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Transnational Isolates: Portuguese Colonial Race Science and the Foreign World

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This article examines scientific transnationalism as an art of engagement with, and avoidance of, the threats and promises of what was foreign to the nation. Portuguese racial anthropologists experienced a tension between remaining imperial-nationalistic in character, and internationalist in their activities simultaneously. They struggled to exclude foreigners from colonial field sites; they aimed at nativist authority based on total control of colonial data. Yet, they eagerly sought connections with foreign experts to capitalize provincial scientific authority within Portugal's colonies. The essay conceptualizes this mode of transnationalism as also a kind of isolationism, an inward oriented form of engaging with foreign sciences and scientists as ambivalently powerful and threatening strangers.

1. Introduction

This essay explores how twentieth-century Portuguese colonial race science engaged with the science and scientists perceived to be foreign to the nation. In this context, scientific transnationalism, I argue, developed as a tension between interconnected movements of engagement and rejection; a dynamic process I conceptualize here as transnational isolationism. The desire to cross national borders in order to gain authority from the alterity of the foreign scientific world went along with the fear that the same outsider domain would usurp autochthonous assets, and thereby threaten a kind of nativist nationalistic scientific sovereignty over Portugal and its colonies. Throughout most of the twentieth century, the Portuguese colonial empire stretched from vast territories in Africa to a few remnant colonies in Asia. Anti-colonial pressures increased after 1945 but the Portuguese

empire lasted until 1974, when a Democratic Revolution finally prompted decolonization, by putting an end to the long-lasting Estado Novo regime, the conservative fascist and national-imperialist dictatorship established in 1933 and headed by António de Oliveira Salazar. During this period, Portuguese colonial anthropologists felt impelled to become transnational in their outlooks without giving the imperial nation away; they distrusted foreigners whilst simultaneously nurturing international exchanges and connections. The desire to engage with and absorb the perceived higher powers of the international world coexisted with a growing fear that this same world could endanger the nationals' claims for scientific authority and political sovereignty as regards colonial subjects. Colonial anthropologists thus experienced a tension between remaining more nationalistic and colonialist in character and simultaneously increasingly internationalist in their activities. Under this framework, the blissful allure of the *estrangeiro* as imaginary source of modernity competed with its dark reverse figure: that of the dangerous and usurping stranger who could corrupt and threaten the nationals' scientific sovereignty, to the point of putting at stake the existence of an ever more insulated imperialist project. In this context, transnationalism became an art of engagement with, and avoidance of, the sciences and scientists perceived to be strangers to the nation.

1.1. The Notion of Transnational Isolationism

The tension between nationalism and transnationalism¹ traverses the modern history of racial science in Europe. The nineteenth-century rise of anthropology as a science of race went along with the formation of a multinational community of scholars whose ethos combined universalistic knowledge ideals with fervent patriotism. One dynamic characteristic of this community was thus a complex and tense cohabitation between intense forms of patriotic nationalism and diverse forms of trans- and inter-nationalisms. Commitments to nationalist politics and endorsements of ideals of scientific universalism, as Chris Manias (2009, p. 1) observed, were “not mutually exclusive but could operate in a highly synergistic manner” (see also McMahon 2016; Barbosa, this issue; Hyun 2020, this issue). This tensional synergy expressed in diverse ways. Regular international congresses and journals; travel exchanges and mobility of scientific

1. I here use transnationalism and internationalism as companion terms that refer to phenomena not bounded to the real or imagined political borders of modern nation-states. While my use of the prefix “trans-” tends to place analytical emphasis on dynamics situated across or beyond such borders; the prefix “inter-” accentuates relationships between bordered national units and their representatives. In my use, both terms, however, presuppose nationalist idioms and the world separated into “nations,” and both imply the category opposition “nationals/foreigners” that is central to my analysis.

people, objects, instruments; or the successive efforts of numerous committees at reaching agreement about rival national styles and competing anthropometric standards (Clever, this issue) offer examples of attempts at resolving this tension to the advantage of communal ideals. Yet, throughout these same efforts, anthropologists often self-fashioned as patriotic, mobilizing nationalistic idioms in their engagements with knowledge and scholars from outside national borders. On some historical occasions, as eventually happened in Europe during the First World War (Evans 2010), intense passionate patriotism took the lead and scientific meetings and connections of an international kind became political battlefields of nationalist animosity, supplementary zones of diplomatic affairs and even warfare.

Thus, elaborating on transnational isolationism, as done here in relation to the Portuguese case, carries the potential of widening our conceptual scope about this broader historical pattern of tensional cohabitations between internationalism and nationalism in the anthropological sciences since the 1800s. In Portugal, and perhaps elsewhere in the national peripheries of the dominant French, German, and British racial anthropologists, such pattern of tensional coexistence was crucially fed by mixed attitudes of attraction and repulsion, ambivalent notions of virtuosity and defect, about sciences and scientists perceived to be strangers to the nation. Central to scientific transnational practices were cultural conceptions of the *estrangeiro* (stranger or foreign/foreigner) as someone or something that comes from outside the imagined nation and carries an ambivalent potency of vitality and danger. This ambivalent affiliation to the otherness of foreign science as both source of vitality and as modernity-giving forces that could simultaneously imperil the inside core of nationality characterized the late nineteenth-century origins of anthropology as racial science in the country (Roque 2018a). This orientation towards outsider-sciences followed claims of a nationalistic form of scientific sovereignty, concerning the full right to exploit research sites and data, and to speak authoritatively about endogenous topics, without the intrusion of foreign researchers into the perceived boundaries of national and imperial terrains. The Portuguese drive to go transnational, in other words, was grounded upon nativist nationalistic conceptions of scientific authority. That is: those conceptions according to which scientists and sciences imagined to be born within the country had primacy and precedence over stranger/outsider sciences; and according to which native born nationals had priority rights (ideally, almost monopoly) to capitalize on access to and authority over field sites and data on the country.

In this essay, I explore these processes further into the twentieth-century history of Portuguese colonial anthropology. In the 1930s, as the Estado

Novo gained momentum, the influential Professor of Anthropology at Porto University, physical anthropologist António Mendes Correia (1888–1960), successfully designed a state-sponsored program of self-declared “Portuguese colonial anthropology,” a special discipline concerned solely with the study of African and Asian “primitive natives” inhabiting the overseas territories under Portuguese rule (see Roque 2001; Pereira 2006). This style of colonial anthropology encompassed ethnography, pre-history, and physical anthropology. However, the core of the program was a raciological anthropology, also known under the term “anthropobiology,” an expression used by Portuguese scholars (after Correia 1933) to convey a pluri-methodological form of physical anthropology as racial science. In approaching here the history of this form of colonial science of race, I intend to reflect upon its mode of transnationalism as an inherently nationalistic relationship with the alterity of foreigners; as a mode of relating to *other* sciences and scientists that is homologous to a mode of relating to *others* as strangers to the nation. My purpose is to reflect on scientific transnationalism as a cross border dynamic governed by a dual pull to make contact with the authority of non-national sciences, and at once to discard such proximity. In Portugal, this was a tensional but dynamic coexistence, that, I suggest, exacerbated exponentially during the post war years, especially with regard to research in the colonies.

