

Photographs of an anomaly. Alterity and the limits of intercultural communication in a colonial situation

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In early September 1948, the Mozambique Anthropological Mission (MAM) was a few days in António Enes (now Angoche). Joaquim Rodrigues dos Santos Júnior, head of MAM, was informed of the anomaly of a young man. Santos Júnior's interest in the case of the little Atomane was part of a colonial teratology that gave rise to a scientific spectacularization of the colonized bodies. Atomane's anomaly is just one of several others recorded during the overseas anthropological missions to Guinea, Angola, São Tomé and Príncipe, Mozambique and Timor, between 1936 and 1959. The photographs of Atomane and the MAM's collection form the documentary *corpus* for the analysis of the limits of intercultural communication in colonial context. Based on new contributions in visual culture, the study provides a critical reading of the photographs from MAM's colonial archive.

Keywords: photography, anthropology, colonialism, Mozambique

Fotografias de uma anomalia. Alteridade e os limites da comunicação intercultural em situação colonial

Resumo

No início de setembro de 1948, a Missão Antropológica de Moçambique (MAM) esteve em António Enes (atual Angoche). Nessa localidade, o chefe da MAM, Joaquim Rodrigues dos Santos Júnior, foi informado sobre a anomalia de um jovem. O interesse de Santos Júnior pelo caso do pequenino Atomane se inscreve numa teratologia colonial que deu azo para uma espetacularização científica dos corpos dos "indígenas". A anomalia de Atomane é apenas uma de várias outras registadas durante as campanhas das missões antropológicas a Guiné, Angola, São Tomé e Príncipe, Moçambique e Timor, realizadas entre 1936 e 1959. As fotografias do pequeno Atomane e outros materiais do espólio da MAM formam o *corpus* documental para a análise dos limites da comunicação intercultural em contexto colonial. A partir de novos aportes em cultura visual, faz-se uma leitura crítica de fotografias do arquivo colonial da MAM.

Palavras-chave: fotografia, antropologia, colonialismo, Moçambique

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The Photographs of the Mozambique Anthropological Mission

The Missão Antropológica de Moçambique (Mozambique Anthropological Mission; MAM) was established by Decree-Law No. 34,478 of April 3, 1945. It was preceded by the Missão Etnográfica e Antropológica de Moçambique (Ethnographic and Anthropological Mission of Mozambique), which was established by Decree-Law No. 26,842 of July 28, 1936. From 1936 to 1956, the

physician Joaquim Rodrigues dos Santos Júnior led six campaigns in Mozambique. Thousands of photographs were taken during MAM's scientific campaigns. Its photographic collection is currently in the Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (overseas historical archive) in Lisbon. For this article, the source and object of study is a set of photographs from the 5th MAM campaign, in 1948. For this expedition, the head of MAM did not have the collaboration of a professional photographer for financial reasons. Santos Júnior (1948) complained about the lack of a photographer in his report: "we took quite a few photographs. The Mission lacks a photographer, who I wanted to add, and who would take charge not only of taking photographs during fieldwork, but also of developing, proofing and enlarging them" (p. 40).

During the 5th MAM campaign, photographs were taken by the team members. A small number of these photographs were reproduced in reports and articles published by some MAM members. However, most of the photographs simply remained on archive. In recent years, some academic works have used MAM's photographs as sources and/or objects of study. MAM's photographs and negatives contain much visual information. To fully understand these visual sources, it is important to provide a context for them, especially those from the 1948 campaign, when the young Atomane was caught in the web of Portuguese Anthropology and its colonial teratology.

In addition to its usefulness for colonial propaganda, Anthropology was an instrumental science of the then so-called "native policy" (R. Pereira, 2005). According to the head of MAM, "anthropology is one of the best, if not the best instrument at the service of native policy" (Santos Júnior, 1948, p. 4). He added that "anthropology provides, like no other Science, basic elements for the direction of native policy" (Santos Júnior, 1948, p. 4).

The general objective of the campaigns headed by Santos Júnior was an anthropological study that would enable the ethnic mapping of Mozambique. According to Decree-Law No. 26,842 of 28 July 1936, the objective of MAM was to proceed to the "knowledge of the ethnic groups of each of our overseas domains, that is, to draw up the respective ethnological charts". To this end, Anthropology, "by establishing somatic affinities, seeks to discover kinships or to define, with precision, the ethnic nature of the different tribes" (Santos Júnior, 1948, pp. 4-5).

