaboard

Ottorino de Fiore, sambaquis, and the politics of knowledge in transnational heritage narratives (1934-1953)

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Research focus

This poster reconstructs Ottorino de Fiore's Italy-Brazil academic network to show how expertise, methods, and institutions circulated across the mid-twentieth-century Atlantic and Mediterranean worlds.

Three analytical lenses

- Academic missions and the building of disciplines in Brazil.
- Teaching, fieldwork, and mentorship in the formation of professional communities.
- The return to Italy and the institutional afterlives of transnational experience.

Case significance

De Fiore's trajectory links Calabria, São Paulo, and Catania, showing how long-distance cooperation shaped departments, archives, collections, and museums.



Portrait of Ottorino de Fiore, 1951

Trajectory and key dates

1890 — Born in Maida, Calabria

1934 — Arrives in Brazil with an Italian academic mission

1937 — Founds USP's Department of Geology

1942-45 — Works under wartime surveillance in Brazil

1950-53 — Returns to Catania; volcanology and museum work

Why this case matters

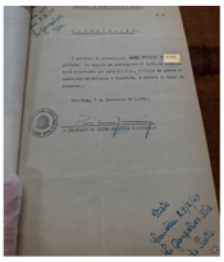
De Fiore's career shows that international cooperation was not only an exchange of ideas. It also produced durable institutional effects: departments, research practices, archival trails, collections, and museum narratives.

Key questions

- Which collaborators and institutions sustained de Fiore's network?
- How did sambaqui research move between local fieldwork and international scientific agendas?
- How were transnational experiences converted into museum infrastructure after 1950?

Sources and materials

- University and departmental records.
- Archival documentation from Brazil and Italy.
- Correspondence, publications, and field reports.
- Museum history of the University of Catania.



1945 authorization for research travel along Brazil's southern coast

Roadmap for further research

1. Map correspondence and institutional links between Italy and Brazil.
2. Identify key collaborators, publications, and museum actors.
3. Connect university history with museum history to explain how scholarly circulation became cultural infrastructure.