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Ivo Carneiro de Sousa

# HISTORY OF EAST TIMOR

BETWEEN MYTHS, MEMORY REALMS, MACAU  
AND THE CHALLENGES OF CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY



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I still remember as if it was yesterday the first paper on “pre-colonial history of East Timor” that I have presented in late September 1983 in a solidarity conference organized in Lisbon. In the end, the Timorese priest that assembled the gathering, father Apolinário Maria Aparício Gueterres was more than disappointed: he had only counted 17 people attending the day-long conference, and more than half were the members of a traditional dance group that performed during the event. In those early 1980’s still quiet close to the brutal Indonesian invasion of the independent Democratic Republic of East Timor few days after being proclaimed on November 28, 1975, the Timorese national cause seemed forgotten, but not ever lost. Afterward, I have attended tens of the most different conferences, debates, and workshops on the so-called “East-Timor problem” where I had always tried to present serious scientific perspectives on historical and anthropological themes. I had also presented papers on, at least, ten international major conferences on East-Timor in several different continents. Among other pleasant memories, I still recall the vivid academic and political impacts of a conference organized in Maputo, in 1997, entitled “Africa and the East-Timor question.” Gathering African research centers from Portugal, Mozambique, South Africa, Angola and others countries, coordinated with intelligence by Dr. Mari Alkatiri, the conference has ended up with a superb closing lecture by Dra. Graça Machel that after that has bridged the East-Timorese national resistance to Nelson Mandela moral solidarity engagement: a very eloquent example of the closest cooperation ever between advanced scientific research and generous solidarity universal principles.

Other than teaching History and Culture of East Timor during several years, from 1994 to 2002, supervising doctoral and master dissertations on the country history and anthropology, I had coordinated between 1994-1999 UNET (Universities Network for East-Timor), gathering more than 50 institutions from diverse world geographies. I was also the stirring research-coordinator of the Portuguese Center for the Study of Southeast Asia (CEPESA), between 2000 and 2005, two periods of the most challenging work that allowed me to systematically publish and co-edit books, journals issues and several novel papers on East-Timor. During these last two decades, divers colleagues, friends and a lot of students have been asking me



to gather some of my most useful papers and to come out with a book able to help young researchers and post-graduate students. I have ever had time to do it until, finally, these last months between 2017 and 2018 I decided to return to my papers, even the oldest ones, and I have sincerely sought to build up a useful printed volume. After countless hesitations, I have picked up six texts among more than thirty, published between 1995 and 2011, and started trying to give them some pertinent connections. The result was indeed a lot of unforeseen work: I have not only revised the papers, but I really rewrote them, updating sources, data and bibliography after reading practically all, but not many, new interesting fresh research on East Timor archeology, history and anthropology. The result of this effort finally ends up with this title that I expect can sincerely encourage young researchers and post-graduate students to study a country that I love and respect.

Lastly, readers from the most diverse cultural, ideological or political backgrounds, and belonging as well, I hope, to different geographies and nationalities will certainly either forget or understand me by dedicating this book to one of the East-Timorese leaders that I have always admired the most: to Dr. Mari Alkatiri with lasting esteem, com a estima de sempre.

Ivo Carneiro de Sousa

*Taipa in front of Macau, May 1, 2018*





I

INTRODUCTION TO EAST TIMOR  
THROUGH MYTHS, TRADITIONAL HISTORY  
AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY



Anyone visiting East Timor for the first time or doing a virtual visit throughout countless available websites on the most diverse aspects of the country will apace notice that a crocodile, more realist or figurative, seems to be the primary memory realm of nationhood. It is the most common image in traditional textiles, sculptures displayed as old, and several commercial brand logos. It also is present in some governmental public services' signings and advertisings, political parties' badges, civic associations or, among other popular consumption examples, in the very cheap different magnets offered for tourists' home remembrances collected throughout fridges' doors. Most adult East-Timorese will quickly explain the generous crocodile design omnipresence recalling an arcane legend, which proves for them beyond any doubt that the island and the amphibious animal share the very same body and, moreover, a similar symbolic brave soul:

In the beginning, in Makassar, on the island of the Celebes, there was a very old crocodile that, not managing to catch fishes on the riverside, dared into dry land to hunt for a dog or a pig able to satiate his hunger. He looked around, but he got nothing. The crocodile decided to return, but the way back was long, and the sun was too hot. Lacking strength, the crocodile thought that he would die along the way like a stone. Nearby, there was a young boy who felt sorry for the old crocodile and decided to help him to return to the river. The crocodile was most grateful and offered to carry forward on his back the boy whenever he wanted to travel through the waters of the rivers and of the sea. Later, famished again, without a dog or pig to hunt, the crocodile resolved to eat the boy but previously having consulted the local animals about his intention. They all, from the whale to the monkey, accused him of ingratitude. Bothered, the crocodile did decide to leave off for the sea. Carefully transporting the boy in his back, the crocodile swam in search of those dry lands where the sun daily raises. Tired of the considerable effort, the crocodile tried to return, but his body was immobilized and turned quickly into stone and land, growing up until been transformed into an island. The boy walked on the back of the island, surrounded it, and called it Timor.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> SÁ, Artur Basílio de. *Textos em Teto da Literatura Oral Timorense*. Lisboa: Junta de Investigações do Ultramar, 1961, vol. I, pp. 9-23.

Although several versions of this legend are available displaying some, different small details, many inhabitants of East Timor still firmly believe today that their nation indeed comes from this old myth. They explain to the foreigners that the entire Timor Island has the body-form of a crocodile with the head in Kupang and the tail in Lautém. In Dili, local people go even further to guarantee that the slope-cape closing to the east the beautiful capital bay is the real mythical crocodile, thus underlining the evident central position of the city in the insular morphology, imagery disputed by other spaces, namely Ailéu that pretends to be one of the crocodile eyes. In the past, this legend was celebrated in several traditional handcraft productions done in buffalo horn now preserved in some ethnographic museums where, as a sort of puzzle, it became progressively more difficult to know how to fix its different movable pieces. It is not easy to stick the wings gained in some versions of the myth by the crocodile and to place in his back the boy and, in function of the variants, the bird or “lorico” who accompanied the fantastic, mythical travel to the South seas where Timor *Lorosae* was born. However, regardless these singular craftworks of some apparatus and a handful of traditional decorations in few surviving sacred houses (*uma lulik*), the myth shifted into a popular common symbol and has been as well updated and politicized in the last decades as a helpful liberation token. Since 1975 Indonesian invasion up to the UN referendum process in 1999, the mythical crocodile has contributed to creating propaganda logos and militant images of East Timorese resistance to the illegal occupation: the crocodile was installed in posters, manifestos, books’ covers, aiding also foreign NGO’s and pro-independence political movements to find an image of what they understood to be the most genuine national symbol of East Timor. It still is.

Does not help any historical or anthropological interpretation of this old myth when one embarrasses friends, politicians, activists and other persons with “scientific” questions or smattering observations regarded as impertinent, typical of a foreigner, a *malai*. How were the inhabitants of East Timor able to identify the form of their island before the satellites and airplanes’ era or before the diffusion of modern cartography? Did the East Timorese know that Portuguese and European 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries’ maps drew a much more fat, rounded up island, being impossible to glimpse any remote form of a crocodile?<sup>2</sup> It embarrasses, even more, the few interested interlocutors available when one underlines that the crocodile is almost everywhere a universal totemic animal, widely manipulated between taboos

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<sup>2</sup> SOUSA, Ivo Carneiro. “Timor-Leste desde muito antes dos Portugueses até 1769”, in: *Encontros de divulgação e debate em Estudos Sociais*, 1 (1995), p. 4.

and injunctions along the whole Indonesian-Malay archipelago<sup>3</sup> (as well as in Africa or South America). Thus, creating in several cultures significant craft productions from pottery to doors, from textiles to houses' decorations. It is no use; nobody contests the evident and essential truth of this foundational myth: Timor is a solidified crocodile. East Timorese politicians, elites, and common people will insist that the crocodile represents both the history of their part of the island and their struggle of national resistance. To inquire on origins, periodization, “ethnic” framing or, at least, cultural meanings of this myth is useless. Nobody knows or wants to know. The myth is fetching, but, unfortunately, it does not help to recall the history of East Timor. And is even debatable if it can help to consolidate any “obvious” image of a national identity that, between political competition and invented regional ethnicities, still seems to lack grand cultural, historical symbols of collective acceptance, including anything close to a shared “national history” or “national culture”.

East Timor history is also strangely forgotten – if it was ever “told” – in those more arcane worlds of rural communities (*sucos*) and villages (*leo* or *hamlets*) spreading through rare plains, some valleys and losing itself in many highlands. When a visitor today reaches these villages normally presented as traditional, surviving clues of ancient history are not easy to discern. At the entry of these villages, one stumbles most of the time on a small cemetery, normally quiet recent. Crosses are standing up in flat gravestones, here and there walled and whitewashed, recalling the paramount influence of the Catholic Church that, gathering more than 95% of the East-Timorese, still merges other cultural practices when one walks into the heart of the village and then in its surrounding territory. In fact, with a lot of luck and much local help, one can find the remains of an old totem that ordinarily is a wood bifurcated pole with anthropomorphic carvings, a great tree or log frequently decorated with buffalo horns resending us to very arcane lost clanic worlds. However, when one tries to collect any memory on these vestiges and its cultural history nobody nowadays really knows, but some vague panoramic ideas commonly shared all over East-Timor. In fact, these sites were transformed in ruins still classified as “primitive” and regarded as embarrassing by the small modernist dominant political class. Most of these archaic symbols were slowly transformed by a long-term historical process, adopting first continental Asian metallurgical cultures, incorporating afterward the demands of commercial exchanges, Catholic missions, colonial wars, then disappearing fast with the political, dramatic transformations of the last century enforcing “modern” social and economic transformations.

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<sup>3</sup> TERADA, Alice M. *The Magic Crocodile and other Folktales from Indonesia*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994.



Memory changes confirmed by the very ethnographic book of Armando Pinto Corrêa, who lived six years in East-Timor, more than five as colonial administrator of Baucau. Published in 1934 and entitled “Gentile of Timor”, the volume quotes several detailed reports from other local military and administrative officials to reach this disappointing confirmation:

In the different areas of the colony it is already almost impossible to collect oral traditions with which to reconstitute the mythology or history of the Timorese. A report by Cova Lima, for example, says that in the memory of the natives there is no trace of the origins of the population.<sup>4</sup> In another, from Oecussi,<sup>5</sup> we read these words no less dismaying: “with the disappearance of the Oecussi’s old people, too, the memory of the few historical facts that could still exist in the tradition of the peoples disappeared. After questioning some old men, none of them have been able to tell me about the history of their ancestors.”<sup>6</sup>

Nonetheless, if one has local engagement and close friends to make a successful field trip to the central mountains of East-Timor, generally of difficult access, it is possible to glimpse in some remote upland villages a kind of altar, usually in stone, rectangular or circular. Served by one or two small staircases, these unique altars still support a stone or more commonly a wood pole totem, the *ai-arabaudiu*, standing up two to three meters high to point out a territorial axis. Systematically looted and sold along with modern imitations pretending to be centuries-old, mainly in Bali and Jakarta expensive antique shops, these impressive altar-totems were still common in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in mambai villages of central Timor, before the Portuguese and local allies victory in the Manufahi colonial war. They were also photographed and drawn during the field inventory made by Ruy Cinnatti, Leopoldo de Almeida and Sousa Mendes as late as 1958.<sup>7</sup> In spite of the unique sensibility and sincere love of Cinnatti for East-Timorese peoples and cultures, producing critical anthropological studies and unique poetry, most of the colonial ethnographic research made in the field has discarded the cultural importance of these arcane vestiges and instead presented a territory without history and populations lacking historical memory.

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<sup>4</sup> GOMES, José Augusto. *Relatório sobre usos e costumes dos indígenas do comando militar de Cova Lima*. Dili, 1933 [dact.].

<sup>5</sup> MARTINHO, José Simões. *Relatório sobre usos e costumes dos indígenas do comando militar de Oecussi*. Dili, 1933 [dact.].

<sup>6</sup> CORRÊA, Armando Pinto. *Gentio de Timor*. Lisboa: Tip. Lucas & C<sup>ia</sup>., 1934, pp. 336-337.

<sup>7</sup> CINATTI, Ruy; ALMEIDA, Leopoldo & MENDES, Sousa. *Arquitectura Timorense*. Lisboa: Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, 1987, pp. 35-38, 78, 87, 97, 154.

Returning to Pinto Corrêa very informed text, the author stresses from a robust ethnocentric perspective the East-Timorese past lack of a material civilization that only flourished from the colonial encounter onward:

In no part of Timor, whether in our colony or the Dutch, have we ever found, standing or in ruins, any construction of masonry before the Discovery. There is not the slightest trace, either on earth or in the memory of men, of temples, sarcophagi, palaces, or any other monument from which it may be inferred that the Timorese had attained any civilization before the Portuguese arrival. Even the first strongholds and dwellings of the Europeans were no more than huts and walls almost always improvised with stakes and loose stones, and even in Lifau, nothing exists except a few remains of shacks and a communication trench: some fitted stones, but rare and difficult to identify.<sup>8</sup>

In consequence of these colonial ideas full of Eurocentric evolutionist ideology plus the long dramatic process of resistance towards the restoration of independence, from 1975 to 2002, nowadays, even in most remote uplands' villages, nothing is remaining but a handful of ruined dispersed sacrificial altar-stones. Even so, whenever these local communities have allowed in the past primary archaeological research in these ruined sites, namely done by the Portuguese scientific colonial mission in the 1960's,<sup>9</sup> there appeared in the altars' surroundings many bones of pigs (but not the head) and buffalos. The former is still the basic animal of a domestic and communal economy as much as the later upholds rites, sacrifices, and gifts demanded by burial, marriage and dowry obligations, the *barlak*. These altars, therefore, other than hierophantic sites were key memory axis of ancient lineages and pre-colonial East-Timorese polities. They should be properly preserved as cultural memory realms of the different pre-colonial "nations" from which emerged in a long-term process the independent nation.

The East-Timor traditional "village" was organized in cultural connection to these altars and grand totems, and also by exhibiting a spatial relation to a large house that was a prominent communitarian-meeting place, often presented in some academic literature as a local "parliament".<sup>10</sup> The sporadic actual surviving examples, albeit restored several times, highlight

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<sup>8</sup> CORRÊA, 1934: 336, n. 2.

<sup>9</sup> LUCAS, Maria Paula; Cardim, Pedro; NETO, Maria Cristina & ALMEIDA, Maria Emília de Castro e. "Breves Notas sobre a contribuição da Missão Antropológica do Centro de Antropobiologia e seus antecessores na arqueologia de Timor", in: *Leba*, Lisboa, n° 7 (1992).

<sup>10</sup> SOUSA, IVO Carneiro de & CENTENO, Rui M. S. *Uma Lulik Timur. Casa Sagrada de Oriente*. Porto: Universidade do Porto/CEPESA, 2001.

that these large houses were no more than a broad thatched roof supported by many stakes and straw closed walls. They have functioned as much as a sacred (*lulik*) house as a lineage museum: swords (*surik*), drums, *tais*, old military uniforms, and sometimes even a monarchic Portuguese flag joined silver jewels, pottery, and relics accounting the village founders' legend, heroes, and leaders. Nowadays, these unique *lulik* houses interdicted in the past to women and foreigners merge in their alleged "sacred" interior space scarce antique goods to the most surprising stuff. Some pottery and wicker baskets accompany current political posters, Catholic images of Christ and Virgin Mary, plus pictures of famous soccer teams, players, singers and beautiful women portrays along with a lot of empty bottles of wine, beer, and local spirit. Looted, ruined and difficult to rebuild, these old spaces celebrate the unity between the living and the dead, fulfilling the fundamental chthonic ancient cults of the ancestors, the forefathers. In some singular surviving sites attached to memory realms of powerful ancestors' founding fathers of dominant lineages, the topological center of the village can be a unique apparatus house. Richly decorated in bright polychromies, displaying props and doors with bas-reliefs, labeled with aristocratic titles and names, presenting the headquarters of a local ruling family of "kings", the *liurai*.<sup>11</sup>

Invading the different social landscapes of East Timor, modern urban milieus included, it is also possible to find a sacred tree – an *ai-lulik*, here surrounded, there on a hillock or even standing in a public space – mobilizing collective devotions, cults and fears. In the small and miserable colonial capital of East Timor that was Dili in the 1880's, the core urban area was dominated by one of these enormous sacred trees exciting popular religious mentalities. Candidly presented as a symbol of "superstition" in the flavored prose of young Maria Isabel Tamagnini's manuscript diary, written between 1882 and 1883, to account her colonial governor father family life in Portuguese Timor:

There is here near our house a vast swamp, and nearby there is a great tree that the natives think is holy, and at the same time fear greatly. They are not able to come close to it, but they are sure that the tree has a large hole and through it, one can reach Europe, while those coming out of it can do marvelous things! When they have seen all of us, they exclaimed: "such large family" evidently came out from the hole in the holy tree!<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> CINATTI, ALMEIDA & MENDES, 1987: 9-13.