With the 5th MAM campaign, Santos Júnior (1948, p. 16) aimed to clarify: (1) the origin and the relations of the populations; (2) the vitality and robustness conditions of the various ethnic groups; (3) the predominant aptitudes and tendencies of the same groups. Another priority of this campaign was to study the displacement of populations and their ability to adapt to the colonial economy. Santos Júnior (1948) addressed what he called the demographic problem of displacement: "the solution that seems imperative is the settlement of the people and above all of the surplus population, in regions whose soil can be exploited in an irrigated regime and which will enable a fixed settlement" (p. 39). According to Santos Júnior himself (1948):

this study should be conducted on the basis of the psychological characteristics of these populations with regard to whether they are nomadic or not, their working habits, aptitudes, similarities with the peoples where they will live, etc. It should therefore determine the populations to be moved and the places where it is convenient to do so, favouring those where large companies are located;

It will study the possibility of concentrating populations in such a way as to increase the size of large settlements. This concentration should be focused on obtaining greater yields from the crops they grow, so as to reduce their cost price and allow greater supervision of the work processes they employ. (p. 22)

Besides the displacement of the population and the settlement of the natives in new villages for a colonial economy based on the exploitation of intensive agriculture, the head of MAM also foresaw

the displacement of natives to industry.

In this particular aspect of manpower for industry, it seems convenient to consider the recruitment of the first craftsmen in tribes or population groups that prove to be from a psycho-technical point of view the best conditions for adaptation to the services for which they are destined.

The precepts of professional guidance conveniently handled on adequate equipment will determine those who will be able to provide the best service.

However, knowledge of the psychological faculties is not enough; physical resistance and somatic qualities must be added as well.

The general anthropological study which determines the somatic characteristics and the complementary medical study will allow a convenient selection of the batches of craftsmen to be employed in the first adaptation tests to industrial labour.

Thus anthropology, in close collaboration with technology, will contribute to the resolution of an important demographic problem of the greatest social and political importance (Santos Júnior, 1948, p. 40).

Disciplines such as Archaeology, Anthropology and Ethnology contributed to a "colonial science" marked by Salazar's teleology in which the assimilation of the native was one of the purposes of colonization. Since the future was already pre-established by the *Estado Novo* (Second Portuguese Republic), it was up to MAM to study the past and the present of the natives. This teleology has an interface with the guidance of the fieldwork of anthropological missions. As such, the MAM of 1948 followed the same political and scientific logic of the other anthropological missions, which, at the end of the day, corroborated the racialisation and the tribalisation of the so-called "natives" at the time.

However, the scientific contribution of the tribal surveys that guided the collection of data by MAM compromised the scope of the results. The categories of race and tribe led Santos Júnior to presuppose an "ethnic purity" in the scope of his research. The methodological criteria used by MAM were selective so as to obtain "pure" specimens of a given ethnic group. The racialism and tribalism imposed by the theoretical schemes guiding MAM's research campaigns predominated to the detriment of complex kinship relations and ethnolinguistic identities in Mozambique. In the absence of any reference to a cultural anthropology, the theoretical and methodological frameworks of MAM could not cope with the complex reality, particularly of those groups that were mestizo or detribalized. Hence, the ethnic cartography elaborated by the MAM team was yet another fiction of Colonial Anthropology.

But some consider that MAM produced and collected a set of materials and documents which, even today, enable a different perspective on the land and people of Mozambique (Rodrigues, 1990). Regarding the 5th campaign, it is generally agreed that "the documentation produced during this campaign provides a more systematic view of the work conducted and gives access to a set of data that can now be used in a context other than the exclusively colonial one" (Roque & Ferrão, 2012, p. 227).

As far as the 5th MAM campaign is concerned, there are some peculiarities. Among others, I highlight a typewritten report that was never published. As it did not pass through the sieve of censorship, the text contains some aspects that are missing in other MAM reports on the conditions of research during fieldwork (R. Pereira, 2005, p. 218). Other highlights were the new priorities that the Junta das Missões Geográficas e de Investigações Coloniais (Commission of Geographical Missions and Colonial Investigations; JMGIC) established for the 1948 MAM campaign, which

clearly shows the instrumentalisation of scientific research in favour of native policy and the colonial economy. Despite the ambitious social engineering plan with projects for population displacement and new villages based on scientific studies, the JMGIC did not heed the request to triple the number of collaborators on the MAM team. By Executive Order No. 12,215, of December 26, 1947, the Minister of Colonies, Captain Teófilo Duarte, made only six collaborators available. One of them was the young Joaquim Norberto dos Santos Júnior, a student of Physical Anthropology in Porto and son of the head of MAM. He was hired with a monthly salary of 2,250 escudos, as established by the above-mentioned ordinance for the position of first assistant (Santos Júnior, 1948, p. 25). Assistant Joaquim Norberto dos Santos Júnior had already taken part in other missions. In 1948, he was responsible for making a large number of palm prints and scientific photographs of MAM.

