REVIEWS

HEADHUNTING AND COLONIALISM: ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE CIRCULATION OF HUMAN SKULLS IN THE PORTUGUESE EMPIRE, 1870–1930, RICARDO ROQUE, (2010)
Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 342 pp.,
ISBN: 9780333919088

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Although Portuguese colonialism is not among the least explored issues in terms of publication in English (see, for instance, Hammond 1975, MacQueen 1997, Lloyd-Jones and Pinto 2003), this book brings an entirely new approach to the subject. Departing from a very specific and unusual item – a collection of skulls in a museum – it aims to shed light on much wider subjects, such as the entanglement between colonial power and indigenous cultures, the emergence and development of a scientific discipline, the practices of knowledge-building both in anthropology and colonial history and the role of scientific controversies in illustrating the intertwining ties between science and society.

The book is divided into two parts, the first concerns mainly the dynamics of colonialism and headhunting in Timor and the second the trajectory of the skulls' collection – from Timor to the scientific study at the University of Coimbra. The first chapter calls into question the clear-cut dichotomy between headhunting (barbarism) and pacification (civilization), by describing the punitive expeditions in 1896 as examples of ritual violence in the exercise of colonial power, tracing the origins of the skulls to Portuguese military campaigns, where indigenous soldiers even under the command of European officers, maintained the traditional practices of cutting off their enemies' heads. The following chapter takes the 'mutual parasitism' interpretation further, by showing how, on the one hand, the Timorese worldview incorporated the Portuguese as legitimate rulers and, on the other, the colonial authorities

developed strategies for integrating indigenous conceptions into the princi-ples of government, forming a political community sustained by traditions, ceremonial institutions, symbolic power and political symbology (titles, ranks, myths, sacred objects). The final chapter in this part analyses the inclusion of headhunting in colonial forms of justice and government, through which 'severed heads in Timor formed ritual circuits that held together colonial-ism and indigenous societies' (p. 70); colonial punitive campaigns offered the opportunity for indigenous troops to acquire both material (war booty) and symbolic wealth (headhunting as a form of gaining social status) and despite the establishment of barriers (rules and regulations) separating Portuguese officers from the 'impurity' of head-feasts, in practice these boundaries were broken and colonial authorities even played important ceremonial roles.

The second part begins by tracing the voyage of the collection of skulls from Timor to the metropolis, via Macau, as part of a larger collection of natu-ral and cultural artefacts, intended for the Lisbon Colonial Museum and for the University of Coimbra. Since colonial gift networks were organized according to a 'commercial script', that favoured economically valuable objects, en route the skulls lost their scientific utility and value, by arriving at the university devoid of their individual 'histories' (biographical data on the subject, name of donor, date and place of collection, ethnographic information). The fifth chapter examines the significance of skulls in nineteenth-century anthropol-ogy, tracing the emergence of a 'science of the skull', both at the international and national scientific arena, intimately tied to racial classifications. Despite their lack of 'histories', the Timorese skulls become teaching and research objects, motivating a scientific controversy that is discussed at in the next chapter. Their authenticity, together with their ethno-geographical classifica-tion, comes into dispute several decades after their arrival at the museum, in a fierce argument between scientists that spills over from the pages of learned journals to the public arena, through letters in newspapers. What is at stake is more than the international debate on the race of the Timor population, but rather the tensions between 'museum anthropology' versus 'field anthro-pology'; 'Coimbra anthropology' versus 'Oporto anthropology'; 'academic anthropology' versus 'amateur anthropology'. The last chapter joins together the first and second part of the book, going back to histories of decapitations in Timor (of Portuguese officers and their enemies) and introducing a new social actor in the plot (the missionaries) that plays a crucial role both in colo-nial power interplay and in scientific endeavours.

The book constitutes a very curious interdisciplinary blend between history and anthropology, between colonial studies and science studies, in terms of methodological and theoretical approaches. Through a painstaking archaeology of institutional and family archives, in various parts of the world, the author unearthed a wealth of textual (letters, reports, newspaper articles, telegrams, official documents, regulations, scientific papers, published works of ethnographers that studied Timor, both military and civilian) and visual documentation (photos, maps, postcards, engravings), the analysis of which allowed him to reconstruct this little-known episode of Portuguese coloni-alism. However, unlike traditional historical narratives, the book shies away from a linear chronology of events, and instead goes back and forth, both in time and in space, from the remote mountains of Timor to the highly civilized academic spheres of the University of Coimbra and back to the courthouse of Dili, from the military expeditions in the 1870s to the scientific controversy in the early decades of the twentieth century and back to a trial in the 1880s. The

interpretation of historical and anthropological facts is then grounded on a solid set of classical theories, tapping into the heritage of philosophy (Michel Serres' mutual parasitism, Michel Foucault's archives and systems of classification), anthropology (Mary Douglas's purity and pollution, Victor Turner's redressive and reintegrative actions towards managing a collective crisis) and science studies (Bruno Latour's circulation metaphor, Madeleine Akrich's scripts, John Law's performative interactions).