<sup>12</sup> TAMAGNINI, MARIA ISABEL D'OLIVEIRA PINTO DA FRANÇA. *Diário de Uma Viagem a Timor (1882-1883)*, (ED. António Pinto da França & Ivo Carneiro de Sousa). LISBOA: CEPESA, 2002, p. 49.

More seriously, albeit playing some lasting roles in the spatial organization of traditional territories, the diverse territorial manifestations of these naturalist hierophanies (trees, streams, mountains, rocks) even fully loaded of sacred and cosmological dimensions did not seem to have centralized the space. In fact, the pre-colonial East Timorese villages were not organized as a ring or a set of concentric areas orbiting a visible religious central site. In spite of new centralities imposed by village churches, chapels, and administrative offices, the observer still finds in some remote rural spaces a “fishbone” structure arranging the human settlement through a simple main street from which several perpendicular-alike irregular pathways distribute the buildings. This system suggests a stratification of households distributed by status distinctions, but also differentiating socio-economic and cultural features: collective kitchens and washrooms, communitarian warehouses, meeting areas and collective worship places.

During the last one hundred years, the long and challenging Portuguese colonization, the following economic forced changes accelerated by Indonesian violent colonial occupation and, after that, by the rapid UN process of extremely fast (lack of...) “transition” to independence restoration, traditional villages became progressively nothing else than territorial rectangles. In some cases, the largest villages have a central street full of simple retail shops restructuring the distribution of relations between households, other roads, rare public zones and some places of worship nowadays leading to the Catholic cross, the chapel, and the parish church. Despite these and other odd “modernization” shifts as replacing thatched roofs by overwhelmingly unhealthy zinc covers, here and there, the countryside villages still keep a communitarian barn or a small thatched roof for collective crafts’ activities, from basketry to copra drying or simply used for storing plain rice and corn. Although all East Timorese villages are nowadays expanding their spatial areas for private vegetable-gardens, poultry-yards, and pigsty, one can still find perched on the trees a kind of kennel (*manleka*), protecting some communitarian village’s agricultural productions, mostly corn and beans, from the attacks of rats and other animal threats.

Countless and restless little grey pigs, a lot of skinny dogs, chickens, some goats and other domestic animals roam freely between those village familiar houses and rare collective buildings, merging with the local population full of young, fragile children. These animals run, fight, pass and search continuously for food throughout the village precinct trying to avoid many small wooden poles marking a grave. In these recent years, the proliferation of all sort of vehicles belonging to the central government and administration services, military and police, wealthy individuals, merchants, several international organizations, NGOs and other cooperation workers have exponentially increased the number of trampling fatal accidents. It is

frequent to find one of these morbid poles or a small flag signing the site of a tragic traffic event, namely injuring and killing those children used to run and play freely in formerly rural areas that were remote in the past but now are part of busy transportation circuits. Since the birth rate in East-Timor reaches 33,4/1000, the fertility rate is of 4.79 per woman, and the median age is of 18.9 years,<sup>13</sup> the country is not only young in political terms but really very young in demography standards, so there are a lot of children, living and playing in large groups, therefore much more exposed to mortal traffic accidents. Withal, the number of domestic animals, dogs, pigs and chickens slaughtered by fast running cars, trucks and the most diverse types of jeeps is as paramount as the daily noisy protests of local communities.

Whenever these rural territories were able to develop economic and demographic resources enough to sustain a large village or an interconnected group of villages' consumption regime, then a weekly market or bazar emerges and grows up to attract hundreds of sellers, peddlers, and buyers diversifying supplies and enlarging demand. Insufficiently studied through the research lenses of ethnography and cultural anthropology, these bazaars are complex transcultural spaces of merchandise, sociability, media communication and political mobilization just as selective receptors of all novelties, from pop songs to dressing fashions, but also echoing politician's ambitions and the latest rumors.

In some small villages more isolated, almost lost in remote mountains or difficult to access through the current shabby road network, mostly shattered during the rainy season, the "end" of the village is not open to a large bazar field. Marked by a significant gravestone, decorated with steles, it displays the place believed to bury a real or imaginary vigilant ancestor and founding father of the local lineage. In these singular cases, the end is, after all, the principle, remembering the eternal return theory exposed by Mircea Eliade to explain the arcane religious beliefs in the ability to return to the mythical age and to become contemporary of the events described in local myths, enhancing the idea that the power of a place resides mainly in its legendary origins.<sup>14</sup> Despite these anthropological clues, it remains difficult to build up any coherent general cultural perspective from the rare materials and scarce narrative vestiges on the lost pre-colonial East-Timorese societies.

The different typologies of traditional *sucos* expressed through house's architecture regional/local diversity as symbolic forms of imagination of common village spaces is undoubtedly a long-term historical and cultural process. In the beautiful book on "Timorese Architecture" by Ruy Cinnatti

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<sup>13</sup> [https://www.indexmundi.com/timor-leste/demographics\\_profile.html](https://www.indexmundi.com/timor-leste/demographics_profile.html).

<sup>14</sup> ELIADE, Mircea. *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954, pp. 7-11.

and the architects António de Sousa Mendes and Leopoldo de Castro Almeida, engaged in a mission for the Overseas Investigation Commission, in 1958, the proposed East-Timorese housing typology is carefully illustrated by amazing pictures, drawings, and plans. However, it follows the colonial ethnic-linguistic regional divisions, thus suggesting diverse singular types for Bobonaro, Maubisse, Baucau, Lautém, Viqueque, Suai, and Oecussi, along with the expansion of “European architecture” divided into two periods, before and after the Japanese invasion.<sup>15</sup> The research mainly accounts for differences in apparatus houses, related to traditional power territorial distribution that goes back to a multi-centuries period, probably organized slowly between 9<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, following rhythms of migrations, renewed alliances and recurrent clashes between lineages progressively more supra-local and on the way to become polities or “kingdoms”.<sup>16</sup> This period didn’t leave us houses or any other monument but many regular, ordinarily rectangular and massive stones more or less piled up in hills of difficult access, a kind of former fortresses that some archaeological research dates very roundly from 1000 onwards,<sup>17</sup> but surely witnessing growing clashes between lineages changing in territorial polities. Nonetheless, initially, these lineage territories in very ancient remote villages were able to gather only ten to twenty residential units according to lineage’s power, social distinctions, and economic functions. Portuguese traders and adventurers arriving in Timor from 1515 onwards still observed these traditional clusters, especially in some coastal regions already integrated as a far periphery in Southeast Asia’s “age of commerce”,<sup>18</sup> but barely described them except for some memories written since the 17<sup>th</sup> century by zealous missionaries, mostly Dominicans.<sup>19</sup> Strictly speaking, these adventurers, traders and soldiers firstly passing and trading through, and after banished and exiled on the island where they expiated crimes committed in Portuguese colonial enclaves in Asia, particularly Macau and Goa, becoming again in East Timor tolerated traders, soldiers, and even colonial officials, all these circumstantial settlers had little interest in the land, its peoples and their cultures, let alone to write about it, if they ever knew how to write.

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<sup>15</sup> CINATTI, ALMEIDA, & MENDES, 1987: 225-229.

<sup>16</sup> SOUSA, 2001: 17-18.

<sup>17</sup> LAPE, Peter V. & CHIN-YUNG, Chao. “Fortification as a Human Response to Late Holocene Climate Change in East Timor”, in: *Archaeology in Oceania*, Vol. 43, no. 1, Climate Change and Archaeology in the Pacific - Part II (Apr., 2008), pp. 11-21.

<sup>18</sup> REID, Anthony. *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450-1680*. New Have-London: Yale University Press, 1993.

<sup>19</sup> VILLIERS, John, “As derradeiras do mundo: The dominican missions and the sandalwood trade in the lesser Sunda islands in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries”, in: ALBUQUERQUE, Luis de (coord.). *II Seminário Internacional de História Indo-Portuguesa: Actas*. Lisboa: Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, 1985, pp. 573-600.

Although these colonial traders, emigrants, and deportees do not seem to have been accurate chroniclers, in contrast, they showed a considerable capacity to adapt to East Timorese territories. Marrying, mixing, producing Eurasian, Indo-Timorese or Chinese-Timorese descendants, and then trying to master and dominate trade and the precarious colonial administration until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. They influenced, indeed, local societies that reversely also changed them. Many of these settlers, administrators, officials, and scribes came from India in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and even more from Macau between 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries through an ongoing process of Chinese emigration that we will study in the last chapter. Many others, perhaps hundreds or even a few thousands, from the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century onwards arrived in Timor from the successively lost Portuguese enclaves in Malacca, Moluccas, and parts of Flores, Solor, Ende, Pantar or, in West Timor, Ataputu and other coastal areas. In 1769, after months of Dutch siege to the fortress of Lifao, in the Oecussi enclave, around 1200 people, mainly *Larantuqueiros*, resettled in Dili, Manatuto, and Bidao, the former evolving to become the capital of Portuguese colonial Timor.<sup>20</sup> In 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the royal envoy Lopes de Lima, in 1851, was virtually forced to exchange with the Dutch the islands of Solor, Lomblem and Eastern Flores to protect, also financially, the Portuguese presence in East Timor and Oecussi, many Catholic populations from these areas found again shelter in Dili, even before the signing of several Luso-Dutch official treaties that, between 1859 and 1914, formalized the colonial division between Dutch West Timor and Portuguese East Timor.<sup>21</sup>

Albeit many weaknesses and miseries, Portuguese colonialism in East Timor did change local societies at different social paces and cultural dynamics, reinventing as many traditions as ethnical divisions. Cultural changes were promoted by Catholic missions and by the colonial administration and included the legal empowerment of customary local authorities engendering a long-term process of spreading colonial rule and new social obedience through the production of novel elites. This sort of “indirect rule” helped to change even the most remote East-Timorese territories slowly. They became progressively invaded by unknown instruments such as visitors, local administrators, currencies, hats, shoes, laws or taxes, Portuguese flags or Catholic images carried on and protected by their traditional local chiefs or *liurai*, thus invested with particular subaltern colonial and symbolic powers.

If, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Kupang, Babao, and Lifau were what seemed

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<sup>20</sup> SOUSA, 2001: 21-22.

<sup>21</sup> SCHOUTEN, Maria Johanna, ‘Apart and together: the Portuguese and the Dutch as neighbours in around Timor in the nineteenth century’, in: SOUSA, Ivo Carneiro de & LEIRISSA, Richard Z. (eds.). *Indonesia-Portugal: five hundred years of historical relationship*. Lisbon: Portuguese Centre for the Study of Southeast Asia (CEPESA), 2001, pp. 201-212.

closer, with the most excessive optimism, to small “towns” engaged in the trade of white sandalwood, slaves, and beeswax. Then, in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, it was the very Portuguese governor of Timor-Solor islands who ordered the burning of the city-fortress of Lifau “with its 36 bastions” (were so many?). Garrison, Catholic population and artillery were transferred to Dili, which became, since 1769, the eastern colonial capital, despite the unhealthiness of its climate and discomfort of its wetlands. From early-20<sup>th</sup> century the influx of East Timorese rural populations to urban areas increased, especially into Dili, today home to more than two hundred thousand inhabitants (193,563 in 2010 census and circa 228.000 in 2014), parallel to a demographic and political trend towards the enlargement, reorganization, and modernization of villages. Former governor of “Portuguese Timor” between 1926 and 1928 and later minister of the Colonies of Salazar from 1947 to 1950, Teófilo Duarte (1898-1956) published an important book that, among other themes, also accounts and illustrates the colonial political strategy aiming to reach what the author labels as population “concentration”:

The state of social backwardness in which the *timor* lives is mainly motivated by their dispersion in villages of five to six huts, thus causing their lack of sociability. From that circumstance, which at first sight appears to be of minimal importance, many consequences arise, such as the impossibility of good school attendance, medical and health visits, monitoring of hygiene standards in the populations, etc. As long as the *timor* lives as now confined exclusively to the sphere of 10 or 12 inhabitants of his settlement, attending only the bazaars every eight days, all efforts will be useless to bring him into civilization.<sup>22</sup>

Two pictures illuminate these powerful colonial “civilizing” arguments. One shows in Bazar-Tete area the “type of indigenous village to build”, displaying a village in a rectangle along a single new central road. The other, much more eloquent, presents the “type of house for indigenous chiefs”, a ground floor building in cement, rectangular, simple, with glass windows and a roof in zinc although still thatched. The house is conveniently hedged and moved apart of the village, implanted in a prominent place, a strategy that one can still observe today in the remaining colonial administrative heads of *sucos*, simply known as *posto*. This residential promotion of the *sucoposto* chief, normally a former *liurai* or issued from a *dato* family, seemed to Teófilo Duarte the key for the ongoing process of villages’ concentration and modernization, although explaining that this was an effort facing some

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<sup>22</sup> DUARTE, Teófilo. *Timor (Ante-câmara do inferno!?)*. Fimalicão: Tipografia Minerva, 1930, p. 355.



traditional oppositions to tackle through might colonial orders:

In Timor, the case does not assume warlike proportions due to the spirit of obedience in which the people live and the goodwill of the chiefs. They would substantially see their mission simplified regarding auxiliary calls, recollection of taxes, etc., enjoying as well of some material advantages benefiting the indigenous people such as water channeling, exemption from public works, etc. However, this was not enough to make them willing to accept such a resolution, since it mattered their separation from the graves of their ancestors, generally contiguous to their houses, the abandonment of some of their gardens, and so on. But the orders given were executed, and I am confident that if the 20 villages built are reinforced annually with 30 to 40 dwellings, and new ones are built, in a half-dozen years, Timor will count with hundreds of villages from 2,000 to 3,000 people each.<sup>23</sup>

In consequence, these socio-economic processes of demographic and territorial concentration, co-extension of the colonial administration to the most remote rural areas, plus the material development of villages and towns' equipment engendered the most critical long-term cultural change. It led nowadays to the current repertoire of almost sixty major population areas of integration, including growing towns in Aileu, Baucau, Maliana, Ainaro, Suai, Ermera, Lautém, Lospalos, Liquiçá, Manatuto, Same and Viqueque. Although in these present-day towns it still is possible to find out some fragmentary vestiges of lost pre-colonial cultural practices, the dominant trend already is the reinvention of traditions through modern media tools, thus generating a folklore-alike festive and commemorative culture that can be easily followed through several web social networks.

Unfortunately, these profound long-term colonial cultural changes have been scarcely researched with the scientific tools of history and anthropology since the very idea of colonialism was progressively avoided by the Portuguese dictatorship official "overseas" ideology. It celebrated the peaceful and multiracial Portugal from "Minho to Timor" as a multi-continental unique nation unable to disrespect the indigenous populations of the colonies, generously invited to enjoy the singular privilege to be part of Portuguese commonwealth. These ideas that from 1953 built up the well-known "lusotropicalist" ideology, exposed by Gilberto Freyre,<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> DUARTE, 1930: 355-356.