An anticipated meeting

The arrival of the MAM team in a district was informed in advance "so that the administrative authorities can concentrate in convenient places two or three hundred adult natives of both sexes and, if possible, aged between 25 and 40" (Santos Júnior, 1948, p. 22). Sometimes the number of people was lower than expected or the people recruited did not correspond to the age range for the samples. There were places where the concentration of people exceeded expectations.

In certain places, the head of MAM was faced with an unexpected reality, in which the "fusion of almost all the tribes of Niassa" resulted in a "huge imbroglio" (Santos Júnior, 1948, pp. 63-64). For him,

Quissanga is undoubtedly not the chosen area for the anthropological studies the Mission has been pursuing, where we have tried, among other goals, to ascertain the general ethnic characteristics that might define or characterize the current tribes and sub-tribes of Mozambique. (Santos Júnior, 1948, pp. 63-64)

The elaboration of the ethnic map of Mozambique revealed dozens of groups whose people and territory formed fixed units through spatial and temporal links. However, what to do with the mestizos and the detribalised? They almost disappeared from the map, because MAM avoided including the mestizos in its tribal surveys. On the other hand, MAM had an interest in anomalous bodies. The case of the young Atomane seems emblematic of a colonial teratology.

Atomane was taken by his father to meet Santos Júnior in the locality of António Enes in September 1948¹. Like other district administrators, Henrique do Carmo Júnior was tasked with providing the "volunteers" for the data collection undertaken by MAM. Henrique do Carmo Júnior probably summoned young Atomane's father to bring his son on a particular day. Based on instructions previously received, the district administrator must have judged Atomane's case worthy of MAM's studies.

The photograph of Atomane with his father (Figure 1) must have been taken after the measurements made by the MAM team. One notices a fancy pin in the boy's shirt pocket, a gift given to him by one of the MAM members. The facial expression of Atomane's father questions the viewer. Had he brought his son with some hope of a cure? What were his expectations? Had he come only to respond to a summons? Or did he ascribe some power to the knowledge or magic of *muzungo* (the same as Portuguese, among the "indigenous" people of Lui in Africa)? To use a term from Alfred Schütz (1998), what stock of knowledge mobilized Atomane's father to interact with the MAM team? I do not doubt that he had some hope that the *muzungos* could do something to cure his son. But there was no science or magic to cure microcephaly, which did not prevent Atomane from being measured, undressed, photographed and examined.



Figure 1. *Atomane with his father* IICT-Photography Collection, Inv. ULISBOA-IICT-MAM (1948)

"We measured him all over"

In 1948, Atomane was 22 years old, according to information from the administrator of the district of António Enes, "where does this little Negro come from and where does he live, he must be one of the smallest in Mozambique" (Santos Júnior, 1949, p. 1). His body was "as thin as a boy's" (Santos Júnior, 1949, p. 1). He was submitted to anthropometric measurements. As Santos Júnior wrote (1949): "we measured him all over" (p. 1).

According to Santos Júnior's notes, Atomane was 113 centimetres tall and weighed 13 kilos and 500 grams. For the head of MAM, it was a case of dwarfism with infantilism whose cause would be an endocrine insufficiency (of the Thymus gland). As to the morphological aspect, Santos Júnior (1949) highlighted the "spheroidal head", "evident muscular insufficiency" and "a body drained of flesh" (p. 3). About the sexual organs, the head of MAM reported on the size of the penis, the morphology of the testicles and the inguinal canal. The infantilism observed by Santos Júnior (1949) was not only associated to Atomane's genitalia, but also to his voice, since the "little voice was weak, faint, and childlike" (p. 3).

According to Santos Júnior (1949), António Enes's little man had a pronounced microcephaly which "would not be surprising if this little Negro did not speak" (p. 3). Atomane's speaking did not seem easy to the observer who ascribed the difficulty to his "rather anomalous" dentition, with 21 teeth, of which "13 in the upper jaw and 8 in the lower jaw" and because the young man was "not much of a talker" (Santos Júnior, 1949, p. 3). We can also infer that the interaction between the *muzungo* and the native in the Portuguese language was an inhibiting factor for the latter.