I propose to conceptualize this form of post war racial anthropology in Portugal as a “transnational isolate.” That is: as a collective firmly transnational in its imaginaries and authority strategies, but ultimately rooted in self-serving notions of hard line imperial nationalism and colonial scientific sovereignty. At the core of what I call transnational isolationism were cultural conceptions of the foreign world as a double-edged source of potency and threat. On one hand, the Portuguese struggled to exclude foreign physical anthropologists from direct access to fieldwork and data in the colonies. They related to foreign anthropologies as threats to ideals of political and scientific sovereignty in the colonies. As such, they sought to cut ties and avoid connections with the outside world. This rejection aimed at building up a nationalistic authority over Portuguese colonial terrains, based on a Portuguese monopoly of colonial biodata by Portuguese nationals. Yet, on the other hand, Portuguese scholars also emulated the authority of foreign science and the symbolic capital that derived from international networking and/or from outsider validation of their work and results. Thus, they eagerly sought connections and exchanges with certain foreign scientists. But they used these exchanges to validate and reinforce insider forms of authority, converting contacts with the sciences abroad into an ultimately inward looking form of nationalist scientific authority. The transnational inclination thus did not aim at intervening

in international debates. It was entangled with the political drive to assert nationalist scientific authority and reinforce Portugal as an exceptional imperial isolate. In effect, I argue, both actions for and against foreign scientists aimed at a common objective: the nationalist assertion of an insider kind of scientific authority akin to imperialist sovereignty.

To investigate this hypothesis, I consider here a selection of critical episodes in the history of the so-called Timor Anthropological Mission, a field expedition to the Portuguese colony of East Timor, led by the medical doctor and anthropologist António de Almeida (1900–1984), in 1953–54. The Timor Mission was the last to appear of a set of similar state-sponsored expeditions in colonial anthropology—the so-called Colonial Anthropological Missions—designed by Mendes Correia and launched between 1936 and 1960 by the Portuguese Overseas Research Board (hereafter JIU).² I first frame the project of the Colonial Anthropological Missions, of which the Timor expedition was a component, within the tensional dynamics between conservative imperial nationalism and expansive internationalism of the *Estado Novo* regime. I then locate these Missions as a central piece of a Portuguese twentieth-century imperial policy based on the concept of *ocupação científica* (scientific occupation), which defined field research as an extension of military and political conquest by scientific means. As such, the missions' goal was to serve as effective actions of colonialist possession, as manifestations of imperial expansionism achieved by scientific fieldwork. They intentionally juxtaposed the Portuguese nationalist ideals of imperial, colonial, and scientific sovereignty. I also show here this juxtaposition concerned both the objects and the subjects of knowledge. On the one hand, “colonial anthropology” was envisaged as a knowledge endeavor focused exclusively on the study of the colonized as research objects—the most primitive and authentic indigenous “races” of the Portuguese colonial empire. On the other hand, it was also born as a knowledge endeavor that claimed priority and even exclusive rights for Portuguese nationals as the authorized subjects of knowledge production. I then turn attention to the double logic of avoidance and engagement that characterized the Portuguese racial scientists' relationships with science and scientists defined as foreign to the empire and to the nation. Firstly, I analyse the foundational episode of the Timor Anthropological Mission in 1953, which concerned the anxious rejection by leading Portuguese physical anthropologists of an Australian scientist's field trip. Secondly, I contrast this critical event of nativist isolationism with a set of other episodes of positive engagements

2. Created in 1936, the *Junta das Missões Geográficas e Investigações Coloniais* (JMIGC) (Board for Colonial Research and Geographical Missions) was later renamed *Junta de Investigações do Ultramar* (JIU) (Overseas Research Board), in 1951.

with foreign scholars. Even such moves towards foreign science, however, were regulated by the self-centered anxiety of colonial anthropologists above all determined to appropriate the powers of foreign sciences to self-serving nationalistic ends.

2. Portuguese Imperial Nationalism and its Foreign Others

The wider geopolitics of diplomatic relations during the Cold War and the development of transnational institutions that mediated relations between national states left a strong mark in post war human sciences (see Linde and Santos 2012). In the case of Portugal, however, the key for understanding scientific transnationalism in this period resides in the country's determination to preserve a vast colonial empire against all odds. The phantoms of the foreign threat as regards the colonial empire had been weighing pervasively on the Portuguese nationalist imagination since at least the British ultimatum of 1890 (Alexandre 2000, p. 216).³ An engrained Portuguese sense of imperial vulnerability was long fed by the imagined or real interest of rival European imperial nations in the Portuguese colonies. In the 1930s, Salazar confronted actual international interest in the redistribution of Portugal's colonies (Gonçalves 2021). After World War II, the phantom of the foreign threat to the nation-empire grew into new proportions and haunted the Portuguese mindset.

Prior to 1945, the Portuguese government regularly confronted international accusations of abuses or deviations from so-called "modern" or "civilizing" standards of colonization and development, most notably concerning the sensitive themes of slavery and forced labor. In the 1800s, British abolitionist charges of continuing slave traffic in Portuguese Africa held sway in international circles. In the interwar years, comparable denunciations of forced labor were strongly voiced in the new major international organizations created after World War I (Alexandre 2000, pp. 65–120; Jerónimo 2015). Accusations escalated dramatically after 1945, and, as decolonization became the norm, they targeted the very existence of the "Portuguese colonial empire." In 1951, in response to the rise of international critiques of Portuguese colonialism, the regime of Salazar abolished the term "colonies" and replaced it by the term "overseas" (*ultramar*). However, this change was merely rhetorical. Rigidly attached to the vision that the colonies were indivisible and inalienable part of the "nation," the regime stubbornly resisted external pressures for decolonization. Portugal joined the United Nations in 1955; its colonialism was under increasing

3. In 1890, after several efforts to extend the Portuguese territorial influence from Angola to Mozambique through a contiguous inland connection, the Portuguese government was forced to capitulate by force of a British ultimatum.

international scrutiny. Pressures amplified after 1961, when the regime began a long and tragic war against liberation guerillas in Angola, Guinea Bissau, and Mozambique. Hence the determination to remain “imperial” and “colonial,” especially with relation to Portuguese Africa, as several scholars have convincingly argued, was accompanied by growing involvement of the Portuguese regime with a number of organizations that regulated international relations in diplomacy, economics, labor, and even science production (Jerónimo and Monteiro 2013; Ágoas and Castelo 2019).

These outward oriented tendencies point to a post war escalation of internationalism and imperialism in the political and diplomatic fronts, most notably in relation to (Portuguese) African affairs. However, one should consider that this post war internationalism was accompanied by the resilience of fascist and Catholic conservative imperial-nationalist ideologies disseminated by the Estado Novo regime in its golden era of the 1930s–40s. This nationalist framework largely defined Portugueseness against the culturally foreign. The regime propaganda (fed by the work of writers and academics) disseminated the idea that the Portuguese nation was a self-rooted ontological unit founded upon uniquely and distinctively “Portuguese” rural customs, arts, folklore, aesthetic styles, and also white ethnic and racial characteristics, perpetuated throughout history as pure and authentic spiritual essences (e.g., Melo 2001; Alves 2013). The outside “modern” world was feared as potentially degenerative and contaminating outsider influence upon supposedly pristine Portuguese autochthonous “traditions.” As a result, scholars were expected to root cultural and scientific production in the autochthonous soil. In other words, Portugal pre-war imperial nationalism, culturally self-referential and deeply distrustful of foreign inputs, would prevail in burgeoning post war internationalism.