<sup>24</sup> FREYRE, Gilberto. *Aventura e Rotina*. Lisboa: Livros do Brasil, 1953; *Um brasileiro em Terras Portuguesas. Introdução a uma possível luso-tropicologia*. Lisboa: Livros do Brasil, 1953; *O Luso e o Trópico*. Lisboa: Comissão Executiva das Comemorações do Quinto Centenário da Morte do Infante D. Henrique, 1961.

are still surprisingly recalled in several, but few contemporary Portuguese historiographical and anthropological studies on East Timor that prefer to stress a discrete colonial presence respectful of traditional social organization and habits. Actually, East Timorese traditional *sucos* – a word available since, at least, 18<sup>th</sup> century in Portuguese<sup>25</sup> – were already wholly transformed in the first half of the twenty century. A period in which was easy to find, in fact, new villages, cement houses, a chapel, a church or a Catholic cemetery reorganizing local spaces along with new administrative buildings, original health equipment, even telephone lines or merely names, topologies and road signings previously unknown. Therefore, during the 1960's it became increasingly more difficult to find traditional handcraft productions, from pottery to apparatus objects in silver as the *kaibauk* or the *surik*, and to build a traditional sacred house, *uma lulik*, or to restore it using old timber technologies taught by ancient rites and cosmologies. The invasion of modern zinc, cement, plastics, cheap cloths or rubber sandals did change material civilization up to the point that, in an eloquent example, the very traditional *beiros*, the typical local fishing and transportation canoe, are not using anymore their characteristic bamboo extended stabilizers now substituted by PVC tubes.

Throughout another long, and also a poorly researched process of changing and transferring traditional shared arcane agrarian cults, Catholicism was also able in the last one hundred years to create very popular saints rapidly becoming “traditional”. It is what one discovers in the popular cult to “Love-Lord-Colonel Saint Anthony” of Manatuto and Lacluta, watching over annual harvests. Much more astonishing is Saint Vicente Ferrer followed by Lacló's populations as “Lord-Colonel Lilaek”, the voiceless colonel, owner of vast rice fields and living in a chapel full of agricultural implements, tools, and goods.<sup>26</sup> Enculturation processes of transferring ancient fertility rites to these Catholic saints that must add up the religious impressive social diffusion of many *Madonnas*, especially Our Lady of Fátima, gathering countless faithful followers, multiplying chapels, images, and processions. It is not difficult to be highly impressed by these Catholic processions, mobilizing thousands of people, several diverse confraternities, hundreds of penitents, mostly young people, but a critical anthropological research would readily be also intrigued by surviving

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<sup>25</sup> The word appears in the referential vocabulary of Bluteau, in a volume edited in 1712, meaning ‘to fall under’ (*cair debaixo*), which was precisely the position of the *suco* in the administrative-political hierarchy developed by Portuguese colonialism since the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (BLUTEAU, Rafael. *Vocabulario Portuguez e Latino*. Coimbra: Colégio das Artes da Companhia de Jesus, 1712, p. 772).

<sup>26</sup> FERNANDES, Francisco Maria. *Radiografia de Timor Lorosae* (ed. Ivo Carneiro de Sousa). Macau: St. Joseph Academic Press, 2011, p. 68.

vestiges of ancient cults incorporated by the Catholic culture: it is common to feed saints or Virgin Mary processional images with rice, fruit, coconuts, areca and in some rural areas even with goatling meat as in the ancient ancestors' rituals. Moreover, some key ancient traditional rituals related with the central process of burial propitiatory regimes, known in the past as *take-rate*, meaning to close the tomb, were so intensely invaded by the Catholic cult of the dead that it generated a quiet syncretic mourning system, the *kore-mate*.<sup>27</sup> In the last decades, mourning and burial processes are led by Catholic prayers and the priest final religious entombment commendation, but this is not the end of the communitarian rituals: a festive meal is often followed by a ball in which some traditional dances as the *bidu*, probably of Indian influences, are brightly performed to honor the dead and his family.<sup>28</sup>

However, despite these profound cultural transformations, East Timorese traditional territories and villages were able to stratify a long-term societal order integrating individuals into social groups and communities, generating a system of social representation much more resilient to modern material cultural changes also due to its legal incorporation and strategic empowerment by the Portuguese colonial system. A traditional lasting social hierarchy was led by territorial “kings” or *liurais*, supported by an aristocracy of *datos*, and upheld by shamans and mediums (*lafitcharu*, *mátan-dok*, *mata-blolo*), socially respected by their ability to manipulate the sacred, to heal, and to keep lineage chronicles and initiatory traditions. These three segments formed a small selective elite distinguished from some bazaar merchants, handcraft workers, rural producers (*ema*), and up to very late 19<sup>th</sup> century countless slaves (*lutubum*) mainly resulting from inter-lineages' wars, kidnappings and ransoms processes, all simply classified as *ata*. These subordinate groups were also intersected by the customary discriminations imposed on women and youth, thus leading to a stratification empowering regime of aristocratic elders and *liurai* families, responsible for controlling lineages' genealogies and the access to sacred hierophanies.

These traditional social representations were framed within territorial lineages and its discriminatory social forms of alliances. The main lineages' alliance system was achieved through matrimonial exchanges between “royal” and “aristocratic” families in search of stable land balances between population and territory, economic productions and social consumption. Nonetheless, political and social territorial stability was not all-encompassing. Wars, rebellions, riots, conflicts, production crisis, sometimes, more factually,

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<sup>27</sup> MENESES, FRANCISCO Xavier Aleixo Santa de (1968). *Contactos de culturas no Timor Português. Contribuição para o seu estudo*. Lisboa: Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Política Ultramarina, pp. 348-349.

<sup>28</sup> MARTINHO, José Simões. *Timor – Quatro séculos de colonização portuguesa*. Porto: Livraria Progredior, 1943, p. 246.

revenge or kidnapping, as those accounted in very old myths and lineages narratives,<sup>29</sup> caused discontinuities and social changes that shook traditional societies. Conflicts explored and even exacerbated by Catholic missionaries, colonial administrators, rare European and Eurasian colons, dividing to rule, undermining the territorial power of prestigious *liurai* up to finally offer them the “civilized” alternative of the peaceful highly moral principles of Portuguese colonialism through their legal administrative empowerment.

Traditional pre-colonial social organization of East Timorese lineage territories and, later, polities or “kingdoms” was not immobile, but dynamic, albeit preserving some essential stratification and status structures. The active social factors were again primarily exploited by Portuguese colonialism from 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards and can be identified, among other elements, in the colonial social efforts aiming the creation of a subaltern elite recruited among the Eurasian minority and, for some commercial roles, the Chinese and *peranakan*. It is enough to glimpse the present-day political rulers in East-Timor to find that the former President, José Ramos-Horta, is a Portuguese “mestizo” or, for example, the former Minister for Infrastructure, Pedro Lay, has a Chinese-Timorese background. Along with these groups of Eurasians and Chinese emigrants, the colonial process did increase the number of Portuguese officials and some settlers, also mobilizing African soldiers, mainly arrived during the Manufahi wars, in 1911-1912. All the same, the subaltern elite formed during the colonial period came again from a long-term process of submission, acceptance, and enhancement of the social and militia positions of Eurasian “mestizos”. They were known in Timor and adjacent islands from 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards as *topasse* or *topaz* (“topazen” in Dutch sources, “topázio” in Portuguese),<sup>30</sup> “larantuqueiros” (from Larantuka in Flores) or “black Portuguese”.<sup>31</sup> Although the vast majority of the East-Timorese population was formed by different lasting local indigenous inhabitants strata, the political, social and commercial roles of these small minorities, from *topasses* to Chinese emigrants’ descendants, became progressively more critical up to reach in 1974-1975 the leadership of the key political epochal movements.

Merging all these different historical, cultural and social changes increased by Portuguese colonialism in the last one hundred and a half years, it is nowadays difficult to identify any remaining vestiges of traditional

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<sup>29</sup> SA, 1961, pp. 26-37.

<sup>30</sup> The probable etymology of this term is the Dravidian *Tuppassi*, meaning interpreter. See, for all, ANDAYA, Leonard Y. “The ‘informal Portuguese empire’ and the Topasses in the Solor archipelago and Timor in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries”, in: *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (October 2010), pp. 391-420.

<sup>31</sup> BOXER, Charles R. “Portuguese Timor. A Rough Island Story: 1515-1960”, in: *History Today*, X: 5 (May, 1960), pp. 349-355.

pre-colonial societies, cultures, and villages. Its physical forms did change significantly, but it remains to investigate whether its “spirit” stands as a symbolic structure still able to set up a collective memory contributing to building up a “national sentiment”. In this perspective, returning to the beginning, old encompassing myths as the *lorosae* founder crocodile and the transformation of modern legends in new-shared myths are constructing a shared national culture laid in very popular memory realms multiplied through images, videos, songs, and many web social networks. In fact, some national leading resistance events, as the massacre of Santa Cruz, and heroes, as Konis Santana or Nicolau Lobato, evidently became the new statues, squares, streets names or public state grand buildings, thus displaying the unique memory places of East Timor. Since memory realms are not indeed history in the academic-scientific critical sense, they will do much more to transform space in civic space and to enhance the process of nation-building than any archaeological survey, ethnographic inventory or historical “discovery”. Moreover, they will even change history in much more “noble” and “supreme” memory realms: the case of Nicolau Lobato (1946-1978) is a significant example. Lobato statue in central Dili, inaugurated on May 20, 2014, Presidente Nicolau Lobato international airport, the Presidential Palace Nicolau Lobato and several avenues and streets holding his name are not only showing a commemorative national symbol but also highlight a paradigmatic case of production of a new East-Timorese myth. It is not essential any more to acknowledge all the factual details of Lobato biography, even less his political discourse, ideology or few writings that are now indisputable. He is the young second President heroically resisting in the highlands to the brutal Indonesian invasion up to die in the exact iconic situation of Che Guevara: falling into a treacherous ambush on December 31, 1978, killed, his body half naked, lying in a makeshift bed was shown by the murderers to some selected Indonesian journalists to suggest not the end of a person but of a cause.<sup>32</sup> The cause, the resistance, and the nation persisted, and Lobato ceased to be a physical body or being to become a myth. In fact, a warrior, resistant, heroic and collective national myth, thus transforming the physic and factual history in spirit, in sentiment, which always is the process of building up a “national sentiment” through heroic, exceptional or singular national memory realms. Lobato was probably aware of the ancient sources of this memorial process, although naturally ignoring that he would become precisely its achievement. In a public rally organized in Dili on September 20, 1974, trying to clarify from a national memory historical

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<sup>32</sup> This event can be watched with French locution in a video named in Indonesian ‘Operasi militer TNI tembak mati Presiden Nicolau Lobato’ [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGpEycZMO3A>]

viewpoint and not only from a strictly political perspective FRETILIN firm defense of independence, Nicolau Lobato recalls an idea of tradition and ancestors' legacy to explain:

FRETILIN defends the independence of the people, and it is not only based on the fundamental right of all peoples to rule their destiny, but also on the unbroken tradition of our great ones – their resolute will of liberation. Our grandparents always sought to shake off the yoke of the colonialist every time circumstances favored them. Camenasse's revolt in 1719, Lacló and Ulmera's uprisings in 1861, Cová and Cotubaba's in 1868-1869, the 1912 rebellion in Manu-Fahi by D. Boaventura, and Uato-Lari's uprising in 1959, among many others, certify our assertion. We are in the right line; we are the only legitimate custodians of the legacy of our ancestors – the uncompromising defense of the Liberation of our people.<sup>33</sup>

Nationhood cultural processes, reinvention of traditions and production of new memory realms, however, are not inconsistent with scientific research of the past, namely using the tools of cultural anthropology or history; they simply belong to different realms of culture and knowledge: fortunately nations are not scientific creations, let alone through elaborated and sophisticated experiences; nations are build up by people through resistance, revolutions, and national identity values. It has been so in the past, and it will probably continue to be in the future. There is no lab, scientific formula or technological product able to generate nations, to create national sentiments or to engineering nation-building in East Timor or elsewhere, in the past, in the present, and certainly not in the future.

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<sup>33</sup> LOBATO, Nicolaus dos Reis. *FRETILIN é a liberdade do Povo em marcha*. Lisboa: Comité 28 de Novembro, 1979, p. 19 [pol.].



## II

### PRE-HISTORY, ETHNICITY, LANGUAGES AND THE FORMATION OF EAST-TIMOR PRE-COLONIAL HISTORY





At first, it was all dry land. Atauro, “Big Land” (Timor) and the other islands formed one single territory, being possible to go out and to walk by foot anywhere. It was thus with Alor, Lira, Timor, Weter, and Kesser. One day, the sea has dried up and all fishes, large and small, died. Only one giant eel (emang) survived and, finding nothing to eat at sea, began to hunt goats on land. One morning, all the people decided to join together to capture the eel, but she ran away to the sea, and defended herself with her powerful tail: a first blow has separated Atauro from Timor; a second blow divided Atauro from Alor; a third blow divided Atauro from Kesser and then all other lands became islands.<sup>34</sup>

Arcane local myths such as this legendary narrative of Atauro’s giant eel recall through very much recreated oral accounts the almost completely forgotten last glacial epoch<sup>35</sup> in which the territory of Timor, probably attached to several adjacent small islands,<sup>36</sup> begun receiving the first migrant populations from mainland and insular Southeast Asia, perhaps still around 35,000-42.000 years ago.<sup>37</sup> This very old pre-history of Timor is generally scarcely unveiled and demands much more primary archaeological and systematic ethnographic research. In spite of several archaeological new field research done in the last years, from 2000 onwards, it still is the Portuguese colonial studies on pre-history and related ethnographic general appointments that inform some repetitive brief lines in any site summarizing the history of East Timor for the most diverse proposes.

The first colonial research of prehistoric lithic materials in East Timor dated back to 1936 and was extensively developed between 1953 and 1964 by the official Anthropological Mission of Timor, initially associating the referential names of António de Almeida and Ruy Mendes Corrêa Cinatti.<sup>38</sup> The mission collected pre-historic stone objects in Laga, Baguia, Maliana,

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<sup>34</sup> DUARTE, Jorge Barros. *Timor: ritos e mitos ataúros*. Lisboa: Instituto de Cultura e Língua Portuguesa, 1984, pp. 211-212.

<sup>35</sup> O’CONNOR, Sue & APLIN, Ken. “A Matter of Balance: An Overview of Pleistocene Occupation History and the Impact of the Last Glacial Phase in East Timor and the Ara Islands, Eastern Indonesia”, in: *Archaeology in Oceania*, Vol. 42, No. 3, Climate Change and Archaeology in the Pacific - Part I (Oct., 2007), pp. 82-90.

<sup>36</sup> Some authors suggested that Flores and Timor were joined by an Early Pleistocene land bridge through Alor, prior to subsidence of the now 3000 m deep Timor Sea, and that Flores was similarly joined to southwestern Sulawesi (BELLWOOD, Peter. *First Islanders. Prehistory and Human Migration in Island Southeast Asia*. Oxford: Willey Blackwell, 2017, p. 55).

<sup>37</sup> BELLWOOD, Peter. *Pre-History of the Indo-Malaysian Archipelago*. Canberra: The Australian National University, 2007, p. 71.