It is perhaps this interdisciplinary framework that leads the author to question several established beliefs in colonial and postcolonial studies and to put forward novel explanations. Such is the case of the Lusotropicalism, an ideology that presents Portuguese colonialism as based in cultural tolerance and racial mixture, that clearly collides with the 'pacification through decapitation' (p. 31) described in this work. The ritual violence in the service of the colonial government also does not fit the model of hybridization (creation of amalgamations of different cultures, languages or races), but is rather an intensification of the dynamics of violence, reinforcing both colonial authority and indigenous cultural practices. Thus Serres' theory of mutual parasitism provides a better explanation for Timor's atavistic colonialism, justifying the survival of early modern traits and blending with autochthonous elements 'by highlighting the symbiotic dynamics underlying the exercise of European rule in indigenous societies' (p. 38). Though not the first to explore the links between anthropology and colonialism in Portugal (Gallo 1988) nor the role of museums in this equation (Dias 2000; Porto 2001), the author also refutes the notion that early Portuguese anthropology was solely aimed at 'nation-building' and not at 'empire-building' (Cabral 1991; Leal 2000), demonstrating that colonial ethnography, though neglected by academic anthropologists, was carried out by military, missionaries and doctors in the colonies (an idea also developed in the author's previous work [Roque 2001]).

Another one of the innovative contributions of this book lies in the micro-history focused on objects (much in the actor-network tradition, that highlights the role of 'non-humans', though this theory goes unmentioned throughout the book) instead of people, communities or events, examining a collection as an object of knowledge that circulates across time, space, cultural and institutional boundaries.

Despite its strong historical streak, this work does not lack relevance for contemporary concerns. On the one hand, Timor has become a much cherished issue in public opinion: the least known and more distant of the former colonies, that struggled under Indonesian rule for decades, it raised in Portugal a wave of popular sympathy and grassroots movements (Cardoso 2003) that combined with significant efforts in international diplomacy, culminating in the country's independence. On the other hand, this book contributes to crucial on-going international debates in the social sciences, such as the reassessment of the colonial and postcolonial relations or the repatriation of human remains in museum collections (Haas 1996; Clifford 2004). Additionally, this work also brings a novel perspective into the growing body of knowledge on scientific controversies, a much favoured subject of science studies (Nelkin 1992; Brante et al. 1993), with the further benefit of dealing with anthropology, since social sciences are often neglected in this field.

Finally, this book reads almost like a detective story. Though it is not revealed until the final chapter (and this review runs the risk of providing a spoiler), the author succeeded where the 1930s anthropologist failed, by managing to trace the real origin of the skulls, uncovering documentary

evidence that eluded the polemists. Now, 150 years later, the mystery is solved and the skulls are reunited with their 'histories'. Therefore, this research does contribute to the advancement of knowledge in more ways than one.

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SOBRE A POBREZA, AS DESIGUALDADES E A PRIVAÇÃO MATERIAL EM PORTUGAL/POVERTY, INEQUALITIES AND MATERIAL DEPRIVATION IN PORTUGAL, INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE ESTATÍSTICA, (2010)

Lisbon, Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 200 pp.,
ISBN: 9789892500812, 5 euros.

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Doubtless poverty and inequality are among the main problems affecting postmodern societies. In Portugal, these problems are becoming more acute than in other countries, mainly since 2001 and even more so since 2008. As in other countries, the situation is the result of the fact economic growth, and the public policies that have enabled it, has allowed for an increase in income inequality and in new types of poverty.

The eradication of poverty has been one of the main topics of discussion in several forums in the last decades and was chosen by the United Nations as the primary goal to be achieved by 2015. This agenda was established in the aims of the eight Millennium Development Goals proposed in 2000 by the United Nations and signed by 189 member states. Taking into account the development of the member states in the last 30 years in terms of economic growth, we will have to wait a little longer to achieve such a goal.

After an international decade dedicated to the eradication of poverty by the United Nations (from 1997 to 2006), we are now into a second that started in 2008.

Poverty and social exclusion were used for a long time as indistinct concepts, but at present poverty is seen as one dimension of social exclusion (Pascal and Bourgeat 2008). Poverty is related to unequal access to material resources, while social exclusion is used as a broader concept, focused on an unequal access to full participation in society (Kenyon, Lyons and Rafferty 2002).