This inward-looking conservative imperial-nationalism dominated the early decades of Salazar’s regime. It may have lost some ground to economic developmentalist ideologies after 1945; yet it was not simply opposed to internationalism. Its presence and effects continued active in Portuguese intellectual circles beyond the 1940s. Nationalistic scientists could thus be highly suspicious of the foreign, but they were also eagerly oriented to the world outside as a necessary source of higher expertise, legitimacy, and symbolic power. They were anxious to go abroad, to appropriate from foreign scholars and institutions a symbolic capital that would subsequently serve to attest the vigour of Portuguese national sciences. Outside national borders one could obtain the credit of scientific authority that Portuguese science could not generate on its own. It is therefore significant that Portuguese nationalist scholars received unprecedented state financial support for the internationalization of their activities during the

Estado Novo through the concession of state grants for study and research abroad via the Institute for High Culture (*Instituto para a Alta Cultura*) and the National Education Board (*Junta de Educação Nacional*). Since the 1930s, these institutions offered generous support to Portuguese research travel and exchanges both at home, in the colonies, and in other European countries (France and Germany primarily). Among the main beneficiaries of this state boost to scientific internationalization were the most emphatic nativist anthropologists and archaeologists who advocated the ideologies of the regime. In effect, nationalistic race sciences thrived with state support for travel and research in Europe. Anthropologists at Porto and Coimbra universities, Mendes Correia and his Porto group in particular, then saw their international visibility increase exponentially (Lopes 2017, pp. 145–166).

Hence, the Portuguese imperial regime of the post war era became firmly nationalist and growingly internationalist at the same time; and it was under these circumstances that a pre-war colonial style of racial anthropology prospered and endured. “Colonial anthropology,” intimately tied to the regime’s concept of scientific occupation, as we will see next, became a critical arena where such coexisting forces of transnationalism and nationalism came dynamically into contact.

3. Colonial Anthropology or Race Science as “Scientific Occupation”

Science research in the colonies presumed a proactive politically nationalist and imperialist stance, in harmony with the regime. Nation and empire became one unit such that nation building and empire building drives coalesced in the political and scientific project of Portuguese colonial anthropology. Central to this nationalist-imperialist colonial anthropology (and to all colonial sciences more generally) was the concept of *ocupação científica*. This notion conveyed a Portuguese colonizing drive to politically possess and occupy people and territories by means of scientific fieldwork, data gathering, and knowledge production. This singular conception of colonial power-knowledge conjunction became profoundly embroiled with both the excessive nationalism and the mounting internationalism of the regime. Most notably after 1945, Portugal’s obstinacy in preserving and legitimating its imperial volition through visions of multi-racial nationhood and a benign spiritual-patriotic form of colonization (Roque 2019), was accompanied by an unprecedented investment in scientific research and fieldwork, sponsored by the JIU (Castelo 2012). This field research impetus, which the above mentioned Colonial Anthropological Missions were a main manifestation, realized the so-called “scientific occupation.” This concept guided state policies adopted by the JIU for fostering science and development in the colonies and justifying Portuguese imperial sovereignty internationally.

In 1945, the JIU was given an effective boost as a state organism of major significance through the dynamic initiative of the then Minister of Colonies, Marcelo Caetano, later to become the successor of the dictator Salazar in the final agonizing years of the regime (1968–1974). In 1950, Caetano explained emphatically the significance he attributed to the concept of scientific occupation as the touchstone of a revitalized Portuguese empire in the modern age. Portuguese imperial sovereignty was henceforth to be established upon the political legitimacy that derived from actual scientific research conducted by the Portuguese state and by Portuguese nationals in the colonies. Wrote Caetano:

The scientific occupation of the overseas [provinces] represents an obligation for any colonial country. It represents, on the other hand, a convenience, which is to establish sovereignty titles. In the past, the titles of sovereignty were based upon effective occupation, on treaties, on conventions, on arbitrary sentences. Today, our sovereignty titles must be reinforced by scientific occupation. That is, colonial scientific research is a political objective of the first importance for the State and it is for this reason that the Ministry of Colonies is directly interested in [scientific research] [...]; at the Ministry of Colonies it is a first order concern. (1970 [1950], pp. 159–60)

Thus, conceived as a prolongation of late nineteenth century ideas of effective occupation, scientific research by Portuguese nationals in colonial terrains became *homologous* to a political action of imperial and national sovereignty. This equivalence was central to the colonial anthropological missions, and to the practice and *ethos* of Portuguese racial anthropologists. Indeed, important to my argument, colonial anthropologists, as we will see, saw themselves as agents and heralds of a kind of scientific sovereignty in colonial research that equaled political sovereignty in imperial terms. Their drive to engage with science and scientists viewed as stranger to the nation became deeply entangled with—in some cases it became almost equivalent to—the politics of Portugal’s decaying imperial regime. It is moreover no coincidence that the concept of “scientific occupation” itself was not simply the work of the minister, Caetano, or more widely of “politicians” alone. The Estado Novo policies of scientific occupation drew largely on the writings and ideas of academics, most notably those expounded by Mendes Correia. Indeed, the idea of scientific work as an action of imperial sovereignty, and the metaphoric correspondence of field scientists to occupying forces also had been the product of an anthropologist’s mind.

3.1. An Anthropologist’s Plan

The Estado Novo nurtured colonial anthropology and the political and academic theories and careers of the university racial anthropologists, first

and foremost of Mendes Correia. In the 1940s, besides his position at the university and his role as deputy to the National Assembly, Mendes Correia was appointed to both the presidency of the Overseas Research Board and the High Colonial School. For decades, until his death in 1960, he became the all-powerful figure in Portuguese anthropological research, and a main protagonist in inter-imperial scientific cooperation policies in the Portuguese colonial territories. In 1942, Minister Marcelo Caetano invited Mendes Correia to lead the empire's "scientific occupation" by taking on the Presidency of the JIU, a position he began formally in 1945 and held continuously until 1958. The appointment was no surprise. An avowed nationalist and political supporter of the regime since its inception, Mendes Correia verbosely exposed his views on the political importance of Portuguese scientific field research in the colonies. "How could the scientific occupation of the colonies be completed," Mendes Correia asked rhetorically (1945, p. 5), "without studies about their respective population?" Central to his vision was the idea that the colonial sciences—anthropology in particular—were a nationalist endeavor that ought to be controlled and undertaken exclusively by Portuguese nationals. A national monopoly of scientific research in the Portuguese colonial possessions was expected to put an end to the dependency of Portuguese scientists on external theories, and external expertise.