<sup>38</sup> LUCAS, Maria Paula; Cardim, Pedro; NETO, Maria Cristina & ALMEIDA, Maria Emília de Castro e. “Breves Notas sobre a contribuição da Missão Antropológica do Centro de Antropologia e seus antecessores na arqueologia de Timor”, in: *Leba*, Lisboa, n° 7 (1992), p. 270.

and Suai, and later was able to identify “antique” rock paintings in Ili Kere, Lene Hara and Tutuala. While the later are old symbolic testimonies of East-Timorese societies already neolithicized and made of sedentary territorial lineages, in contrast, the different lithic vestiges were still vaguely classified through Eurocentric chronologies, thus extended in the traditional evolutionist categories from Lower Paleolithic to Late Neolithic.<sup>39</sup>

The last fifteen years of archaeological research other than reassessing those previous sites added up new nearby field areas of excavations in Matja Kuru, Telupunu, and Jerimalai all in eastern-end of Timor in the Lautém district, whose elders claim to be, let us remember again, the tail of the mythical crocodile that solidified into Timor *Lorosae*. There are nowadays six caves confirming an ongoing human settlement in these coastal regions from, at least, 42.000 years ago<sup>40</sup> relying on living patterns based on the consumption mainly of marine shellfish, but also including turtles, fish and some reptiles, rodents and bats.<sup>41</sup> During thousands of years human communities lived from these diets’ regimes and archaeological findings of polished shell fishhooks dating from circa 10.000 years ago,<sup>42</sup> plus many fish bones vestiges and progressively fewer turtle shells suggest a lengthy shift towards a fishing culture and naturally changes coming from the depletion of vulnerable resources.<sup>43</sup> However, some ten kilometers inland, the two archaeological sites of Matja Kuru 1 and 2, in the margins of the great lake of Ira Laloro, occupied by human groups since respectively 32.000 BP and 15.000 BP have displayed remains of mixed marine and terrestrial resources, but mostly a large number of vestiges of a freshwater chelid turtle consume against very few traces of shellfish.<sup>44</sup> In contrast, the only pre-historical sites excavated in the interior of East-Timor, Uai Bobo 1 and 2, near Venilale, the former colonial Vila Viçosa, 30 km south of Baucau, show roughly 6000 high caves with human occupation dating from 14.000 BP and, according to identified vestiges, relying on a diet of large and small rats plus bats and natural native fruits and roots.<sup>45</sup> Differently from the coastal settlements,

<sup>39</sup> LUCAS, 1992: 271-276.

<sup>40</sup> O’CONNOR Sue; BARHAM, Anthony; SPRIGGS, Matthew; VETH, Peter; APLIN, Ken & ST. PIERRE, Emma. “Cave archaeology and sampling issues in the tropics: a case study from Lene Hara cave, a 42,000 years old occupation site in East Timor, Southeast Asia”, in: *Australian Archaeology*, n.º. 71 (December 2010), pp. 29-40.

<sup>41</sup> O’CONNOR & APLIN, 2007: 85.

<sup>42</sup> O’CONNOR, Sue & VETH, Peter (2005). “Early Holocene shell fish hooks from Lene Hara Cave, East Timor establish complex fishing technology was in use in Island South East Asia five thousand years before Austronesian settlement”, in: *Antiquity*, 79, n.º. 304 (2005): 249-256.

<sup>43</sup> O’CONNOR & APLIN, 2007: 85.

<sup>44</sup> O’CONNOR & APLIN, 2007: 85-86.

<sup>45</sup> GLOVER, Ian. *Archaeology in East-Timor, 1966-67*. Canberra: Department of Pre-History – Research School of Pacific Studies, 1986, pp. 128-133.

Uai Bobo's sites have provided a large amount of scrapers, adzes, burins, and choppers since it was necessary to cut rodent's meat, skins and others terrestrial foodstuff resources.<sup>46</sup> Albeit the important contribution of these last years archaeological research, it is not yet possible to discard the contributions of colonial science, namely the studies headed by António de Almeida, since they did have privileged access to sites, populations and historical vestiges that, nowadays almost forgotten in Portuguese former colonial museums and institutes, are absolutely unrepeatably. Moreover, the critical cultural linkage between pre-history and anthropology built up since the 1940's by Portuguese colonial research in the field<sup>47</sup> has been completely broken during the 25 years of brutal Indonesian colonial occupation of East-Timor multiplying destructions of every and anything that could suggest the antiquity of the country cultural singularity, plus countless lootings of anything seemingly old thereafter arriving in the antique shops of Bali and Jakarta. Significantly, in 2009, the human faces petroglyphs carved discovered in Lene Hara Cave,<sup>48</sup> a site researched since 1963 by António de Almeida and published from 1967,<sup>49</sup> suggest cultural connections to traditional East-Timorese old stone and wood masks<sup>50</sup> namely brought to several Portuguese ethnographical museums in the 1960's and 1970's, thus requesting much more pre-historical/anthropological connective research.

Anyway, one has some panoramic identification, but not really scientific studies applied to East Timor, of several following South continental Asia and mainland Southeast Asia migrations of Austronesian languages populations that reached Eastern Indonesian islands between 3000-1000 BCE,<sup>51</sup> spreading an organized agricultural economy, introducing goats, pigs, dogs, civet cats and monkeys, plus other ceramic technologies and a

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<sup>46</sup> RABETT, Ryan J. *Human Adaptation in the Asian Palaeolithic: Hominin Dispersal and Behaviour during the late Quaternary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, pp. 170-172.

<sup>47</sup> CORRÊA, A. A. Mendes. *Timor Português. Contribuições para o seu estudo Antropológico*. Lisboa: Imprensa nacional, 1944.

<sup>48</sup> O'CONNOR, Sue; APLIN, Ken; ST. PIERRE, Emma & FENG, Yue-xing. "Faces of the ancestors revealed: Discovery and dating of a Pleistocene-age petroglyph in Lene Hara Cave, East Timor", in: *Antiquity*, no. 84 (2010), 649-665.

<sup>49</sup> ALMEIDA, António de. "A contribution to the study of rock paintings in Portuguese Timor", in: SOLHEIM, W. G. (ed.) *Archaeology at the eleventh Pacific science congress: papers presented at the XI Pacific science congress*, Tokyo, August-September 1966. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i - Social Science Research Institute (Asian and Pacific Archaeology Series 1), 1967, pp. 69-76.

<sup>50</sup> RESTIVO, Maria Manuela de Castro. *A coleção de Timor da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto: uma introdução às artes tradicionais timorenses*. Dissertação realizada no âmbito do Mestrado em Museologia. Porto: Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto, 2015, p. 79 (pol).

<sup>51</sup> BELLWOOD, Peter; FOX, James J. & TRYON, Darrell (eds.). *The Austronesians. Historical and comparative perspectives*. Canberra: The Australian National University, 2006, pp. 103-112.

new repertoire of axes and adzes as those collected and studied by António de Almeida in Baguia.<sup>52</sup> Nevertheless, besides these emigrants' agricultural economies, those hunting-gathering populations were still resilient, thus continuing to exploit the natural maritime and land resources mobilized by those first pre-historic inhabitants of Timor made up by successive colonization waves coming not only from continental South and Southeast Asia, but also from the Malay-Indonesian archipelago and even much more far away from Melanesia. Although there are not available research results on these various human emigrations, but countless gaps, this diversity of a long-term recurrent pre-historic human colonization seems verified by East-Timor very complex ethnic-linguistic mosaic.

Unfortunately, regardless some few new titles and re-editions of former studies,<sup>53</sup> languages and ethnic-linguistic researches on East Timor are still following up most of the classifications, divisions, and cartographies displayed by Portuguese colonial anthropologists as early as 1920-1940. In fact, academic and official maps of ethnic-linguistic divisions are substantially similar to the "ethno-linguistic draft chart of Portuguese Timor" published by A. Mendes Corrêa in his very famous "Races of the Empire", dating from 1943, and dividing the territory into 28 ethnic-linguistic groups.<sup>54</sup> Accumulating twenty years of Portuguese scientific investments in the classification of these "ethnic" languages and its incorporation in the administrative colonial divisions, the set of works by Leite de Magalhães, Abílio José Fernandes, then head of the Timor Catholic Missions, and Álvaro Fontoura, colonial governor between 1936 and 1940, agreed in dividing the linguistic map of the colony into two main branches, contrasting an Austronesian collection

<sup>52</sup> ALMEIDA, António de. "Contribuição para o Estudo do Neolítico de Timor Português", in: Memórias da Junta de Investigações do Ultramar, 16 (1960), pp. 127-139.

<sup>53</sup> HULL, Geoffrey. *The Languages of East Timor. Some Basic Facts*. Dili: Instituto Nacional de Linguística, 2002; THOMAZ, Luís Filipe F. R. *Babel Loro Sa'e: o problema linguístico de Timor-Leste*. Lisboa: Instituto Camões, 2002 (2 ed.).

<sup>54</sup> CORRÊA, A. Mendes. *Raças do Império*. Porto: Portucalense Editora, 1943, p. 591. The ethno-linguistic map is not based in original research of the author that follows the division of East Timor in 15 languages suggested by the priest Abílio Fernandes (FERNANDES, Abílio José. *Esboço histórico e do estado actual das missões de Timor e reputação dalgumas falsidades entre elas caluniosamente afirmadas por um ex-governador de Timor*. Macau: Tip. Mercantil, 1931), a proposal already based in previous field studies by MAGALHÃES, A. Leite de. "Subsídios para o estudo etnológico de Timor", in: *Trabalhos da Sociedade Portuguesa de Antropologia e Etnologia*, vol. I, fasc. II. Porto, 1920. From these sources came later the official division in 28 languages presented by the governor Álvaro Fontoura (FONTOURA, Álvaro. *Colônia Portuguesa de Timor. Photographic Album*, c.1936-1940, ethno-linguistic map in [http://www.ics.ul.pt/ah-social/fontoura/album/pag\\_inteiras/3.htm](http://www.ics.ul.pt/ah-social/fontoura/album/pag_inteiras/3.htm)) following up the field work of the "geographic mission" organized in 1937 by the "Junta das Missões Geográficas e de Investigações Coloniais" led in East Timor by the geographer Jorge Castilho (1880-1943). A. Mendes Corrêa was able to access the results of this field mission and published it in his important monograph *Timor Português. Contribuições para o seu Estudo Antropológico*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1944.

of languages centered around *tetum* with pre-Austronesian or (wrongly labeled) “Melanesian” languages. Indeed, different Austronesian dialects spread from the II millenium BCE throughout the Malay-Indonesian world also stressing an economic new lexicon orbiting the agricultural ecology of rice, present in the major islands’ cultures and languages of Sumatra and Java but unable to engender significant cultural impacts in Timor, therefore not imposing the social divisions of labor of rice-growing societies with its specialized vocabularies.<sup>55</sup>

In fact, pre-Austronesian inhabitants of East Timor had already structured Neolithic and Megalithic complex cultures, manipulating particular axes and oval shell adzes, but not systematically using ceramics substituted by a large constellation of wood and bamboo containers plus domestic instruments, including the very common sharp wood sticks (*ai-suac*) still used by women to dig their domestic lands and yards.<sup>56</sup> These populations were already able to explore various tubers and fruits in an environment of clear pre-domestication, although they did not cultivate these species cyclically, thus rearing permanent economic structures. If they did it, their demographic representation would naturally be much more expressive and more resilient to the Austronesian expansion of permanent crops and peasants’ settlers. In consequence, these pre-Austronesian populations, first of hunter-gatherers, and afterwards of rare Neolithic farmers survived in successively reduced demographic numbers during the millennium of more intense Austronesian expansion, around 1000 BCE, despite the long-term survival of a cerealeless agricultural economy in the mountains of central Timor almost until mid-19<sup>th</sup> century coffee expansion, laying out new demographic and economic colonization to coastal areas.<sup>57</sup> Next, during the millennium of more intense southward and eastern expansion, the agricultural economy of Austronesian societies scattered in several different latitudes and grown into the most diverse ecological adaptations. Cereals, for example, were replaced in Timor by the ongoing domestication of tubers, while some local groups drew out their economic survival away from agriculture by developing coastal fishing activities, mainly in the north maritime areas of the *taci fetus* or “sea-woman”. This precisely is the sea mythically controlled and divided by that giant Atauro’s eel, which is still a powerful island taboo, therefore being forbidden to eat eels’ meat as also is completely interdict for pregnant or menstruated women to bathe in sea waters.<sup>58</sup>

Later, during the millennium stretching between 500 BCE-500 AD,

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<sup>55</sup> BELLWOOD, 2007: 219.

<sup>56</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 8-9.

<sup>57</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 9-10.

<sup>58</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 10.

important territories of the Malay-Indonesian archipelago were drawn into various religious, cultural and trade contacts with Indian and Chinese civilizations, receiving political systems and religious practices influenced by Hinduism and Buddhism, amply associated in astonishing syncretic practices in these Southeast Asian regions.<sup>59</sup> The economic developments of this period stood out the spread of metallurgies, the systematic domestication of cattle, especially pigs and buffalos, and the expansion of rice growing agriculture, including the appearance in certain islands, from Java to Bali, of irrigated terraces. It seems that these metallurgical cultures expanded in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago from Indochinese, Indian and Chinese sources, although between 500-200 BCE bronze and iron technologies were simultaneously introduced and lent from Vietnamese Dong Son culture.<sup>60</sup> Since North Vietnam became virtually a Chinese Han Empire's protectorate around 11 BCE, and then a sort of imperial province from 43, the metallic cultures' expansion in insular Southeast Asia echoed also the economic and technological important developments of the classic "middle empire". In fact, Han ceramics spread out in Sumatra and Java while many Buddhist Chinese pilgrims en route to India have frequented Indonesian islands at least since the fifth century. However, material evidence of an organized trade with China is very fragmentary before the Song dynasty, and its overseas trade systemic investments left no traces in Timor islands.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> BELLWOOD, 2007: 269-275.

<sup>60</sup> BELLWOOD, , 2007: 269.

<sup>61</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 10-11.

## Indian and Hindu-Buddhist influences

It is much more important to highlight Indian cultural influences in the mainland and insular Southeast Asia. References to this region in Tamil and Sanskrit literature go back to third century BCE and if still are unclear their corresponding trade and cultural connections, it seems significant to note that around the year 70 cloves exported from the Moluccas were already reaching Rome through the complex of the Indian Ocean economy, therefore stressing ongoing commercial linkages between India and Southeast Asia with impacts in the Eastern Mediterranean trade in the context of the Roman Empire commercial networks.<sup>62</sup> Then, between the first and fifth centuries, several “indigenous” pre-mercantile states thrive in south of Indochina and in north Malay Peninsula, so that by the end of this period trade routes directed to the Indian Ocean economy were already following up the Malacca Straits focal position, demanding afterwards the mobilization of a first interconnected network of trade harbor-towns.<sup>63</sup>

In consequence, from the second century onwards these commercial communications stimulated the establishment of several trade regional states, as the case of Champa in Central Vietnam, Funan around the Gulf of Siam, other small states in south Thailand and a vague state in Sumatra and West Java labeled Ko-Ying.<sup>64</sup> However, the permanent political and religious Indianization of several Southeast Asian territories increased only from the fifth century, merging polities ruled by sacralized dignitaries and networks of Hindu and Buddhist shrines, as the important Srivijaya kingdom founded around 670.<sup>65</sup> Built up as a Buddhist trade state, Srivijaya held together a set of bond cities in the regions of Palembang and South Malay peninsula, exporting local products – resin, camphor and benzoin – and implementing a financial system of collecting taxes on ships passing through the Straits of Malacca. Afterward, during the eighth and ninth centuries, Hindu-Buddhist influences installed new polities in the west and central Java, then spreading from about 930 to the east until reaching Bali. This long-term historical process culminated between twelfth and fourteenth centuries with the organization of the mighty “empire” of Majapahit, which, cored in central Java, was able to structure political and symbolic suzerainty linkages in vast areas of the Indonesian archipelago just until declining under the pressures

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<sup>62</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 11-12.

<sup>63</sup> REID, Anthony. *A History of Southeast Asia: Critical Crossroads*. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, pp. 30-47.

<sup>64</sup> HIGHAM, Charles. *Early Cultures of Mainland Southeast Asia*. Bangkok: River Books, 2002, pp. 228-296.