The list with all Atomane's anthropometric measurements was the basis for Santos Júnior's communication during the "VI Congresso de Anatomia Luso-Hispano-Americano" (VI Luso-Hispanic-

American Congress of Anatomy) and the “XIX Reunião da Sociedade Anatómica Portuguesa” (XIX Meeting of the Portuguese Anatomical Society), held in Lisbon, between May 15 and 18, 1949. From Atomane's list of measurements, some refer to the criminal anthropology of the late 19th century, such as the frontal head diameters, frontal maximum and vertex-transverse. In Santos Júnior's notes, there is no information about psycho-technical tests done on Atomane. But the head of MAM mentioned that, by the apparent curiosity he paid to the measurements "that we were doing to him, he left us the impression of a certain degree of intelligent confidence" (Santos Júnior, 1949, p. 1). Atomane was described as "smiling", with a "keen and shrewd gaze", "whenever he looked at us he smiled confidently and pleasantly" (Santos Júnior, 1949, p. 1). Still on the otherness of the "microcephalic from António Enes", Santos Júnior (1949) commented on a fact that attested to his empathy, "his degree of sensitivity" (p. 1):

the Mission companions and I gave Atomane some fancy pins that he had pinned on his little shirt. A Negro from the rudimentary schools of the Catholic Mission in Malatane stole one of the pins from Atomane , the most fashionable and certainly the one our little midget liked the most.

I don't know how Father Celso heard of it and he punished the pilferer with a spanking. The punished man wept. Well, little Atomane , who witnessed the punishment, had tears streaming down his face. (p. 2)

For the head of MAM, the empathy displayed by Atomane was proof that the microcephaly had not affected his sensitivity and his otherness. Atomane's portrait (Figure 2) and other photographs of him, including nudes, demonstrate that the photographer's instructions were heeded. Thus, the communication between the photographed subject and the photographer was decisive for the final result. However, the intercultural communication between the anthropologist and the "native" man seems to have been compromised by the anomaly. Probably the head of MAM and his son Norberto sought to obtain information in conversation with the little Atomane and his father. But the colonial context of the social interaction between the members of MAM and the "native" people in a colonial situation took place constrained the alleged intercultural communication. Criticisms of these limits on fieldwork were already outlined in the mid-20th century, such as those of Michel Leiris (1950) in his essay "O etnógrafo perante o colonialismo" (The ethnographer and colonialism). At the time, Portuguese Anthropology followed a "hard line" that tied scientific knowledge to the colonial project of the Salazar regime. As such, Atomane's photographs are part of a colonial teratology that had an interface with the spectacularization of the anomaly².



Figure 2. *Atomane* IICT-Photography Collection, Inv. ULISBOA-IICT-MAM (1948)

Microcephaly and colonial teratology

Microcephaly has been studied by Portuguese medicine since Miguel Bombarda (1894). Mendes Corrêa did his doctorate under the direction of Miguel Bombarda's thesis. Also, Santos Júnior was a disciple of Mendes Corrêa. He probably knew about those first studies on microcephaly in Portugal. It is worth noting that Miguel Bombarda disagreed with Carl Vogt's thesis, in which microcephaly was considered an evolutionary regression. According to the Portuguese physician, microcephalic people were not "human-apes" as Carl Vogt claimed. Despite Bombarda's criticism of Vogt in 1894, microcephalic people were still seen by many as a "human-apes" and even as a "fairground animals". In 1911, a manager of an animatograph in Lisbon exhibited little Antonio, whose "simian attitudes" he still intended to perfect for the show (Cascais, 2016, pp. 104-105). Little Atomane did not become a "fairground animal". He did not present the stigmas of the "human-ape". Just like the colonial situation, Atomane's diligence, promptness and lack of aggressiveness prevent certain comparisons, in terms of behaviour, with the cases of microcephaly that served the studies of Miguel Bombarda (1894), João Neves (1898), Júlio de Matos (1911) and Ernesto Roma (1913).

Santos Júnior's interest in the case of the tiny Atomane was in line with one of the objectives of the MAM campaign of 1948 which was to assess the robustness and vitality of the populations studied. Anomalies had been studied since the first MAM campaigns (Santos Júnior, 1939) Colonial teratology accompanied the studies on the robustness and vitality of ethnic groups. With the ruler of "racial purity", attempts were made to measure the natives to compare them and identify those that were superior (more "pure") and those that were inferior (less "pure").

As anthropological missions had an interest in "purer" groups, those "less pure" were sometimes considered as residuals in an evolutionary line. Miscegenation, however, challenged some postulates of the anthropological missions. The reports and articles by António de Almeida or

Santos Júnior note that miscegenation was an independent variable, a factor that compromised some scientific results.