Above all "subjects," Mendes Correia saw anthropological studies as a special activity that should be in the hands of nationals alone. In 1936, in a programmatic report to the Minister of Education that would become a pillar of the state colonial research policy, Mendes Correia argued vehemently for an "intensive plan of scientific research in our colonies." He justified the urgent need of such plan because of the "disproportion between the quantity of foreign works and of Portuguese works about our colonies"; in his opinion only strong and direct state financial and institutional support would correct this imbalance, finally allowing for scientific authority on colonial possessions to be handed over to its legitimate owners—the Portuguese nationals. Wrote Mendes Correia:

from the national point of view, it is at same time disdainful, risky and frankly harmful the quasi stagnation of our efforts towards the scientific knowledge of our colonies. The fact is disdainful for our prestige as civilized Nation. It is a risk for the sacred integrity of our Empire, moreover at this time when expansionist ambitions from stronger nations raise against the small metropolises, which, like Belgium, Holland and Portugal, possess great colonial areas. [...] There is no other way of making them back off from their purposes of absorption and conquest unless we show ourselves capable of

realizing in the Colonies the task at which they aim at replacing us.
(1936, pp. 2–3)

The idea that international scientists were interested in Portuguese territories only to abusively extract field data was common among nationalist intellectuals of that historical period. Since the late nineteenth century at least, there was concern about foreign anthropologists seeking ties with scholars in Portugal with merely a view to obtain raw data from Portuguese sites that they would later egoistically use in their theories and publications. In the 1930s, Portuguese colonial scientists similarly accused foreign sciences of maintaining a data-extractive relationship that excluded Portuguese national scientists from the scientific profits to be obtained from the exploitation of “Portuguese” field material.⁴ Mendes Correia and the Overseas Research Board thus wished to put an end to this imagined relationship of abuse, restoring the legitimate rights of Portuguese anthropologists to fully control and own data collected in Portugal’s colonies.

It was in order to realize the ideals of scientific occupation that Mendes Correia then proposed the creation of Colonial Anthropological Missions, state-funded field expeditions directed by scientists of pure Portuguese extraction. The government swiftly supported his proposal. A first anthropological mission was sent to Mozambique in 1936. Five years later, Mendes Correia (1941) submitted to the JIU a “plan of anthropological studies,” elaborating on a more ambitious field program of expeditions to Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, and East Timor. African colonies were prioritized. Accordingly, field Missions to Angola and Guinea were launched in the 1940s. A mission to Timor came last in the timeline. Yet no expedition would be organized in that decade. Despite Portugal’s neutrality in the Second World War, East Timor would be inaccessible to research during the war years, having been invaded and occupied by Japanese forces between 1942 and 1945. Portuguese administration resumed after the Japanese defeat. Nevertheless, no Portuguese arrangements were made for an expedition there until 1953. Then, an unexpected event precipitated the Portuguese decision to organize the Timor Anthropological Mission in haste, under the direction of António de Almeida. As the following section reveals, this decision was the result of Almeida and Correia’s attempts to deal with the perceived threat to Portuguese scientific sovereignty, posed by the impending visit of a foreign physical

4. Unsurprisingly, such accusations of abusive data extraction were never self-reflexive. Presupposing their imperialist monopoly as biodata sovereigns in the colonies, Portuguese colonial anthropologists never perceived as abusive the colonial relationship of violent data extraction that the Portuguese administration and scientists maintained with the lands and bodies of their African and Asian colonized subjects.

anthropologist. Thus, the immediate origins—ultimately hidden (not disclosed beyond the top level Portuguese corridors)—of the Timor Anthropological Mission of 1953–54 are located in a sequence of micro-political maneuvers by the racial anthropologists in Lisbon, driven by nationalistic ethos, voracious scientific nativism, and anti-foreign sentiments.

4. The Hidden Origins of an “Anthropological Mission”

By 1952–53, Dr Neil W. G. Macintosh (1906–1977), Senior Lecturer of Anatomy in the University of Sydney (on the path to become Professor of Anatomy at the same university) applied to the Portuguese consul in Australia for a permit to conduct physical anthropological fieldwork in East Timor. He had just finished his PhD thesis on the topic of the “antiquity of Man in Australia” and was now interested in developing broader studies on the regional origins of so-called “Australian Aborigines.” Macintosh’s interest in East Timor followed a century or so of wider international interest of race scholars in the supposedly ambivalent racial make-up of the islanders—a confusing blend, mixture or crossroads of the main Asian and black “races” or “types” of the region. For this reason, the study of Timorese islanders had long attracted Dutch, Swiss, British, and French race scholars eager to find solution to the problems of anthropogeography of the Indonesian Archipelago (Roque 2018b; Sysling 2016). Yet, Macintosh’s project in the early 1950s, as he reported retrospectively later in life (Macintosh 1974–75), was specifically related to his interest in tracing the Southeast Asian origins of Aboriginal Australians by comparing anatomical evidence from Australia with biomaterial evidence to be collected *in situ* in various islands of the archipelago. To this purpose Macintosh read attentively Mendes Correia’s *magnum opus* on the racial anthropology of East Timor, the monograph *Timor Português* published by the JIU in 1944. Macintosh’s annotations (undated) about Correia’s monograph, still to be found among his papers, indeed indicate he was reading this work with a view to locate signs of Australian or Australoid presence in Timor, suggesting affiliations between the indigenous peoples of Timor and Australia.

In the post war period, foreign scholars like Macintosh intending to pursue fieldwork in Portugal’s colonies had to confront the dictates of the Portuguese foreign affairs politics and bureaucracy. Scientific fieldwork by non-nationals in a Portuguese colony was inherently a political matter of international relations and national-imperial security; as such it was evaluated carefully by the Portuguese authorities, pressed by the need to manage the perceived animosity towards Portuguese colonialism. Such applications often were assessed not simply on their own terms, but on the diplomatic issues associated with the scholars’ nationality. Their bureaucratic circuits were also arduous and convoluted. Typically, a special

application was submitted to the local Consulate or Embassy and then passed on for approval to the Foreign Affairs Office and finally the Minister of Colonies himself, in Lisbon. In addition, the JIU presidency and executive committee also assessed the application in their meetings, often based on Assessment Reports written by appointed Portuguese experts on the proposal's scientific suitability.

The early steps of Macintosh's application are lost in the Portuguese archives, but the available evidence suggests the Minister of Colonies initially approved it. We also know António de Almeida himself was not formally consulted to assess this particular application. This was because he was still to become an authorized expert on the anthropology of Timor. After his return from Timor in 1954, Almeida would be asked systematically by the Ministry and the JIU to assess the suitability of foreign researchers' applications to Timor (as a rule, he assessed them either negatively or distrustfully). Yet, in 1953, before he made his name as an expert on that colony, he sought to exert his influence at a personal level—by writing directly to the Minister. A private letter from António de Almeida reveals the disturbance that the swift ministerial approval of Macintosh's trip caused in the upper ranks of Portuguese colonial anthropology. The ensuing turbulence around the phantasmatic presence of a foreign field-worker usurping the nationals' rights would lead to the organization of the Timor Anthropological Mission.

4.1. An Australian Threat

A medical doctor and physical anthropologist by training, Almeida first specialized in the colonial anthropology of Angola. Since 1935 he held the Chair of Colonial Ethnology and Ethnography at the High Colonial School in Lisbon, where for years he taught the subject to many colonial officials and administrators. In the 1940s, Mendes Correia entrusted him with the leadership of the anthropobiological mission to Angola. In 1955, after also succeeding as leader of the Timor expedition, he was appointed Director of a new Centre of Overseas Ethnology Studies (renamed Centre of Anthropobiology Studies in 1962), a research centre created especially for Almeida with the purpose of housing and computing the data collected in the Anthropological Missions. Like Mendes Correia, his scientific vocation went together with a political career within the Salazar regime. In 1938 he attained a position as deputy to the National Assembly with his scientific work. After Correia's death in 1960, and until his retirement in 1970, Almeida became the harbinger of Portuguese racial science with respect to the colonies, forever devotedly attached to the original "scientific occupation" framework that inspired the Colonial Anthropological Missions in the 1930s.