<sup>65</sup> HALL, Kenneth R. *A History of Early Southeast Asia. Maritime Trade and Societal Development, 100–1500*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011, pp. 103-133.



of Islamic expansion in insular Southeast Asia in the second half of the fifteenth century and early decades of the sixteenth century, a period already frequented by Portuguese traders and adventurers based in Malacca.<sup>66</sup>

Merging often cultural and ideological values of Hinduism and Buddhism to serve the unification of political spaces, the status supremacy of court societies and the territorial central role of temples and collective pilgrimages, the geographical impact of Indian influences in Southeast Asia was paramount in the polities around the Straits of Malacca and the Java Sea, namely in eastern Sumatra, South Malay Peninsula, Java and Bali. In contrast, these influences were fragile in the highlands of Sumatra, namely among the Batak, and was virtually absent in Mentawai, Nias, Sulawesi, the Lesser Sundas, Timor and in most of the Moluccas islands. These cultural spaces were mainly marked by the predominance of ancient local lineages' cultures and their alliances, plus leading to the processes of creating specific political units. Strictly speaking, in Timor, the new metallurgical cultures originated from mainland Southeast Asia were combined and often absorbed by resilient local stone-wood cultures and economies, situations that, added to other geographical and cultural factors, impeded any cultural Indianization and then limited Chinese influences in 12<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries to sandalwood maritime trade. The limited impact of Indian and Chinese cultural influences added up to the systematic capacity of adapting and absorbing into local cultural territories and polities other external linkages contributed to strength East Timor insularity, plural cultural identities and societies' localization as can be found through the research of local/regional languages and some surviving traditional genealogies.

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<sup>66</sup> HALL, Kenneth R. *Economic History of Southeast Asia: Singhasari (1222-1292) and Majapahit (1293-1528)*, in: TARLING, Nicholas (ed.). *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (1992) 1999, I, 1, pp. 215-226.

## Lineages and Languages

From a cave in N'Huan left many men and women dressed in loin-cloth (*langostins*). Although able to communicate, they spoke through an aperture under the right armpit because they had the mouth covered yet delineated. One day, they set fire to green bamboos, and some exploded with great noise, which made their mouths to open and closed the hole in the armpit. Then, they distributed stones and irons to build their homes, but some who didn't receive any tools were compelled to cut by hand the leaves and, by placing them in the ass, turned into monkeys and left to live in the mountains. So even today, the Dádua do not eat monkey meat not to be fed of their siblings.<sup>67</sup>

The discrimination between “men/women” and “monkeys” in this Dádua myth seems its central narrative lesson. The difference lays out clearly through both the use of a “language” as through the mobilization of expertise of an already metallurgical culture (“then, they distributed stones and irons...”) able to produce its construction tools (“didn't receive any tools...”). The myth also suggests a process of social segmentation of this imagined primeval population poorly dressed with “langostins,”<sup>68</sup> thus privileging the group capable of building their homes using stone and metallic instruments while marginalizing the others as “monkeys” and evicting them to the mountains. This account probably is one of the few surviving arcane local myths witnessing an explicit confrontation and even social division of labor between Austronesian-speaking migrants who occupied the most favorable plains of Timor, and former pre- and proto-historic indigenous populations systematically drawn into more remote mountainous areas of the island. The myth also remind us that, although most of the Southeast Asian insular populations speak, as we know, Austronesian languages and dialects, there are very important cultural exceptions still communicating in “Papuan” languages not only in New Guinea, but also in the most Eastern areas of Timor still dominated by fataluku, macua, bunaque and makassae speakers and cultures.<sup>69</sup> Therefore, historically, the East-Timorese territory became a long-term cultural and linguistic boundary receiving central Malay-Polynesian languages spreading between eastern Sumbawa up to the Moluccas, except for Halmahera, but keeping pre-Austronesian

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<sup>67</sup> ‘Mith of the N'Huan Cave’ (ALMEIDA, 1975: 76-77).

<sup>68</sup> The term “langostins” refers to a small loin-cloth “limited by a narrow strip and tucked up in the waistline and the legs in a format that hardly covered the sexual organs (CORREIA, Arnanado Pinto. *Timor de Lés a Lés*. Lisboa: Agência Geral do Ultramar, 1946, p.57)

<sup>69</sup> CORREIA, Adérito José Guterres. *Describing Makasae: A Trans-New Guinea Language of East Timor*. Sydney: University of Western Sydney, 2011.

or “Papuan” languages and dialects communicated from Melanesian-Pacific worlds. This peculiar cultural situation explains the large number of East-Timorese “languages” still inventoried in early 1975 in the last field works of the Anthropological Mission led by António de Almeida, then accounting 31 ethnic-linguistic groups: Baiqueno or Biqueno; Becáis; Bunaque; Dádua; Fataluku; Galólen or Galóli; Hábo; Idáte; Isni; Lacalei; Lólen or Lólei; Macalére; Makassae; Macua; Mambae; Maráe; Midíque; Nái Damo; Ná Ine; Ná Nahéque; Nauéti; Okó Midíki or Quirui; Ossó Móco; Quémaque; Raclu-Un; Rái Esso; Réssuque; Sá Ani; Tétum (*Tetum* Térik of Viqueque, Soibada, and Dili); Tocóde; and Uai Máa.<sup>70</sup>

This wide linguistic diversity is the result of a significant historical complex process crossing various cultural factors – from insularity to migrations, from social mobility to recurrent wars and rebellions, from lineages’ territoriality to supra-local polities tributary systems –, subjects still scarcely researched by history, anthropology, and even less by linguistics. Other than the country’s lingua franca, *tetum*, and the Oecussi enclave *Uab Meto* (in fact, a baiqueno dialect), the East Timorese new Constitution consecrated thirteen local/regional languages, although using some new terminologies: Becáis, Bunaque, Dádua, Fataluku, Galóli, Hábo, Idáte, Kawaimina, Quémaque, Lólei, Macalere, Mambae and Tocóde; plus adding up “Wetarese”, the Wetare island language, as the dominant dialect of Ataúro.

Nevertheless, the vast “ethnic-linguistic” divisions stressed formerly by colonial science and now selected under the Constitution cannot be exaggerated: Nái Damo, Ná Ine or Sá Ani, for example, are nothing more than sub-dialectal variations of the Makassae language. The same connections can be highlighted for several local dialects rooted in *tetum*, baiqueno, bunaque or mambae. Thus, from a strict etymology and semantics perspectives, there were essentially seven ancient languages spoken and still used in East Timor: (1) Baiqueno; (2) Bunaque; (3) Tetum (4); Mambae, (5) Makassae; (6) Fataluku; and (7) Macua. These seven languages were largely responsible for producing most of the traditional myths and narrative legends of the lineages territories and pre-colonial polities, although deeply invaded by Portuguese words, some Malay and, in the last twenty-five years, by Bahasa Indonesia, nowadays the other most common spoken language in East Timor. Anyway, we don’t have comparative linguistics, anthropological and historical research available to connect linguistic differences, cultural ethnicities, social status and colonial inventions. These are structures that move in different directions, influencing each other, shaping diverse social organization formats and complex systems of cultural values in lasting historical processes. Therefore, the research on linguistic diversity and

<sup>70</sup> ALMEIDA, António. *O Oriente de Expressão Portuguesa*. Lisboa: Fundação Oriente, 1994.

ethnicity must convoke a clear perspective on East Timorese long-term historical singularities in order to understand ethnic-linguistic divisions as part of a more complex social-territorial system made up by landscapes and human populations, historical periods and singular geographies, including the lengthy Portuguese colonialism in the oriental region of Timor island.

## Islam and the Age of Commerce

Returning to the lessons of a long-term history of Southeast Asia concerned with ongoing communications between time and space, the current research trends divide the pre-colonial large past of this large, diverse region into three major distinct cultural areas: (1) a “Indianized” region (or civilization?) dominated by a rice-growing economy and Hindu-Buddhist organized polities; (2) a region of interconnected coastal Islamized societies, especially Malaysian, then spreading across the Indonesian archipelago from 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries onwards; and (3) the islands’ and inlands’ more remote regions such as Timor and New Guinea, reproducing polities strongly marked by traditional local lineages’ cultures, and communal socio-economic solidarities but framed by persistent rigid social patrimonial hierarchies. The first two cultural regions offer models of “para-cosmopolitan” societies by accessing early agrarian economies as a response to demographic pressures, economic resources, and social differentiation, then adapting quickly to triangular maritime trade flow between Indian and Chinese world-economies matching through the development of harbor-towns in continental and insular Southeast Asia. In the third region, which includes Timor, one finds poor agrarian economies based on very few different plants since the arcane Neolithic strata, comprising the Polynesian chestnut, bamboo, pumpkin and simple grain of millet in communication with the local domestication of tubers, taros, and yams. In addition to this less affluent plants and even much less diverse fauna, this region was mostly, but not totally, excluded from the booming economy of rice with its demographic, social, economic and cultural growth impacts.<sup>71</sup>

Later, from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the spread of Islam in Southeast Asia was able to dwell local cultures and societies mainly in Malaysia, Sumatra and Java contributing furthermore for its integration in the “age of commerce”.<sup>72</sup> In fact, these regions’ fast Islamization is related with the active role of Muslim merchants who settled in South Malaysia and West Javanese ports, married with local trade families, and then mobilize diplomatic skills, international links and economic wealth to contribute for the socio-economic development of coastal Sumatra, Java and Malacca straits kingdoms. Mostly, the first converts to Islam were systematically recruited from local “patriciates” seeking to attract Islamic trade and to win new allies in their clashes against Hindu traders of Java linked to its central kingdoms. In particular, leaders of coastal trade areas used functionally their conversion to Islam as a way of

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<sup>71</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 13.

<sup>72</sup> REID, Anthony. *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450-1680*. New Have-London: Yale University Press, 1993.

legitimizing their resistance against the authority of Majapahit kingdom and rid themselves, by violence and commercial supremacy, from the sovereignty of Hindu-Buddhist Javanese kingdoms.<sup>73</sup>

In this period, it was also important the missionary activity of Muslims from Gujarat, Bengal and, further, regions of Arabia. Missionary efforts were mainly undertaken by Sufi missionaries and pilgrims who, armed with their own cultural and literary singular qualities, came to Southeast Asia not only as teachers and spiritual masters but also as traders and diplomats who quickly penetrated commercial spaces, ruling courts, then reaching villages and rural communities. They were able to spread out Islam worldviews through attractive and popular social strategies without completely antagonizing local cults and traditional religiosities.<sup>74</sup> The pantheistic Sufi doctrines were easily understood by local savants and elites influenced by previous dissemination of Hindu teachings emphasizing the worship of sanctity and faith in the saint as a miracle worker, two religious-symbolic elements common to Islam and to Indonesian traditional religious cultures.<sup>75</sup> Nevertheless, it is worth noting that cultural and social Islamic circulation in Indonesia was also addressed to ordinary people and not just to ruling and trade elites. Islamic doctrines were able to provide an ideological justification for individual wealth, including mercantile might, as well as to strew solidarity between peasant communities and to thrust the integration of small local groups into larger societies. In an age of trade expansion, Islamic influence in Southeast Asia assisted to the development of a more integrated society adequate to replace traditional villages' communities threatened by the economic transformations potentiated during the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>76</sup>

These factors worked complementarily, although differently from place to place depending on its political, economic, social and cultural characteristics. There was not a unique process of Islamic expansion in Southeast Asia and much less in the Indonesian archipelago, even when the travels of Muslim merchants, pilgrimages of Sufi masters, multiplication of disciples or foundation of Koranic schools, "ulama" and fraternities spread in the region, setting up social structures that transformed arguably Islam in the most popular religion of Indonesia. Indeed, Islam proffered new forms of social solidarity that, as these schools, "ulama" and fraternities escaped from the traditional burden of lineages' communities. This Muslim "brotherhood", albeit mostly male, attracted locals decisively, so that, during

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<sup>73</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 14.

<sup>74</sup> FEDERSPIEL, Howard M. *Sultans, Shamans, and Saints: Islam and Muslims in Southeast Asia*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007, pp. 22-30.

<sup>75</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 15.

<sup>76</sup> LAPIDUS, Ira M. *A History of Islamic Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, pp. 475-477.

the 15<sup>th</sup> century, only a few decades before the arrival of the first Portuguese traders and adventurers, Islam was already dominant in Peninsular Malaysia, Sumatra, and Java. However, further, in the direction of Timor, the Moluccas and the thousand islands later labeled the Philippines, some early Muslim successes located mainly in port areas were still very scarce when compared to the historical power of local cults and religiosities, as it was well testified by the first Portuguese demanding the Eastern Indonesian seas. Dating still from 1518, a letter sent from Malacca by Afonso Lopes da Costa to king Manuel explained very clearly:

In the headland of this island of Java there are two kings, one of “Cynbaba” (Sumbawa) and another of “Bymba” (Bali); these are closer to the islands of Timor and Banda, and are the first lands that one takes when coming from those parts; from there to Banda is seventy leagues of latitude, and they want very much peace and friendship with Your Magesty; they were not yet visited on your behalf; when one leaves the Agacy channel until reaching the Moluccas there is no bottom in all this sea; in Banda and Timor, there are very good harbors and provisions, and these Kings are gentiles, and they don’t like to talk with Moors.<sup>77</sup>

Societies and cultures of Timor and adjacent islands were not, in fact, continuously Islamized, although some fragmentary documents account movements of Muslim trade and attacks. In fact, traditional Timorese kingdoms did suffer various pressures and incursions from Muslim states of Java and, mainly, Makassar often forcing them to pay some heavy circumstantial taxes and to surrender to a vague adherence to the religion of Mohammed. The referential chronicle of Fr. João dos Santos “Oriental Ethiopia and History of remarkable things of the Orient”, published in 1609, summarizes these Muslim assaults in Timorese territories and the counter-conversion role of the first Catholic missionaries in the region:

These churches until the year 1599 were eighteen, which are scattered on those islands and in each of them there are large parishes and settlements of Christians already made, and many others that are being done every day with much work and vigilance of the priests who support them in the faith, and defend them of the moors of Java that often come there in their boats; before St. Dominic’s priests arrival, the moors had taken possession of the people of these islands, and many were made moors, but the priests as good shepherds converted

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<sup>77</sup> IANTT - *Gaveta* 15-21-16, fl. 8v. (August 20, 1518 – Malacca).

them and they were made Christians out of the mouths of the wolves. The moors suffered severely and waged war against the priests and the converted Christians themselves, landing on the shores of these islands, assaulting villages and churches and robbing and killing as many as possible and then fled back to their land.<sup>78</sup>

It is clear from this text that Muslim circulation in Timor islands was firmly related to local sandalwood trade places and the religious rivalry was undoubtedly part of a broad commercial competition. In any case, these Muslim incursions were mainly affecting some few Timorese coastal areas and natural ports engaged in sandalwood trade following the form of raid and razy: a group rapidly detached from the commercial vessel attacked very localized objectives then looted quickly to returning fast to the ship. It seems that in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century there were already local Timorese polities trying to get Portuguese support against these Muslim raids mainly done by those traders from Makassar as can be witnessed in a case occurred in Manatuto in the early 1660's.<sup>79</sup> The Catholic missionary accounts in this period did acknowledge both the close link between sandalwood trade competition and religious antagonism, but explaining that Muslim meddling in Timor was only circumstantial, limited to few localized areas since the vast majority of the population was still made of "gentiles":

In the last few years, the Moors from Makassar have come to Timor, where they are in two villages of two stations called Manatuto and Adê, which are also ports where they buy sandalwood, wax, and slaves. However, these settlements are of very little consideration, and the Moors have not yet infected the naturals because everyone else is gentile from whom the island is very populated and so it takes great advantage in this to all the others.<sup>80</sup>

These sources demonstrate that Timor was not ever significantly Islamized since, other than in few coastal trade areas, the majority of the different local populations were not only ignoring Muslim religion but were

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<sup>78</sup> SANTOS, Frei João dos. *Etiópia Oriental e vária História de cousas notáveis do Oriente*. Évora: Manuel de Lira, 1609 [Lisboa: CNCDP, 1999], p. 468.

<sup>79</sup> In a letter written from Macao, in 1661, the Jesuit Matias da Maia, Provincial of Japan, informed the general of the Company in Rome on the circulation of a missionary in the region of Motael where he "found that his King went to ask for the help of the high captain of Timor against the Moors and the heathens of Manatuto, enemies of the Portuguese" (JACOBS, Hubert (ed.). *The Jesuit Makasar Documents*. Rome: Jesuit Historical Institute, 1988, p.173).