In the mid-20th century, the possibility that some anomalies could be associated to racial degeneration still persisted. The link between degeneration and heredity was the basis of the Frenchman Bénédict Augustin Morel's (1857) theory already described in his *Traité des dégénérescences* (Treaty on Degeneration). Morel's theory had a direct impact on Medicine in Portugal, as in the work of Basílio Freire (1886), and also on Portuguese Anthropology in the late 19th century, notably Criminal Anthropology whose great advocate was Francisco Ferraz de Macedo (1899). A graduate in Natural and Pharmaceutical Sciences from the Faculty of Rio de Janeiro, and in Medicine and Surgery from the same university, Ferraz de Macedo was a full member of the Paris Anthropological Society. As an official delegate of the Portuguese government, he attended the "Congresso de Antropologia Criminal" (Congress of Criminal Anthropology), held in Geneva between the 24th and 29th of August 1896 (Macedo, 1900).

Francisco Ferraz de Macedo was one of the first to deal with degeneration and miscegenation in a colonial context. He was also the author of a "physical-intellectual-moral" mapping (Macedo, 1877). His synthetic map provides a comparative table of 16 nationalities on the basis of 21 questions. The author explains that he did not group the inhabitants of nations by race, since "the civilisation of some influencing others has profoundly modified their primitive ethical rhythm" (Macedo, 1877). Francisco Ferraz de Macedo used the category of gender (masculine and feminine) for the elaboration of his synthetic map of "ethics and partial ethnology".

The influence of the B. A. Morel, Cesare Lombroso and Paul Broca's theories persisted in the Portuguese Anthropology in the first decades of the 20th century, under the aegis of Mendes Corrêa. As in Ferraz de Macedo's view, some theses of Criminal Anthropology were not defended by the "school of Porto". However, the anthropological missions updated some aspects already raised since the beginning of Anthropology in Portugal. To assemble its samples, MAM struggled to find the "normal" types, those who would meet the "normal profile of a race", as Ferraz de Macedo (1900) put it in his *Bosquejos de Antropologia Criminal* (Abstracts on Criminal Anthropology). When looking for a normal type of man, Physical Anthropology had to deal with deviations. The normal referred to the abnormal not only in physiological terms, but also as to social and moral habits³.

Santos Júnior (1944, 1945) was not bothered by the fact that some anomalies could not be associated with a race or a tribe, although both categories were of pivotal importance in the anthropological scheme of mapping human groups. In fact, no anomaly was thoroughly studied by the head of MAM. In the reports and documents produced by Santos Júnior, the anomalies – such as Atomane's dwarfism – were mere curiosities and whose superficial comments were no more than a scientific varnish already cracked by a Colonial Anthropology in crisis from the mid-20th century onwards.

Some topics correlated to anomalies were also addressed superficially by Santos Júnior, even in lectures for a lay audience. In Mozambique, for example, Santos Júnior delivered a series of lectures during the fifth MAM campaign in cities such as Beira, Nampula and Quelimane. In the latter, the title of his lecture was *Como se deve estudar um preto do ponto de vista antropológico* (How one should study a Negro from an anthropological perspective). Further talks were delivered in the mainland to a more exclusive audience. Atomane's case of dwarfism and infantilism was the subject of a communication by Santos Júnior during the "VI Congresso de Anatomia Luso-Hispano-Americano" (VI Luso-Hispanic-American Congress of Anatomy) and the "XIX Reunião da Sociedade Anatómica Portuguesa" (XIX Meeting of the Portuguese Anatomical Society), held in Lisbon, between May 15 and 18, 1949. Although he could use Atomane's photographs to illustrate his communication, as well as drawings and the palm and sole prints of the "microcephalic from António Enes", Santos Júnior added little to medical knowledge on microcephaly. His communication was an example of scientific and colonial spectacularization of an anomaly identified in a district of an overseas province.

As microcephaly is an untreatable pathology, the photograph merely restates the proof of therapeutic impotence (Cascais, 2016, p. 105). Atomane's set of photographs highlights the limitations of science. If Atomane's pictures show the viewer an enigma that science could not decipher, they also demonstrate that photography, scrutiny, measurement and observation have other purposes, since the abnormality of the photographed subject seems to confirm the normality of those who photograph, scrutinize, measure and observe.