In April 1953, well informed within the apparatchik corridors of the regime, he heard about the planned trip of the Australian anthropologist. By then, Macintosh's request had already been preliminarily approved by the Portuguese consul in Australia and even by the Minister of Colonies. However, Almeida felt confident that he could shift the course of events by exerting his personal influence. He was perplexed with the rumors of approval of the application by the dynamic new Minister of the Colonies/Overseas (appointed in 1950), Commander Manuel Sarmiento Rodrigues (1899–1979), himself a passionate advocate of colonial anthropological studies. Sarmiento Rodrigues was an acquaintance of Almeida from their common times as lecturers at the High Colonial School. In 1946–47, Rodrigues (by then Governor of Portuguese Guinea) invited Almeida to coordinate an ethnographic questionnaire in that African colony. Almeida thus wrote privately to the Minister, affectionately treating him as “illustrious friend.” The private nature of the letter makes clear the close ties that linked colonial physical anthropologists to the ruling elite of the regime. Almeida began the letter by reporting on the progress of his latest anthropobiological fieldwork in Angola. Almeida assumed his “current scientific concerns were concentrated mainly on Angola”; however, he used the letter to voice his scientific concerns about a different colony. In a lengthy and revealing passage, Almeida asked the minister to somehow impede Macintosh's trip and, in its place, to provide state support to a Portuguese led anthropological expedition, to be launched very soon under Almeida's direction:

[...] it was not without profound sadness that I learned about the desire expressed by Dr. Mac Intosh [sic], lecturer of the Medicine Faculty of Sydney, to visit Timor within one year, to study those peoples, for which he wrote our Consul [in Sydney]; this researcher's request has already been dispatched by Your Excellency, who sent it to the Overseas Research Board. [...] You know better than myself about Australia's constant *interest* in Timor, an interest now revealed under the cover of scientific research. Can the realization of Dr. Macintosh's trip be avoided? I think this could be done if, before him, one Portuguese would go to examine the inhabitants of our Timor; because if in reality there are only [Australian] scientific intentions, Dr. Mac Intosh will not need to travel to that Province, because, easily and without trouble, he would use the elements collected by ourselves for his own work.

I think a five or six months-long field campaign, to begin by coming June or July, will suffice to make the anthropobiological prospection of the peoples of Portuguese Timor; this is an exhaustive

undertaking, but out of good will I would propose to assume it myself with my auxiliaries, if Your Excellency understands it is worth the sacrifice for the good name of Portuguese Science and the prestige of the Nation. (Almeida 1953a; emphasis in original)

The Australian anthropologist's field trip to Timor represented a threat to imperial sovereignty and a blow on the "prestige" of Portuguese scientists; as, such, it should be "avoided" and an alternative field expedition promoted. Australians could well use data controlled and collected by Portuguese colonial scientists, but by no means should they come into possession of such data themselves. In the case of Macintosh, an Australian national, Portuguese fears of Australia's interest in the annexation of Timor resonated in Almeida's assessment of his application. In effect, in order to persuade the Minister of the need to sponsor an alternative Portuguese expedition, Almeida insinuated that the allegedly scientific trip of Macintosh was covering up the Australian government's intention to assault Portuguese sovereignty and take possession of the colony. This was presumably a longstanding Australian political wish, the anthropologist implied, especially since Australian armed forces had come to East Timor to fight the Japanese during the Second World War. In addition, Almeida argued the trip should be avoided because a Portuguese national expedition could instead be "easily" set up under Almeida's leadership. In the face of the specter of an Australian invasion, it was time for Portugal to reclaim sovereignty through scientific occupation of the territory of Timor; it was time to finally realize the Anthropological Mission planned since the early 1940s. With pompous patriotic verve, the anthropologist, self-commending, offered his services to the minister to head the expedition that would save an imagined imperial sovereignty in peril.

Almeida's privately voiced concerns received official support from the Overseas Science Board. The Minister sent Macintosh's research request for evaluation and endorsement to the Plenary Session of the JIU, then presided over by Almeida's mentor and ally, Mendes Correia. The premature ministerial approval of the trip seems to have embarrassed the Portuguese experts on this Board, above all Mendes Correia and Almeida, also seated on the committee. In May 1953, the Board met to decide on the matter. The result was a rather reluctant and conditional approval of Macintosh's trip, followed by a set of recommendations. Signed by President Mendes Correia (1953), the Board's final resolution on the proposed trip read:

The Board does not see how it is possible to formulate an objection against the proposed pretension, but understands that Dr. Macintosh should be accompanied by a trustworthy Portuguese and that it is

desirable that researches in Timor are, as much as possible, made by Portuguese nationals. The Board is in favour of the convenience of his President [Mendes Correia] travelling to Timor to install a local Centre of Studies and to promote the convenient works, and further suggests that the [staff of] Prof. António de Almeida's Mission to Angola may go to work in Timor the current year. (Mendes Correia 1953)

The Board did not openly object to the ministerial decision but it criticized the political inconvenience of anthropological fieldwork by foreigners ("it is desirable that researches in Timor are, as much as possible, done by Portuguese"). It also decided that if the Sydney anatomist was to conduct fieldwork in Timor, he should travel in the company, and under the surveillance of, "one trustworthy Portuguese [scientist]." Finally, the Board declared, in a gesture of anthropological sovereignty that subtly affronted the diplomats' and ministerial early approval, the President himself, Mendes Correia, would accompany António de Almeida to the colony that same year, in order to create in Timor a Research Centre and jointly kick start a new Anthropological Mission. This was then a strong statement of the colonial anthropologists' claims to monopolize scientific research in Timor, based on a nativist ideology that regarded foreign fieldwork as a political act of usurpation of Portuguese sovereignty over its overseas territories. The response to this perceived threat was to launch a Portuguese expedition. Hence the origins of the Timor Anthropological Mission are located in a double gesture of transnational isolationism: the refusal to embrace an authority-threatening foreign science was accompanied by the assertion of Portuguese experts' nationalist right to exclusive access to and exploitation of the colonial terrains and its indigenous racial data.

4.2. Field Trips that Never Were

Either persuaded by such arguments, or simply aware of the need to sooth the tension with the anthropologists, the Minister of Colonies, Sarmiento Rodrigues, quickly approved the JIU Board's resolution. Consequently, formal preparations began for the Timor Anthropological Mission to be organized under Almeida's command. To this purpose, Almeida met with Sarmiento Rodrigues to present the field plans for one year long campaign. Again, he wrote privately to the Minister to express his contentment for the Board's "unanimous approval for the organization of the Timor Anthropological Mission" (Almeida 1953b). Meanwhile, Macintosh's application followed its bureaucratic course within the Foreign Affairs departments. The JIU's ambivalent resolution was also forwarded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In August 1953, accordingly, the Portuguese

Consul in Sydney was given “confidential” instructions from the Office of Political Affairs in Lisbon (DGNP 1953) for not refusing the Australian’s pretensions (“because it was not convenient to reject it”), granting him permission to “conduct anthropological investigations in Timor.” Implicit in this reluctant administrative approval was the “inconvenience” to openly reject the request, for the sake of good diplomatic relations with the Australian government. Permission was conditional on Macintosh’s travelling and working in Timor in the company of a “trustworthy person” appointed by the Portuguese authorities. However, for reasons unknown Macintosh did not take on this final offer. Perhaps he lost interest or perhaps he was displeased with the obvious Portuguese controlling scheme. In any case, he never travelled to East Timor; never corresponded with Portuguese anthropologists; never again, until his death in 1977, did he express interest in pursuing research in that Portuguese territory.