<sup>80</sup> SA, Artur Basílio de. *Documentação para a História das Missões do Padroado Português do Oriente. Insulíndia*. Lisboa: Agência Geral do Ultramar, 1956, IV, p. 489.



also firmly attached to their traditional cultural and religious practices as intrinsic part of their social systems and networks. Nevertheless, albeit the documental interest, these are themes and events already belonging to a progressive colonial encounter framework merging religion, trade, and policies, thus thither from the pre-colonial history of East Timor, which is the primary target of this chapter. However, these very same 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century missionary sources, namely coming from priests working in the field, are important memories that can be carefully read for gathering some historical evidence on traditional pre-colonial Timorese societies, regardless the devotional aims of these texts and their cultural representation other than “ethnographic” presentation of local people and cultures.

## The First Catholic Missionaries and Pre-Colonial History of Timor islands

Reports, letters and chronicles of the first Catholic missionaries, mainly Dominicans, in Timor islands are discourses in-between the prefiguration of a colonial encounter and the observation of pre-colonial societies still attached to traditional lineage powers, ancient polities and several arcane cultural practices. One of the first Portuguese documents on “Timor people” is a very interesting letter-report written by the Jesuit Baltasar Dias on December 3, 1559, sent from Malacca to the Provincial of India, in Goa. Dias opens the memoir explaining that, by “Solor islands”, traders from diverse nationalities settled in Malacca acknowledged the set of islands from Bali (“Balle” in the text) up to reach the open ocean, thus being, according to the Jesuit, “the lattermost of the world” (“as derradeiras do mundo”). Then, the text describes island by island the corridor of the Lesser Sundas up to reach Timor. After briefly referring its geographical situation and the trade navigation system following the monsoon, thus departing from Malacca every February and September to return in June and October, the Jesuit only explains much preemptorily:

The people of Timor are the most beast people in these parts. They worship nothing, nor they have idols; everything the Portuguese say they do. The language of these people is said to be very short, but in some things as Malay.<sup>81</sup>

Although the document is really poorly informed, certainly based in traders accounts and their vivid language, it has two key views: one on the language by pre-identifying what is today *tetum*; the other suggesting an especial submission cultural attitude since “everything the Portuguese say they do”, thus anticipating two topics widely repeated by later missionary reports on the field. In fact, from mid-sixteenth century onwards, some of the missionaries that reached the Timorese territory, Eastern Flores and its adjacent islands were able to, prior, identify the social and cultural otherness of these regions, than to find their main powers and agents, thereafter systematically mobilizing these socio-symbolic traditional East Timorese structures to spread Christianity, which was also offered as moral justification of dominant powers open to conversion, thus contributing to maintain, but also to smoothly change, the traditional local social authority. Therefore, an evangelization strategy of conversion of ruling leaders arose

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<sup>81</sup> SA, Artur Basílio de. *Documentação para a História das Missões do Padroado Português do Oriente. Insulíndia*. Lisboa: Agência Geral do Ultramar, 1955, II, p. 345.

through the example of the prince of Mena that, around 1590, traveled to Malacca with the Dominican Belchior da Cruz to be solemnly baptized by the bishop D. João Gaio Ribeiro:

This Christendom of Solor and Timor was growing so much that from then until now there are innumerable Christians that have been made and are being converted each day in those islands; among whom there were also some principals that became Christians and, in particular, the rightful heir to the kingdom of Mena, whom Father Frei Belchior da Luz, a religious of this order, converted, catechized and brought to Malacca. There the captain and more people of the fortress received him, and mainly the merchants that go from Malacca to the island of Timor to get sandalwood because they recognized him and knew who he was, and the Bishop João Gaio Ribeiro baptized him. Father Frei Belchior took this prince back to his island where he was very well received by the same Gentile king, his father, who had as much reverence and respect for the said priest as if he had been his prelate. The same respect has all the inhabitants of these islands either Christians or Gentiles regarding our religious that lives among them, particularly those who live closer to the churches where the said priests reside.<sup>82</sup>

Other than these examples of high conversions always transformed in devotional cases for the readers' pious satisfaction, it is also possible to find a sincere narrative effort to describe these remote Eastern societies. This is the case of an extraordinary account written by a Dominican missionary that worked several years in the islands of Solor-Timor, Frei António da Encarnação, who wrote and then printed his memoir in Malacca, in 1633, a quite rare example of press work in the Portuguese Malay enclave. This relation almost without a geographical presentation as was common in these records opens by rapidly exposing some lasting topics on the Timorese cultural behavior anticipating the frequent ethnocentric criticism so popular in 19<sup>th</sup>-century colonialist accounts on the "laziness of the inhabitants" as the exact cause of their misfortune:

The islands of Solor are more than sixty, four of them very large. The island called Timor has four different languages in itself, there is the wood of sandalwood, merchandise very esteemed in those parts, and they say there is also gold in it; the islands are all very fertile and, due to the good climate, they are giving and they can give all the fruits

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<sup>82</sup> SANTOS, 1999: 467-468.

that are produced in most parts of the world since the earth is good and of substance and the air benign, but the laziness of the inhabitants make them in need of everything, because they do not want to work and cultivate the lands, therefore suffering great faults, misfortunes, and distress.<sup>83</sup>

Although these topic ideas will return later in this relation, the text starts assembling local inquired information on diverse characteristics of the cultural Solor-Timorese diversity: there was “four languages” in a very fertile territory. In continuation, the Dominican describes, in fact, these “fertile” territories and the diverse populations of the Timor-Solor islands regions with much more bright colors and favorable, in some cases exaggerated agreeable evidence. In panoramic terms, confirming the previous texts on the openness and simplicity of the inhabitants, the author summarizes that local peoples are

ordinarily candid and simple or rude; but so fond and easy to receive the holy baptism, except a few lands of Moors, which are very few and of little strength; but in the others they ask for Fathers, and they fear Christians a lot when they see any force, just as they do not listen to them when they do not see it.<sup>84</sup>

If this idea of “force”, as we’ll see, comes clearly from the missionary acquaintance of social powers’ traditional culture in these regions, in contrast with the initial idea of misery, these Eastern islands seem to have propitious climate, natural resources, foodstuff, from cattle to fruit and vegetables, as well as appropriated material structures and the utmost profitable trade regime. Highlighting the food resources certainly coming from necessary agricultural production, the Dominican briefly stresses that these islands astonishingly have

excellent rice very cheap and very substantial and grows in the hills with the moisture falling from the sky, which is against the nature of rice that wants low places very wet. And there also are many yams, and they do not lack vegetables able to support everyone.<sup>85</sup>

At the same time, the livestock also looks much more than generous

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<sup>83</sup> ENCARNANÇA, Frei António da. *Relaçam do Principio da Christandade das Ilhas de Solor*. Malaca: [s.e.], 1633, p. 21v.

<sup>84</sup> ENCARNANÇA, 1633: 22.

<sup>85</sup> ENCARNANÇA, 1633: 23.

and widely reproductive as

the sheep foal three times a year, the goats have each three children, the cattle are fat and beautiful all time, and the buffalo eaters say that it is as good as a cow; they hunt deer, pigs, and many buffaloes, as well as fish that is very good and of many varieties and beautiful as the hake of Portugal, plus many mullets, bream, and other better fishes.<sup>86</sup>

Rice, tubers, vegetables and this amazing multiplication of domestic animals plus the hunting resources were still complemented by a delicious collection of diverse kind of fruit, in fact, according to the text,

so good fruits, as muscatel grapes that last all year, pruning them every month, good oranges from China, good melons, very fine pomegranates, figs, lemons, pineapples, mangoes, jackfruit and cashews, all good. And yet another fruit that serves as almonds and seems like them; the plants and flowers are very fragrant, and the basil grows in the woods as in Portugal the rosemary.<sup>87</sup>

In continuation, contrary to the historical memory pessimism that we have followed back with Armando Pinto Corrêa and those other reports from the early 1930's, regretting the complete lack of material "civilized" monuments in the full territory of Timor, this memoir written by a missionary working in the field during the first decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century recalls that

For buildings, they have a lot of stone and excellent lime or lead from earth stone that binds a lot and costs little. And so much firewood and lots of timber for houses, for boats, for tents, and they have the best coffins.<sup>88</sup>

This very reliant constellation of remarks includes as well a positive evaluation of the climate and, contrary to spread opinions about its dominant insalubrity and rampant sickness, there was in this insular region people able to reach impressive longevity:

Neither are these unhealthy lands, as some imagine by those who come sick from them, which is not so much caused by the climate of the land but by the disorders and disruptions of various things that they don't know how to avoid or they get into; there are in these parts of Solor

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<sup>86</sup> ENCARNAÇÃO, 1633: 23.

<sup>87</sup> ENCARNAÇÃO, 1633: 23-23v.

<sup>88</sup> ENCARNAÇÃO, 1633: 23v.

many people over a hundred years and some one hundred and twenty. And for all kinds of recreation, they have a lot of comforts, lots of excellent streams of cold water and hot water, lots of freshness with lots of good mouths and creeks of the beautiful and pleasant sea.<sup>89</sup>

Moreover, the trade system in the Timor-Solor islands is presented as one of the most lucrative in the Malay-Indonesian seas, attracting several different nationalities of merchants and feeding Malacca commercial platform and Chinese markets:

The trade and contracts are many in precious sandalwood, wax, turtle, slaves, and cattle and there is excellent cinnamon in Ende. Those goods that come from abroad are mainly fine gold, silver, ivories, iron, good clothes and silks, of which everyone gains a lot both foreigners and natives, in short time and without embarrassment of conscience and with much less sea perils or thieves who, on the other islands, are full of rich things. Those who know how to take advantage of their experience in China and Malacca have been following and follow today this contract which concerns them more and has minor embarrassment that the others they say. I saw a letter in this last monsoon that credits the gains of the Solor sandalwood trade in China to reach 200%, and another credited person told me that they, at least, gained 150%.<sup>90</sup>

Arrived at this optimistic commercial description within a sizeable textual set of the most prosperous themes, it is worth to underline that this is a text aiming to mobilize more missionaries for the Dominican missions in Timor-Solor islands that started from 1558 onwards. This memoir was printed in Malacca with this precise goal and certainly hoping to reach and influence religious and political elites in Portugal. What in fact the text did since it is the main source of the fourth volume of the official Dominican Portuguese chronicle started by Fr. Luís de Cácegas and Fr. Luís de Sousa, finished for this last part by Fr. Lucas de Santa Catarina, but unfortunately published later in 1767 to finally copy and paste this relation for the first of its eleven chapters on the Timor-Solor mission<sup>91</sup> In this context, some comparisons with Portugal as in the case of fish, and a lot of understandable optimism were basic textual strategies to mobilize readers and to get more soldiers to the far most Portuguese Catholic mission in Southeast Asia.

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<sup>89</sup> ENCARNÇÃO, 1633: 23v.

<sup>90</sup> ENCARNÇÃO, 1633: 24.

<sup>91</sup> SANTA CATARINA, Fr. Lucas de. *Quarta Parte da História de S. Domingos*. Lisboa: António Rodrigues Galhardo, 1767.

Nonetheless, outpaced these auspicious subjects with a pleasant climate, a lot of fruit, assorted fish and the most reproductive domestic animals, the relation returns to the initial generic topics on local populations and cultures, thus providing some interesting clues on various aspects of pre-colonial societies in Timor-Solor islands. Now, readers are informed that:

These people are so lazy and disregarded, including the Christians, as if they were not born to work like the rest of the world. They don't work, they don't want to cultivate the land (except those who live in the high mountains called Gunos<sup>92</sup> which is the same name as the hills), and they don't fish nor serve. (...) All their life and commitments are wars, guns, vanities, knights, hunting, recreation and some, few, try to gain some prominence in Timor. And as they do not want to work therefore mostly are very poor, yet they neither want to appear indigent nor ask for alms even if they starve to hunger when they don't have any support from the world. However, what they receive they thank without fear.<sup>93</sup>

Albeit the strong topic again on a “lazy” people that doesn't want to work, in consequence poor, we are much better informed on their “life” since their commitment in wars, hunting or recreation recall traditional cultural behaviors, although our author has witnessed the very diversity of local populations by including those mountain or Gunos' communities that seemed to “want to cultivate the land”. The following arguments understand that the cultural behavior of these populations has a cultural and social background that includes their unique power and laws' systems:

They are governed ordinarily by Lords whom in their parts they call *ataquables*, others *alalaque* and others *Roy*. They have their ordinary laws among all of captivity and not of death against evildoers, and they captivate them for four or five things as outbreak, murder, adultery, debts when they do not have how to pay, and so there the captives are not as bad as in other places, because albeit barbarians they are republicans that govern themselves in their own way and can make their laws that somehow oblige all.<sup>94</sup>

The textual surprise of the missionary lays precisely in the critical idea

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<sup>92</sup> ‘Gunos’ means, in fact, mountains and doesn't define therefore any concrete ethnical population. It was also used in Portuguese seamanship books as PIMENTEL, Manoel. *Arte de Navegar*. Lisboa: Oficina Real Deslandesiana, 1712, p. 424: “the northeast end of Timor with many mountains or sharp *gunos*”.

<sup>93</sup> ENCARNACÃO, 1633: 24.

<sup>94</sup> ENCARNACÃO, 1633: 24-24v.

that, although they were “barbarian”, they also were “republicans” (*respublicos*) since they had their encompassing laws that “somehow oblige all”. We know already that this traditional pre-colonial social system has functioned in East-Timor largely due to the stability of a long-term lineage regime, able to build up a societal hierarchy and a domination process cored in the power of *liurais* and *datos*, the “Lords”, namely expressed by their fortune in land, treasures and firm control of women marriage favorable alliances. Fr. António de Encarnação witnessed with some moral scandal this regime, informing in accordance:

The nobles (who are the ones who have everything) are chiefly doing their treasures in which they invest a lot by gathering as many pieces of gold and silver as they can, ivories and pearls. They buy with many of these pieces the women with whom they will marry and also the others that they will use, since among them (except those who fear God) it is almost all the same. And whoever owns these lands, to foal daughters is to foaling a treasure for their parents and, far from giving them pain, they are not only friends but also wives as captives of their husbands.<sup>95</sup>

The text confirms the elitist, or “nobles”, land ownership and their symbolic capital accumulation on precious metals and stones plus women. Thus, the control of the nuptial market was a key for engendering favorable alliances with other lineages reinforcing territorial domination. This traditional lasting social system was grounded, as we have already suggested, by the true socio-symbolic institutionalization of the *barlak* as a mode of negotiation of marriage alliances and others based in an obligatory gift-giving and gift-receiving exchange regime. Although our Dominican missionary reads these processes as a disorder impossible to overcome due to the paramount fear of the “little” regarding these “great” and “rich”, the text identifies the *barlak* process, called *bicharas*, literally a “combination”. The text fully acknowledges a social obligation that was already, as today, extended from strict marriage agreements to most of the social alliances’ demand of ‘honor’:

Since those that live in these extremes are the greatest and richest to whom the subjection is remarkable by the fear that the little ones have of them and since they do not have church, even trying all the remedies, including the one they call *bicharas* (which are some solemn concerts which they do under one another’s honor and credit if they do not keep up what they have agreed upon), there is no other human remedy for such disorders but the fear of the church when it has strength.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> ENCARNAÇÃO, 1633: 24v.

<sup>96</sup> ENCARNAÇÃO, 1633: 25.