Poverty is usually measured in either absolute or relative terms. While absolute poverty refers to a defined standard which is consistent over time and among countries (for example, the percentage of the population eating less food than is required to sustain the human body (www.worldbank.org – accessed 15 March 2009), relative poverty deals with a social definition of poverty and is dependent on a certain social context. Relative poverty is measured by the percentage of the population endowed with less income than some fixed proportion of the average income (www.worldbank.org – accessed 15 March 2009). The European Union based the poverty line on the concept of 'economic distance'; a level of income settled at 60 per cent of the average household income.

Collecting data on the range and severity of poverty is, at present, the responsibility of public administration and governments. All citizens have the right to access this information. In such a context, and because 2010 was declared by the European Union as the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion, the National Statistics Institute (Instituto Nacional de Estatística – INE) made an effort to obtain data on the Portuguese situation concerning poverty, inequality and deprivation. To fulfill that aim, the INE recently published an interesting analysis of the issue – *Sobre a pobreza, as desigualdades e a privação material em Portugal/Poverty, inequalities and material deprivation in Portugal* (2010).

The report is divided into three parts, and the introduction (pp. 3–4) and executive summary (pp. 11–20) have been translated into English.

The first part (pp. 23–31), entitled 'Enquadramento teórico' (theoretical framework), is recommended reading, as its author, the economist Manuela Silva, explains the evolution of the concept of poverty and makes clear the need for making available more complete statistics about this subject. The second part (pp. 35-82) deals with 'some aspects of the distribution and redistribution of income' ('Aspectos distributivos e redistributivos do rendimento'), and the third (pp. 85-125), written by several Portuguese researchers, raises a 'discussion of some topics' ('Pontos de reflexão').

Conducting a critical appreciation of the report, one would like to comment on the results obtained for the main indicators, keeping in mind data from the annual Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC). The survey collected a representative sample of private households in Portugal and the data collected made possible an analysis for the period from 2003 to 2008. The problems of the welfare state and the growing privatization of public services are thought to have impacted, in a short space of time (since 2008), on the extension and severity of poverty and inequality felt in Portugal. Involuntary poverty is nowadays seen as a violation of human rights and opens the possibility of improvement of the statistical concept (INE 2010), even if it remains difficult to build a composite index.

In 2008, 17.9 per cent of the Portuguese resident population was at risk of poverty. This is lower than the figure for 2003 (20.4 per cent). This means that, in 2008, the annual income of those at risk was below the poverty line, i.e. 4969 euros (that is, an average monthly income of 414 euros).

Portugal shows a large asymmetry in the distribution of household income. In 2007, the Gini coefficient for Portugal was 35.8 per cent versus 30.6 per cent for the European Union as a whole. Even so, this inequality has gradually decreased since 2004 (from 38.1 per cent in 2003 to 35.4 per cent in 2008). The risk of poverty among the elderly also declined between 2003 and 2008, from 28.9 per cent to 20.1 per cent, but when comparing this group to the total resident population, the risk was higher. Also, the material deprivation index of the elderly was calculated to be higher (24.7 per cent) than that of the entire population (21.4 per cent).

In 2008, households with two adults and at least three dependent children were at the highest risk of poverty (42.8 per cent), along with households with one adult and dependent children (38.8 per cent) and the elderly living alone (32.7 per cent). The risk of poverty for households without dependent children was much lower (14.9 per cent) when compared with those that had dependent children (20.6 per cent). It is important to mention that the concept of dependent children has to do with individuals under 18 years of age, with those between 18 and 24 years of age being considered economic dependents.

But we cannot forget the groups of children and women, which continued to show a high risk of poverty in 2008. These are the groups that showed the worst evolution since 2004. The infant poverty data shows that one child in five faced a situation of deprivation, and it was within single-parent families and households with two adults and at least three children that this scenario was most serious. In fact, about half of the children were at risk of poverty or deprivation. In the same year about 19 per cent of Portuguese adult women were at risk of monetary poverty (2 per cent above the European average and 3 per cent above the Portuguese adult-male average).

In the third part of the report there is an interesting analysis by Carla Machado of women's poverty, calling for a deeper analysis of material deprivation, particularly regarding gender-specific items, intra-household income distribution, and sampling designing that would make it possible to better take into account single-parent families.

Social-class origin has proven to be an important factor behind the education path followed by children, as 72.5 per cent of children who had parents with occupations such as businessman, business manager and scientific or technical professional were able to attain a secondary or higher level of education.

The average monetary income of the individuals that had an undergraduate degree was double that of the total resident population (830 euros more per month). Nevertheless, between 2003 and 2008, the evolution of monetary income available was positive for all levels of education, including those who had not completed secondary-level education (3.4 per cent).

Finally, it is worth mentioning that in 2008 the average income of individuals that lived in high-density areas was superior to that of the total resident population (1780 euros more). This did not occur in the case of intermediate and low-density areas.

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