In Portugal, Almeida kept on controlling access to the Timor field site and to the Mission’s data and collections. Almeida lost some of his early influence in the 1960s, as a new generation of Portuguese scholars shifted the center of colonial sciences from racial anthropology to cultural anthropology and luso-tropicalist social sciences. Nevertheless, until the end of the regime in 1974, he assessed virtually all applications by foreign anthropologists interested in doing fieldwork in East Timor. Throughout these years, he was a decisive gatekeeper of physical anthropological fieldwork in the colony, always loyal to the nativist tenets of colonial anthropology and the premises of scientific occupation. In his assessments, when not overtly opposed, he was suspicious of foreign scientists as threatening entities. In 1970, in one of his last assessment reports, he summarized his longstanding views on this matter, again advising the Cabinet of Political Affairs and the JIU Presidency against the approval of ethnological fieldwork in Timor. This time the proponent was Japanese anthropologist Taryo Obayashi (1929–2001), from the University of Tokyo, known in Japan for his work on tracing the cultural origins of contemporary Japanese in Southeast Asia. The Portuguese government would reject this foreigner’s pretension, in accordance with Almeida’s negative report. He then combined universalistic ideals of science as a transnational endeavor that knew no political borders, with hard line nationalistic suspicions regarding foreign science and scientists in Portuguese colonial territories. “Although Science does not have fatherland,” Almeida wrote:

in principle, I am not favorable to the presence in our overseas provinces of researchers who most often do not go there imbued solely with strictly scientific intentions – my opinion is based on 35 years of experience and arduous labour all over our overseas; I can

admit exceptions if, among us, there are no suitable experts on those subjects about which they [foreigners] want to conduct research. Fortunately, this is not the case at hand. (Almeida 1970)

Portuguese colonial anthropologists, I argue, grounded scientific and imperial sovereignty upon an exclusive nativist right to monopolize field-work collecting and access to data from indigenous peoples under Portuguese rule. Foreign science, accordingly, was an undesired intruder into the colonial domains. However, the alterity of foreign science could also be absorbed positively into nativist aspirations. The next section calls attention to the opposed movement of colonial anthropologists as transnational isolates. That is: the urge to go foreign and constantly seek ties and connections with foreign science via networking, institutional memberships, participation in international meetings, and also through scientific collaborations with foreign scientists of international reputation. This outward orientation, however, was aimed at reinforcing the inward looking forms of authority of the Portuguese racial scientists. Every transnational rapport, in other words, was voraciously transformed into some form of imperial-nationalistic symbolic capital; it was a means to extract value that could fortify the Portuguese anthropologist's authority claims over the bounded realm of the nation-empire. Several episodes in the career of António de Almeida and the history of the data collected by the Timor Anthropological Mission offer exemplary instances of these arguments. It is to the analysis of these episodes that I now turn.

5. (Ab)using Stranger Sciences

In 1953–54, generously state funded and aided by the local colonial administration, Almeida and his team were able to collect a massive quantity of biological, anthropometric, linguistic, archaeological, and ethnographic data in East Timor. The collected data and objects were then brought to Lisbon. The assembled data then became the founding stone of Almeida's Centre of Overseas Ethnology. At the same time, the imagined wealth contained in this vast anthropological data would become the treasured foundations of the influence of anthropobiology in Portugal for the next decades. To an important extent, this authority was generated out of relationships with the international world in two main directions: first, the participation in international meetings and forums; secondly, the development of self-interested and selective collaborations with foreign experts that validated and added a surplus of scientific credibility to Portuguese scientists, whilst also compensating for the latter's insufficiencies in certain skills and knowledge areas.

5.1. Participating in International Congresses

Both politicians and scientists understood the participation in international meetings as authentic diplomatic occasions. In effect, the anthropologists' trips often took place as appointed government "representatives" of Portugal in the symposia. Within the framework of scientific occupation, such occasions were expected to pay service to the propaganda of the Portuguese colonial empire. In this vein, since the outset Almeida took steps, supported by the government, to present his field research results in international scientific conferences in and about the Asia-Pacific region. Occasions for such strategic profiteering from "the international" came whilst Almeida was still on fieldwork in Timor in 1953. Then, Almeida was appointed by the JIU to represent Portugal in the VIII Congress of Pacific Sciences and the adjoining Pre-History Congress that took place in Manila in 1953. He was appointed jointly with Mendes Correia and with the agronomist Ruy Cinatti (1915–1986), an influential colonial official in Timor who collaborated briefly with Almeida in the Timor mission. It was Cinatti who called the government's attention to the significance of the scientific event. In the letter that successfully made the case for supporting his and Almeida's participation in the Manila congress, Cinatti argued this would be "an unique occasion to present the unknown Portuguese Timor internationally and to claim rights that in the current political order it is necessary to defend" (1953). Upon his return from Manila, Almeida would further refer to the Timor Anthropological Mission as a true matter of Portugal's "external policy," whilst exaggeratedly exalting the foreign scholars' reception of his paper at the congress (Almeida cited in Cinatti 1953). Conforming to his superiors' expectations, Almeida typically wrote self-indulgent reports of his participation in international congresses, verbosely self-praising the scientific quality of his performance to his superiors. To this purpose, he would typically attach to his reports "documental evidence" of the foreign experts' validation: letters, copied citations, and other commentaries that supposedly attested to a warm and positive recognition. But more than intervening in international debates, Almeida's participation aimed at a Portuguese audience. His intent was to capitalize participation in foreign congresses to reinforce his provincial scientific authority at home.

At a time when the Portuguese government's continuing colonialism was criticized, Almeida's self-praise carried a celebratory political message about the "greatness" of Portuguese scientific occupation. Government authorities could thus be pleased with such a portrayal of imperial-scientific sovereignty as well as with his claims to Portuguese scientific grandeur acknowledged by foreigners. However, Almeida's biased version of events did not pass unnoticed by his Portuguese detractors. This was the case of

Almeida's participation in the Prehistory Congress in Manila of 1953, where he presented a short paper (co-authored by Mendes Correia and Cinatti) about some stone artifacts from archaeological prospections just made at Laga, in Timor. In his report, Almeida (1954, p. 350) emphasized the foreign experts' interest in his talk, claiming they were highly impressed with the quality of the data. "Extremely interested," he reported, "Profs. Eyer and Koenigswald examined at length the lithic artifacts I brought from Timor." However, as Poloni (2017) observed, Almeida was occulting the hostility and distrust with which his paper and the data were received. Co-author Ruy Cinatti was highly critical of Almeida's methods. Following the congress episode, he fell out with the anthropobiologist and decided to turn to British social anthropology. In the 1960s, he became Almeida's powerful rival and, just like Almeida, Cinatti mediated international interests as gatekeeper of fieldwork studies in Timor (Castelo 2017). According to Cinatti, Almeida's conference reports largely distorted the events at Manila. In a letter to the Governor of Timor, Cinatti criticized Almeida's performance at the congress and accused him of misrepresenting international "interest" in his paper. Cinatti stated that Almeida displayed archaeological ignorance before the two reputed archaeologists, who were quick to criticize his clumsy classification of the stone artifacts as Palaeolithic. "If Mr. Governor had seen a meeting with some of the most renowned anthropologists," Cinatti wrote,

such as Prof. Koenigswald and Dr. Byer, you would have seen the muddle in which Dr. António de Almeida was. He showed one stone, one of those he took from Timor, and classified it as 'moustérien': it is an epoch of the Palaeolithic Age. Immediately Prof. Koenigswald said no, because to be 'moustérien' certain characteristics were missing in it. Dr. António de Almeida, the poor one, scratched his head, said 'oui, oui' and confessed me, in plain Portuguese, he had already screwed up. (Cinatti cited in Poloni 2017, p. 119)