Unfortunately, these 17<sup>th</sup>-century missionary memories able to witness ancient Timorese traditional societies and cultures are rare. At the same time, even the observations written by Fr. António da Encarnação are already much more concerned with the mission than with an ethnographic-like observation still an anachronism in this period. In consequence, the text accounts the otherness of Timor-Solor islands' peoples and cultures as a complicated dialectic of surprising advantages and huge missionary challenges: space frames the advantages, while cultures are the real challenge to be faced with the strong Catholic faith. Moreover, the true goal of the mission would be to transform the challenges in religious opportunities able to change the “disorders” of local societies and the “laziness” of their populations through their Christian conversion. This evangelization program became the hard religious work of many Catholic missionaries in oriental Timor up to the very late creation of Dili diocese, in 1940. Some, sadly few, 19<sup>th</sup>-century essential accounts of the social and cultural territory forming the Portuguese colony were intelligent enough to acknowledge the significant role of the religious mission for the success of the colonial political process. It is the case of the referential book written by the former colonial governor Afonso de Castro (1824-1885), published in 1867, critically noting:

Today, and perhaps then, the Gentile after being baptized is as ignorant of the sublimity of our religion as it always was. He becomes a Christian as if he was a Moor. The pomp of worship seduces him, and faith does not enlighten him; it pleases him the clothes of the priest; the religious songs delight him, but he does not understand what is symbolic in the holy sacrifice, nor does his understanding comes ever to realize the beauty of the precepts of Christianity. For the inhabitant of Timor being Christian means to call himself José or João instead of Turo or Tele, and to take a woman in the face of the altars instead of taking her according to their *estilos*. To be a Christian means for the *timor* to be a subject of His Majesty the King of Portugal, and this is the critical point for politics. Considering these things without any prejudices, the conversions in Timor were much more advantageous for politics than to the religion. Portugal has acquired subjects, but the church hardly increased the number of faithful, since most of the converts are Christians only by name. Nevertheless, it is necessary to confess that the work of the religious was worthy of all praise, and it would be sufficient that among so many thousands of conversions only one was true to worth the actions of the missionaries in the eyes of God.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> CASTRO, Afonso. *As Possessões Portuguezas na Oceania*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1867, pp. 28-29.





## III

### LINEAGES, ALLIANCES AND POLITIES

COLONIAL RULE AND SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Ona-Kei  
Mau-Kei  
Pui-Ona  
Mau-Ona  
Pui-Sera  
Mau-Sera  
Pui-Pei  
Manu-Pei  
Ake-Lili  
Tomo-Lili  
Kiki-Pui-Telo  
Laru-Telo  
Ma-Telu  
Roko-Maa  
Kati-Maa  
Oo-Lavanu  
Mamanatcha  
Assumaa  
Setiara  
Maanai  
Lari-Mere  
Maa-Koro  
Pere-Koro  
Mama-Koro  
Falu-Lavanu  
Ratu-Lavanu<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> AHM, Missões de Timor, 1899, Ms. 19-7; CINATTI, Ruy. *Motivos artísticos timorenses e a sua integração*. Lisboa: Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, 1987, pp. 19-20.

This very simple genealogy of “Réssi-Katikaru” was recorded as a memory legend of a group of emigrants arriving in East Timor from the Kei islands west off Papua-New Guinea. The brief oral document defines an onomastic patrilineal lineage transmitted over more than five hundred years. This rare genealogy collected in late 19<sup>th</sup> century near Manatuto, still remembered in early 1950’s, after that completely forgotten, is divided in seven *maarmalaru* (grandparents) and one *ahalu* (literally green or new descendant). It starts with the record of the first two lineage founding-fathers that still preserved in their name its Kei origins. The *maarmalaru* organized the main body of lineage ancestors’ cults: they were only invoked in particular situations, their names were socially taboo and could not be given to newborns. Mixing old myths and contemporary colonial history, the island of Kei still sprang up a Portuguese flag in the first 19<sup>th</sup> century decades, wakening in 1848 loud protests from the Dutch governor of Kupang who even sent a threatening brig to Dili.<sup>99</sup>

This strategic communication between traditional forms of social organization and colonial manipulation of local arcane powers and territories is a long-term formative process of East-Timor social history. Portuguese colonialism invested in strengthening localized powers and consuetudinary divisions thus exacerbating invented traditions, legalizing ethnic differences and reinventing a socio-territorial organization as a mean of domination and social stabilization. So, in the early twentieth century, through a very official royal decree published on July 17, 1909, the Portuguese government far away in Lisbon formally recognized the legal-political existence of 77 different East Timorese “kingdoms” (*reinos*), but disciplined spreading over only 11 administrative “districts” (*concelhos*). The royal text has accordingly defined an East-Timorese *lurahan* or “kingdom” as a municipal district ruled by a *liurai* or “king” rewarded with the patent of colonel under the suzerainty of the colonial governor representing the king of Portugal. The decree has also established that a *suco* (assembling a group of villages within the same ethnic group) should be governed by a *dato* (noble) with the appropriate rank of major. The document has finally decided that *leo* was a village equivalent to a Portuguese “freguesia” (or parish) ruled by a *dato* appointed as captain of the Portuguese royal army in Timor.<sup>100</sup> These legal, political and administrative colonial principles did not only mobilize traditional East-Timorese social ruling powers but also exacerbated by reinventing traditional hierarchies, divisions and rulers’ ranking faithful to Portuguese colonialism, a key strategy in the formation of a helpful subaltern elite. However, these colonial processes have

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<sup>99</sup> CASTRO, Gonçalo Pimenta de. *Timor. Subsídios para a sua história*. Lisboa: Agência Geral das Colónias, 1943, p. 57.

<sup>100</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 11.

more complex connections with local societies and cultures, thus demanding a careful anthropological identification of the main traditional East Timorese kinship and social systems' historical formation since, as we have already suggested, the invention of these traditions still impacts in contemporary social relationships and even in modern political competition.

In East-Timor, as in most pre-colonial Southeast Asian societies, traditional social organization and spatial human domestication arose from territorial lineages.<sup>101</sup> Following unilineal rules, kinship structure was strongly patrilineal and preferred exogamous marriages, being generally prohibited marriages between direct descent blood relatives, namely siblings, uncles, and nephews. The brides were usually chosen out of their *suco* (that ethnic group of villages), searching for marriage alliances between other outside *sucos* or territorial lineages; thus, the husband territory (*fetosá*) should obligatory be different from the wife (*umane*) *suco*. The *fetosá* male was allowed to continue to marry *umane* women, but otherwise was forbidden. This system of lineages' alliances was also strictly stratified, obliging the son of a *liurai* to marry only with a daughter of another *liurai* or, at least, a prominent territorial *dato*, a high nobleman. In addition, as Fr. António da Encarnação has previously highlighted, these dominant social elite groups invested in polygamy extensive families that were often facilitated by the first woman, normally interested in turning into the leading female figure of an extensive domestic unit reuniting several women who partake in family reproduction, household management and domestic division of labor.<sup>102</sup>

The system of inheritance was marked by a patrimonial descendants' pattern, ensuring stable land control and a strict corporate transfer of property which, linked to relatively high local demographic densities, preserved an elitist heritage model and selective domination over agrarian production. In consequence, territorial East-Timorese traditional lineages generated a pattern of undivided inheritance in which the elder male members of a local lineage, often an uncle-father's brother, held the entire household plus the common part of the land's lineage, then conveying the property to the next generation. Whenever there was a need to share the inheritance only men were allowed to compete under principles of kinship claim and age. At the same time, property ownership was based in social status' positions exclusively transmitted to men of noble lineage, being precisely this social stratification specialization responsible for the economic, social, cultural and symbolic reproduction of a kinship system leaned on patrilineal lineage domination.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> ADAMS, Kathleen M. & GILLOGLY, Kathleen A. (eds.). *Everyday Life in Southeast Asia*. Bloomington-Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2011, pp. 2-3.

<sup>102</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 12.

<sup>103</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 12

Lineages' territorial and political power was largely achieved through permanent inter-lineages wars, clashes, and negotiations. Several old lineages myths and legends account fiercely wars of expansion, conquest, and resistance creating heroes, worshipping real or imaginary warlords as well as witnessing dramatic ends of some lineage leaders and their cultural territories. Although recurrent until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and even politically manipulated nowadays, clashes between different territorial groups were not the dominant process of lineages reproduction and later transformation in politics. Political and territorial inter-lineages alliances were much more frequent, based in social negotiations through that referred gift-giving and gift-receiving system known in *tetum* as *barlak* (also *barlaki* or, in Portuguese version, *barlaque*).<sup>104</sup> Negotiations between different territorial lineages' *liurai* and *dato* required the groom's family to pay to the bride's family an important dowry (*buramoto*) gathering to cattle, mainly buffalos, expensive material and symbolic goods. If the negotiation or *barlak* reached a final marriage agreement, after the ceremonial wedding, the wife was "liberated" from her local family to live in virilocal model among the husband household territory. In contrast, poor peasants families usually had considerable difficulties to pay the *barlak* dowry, forcing the future husband to live in uxorilocal situation, very often in a position of social inferiority. As another ethnographic example of Marcel Mauss theory of the gift,<sup>105</sup> the *barlak* was widely competitive and stratified contributing for social and economic domination of increasing larger territories by dominant lineages families of landowners able to mobilize wealth enough to access brides from upper social strata.

In fact, *barlak* negotiations were (and still are) commonly obliged to mobilize large amounts of buffalos, poultry, rice and other foodstuffs along with apparatus objects, namely *surik* (swords) and special cloths known as *tais* with different lineage symbols and colors. The progressive *barlak* symbolization led to a numeric ratio between apparatus' objects and buffalos' gifts, being the number of vertical black lines of a *tais* the exact number of buffalos required for a successful negotiation between different lineages. Then, the growing economic and symbolic competitive investment in apparatus gifts, thus multiplying the number of buffalos, *tais*, *surik* or jewels necessary for getting brides of higher social status was responsible for dissolving the previous dominant virilocal pattern, since most husbands' lineages were simply unable to pay before the wedding the entire *barlak*

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<sup>104</sup> The word comes probably from *bér laki*, meaning to "take a woman" (BERTHE, LOUIS. "Le mariage par achat et la captation des gendres dans une société semi-féodale: les Buna' de Timor central", in: *L'Homme*, vol. 1, Issue 3 (1961), pp. 5-31).

<sup>105</sup> HICKS, David. "Younger Brother and Fishing Hook on Timor: Reassessing Mauss on Hierarchy and Divinity", in: *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Mar., 2007), pp. 39-56.



dowry. The solution still in place today has just delayed in time the *barlak* payment, shifting it to an ongoing annual installment in goods and/or labor, which was particularly useful in the past to mobilize militias for wars and workers for important communitarian tasks. Consequently, decisions on post-marital residency and offspring affiliation to one or the other allied lineages were strategic and ambivalent, so that even ethnic territorial groups sharing the same social vocabulary chose patrilineal or matrilineal affiliations as answers to the most diverse pressures, from population growth to wars' threats or economic crises.<sup>106</sup>

Patrilineal and matrilineal affiliation systems in East-Timor were, therefore, very often combined or mixed, after that playing a strategic role in the stabilization of lineages powerful enough to privilege either the grooms or the bride families taking into account political advantages and socio-economic benefits at stake. Social anthropology of East Timor's lineages highlights some affiliation and alliances dominant systems, but strategic options and social transgressions were possible generating some new social and territorial contradictions then solved by fresh clashes or negotiations. Although Portuguese colonialism increased social mobility processes through the introduction of new social groups, labor divisions, educational demands and technical professions, it was also responsible for protecting political and social stable alliances between East-Timorese royal families. Thus, it was very common to see colonial governors or local administrators' present in important high-rank marriages, then contributing with material and symbolic goods for the successful *barlak* exchanges, introducing some colonial etiquette and glamour in traditional lineage families' symbolic ceremonies. The three most important early colonial photography collections of East-Timor – colonial governor José Celestino da Silva photograph collection (1897-1903), governor Souza Gentil portfolio (1920-21)<sup>107</sup> and the well known “Album Fontoura”, gathering more than 500 photos from 1937 to 1940 organized by the governor Álvaro Neves de Fontoura<sup>108</sup> –, they all display several pictures of these royal weddings and its bright constellation of *barlak* extravagant gifts.

Regardless diversity of lineages affiliations options, East-Timorese traditional systems of alliances shared the same patrimonial domination goals sought both through alliances between territorial communities and independent villages, as through partnerships between different political lineages for the joint exploitation of land consistent units, namely watercourses,

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<sup>106</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 12.

<sup>107</sup> SOUSA, Ivo Carneiro de. “A coleção fotográfica de Souza Gentil (1919-1920). Um portfolio da ordem colonial?”, in: *Revista de Cultura (Internacional Edition)*, 18 (2006), pp. 49-69.

<sup>108</sup> [http://www.ics.ul.pt/ahsocial/fontoura/album/pag\\_inteiras/0.htm](http://www.ics.ul.pt/ahsocial/fontoura/album/pag_inteiras/0.htm)

mountains, coastal areas, regions with abundant agricultural resources, communication routes or common pilgrimages roads to hierophantic sites. Lineage and land, in other words, kinship system and territorial monopoly of land exploitation were the most fundamental structures in the traditional social organization of East-Timor peoples. Therefore, among various conventional principles of social organization, a leading formative factor was the economic preeminence of lineage descendants coming directly from the founding group of an agrarian domain. The most arcane surviving lineage narratives always stress this foundational memory – real or fictional – of primeval ancestors who, first, occupied, cleared, domesticized and worked the land. Although many of these lineage narratives refer to fictional ancestors imported from general founding myths, their descendants' cultural transmission and ritual celebration monopoly were more than enough to preserve their patrimonial land domination and high status. *Liurais* and *datos* often came precisely from those very restricted groups able to trace their ancestry narrative line, to transform it into a territorial genealogy account and to monopolize its oral and artistic representation.<sup>109</sup>

However, traditional lineages social ranking was open to individual skills, economic wealth or military power manipulation. A set of lasting connections still operative nowadays, namely through close ties between political parties and traditional power whenever a wealthy sponsor of a local civic or old religious festival uses it to enhance political influence and electoral ambitions. Thus, social ranking in pre-colonial East Timorese communities could be inherited and acquired, although descendants of lineage (real or mythical) founders appropriated central secular and religious positions. They also dominated the word in community affairs, had the right to provide collective festival meals, interfered in the distribution of joint work and monitored both decisions about land use as the commercial movement of surplus production. The social power of *liurais* and *datos* expressed itself through a bright constellation of apparatus objects, true treasures of lineages “museums”, generally held in the referred sacred houses (*uma lulik*). Rare polychromatic ceramics; head jewels and necklaces, known as *kaibauk* and *belak*; impressive *surik* or swords; exquisite drums; many *tais*; and astonishing wood antique statues of ancestors (*aitos*), here and there rarely sculpted in stone.<sup>110</sup> Lineage prestige was also expressed, as always, through economic wealth, success in agriculture and accumulation of livestock, mainly pigs and buffalo: the former fundamental for collective festivals' charitable meals, and the later crucial in agricultural production,

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<sup>109</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 12.

<sup>110</sup> SOUSA, Ivo Carneiro de & CENTENO, Rui M. S. *Uma Lulik Timur. Casa Sagrada de Oriente*. Porto: Universidade do Porto/CEPESA, 2001, pp. 91-102.

transportation or for a convenient *barlak*. It is unworthy to stress in detail what the formerly studied relation of Fr. António da Encarnação has already explained with some moral “scandal”: the most powerful lineages sought to strengthen its territorial position through systematic monopolization of available wives and women through very asymmetric alliances with other nearby lineages with much less economic power, but with exchangeable maiden and land. This process was achieved through fierce competition of lineages’ dowries acting within alliances’ negotiations as a factor of social ranking and territorial distinction, reinforcing an elitist endogamy pattern and hampering less powerful lineages of extending its agrarian territories bound both to expensive *barlak* payments and to an uxorilocal dependency.<sup>111</sup>

One might think that in this way, a dominant lineage would be able to reinforce almost permanently its territorial domination, being only limited by available demographic and agrarian resources. Lineages alliances and affiliations, however, are very complex processes. They are subject to different social and symbolic manipulations of genealogies, and dependent on opulence and apparatus plays as well as to social and economic welfare. In consequence, whenever a lineage leader showed an increasing trend to consolidate his power in “unpopular” forms and actions, riots and rebellions arose frequently leading to new lineages political arrangements and leadership.<sup>112</sup> If these processes were able to build up new polities transcending the territorial lineage system and territory is very difficult to verify. A supra-local polity or “state” cannot rise out from a traditional micro-scale lineage territory unless emerging leaders could convert the network of economic, social and military alliances in a centripetal charismatic power gathering and incorporating several territories. This political transformation doesn’t seem to have occurred in the Malay-Indonesian world before the “Indianization” period from 5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> century. In the case of Timor, it is even harder to historically explain when powerful lineages progressively more able to expand alliances and territories were represented, at least in foreigners’ accounts, as “kingdoms”.