Photographs and the provinces of meaning in a colonial context

At the end of the 19th century, the photographic process as a trustworthy copy of reality seduced many in the field of Arts and Sciences⁴. The myth of photographic objectivity had in scientific photography its last refuge. In Portugal, the anthropology of the so-called "school of Porto" made photography an important instrument of its scientific method (P. Matos, 2014). MAM Campaign resorted to photography as a data collection procedure for its scientific research. Together with thousands of photographs from the MAM campaigns and from other missions in Guinea or Angola, one can compose an iconographic compilation of a colonial teratology. Bodies with anomalies were the target of scientific curiosity and the photographic images often show an indecent and obscene look. In general, these MAM campaigns were not very careful with the presence of the anthropologist as a disturbing element in a community. Among other actions of the MAM team, the photographic act embarrassed, not infrequently humiliated, whoever was exposed to the objective lens.

One should not forget that the exposure of thousands of individuals in front of the camera was part of MAM's collection of information to compile indexes of robustness and vitality and, consequently, to identify and situate groups in a racial hierarchy (R. Pereira, 2005). The MAM reports served not only for the native police, but also for the economic development of the colonies. According to Santos Júnior (1948): "the rational and equitable utilization of the human factor in the colony of Mozambique requires prior scientific knowledge of the somatic-physical-psychological characteristics of its ethnic elements" (p. 15). The head of MAM did not question the utilitarian nature of scientific knowledge and its artificial indices of robustness and vitality of the peoples to convert them into mere labour power. Santos Júnior's Anthropology can be seen as an auxiliary discipline of social engineering responsible for the promotion of a colonial project in the tropics. In fact, the disciple of Mendes Corrêa was in line with the vision of one of the first Portuguese anthropologists, Adolfo Coelho (1893), who was quite optimistic about the artificial selection applied to colonization: "an analogous process could rise the African Negro to a higher level, make him not an equivalent of the European, but a very useful man for the expansion and development of our civilization" (p. 39).

Unlike what Adolfo Coelho had predicted, Colonial Anthropology promoted the reification of the other. The photographic archive of the anthropological missions between 1936 and 1959 contains several examples. How, then, to find in these photographs the lost subjectivity of the people photographed? How can one see the portrait of Atomane beyond a case of dwarfism and infantilism? How can we identify a performance of the subject photographed that has left some mark on the final result? To obtain a cognitive approximation of Atomane's "world" from the photographs, the notion of "province of meaning" may be useful.

Alfred Schütz (1998) developed his phenomenological approach to complex societies, inspired by William James' theory of the different realities in which one lives simultaneously. From his interest in the way individuals adjust their behaviours on the basis of their expectations, in their everyday life and to their stock of knowledge, Alfred Schütz suggests a hermeneutics of intersubjectivity for a comprehensive sociology. But how to think of interactionism in a colonial context? How can individuals from different groups in a colonial situation develop an intercultural communication?

For Alfred Schütz, the focus of the relationship between “me” and “my neighbours” (we-relationship) differs from that between “us” and “others” (they-relationship). In a colonial context, how can the interaction of subjectivities with different experiences of the world be understood? According to Schütz (1998),

in the face-to-face relationship, I directly experience the presence of the other through his or her living corporeality. Spatially, this means that he occupies a position, a place in relation to my place (...) I occupy through my body, a ground zero, from which the world and my fellow human beings are positioned. (p. 98)

In his essay on Don Quixote and the problem of reality, Schütz (1998) demonstrated that, within the province of meaning that forms the universe of the “knight of the sad figure”, the premises maintain their internal coherence and harmony (p. 129).

During the MAM campaigns, how the measurements of the bodies and the photographs were perceived by the native people remains unclear. *Muzungo* witchcraft? Perhaps. One should bear in mind that the interactive actions between the MAM team and the native people were permeated by different cultural codes and guided by the expectations of the in-group and out-group members. One should bear in mind that the interactive actions between the MAM team and the “native people” were permeated by different cultural codes and guided by the expectations of the in-group and out-group members. It is worth noting that since the 1920s, Bronislaw Malinkowski's ethnographic method emphasised the importance of a normalised and non-disruptive presence in the community being studied. According to Malinkowski (1922), a prolonged stay allowed for (almost) total immersion and knowledge derived largely from participation in the daily life of the group under study. Accordingly, the visual information contained in a photographic image may vary depending on the length of immersion of the fieldwork⁵.

During the 5th MAM campaign, photographs were taken by those who did not have a normalized presence in the communities where data collection took place. For some of MAM's scientific purposes, the disturbing presence of the anthropologist/photographer seemed irrelevant. Despite the manner in which some photographs were taken in a colonial context, certain “manipulations” and choices made by the photographer or signs of contrariness on the part of the photographed subject suggest conventions which end up determining the final result. The artificiality of some photographs of bodies in a colonial situation does not necessarily invalidate the photographic image, because the visual information is related to certain conventions that, in turn, govern the social interaction between photographer and photographed subject. These conventions can be perceived in the visible part of a photograph, but they also refer to what was left out of the picture.