Presenting research results in international meetings was a declaredly political act of propaganda of scientific occupation in the colonies. Every commentary from foreign scholars at the meetings on such results could be potentially converted by Portuguese scholars into some kind of external acknowledgement of the inner worth and superior quality of Portuguese science, and, though implicitly, an acknowledgement of the virtuousness of Portuguese colonialism itself. In addition, collaborating with foreign scholars was another means to (ab)use the higher scientific authority of stranger sciences. The promotion of self-interested and selective collaborations with foreign experts was a strategic way to usurp the expertise of foreign scholars for furthering the defensive nativist political ends of

colonial anthropologists. Two episodes in the early years of the Timor Anthropological Mission reveal the strategic significance of such usurping engagement with foreign science.

5.2. Recruiting Foreign Experts

The Colonial Anthropological Missions were designed primarily as surveys of physical anthropological data for raciological ends, and accordingly thousands of anthropometric measurements and blood-group data were collected. However, they were also understood as broader knowledge endeavours that required the collaboration of subsidiary sciences, such as ethnography, archaeology and linguistics. In the Timor Anthropological Mission, archaeology and linguistics were fundamental. To begin, considerations about indigenous languages were underlying the expedition's raciological research. Mendes Correia in the 1940s suggested a rigorous classification of the yet unknown variety of East Timorese languages could help to solve the problem of the racial taxonomy of Portuguese Timor. Consequently, the expedition would collect biological data in connection with language records and linguistic groups. Archaeology or "pre-history" was also a subsidiary means to address ethnogenic preoccupations. The expedition members thus proceeded to serendipitous gathering of archaeological data, in particular, a number of chipped stones collected almost fortuitously on the region of Laga. In addition, in the 1950s, at a time when stone artefacts were critical to ongoing international debates about the deep human past of the Indonesian Archipelago, amassing pre-historic stones in Timor became by no means negligible in attaining wider visibility in scientific circles abroad.

Yet the Portuguese collected linguistic and archaeological data which ultimately they were not qualified to examine and classify. Mendes Correia and Almeida were medically trained physical anthropologists. They were not skilled experts in stone tools and linguistics, and as such were unable to turn their collected records into reliable scientific knowledge. Therefore, in order to compute the linguistic and archaeological data from the Timor Anthropological Mission, they developed research collaborations with two foreign scientists: the aged French pre-historian Abbey Henri Breuil (1877–1961), by then one of the most reputed European authorities on prehistoric art and stone tools; and the South African linguist Ernst O. Westphal (1919–1990), an expert in African Bantu and non-Bantu Khoisan languages, then based at SOAS, in London.

5.3. The Africanist Turns into Timor Linguist

By 1953, both Westphal and Breuil had a record of either past or ongoing collaborations with the Portuguese scholars, which they wished to capitalize on for their own purposes. Westphal was in correspondence with

Almeida because of his declared interest in studying linguistic data collected by Almeida among the Khoisan people in Portuguese colonial Angola. His intent was to examine these records and use them for his studies about non-Bantu languages. Westphal thus seemed to be aware of the difficulties in circumventing Portuguese protectionism against foreign research in the colonial territories. Yet rather than applying for permission to do his own fieldwork and have direct access to Angolan field sites, Westphal resorted to a distinct collaborative strategy. He proposed to study data collected and held by Almeida in Lisbon, this way satisfying Portuguese anxieties for control and recognition of sovereignty. Sometime in the early 1950s he nurtured ties with the Portuguese with a view to examine the Khoisan linguistic records in Almeida's possession—and he succeeded. In late 1956, upon Almeida's recommendation, Westphal received approval from the Minister of Colonies to come on a visit to Lisbon paid and sponsored by the JIU. His visiting appointment was to collaborate with Almeida in the study of the "Angolan Bushmen" linguistic data. Publications were expected from this collaboration, Almeida (1956) justified to his superiors, which "would result certainly in prestige for the science and the good name of Portugal."

The official correspondence regarding Westphal's temporary appointment in Lisbon does not mention the study of Timor data. The latter apparently took place as a favour or a supplement to Westphal's official duties concerning the African material. Indeed, besides putting Westphal to work on the Angolan Khoisan records, Almeida also took advantage of his expertise in the analysis of linguistic data collected in East Timor in 1953–54. This study would form the basis of a (never published) co-authored draft paper by Almeida and Westphal that classified thirty-one languages/ethno-linguistic groups. However, this draft along with Westphal's classificatory arrangement would crucially legitimate Almeida's attempts at mapping racial ABO blood-group distributions in the colony according to linguistic groups (Roque in press). Westphal's self-centered interest in gaining access to the non-Bantu records and in circumventing the Portuguese defensive tendency to keep foreigners away from colonial data and fieldwork might help explain why he agreed to play the Portuguese scholar's game. For Westphal, this strategy seems to have yielded the desired results.⁵ Yet, forever an African-languages specialist, he never pub-

5. In 1961, he made "plans to visit Angola in order to make a detailed linguistic study of the Bushmen and other non-Bantu groups," and requested Portuguese government support to facilitate fieldwork. The request was approved but Westphal (1956–61) changed plans and the trip did not occur. By 1973 he spent some time in Lisbon to work with missionary Carlos Estermann on his Kwadi recordings.

lished or developed any interest in Timorese subjects or in Oceania linguistics. His involvement with the Timorese material was fortuitous, a way to please his host and satisfy Almeida's interests. In the end, he offered the Portuguese his expert services, in the expectation that in return Almeida would secure him continuing access to valuable "Angolan Bushmen" data.

5.4. The French Pre-Historian and the Timor Stone Tools

Henri Breuil first visited and conducted field research in Portugal in the 1910s and he returned for further archaeological work in the 1940s. In 1947, acknowledged as "a notable figure and almost founder of prehistory in Europe," he was given permission by the Portuguese government and the JIU (through its President Mendes Correia) to visit pre-historic sites in Angola with the support of the colonial administration (Alves 1947). He was on good terms with Portuguese scholars ever since, including with Mendes Correia, with whom he exchanged friendly correspondence since at least 1933 (Cardoso 2016). Breuil's reputation as an expert on the Palaeolithic Age in Europe (especially the Iberian Peninsula) drew upon collaborations maintained with local scholars such as the Portuguese. In 1959, however, though serendipitously, Breuil became like Westphal a participant in the voracious nativist knowledge politics of the Portuguese colonial anthropologists.

In 1953, as seen above, Almeida presented preliminary findings of archaeological fieldwork in Timor at the Congress in Manila. Based on a handful of stone tools, he then advanced a new Palaeolithic classification of a previously unimagined antiquity for humans in East Timor. He declared (1954, p. 351), quite adventurously, that the stone artefacts he had collected were evidence of the earliest known human occupation in Timor, dating back to the Upper Palaeolithic. This was a bold statement. It challenged the then accepted archaeological wisdom by extending the dating of Timorese human settlement beyond the Neolithic period. Almeida's bold hypothesis was received with curiosity, but principally, as noted above, with strong scepticism by the archaeological authorities present at the meeting, such as Von Koenigswald, who never accepted the classificatory conclusions of the Portuguese, even after he perused the lithic materials directly, decades later in Lisbon (Zbyszewski, Neto, and Castro-Almeida 1985–86, p. 24). Controversially classified as Palaeolithic, Timorese chipped stones promised Portuguese anthropologists visibility and recognition in a scientific field in which ultimately they were not experts. But Mendes Correia and Almeida were determined to demonstrate their hypothesis. After the events of 1953, they eventually came to the conclusion that, if their hypothesis had any chance of wider acceptance, they had to rely on the expertise of foreign scholars. They thus sought

an alliance with Henri Breuil, known already for his lusophilia and whose international reputation they could strategically (ab)use to lend support to their idiosyncratic claims on the prehistory of East Timor.

To this end, Almeida and Mendes Correia took advantage of a propitious occasion. In the early 1950s, Breuil was in Lisbon regularly to lecture at the University of Lisbon, where he was awarded a *honoris causa* doctorate in 1942. In January 1957, having heard of Breuil's presence in Lisbon, Almeida (1957) wrote the President of JIU with a proposal to "take advantage of [Breuil's] stay among us for helping out in the study of the Timorese paleoethnological material. Prof. Breuil is today the most reputed archaeologist, whose opinions are respected by all prehistory scholars." In return for his collaboration, Almeida requested from the JIU a payment to the French scholar. A co-authored paper by Mendes Correia, Almeida and Breuil on the Timor collections, to be presented at an international congress, was expected, but it was never written. However, supported by Almeida, Breuil indeed examined the Timorese stone artefacts during his stay in Lisbon.⁶

Upon his return to Paris in March 1957 Breuil sent Mendes Correia an extensive account of his conclusions about the Timor stone tools. Breuil's report ambivalently supported the Paleolithic classification of only some of the samples (Breuil 1957; Poloni 2017). Two years later, in April 1959, then aged 82, Breuil returned to Lisbon. Invited by Almeida and Mendes Correia he gave a talk at the Lisbon Academy of Sciences concerning his conclusions about the Timor and Angola lithic artefacts collected by Almeida's expeditions. Breuil's talk at the academy was never published but sections attributed to his speech appear in Almeida's writings. Thus, in May 1959, Almeida was quick to announce Breuil's public appraisal of the stone tools in a letter to his JIU superiors. Almeida sent the President of JIU, then José Carrington da Costa, a French-language transcript of a segment of Breuil's talk, where eventually he spoke highly of Almeida's findings as internationally valuable. According to this transcript, in his talk Breuil (cited in Almeida 1959) stated that the chipped stones "prove the existence of an ancient Palaeolithic with various stages [in Timor], and this discovery is considerable for it strongly extends to the East the known limit of the latter which, until now, did not go beyond Java." JIU President Carrington da Costa (1959) responded with words of "satisfaction" and self-congratulation for having "directly as well as indirectly" contributed to the "applause received by [Portuguese] anthropological and

6. Breuil also examined Angolan archaeological data collected by Almeida. Later in 1964, Almeida published a paper on Angola using Breuil's name (who died in 1961) as co-author.

ethnological researches from persons as important and knowledgeable as Father Henri Breuil.”

Breuil's reports and words were used and abused in subsequent years. Almeida as well as Mendes Correia (1955) made wide propaganda of the Frenchman's 1959 statements (not of his ambivalent report of 1957) in their writings. Breuil's talk of 1959 was thus recurrently mobilized as authorized certification of the international worth of Portuguese scholarship on the archaeology of Timor (e.g., Almeida and Zbyszewski 1966; Zbyszewski, Neto and Castro-Almeida 1985–86). Nevertheless, Portuguese (ab)use of Breuil's authority actually failed to intervene in international debates about the archaeology of Island Southeast Asia. Against Almeida's claims, Dutch and Australian archaeologists (notably Koenigswald and Ian Glover) subsequently classified the Laga findings as Neolithic, and it is this opinion that still prevails (see Oliveira 2008, pp. 13–14). However, Breuil's assessment was of great consequence within Portugal, providing the colonial anthropologists' nativist power claims with a capital of external credibility. Transnational validation, in other terms, increased internalist authority in national-imperial circles. For this reason perhaps, although ever more isolated internationally in their arguments, except for the spectre of Breuil's voice, Almeida and his followers at the Centre of Anthropobiology in Lisbon would never abandon the vagaries of 1953 concerning the Upper Palaeolithic dating of human occupation in East Timor.

6. Conclusion

In this essay I have followed how twentieth century colonial anthropologists could endorse scientific universalistic ideals and transnational practices while at the same time remaining strongly rooted in hard line notions of nativist authority and imperial-nationalism. To the latter purpose, the Portuguese sought to keep foreigners at bay, whilst also developing certain strategic research collaborations with foreign scientists with a view to appropriate and capitalize the imagined authority of stranger sciences. By attending international congresses and collaborating with foreign scholars, for example, national anthropologists were aiming at the usurpation of the powers associated with the exteriority and alterity of the foreign, either through foreign appraisal at international forums, or through a deliberate appropriation of the expertise of foreign scholars for nativist ends. The difficult to access the Portuguese colonies made the field data collected by Almeida and the colonial expeditions particularly desirable for some scholars abroad. This may help explain how, on some occasions as in the case of Westphal, nativist usurpation of stranger sciences could also serve data-extractive interests of non-national outsiders.

Since the 1930s and throughout the post war years, a peculiar blend of colonial and scientific sovereignty expressed in the notion of “scientific occupation” characterized Portuguese racial anthropology as a colonial science. Portuguese transnationalism in this context, I argue, was grounded upon conceptions of the ambivalently dangerous and power giving otherness of foreign sciences, exacerbated by an extreme nationalist-imperial nativism. Central to these conceptions was a category opposition between alterity and autochthony, “foreign” and “national,” *estrangeiros* and *portugueses*. Scientific practices between and across national borders thus found in such oppositions and in hard line imperial nationalism the limits but also the conditions of its realization. My hypothesis is that the two movements—nation-oriented fixations and cross-national bonds—worked together within a kind of scientific transnationalism that was at the same time a nationalist form of scientific isolationism, a composite formation I conceptualized as transnational isolationism. Transacting with the international world allowed colonial race science in Portugal to remain “more” Portuguese; it was a form of appropriating the superior authority of the foreign world to enlarge autochthonous authority and expertise. Isolationism allowed this same self-interest to be perpetuated through practices of exclusion and avoidance; it operated by closing down foreign access, and by drawing upon an exclusive political right to sovereign access and use of colonial data and field sites. Hence colonial scientists and specifically physical anthropologists in Portugal became transnational isolates, actors of a form of transnationalism that was above all aimed at strengthening and preserving a form of nativist nationalism possessively attached to an empire in decline.

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