Atomane's photographs can be seen from a reversal of perspective, which can be observed not only with the attention turned to him, but also to the one outside the visual record, for example, the photographer. In a colonial context, the image of otherness was racialised⁶. In the case of Atomane, the manner in which he was photographed denotes the photographer's prior knowledge and beliefs about native otherness and microcephaly. Instead of approaching the photographed subject, bringing the focus of the analysis closer on who photographs, that is, observing who observes and not only who was observed, makes the photograph more a product of stigmatisation than a visual record of stigma.

The photograph of the MAM head's son with Atomane (Figure 3) seems emblematic of the limits of intercultural communication. They should both be the same age. The photograph can be analysed in the binary logic of the terms coloniser and colonised, white and black or simply normal and abnormal. It has similarities with other photographs of European explorers with the so-called pygmies of equatorial Africa. I would rather follow other clues. The MAM helper is seated while Atomane poses in an erect position, slightly bent over and leaning on the leg of the young Portuguese. But what do those positions represent in the codes of Norberto and Atomane? Their

bodies are touching. They both look at the camera. One gets an image of a friendly encounter between the young anthropology student and the native. Otherness and (a)normality are established.



Figure 3. *MAM assistant with Atomane* IICT-Photography Collection, Inv. ULISBOA-IICT-MAM (1948)

The photograph of Atomane with Norberto has an interesting detail. I refer to the two fancy pins attached to Atomane's shirt pocket. As mentioned earlier, Atomane had received some costume pins from MAM team members. One of them was stolen from him. According to the head of MAM, it was the "most flashy and certainly the one most to our little dwarf's liking" (Santos Júnior, 1949, p. 2). I have no doubt that the pin in question is the one prominently displayed in his shirt pocket. If so, one can infer that the two other photographs (Figures 1 and 2) were made after the photograph of Norberto and Atomane (Figure 3).

It is known that every photograph "isolates, preserves and presents a moment taken from a continuum" (Berger, 2017, p. 39). Thus, the photograph refers to what is unseen, that is, what happened before and after it. In an attempt to integrate the photograph of Norberto and Atomane into a continuum, one must take into account the probable summoning of Atomane's father and the measurements and palm prints made by the MAM helper. After the photographed instant, Atomane returned home with his fancy pins. The head of MAM and his son Norberto would return to Portugal, where they would submit papers based on the data collected in Mozambique. It is known that the same object can have different meanings according to the individual standpoints of different people (Schütz, 1998, p. 25). In front of the camera, Norberto and Atomane have different expectations. The first expects to have an image revealed that may have multiple uses for him, including as a visual record of "having been there", to use a Roland Barthes (2015, p. 67) notion. As for the second, what did he expect from that moment? He accompanied his father and obeyed orders, among others, to be photographed. He probably did not receive any revealed photographs of his own image. He returned home not knowing that his portrait would be part of a teratology iconography and that his measurements would enter the statistics of a colonial anthropology.

An examination of the images of anomalous bodies in MAM's photographic collection raises the following question: who were the monsters in colonial teratology, after all? Like in the film *Freaks* (1932), by Tod Browning, the photographs of anomalous bodies in colonial situations challenge us and we are compelled to ask on which side is the monstrosity. Wouldn't the spectacularization of sick or anomalous bodies through photography or exposing the suffering of others on film have something indecent about it?

As for the viewer, this viewer, even many years after the photograph was taken... well, we can keep staring at these faces for a long time and fail to understand the mystery, and the indecency, of our own role as viewer. (Sontag, 2015, p. 61)

Seeing Atomane's photographs causes unease, his picture disturbs. He was more than a case of "dwarfism and infantilism" to use Santos Junior's (1949) words. Beyond scientific spectacularization in exotic lands, the case of the tiny Atomane unveils a fascination that fostered the production of images of a bizarre set of anomalous, sickly and mutilated bodies that, according to the heads of the anthropological missions, made colonization a categorical imperative for Africa. There are photographs of microcephaly and other cases of congenital malformation, as well as images of the enlargement or perforation of earlobes or lip lobes, the filing of teeth and body scarifications in the iconographic spoil of colonial teratology produced by anthropologists and their assistants in the Portuguese scientific missions⁷.

Like Mendes Corrêa, Santos Júnior was a physician who became an anthropologist. There were many physicians engaged in the Portuguese colonial project. According to Luís de Pina (1934, p. 1), colonization based on scientific principles would be the African panacea. During the *Estado Novo*, the mainstream of tropical medicine and colonial anthropology suggested that, under the colonial order, the natives would cease their "ethnic mutilations" and could be cured of many illnesses and anomalies. From the colonial perspective, Atomane's portrait would be like the face of a disappearing Africa⁸.

Final considerations

Based a record of internment of the 18th century, Michel Foucault (1977) made an "anthology of existences" wherein the common point of these lives was their clash with power. Without this conflict with the law, perhaps, there would be no trace of these existences in the archives. Another "anthology of existences" can be made of people who were never in conflict with the law. However, traces of their lives have been preserved in the archives because the anomaly of their bodies was the target of scientific curiosity. Of the latter, there is the case of Atomane who, due to an anomaly, was taken by his father to meet the MAM team during their passage through the district of António Enes in September 1948.

Atomane's case unveils a scabrous feature of the campaigns of the anthropological missions to Guinea, Angola, São Tomé and Príncipe, Mozambique and Timor, between 1936 and 1959. The spectacle of the anomaly was often exaggerated, as these cases were residual in the empirical data set for native policy formulations, and so forth. Disregarding possible constraints, the head of MAM made Antonio Enes' "little man" a spectacular case. Atomane was the object of a scientific study that Santos Júnior delivered in a presentation entitled *Um caso de nanismo completo ou total num preto de António Enes, Moçambique* (A case of complete or total dwarfism in a Negro from António Enes, Mozambique), during the "VI Congresso de Anatomia Luso-Hispano-Americano" (VI Luso-Hispano-American Congress of Anatomy) and the "XIX Reunião da Sociedade Anatómica Portuguesa" (XIX Meeting of the Portuguese Anatomical Society), held in Lisbon, May 15-18, 1949. Santos Júnior's interest in the anomalies in Mozambique is related to colonial teratology. But what does the scientific spectacularization of anomalous bodies expose? Wouldn't the spectacle of the morbid be another development of the obstinate search for normality?

Just as the photograph extracts a moment from a continuum (Berger, 2017), Santos Júnior's (1949) report on the "microcephalic of António Enes" isolates the anthropologist's social interaction with the native from the colonial situation where it happened⁹. The anthropologist's inter-subjective experience with the native is permeated by the rational action of the former based on an alleged normality – and superiority – expressed in an attempt at intercultural communication in a colonial situation. It turns out that the native also interacted with the MAM team from his own reality and conventions, despite the fact that the MAM members were unaware of the provinces of meaning or the multiple realities in which they and the others were. It seems essential to consider the provinces of meaning of individuals in a colonial situation when studying the realm of image production and how certain inter-subjective experiences occurred. This enables a better assessment of the limits of intercultural communication between the different actors ((in)voluntarily involved in MAM's campaigns.

Translation: Anabela Delgado

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Notes

1. The current city of Angoche, in Nampula province in Mozambique, was called António Enes during the colonial period.

2. As Susan Sontag (1975) has demonstrated in her review of the book *The last of the Nuba*, by the German photographer Leni Riefenstahl, fascinating fascism can unfold in photographs of African otherness.
3. On degeneracy and miscegenation in Portuguese Anthropology of the last quarter of the 19th century, see Joaquim António Fernandes dos Santos (2002, pp. 116-120).
4. On the objectivity ascribed to photography, see, for example, the preface by Luciano Cordeiro to the photographic and descriptive album, entitled *África Ocidental* (West Africa), by José Augusto da Cunha Moraes (1885).
5. On the reconceptualization of the field and the potential of the photographic image in Visual Anthropology, refer to the article by Sofia Caldeira (2017).
6. On image and racism, the issue compiled by Ana Cristina Pereira, Michelle Salles and Rosa Cabecinhas (2020) provides some inputs related to the (in)visibility of the photographed subject in a colonial situation.
7. Regarding the spectacularization of sick or anomalous bodies, it is worth remembering that images of bodies deformed by leprosy or with symptoms of tropical diseases such as human African trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness) were featured in illustrated magazines of the mainland periodical press and in various media of colonial or missionary propaganda. At the colonial exhibitions, stands would display large format photographs of health and hygiene services, sanitary campaigns and also numerous cases of tropical diseases.
8. Unlike the importance photography had to an ethnography of urgency which believed that so-called 'primitive societies' were destined for an inevitable demise (Caldeira, 2017, p. 170), the photography of anomalous bodies did not have the same appeal.
9. In the mid-20th century, Michel Leiris (1950) addressed the ethics of the ethnographer under colonialism and made a critical reflection on the ambiguity of social scientists in a colonial context.

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