Inexistent in East-Timorese traditional languages, myths, genealogies and legends, the very concept of kingdom was mainly a classificatory intromission of Portuguese and Dutch colonial circulation in the region. From early-17<sup>th</sup> century, several Dominican missionary reports, Portuguese autonomous maps of Timor islands as well as the first VOC Dutch accounts of the region have used a Eurocentric concept of kingdom to read the complex local political geography and to manipulate symbolic relationships between

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<sup>111</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 12-13.

<sup>112</sup> Some of these revolts generate new narrative accounts of territorial lineages’ foundations as compiled in SA, 1961, I.

polities represented as alliable “kingdoms”. In general terms, Portuguese and Dutch 17<sup>th</sup>-century memories simplified Timor political mosaic into two “provinces” of “Servião” and “Belos”. The first situated in the western part of the island and the second in central Timor, orbiting respectively around the kingdoms of Sombai and Wehale (*Belale*), often presented even as “empires” mobilizing tributes from other small Timorese kingdoms and some neighboring islands. However, territorial and political links between various Timorese polities were deeply manipulated by Portuguese and Dutch colonial geography, and it is challenging for modern research to understand the precedence and hierarchical connections of different pre-colonial realms. Besides Wehale and Sombai, there are several other candidates to the rank of dominant “kingdoms”, as in the cases of Mena, Samoro, Liquiçá, Luca and Ambenu, territories where one can find traditional accounts presenting their chieftains as the truly unique “king” of all Timor island.<sup>113</sup>

Revisiting the memories still preserved in some old oral accounts in prose (*kanoik*) and rare legends in verse (*dadolik*), complex dialectics of conflicts and negotiations between Timorese political realms arise again. An ancient narrative in *tetum*, for example, accounts the clash between the “kingdoms” of Samoro and Wehale due to a failed *barlak*, which had aimed to marry the “crown prince” of Samoro to a “princess” of Wehale. According to this memory, the “royal house” of Wehale has tried to deceive Samoro negotiators offering them for marriage with their “prince” a servant instead of the desired “princess”. In a movement of abduction, widespread in these vivid narratives, Samoro’s envoys managed to kidnap the princess and crossed the We-Nunuk stream with the help of crocodiles that have then frustrated Wehale warriors’ persecution.<sup>114</sup>

Another ancient oral narrative stressing as well the symbolic importance of pre-colonial Wehale recalls a long war between this “kingdom” and Liquiçá, finally concluded with the foundation of the realm of Vemasse. In this legendary account, one finds again an open conflict caused by another failed *barlak* trying to unify Timor politically, since the narrative presents the island only divided precisely between these two “kingdoms” of Wehale and Liquiçá.<sup>115</sup> Other references to the formation of Wehale can be traced in another quondam oral narrative still circulating in Indonesian Timor in the 1930’s. It recalls a foundational voyage of immigrants from the Malay Peninsula who, after many fictional adventures, build up among others

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<sup>113</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 13-14.

<sup>114</sup> SÁ, 1961: 24-33.

<sup>115</sup> SANTOS, Eduardo. *Kanoik. Mitos e Lendas de Timor*. Lisboa: Serv. de Pub. da Mocidade Portuguesa, 1967, pp. 71-82.

the “kingdoms” of Uai Hali (Wehale), Uai Hico and Hai i Timor.<sup>116</sup> The traditional representation of Wehale as a central pre-colonial polity appears in a short *dadolik* still known by the elders of Lacló in the 1960’s. It remembers in verses that “the kingdoms of Bebico, Behale, and Betano / they are like three tributaries that converge / their waters to the same stream / that glides majestically into the sea”.<sup>117</sup>

Unfortunately, these sorts of arcane narratives are not only invaded by colonial vocabulary but are also unable to clarify the political and symbolic system of alliances and precedence between pre-colonial polities of Timor. They, at least, underline the crucial role of matrimonial negotiations through achieved and failed *barlak* in the competitive process of political balances and rankings aiming to control supra-local territories. Nevertheless, these accounts and the persistent Portuguese and Dutch colonial division of Timor in those two “provinces” of “Servião” and “Belos” are unable to encompass all Timorese political and cultural territories, since most of the Eastern spaces lay completely out of these representations. Important cultural territories around Manatuto, Baucau, Lautem, Lospalos, Homar, Viqueque, Laclubar, Laleia, Iliomar, Clacuc and some other Eastern realms have produced their lineage-polities’ traditional accounts to stress their strong “independence”, namely narrative, although nowadays increasingly represented as the original (“truly”?) homeland of the unconquerable *lorosae* people.<sup>118</sup>

In the long pre-colonial history of East Timor cultural territories, it seems wiser to emphasize the importance of lineage patrimonial dominations able to build political ruling regimes whenever its leadership and alliances investments developed supra-local polities organized around the concept of *liurai*, usually translated by Portuguese and Dutch colonial accounts through the category of a *king*. Regarding social organization, however, economic functions of various social groups relied more closely on the power of local landlords and the permanent separation between aristocracies and ordinary people, thus assigning to lineage distinctions the economic and social discrimination imposed by the division of rural labor. In this social system, the *liurai* represented not merely the symbolic and narrative power of a ruling lineage but also tended to appropriate critical patrimonial domains shared with the villages’ nobility (*dato*). This very narrow aristocratic group commanded rural workers and servants (*atan*) who formed if necessary, an essential part of the hosts of warriors. In practical terms, political and military power was shared among a *liurai* ruling a group of villages (*suco*)

<sup>116</sup> CORRÊA, Armando Pinto. *Gentio de Timôr*. Lisboa: Ed. do Autor, 1934, p. 329.

<sup>117</sup> “Webico, Wehali eh Wetano/ We sanak tolo, eh we liman tolo/ Súli mutuk nakfilak ba mot bot/ Mota bot loke dalam tuka ba taci” (FERNANDES, 2011: 44).

<sup>118</sup> CORRÊA, 1934: 331-345.

and *datos* controlling singular settlements (*leo*), thus monopolizing the management of rural work and collective festivals. This power strengthened through dominant endogamy alliances among these dominant groups based on the amount of economic, social and symbolic control of gifts required for a successful *barlak* reaching brides of high social strata.

Although scarce, current sources for the pre-colonial history of East-Timor are still these rare narrative myths and legends, some sparse oral genealogies, plus those 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>-century memories of missionaries to read with our already suggested precautions. Arcane myths and accounts should also be researched carefully, whereas genealogies appear as direct testimonies of traditional social order. In rigor, these old genealogies have constituted the traditional social order itself. In fact, traditional genealogies' narratives were and still are presented as "ancient wisdom" (*rata-lo* or *no-lo*), since they were the only acceptable invocation of a lineage memory and its original foundation. Recalling a lineage memory was a highly respected symbolic power monopolized by a "master of the word", the *lia nain* also known in *tetum* language as *maeor* – a concept coming from the Portuguese word "major", the honorific and military title given by colonial authorities to East-Timorese villages' aristocracy. Disclosing a genealogy memory to a foreigner was (and still tends to be) wholly forbidden, being the exclusive privilege of a *lia nain* to present the account in the most important lineage gatherings and festivals. Chroniclers of arcane East-Timorese lineage local societies, these masters of the word became progressively unique custodians of the great oral cultural traditions of East-Timorese peoples. Even after being thoroughly invaded by Portuguese words, names and surnames, therefore values, these lineage oral accounts still witnessed the traditional social pre-colonial order, although later controlled and manipulated by colonialism.

It is the extraordinary case of a Makassae old genealogy celebrating the lineage ancestors of the Laivai *liurai*, Aleixo da Costa Meneses. The oral narrative refers the central role of the *barlak* system again and highlights a kinship pattern of large families built up through an extensive marital, domestic and sexual appropriation of women. The extended female marriage market is strategically controlled in this account by the *liurai* ancestors, a process rooted in two legendary founding-fathers detached from a group of seven who, born of a *boa*, were then dispersed by several mountainous regions. The narrative memory flow identifies in the final one hundred years a progressive colonial control of names, marriages, and affiliations using progressively more Portuguese names and finally, in the two last generations, following the Catholic monogamy marriage moral. At the same time, as it approaches the present, the genealogy record becomes a little bit more detailed, accounting for high infantile mortality, paying more attention to female identification as well as enlisting cases of male lineage successors that have decided to stay single. Regardless these precious clues, the oral

genealogy narrative is a brief and straightforward account:

Mau-Ofo and Kai-Ofo.

Mau-Ofo is from Laga origins and Kai-Ofo is from Laivai origins. Kai-Ofo had from an unknown woman Mau-Ofo and Laka-Kai whom came to Laivai. They had a discussion because of a weaver, having Laka-Kai fled to Lavetéri where he had many children. Therefore, those of Lavatéri are our brothers.

Mai-Kai stayed in Ililai and he had Meta-Mau from an unknown woman.

Meta-Mau had Kei-Meta and Sama-Meta from an unknown woman.

Kei-Meta is from Eukisse origins and Sama-Meta is from our origins, and he had Noto-Sama from an unknown woman.

Noto-Sama had Bale-Noto from an unknown woman.

Bale-Noto had two wives. One, called Dii-Gaa, generated Réssi-Bale. Another called Laka-Kai, generated Ili-Bale and Hei-Bale.

Réssi-Bale had seven wives: Liba-Te who generated Kai-Réssi; Lalo-Dara who generated Loi-Réssi; Teli-Réssi who generated Bada-Réssi; an unknown woman that generated Lari-Réssi; an unknown woman that generated Bossi-Réssi; an unknown woman that generated Uai-Réssi; an unknown woman that generated Bui-Réssi.

Ille-Bale made a *barlak* with a Lakavaa woman and had two children: Ve-Ili and Leve-Ili.

Hei-Bale made a *barlak* with Bere-Sala and had a son: Mau-Hei.

Kai-Réssi had two children from an unknown woman: Koo-Kai and Dibi-Kai.

Loi-Réssi made a *barlak* with a Beinaa woman and had two children: Noko-Loi and Sama-Loi.

Bada-Réssi made a *barlak* with a Kassa-Mau woman and had three children: Bui-Réssi, Dara-Réssi and Liba-Réssi.

Lari-Réssi had two wives: Nai-Doli, from whom he had a son, Fogo-Lari who died single; and Lau-Kai who had four children: Luís da

Costa, Domingos da Costa, Dibi-Lari and Ro-Lari.

Bosi-Réssi had from an unknown woman three children: Mau-Bossi, Noto-Bossi and Are-Bossi.

Uai-Réssi and Sama-Réssi did not have wives. If they did, it would be unknown women.

Bui-Réssi had from an unknown woman three children: Bui-Bui, Lessa-Bui and Boi-Bui.

Ve-Ili had from an unknown woman two children: Noko-Ve and Uai-Ve.

Leve-Ili stayed single. If he had family, it would be unknown.

Mau-Hei made a *barlak* with the woman Lau-Daí and had five children: Bui-Mau, Teli-Mau, U-Mau, Dare-Mau and Bada-Mau.

Luís da Costa had two wives: Rosa da Costa, with whom he had four children: Aleixo da Costa Ximenes, Francisco da Costa Ximenes, Maria da Costa Ximenes and one died. From the woman Dasi-Boro he had Domingos da Costa Ximenes and another who died.

Domingos da Costa Ximenes made a *barlak* with Liba-Lari and had the daughter Kote-Lai, and some children that died.

Francisco da Costa Ximenes has three wives: Bui-Bai, from whom he has the son Valentim Ferreira dos Santos; Liba-Rai, from whom he has Luís, Lito and Norberto, having some others that died; Liba-Gali who did not generate sons or daughters.

Domingos da Costa Ximenes married with Albertina, having three children: Eduardo, Zeca and Maria Filomena, and some others died.

Valentim Ferreira dos Santos is married with Isabel, having four children: João Baptista, Verónica, Augusto and Elias, having some others died.<sup>119</sup>

These narrative forms of celebrating a traditional social organization are mainly centered in the *lurai* power to achieve favorable matrimonial

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<sup>119</sup> CINATTI, 1987: 42-43.



alliances through the economic and symbolic control of the matrimonial market, but these processes were not enough to transform social power in territorial expansion. One must also recall some much more primary ecologic constraints coming from the vast diversity of territories in spite of the small geographical dimension of East-Timor. In fact, limits are prior imposed by local landscapes' challenges generating diverse strategies for their cultural domestication. In many rural villages, one can still find communitarian gardens of taros and yams – the plants of Neolithic origins – next to private fields full of late imports, sometimes very late, brought by emigrants and Portuguese economic colonization. Thus spreading beans, rice, corn, sweet potatoes, garlic, onion, tomato, peanuts, tobacco, and since the early decades of 19<sup>th</sup> century the ubiquitous coffee. Communitarian tubers seem to retrace very arcane collective economies while the new imports, coffee included, remember precisely the last centuries of colonial promotion of private landlords that were former *liurais* and *datos* transferred to the new power of modern economy. Isolated or in groups near the villages, chasing the favors of a very irregular hydrography of torrential streams falling from the mountains during the rainy season, one can still taste today various fruits: orange, lemon, banana, mumps, but also those much more wild, and certainly older, arecas, jambos, breadfruit, and jackfruit trees. Here again, there are indigenous fruits and colonial imports, but communitarian and private social distributions are today difficult to trace from a historical perspective. Beside gardens or in places further apart, villagers take care of pepper, betel, saffron, chili, reminding the spice world of Eastern Indonesian islands, namely the relations with the Moluccas, but also the transoceanic voyages of flavors. Most of these spices have been imported, but we don't know about their social impact. Agricultural development of the most fertile regions was achieved mainly through the expansion of rice, and later coffee plantations that brought inevitable processes of rural enclosures and land privatization. Fences arose early, often made of guavas, pineapple trees or native cottonwoods added up to bamboo and wood edges imposed by lineage powers and, much later, consecrated by Portuguese colonial property laws. When this economic process was able to increase the social importance of layers of free peasants and independent landowners we do not really know, although Portuguese colonial 19<sup>th</sup>-century economic management was already addressing these groups demands, namely in coffee plantations around Bazar-Tete.<sup>120</sup>

The forests that dominated traditional East-Timorese diverse landscapes were mainly extensive, and to pinatas of “ai-maras”, cedars of “ai-seria” and other tropical trees used in habitat traditional construction

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<sup>120</sup> BRAGA, Paulo. *Dili: Bazar-Tete*. Lisboa: Cadernos Coloniais, [s.d.]

systems, the territory was largely dominated by plenty of Asian chestnuts and precious sandalwood. The agitated 18<sup>th</sup> century brought already the first alarmed official colonial complains witnessing the fast depletion of sandalwood, which dwindled rapidly, firstly, as dominant landscape and, later, as dominant trade export until the mid-nineteenth century, prelude for the modernist triumph of the great revolution of coffee. Occupying large areas, but also invading domestic yards in central regions of East Timor, virtually no high and medium altitude's villages dispensed their coffee trees, then creating extensive plantations dominated by wealthy owners but also multiplying intensive plantations of smallholders. Timor coffee was and still is famous, albeit now barely stands global competitions of other industrial neighboring regional productions from Vietnam to Papua New Guinea.<sup>121</sup> These changes from sandalwood prosperity and decadence to the process of coffee expansion have not yet been studied as social changes' processes. In the past, the two main natural East-Timorese exports, sandalwood and beeswax had certainly a huge impact in defining realms and ethnic boundaries according to the movements of expansion and retraction both of sandalwood trees and wild bees, a process witnessed in 1861 during the four months visit to Timor of the famous naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace, noting in his acclaimed book "The Malay Archipelago" that

almost the only exports of Timor are sandalwood and bees wax. The sandalwood (*Santalum* sp.) is the produce of a small tree, which grows sparingly in the mountains of Timor and many of the other islands in the Far East. The wood is of a fine yellow color, and possesses a well-known delightful fragrance which is wonderfully permanent. It is brought down to Delli [Dili] in small logs, and is chiefly exported to China, where it is largely used to burn in the temples, and in the houses of the wealthy. The bees-wax is a still more important and valuable product, formed by the wild bees (*Apis dorsata*), which build huge honey-combs, suspended in the open air from the under side of the lofty branches of the highest trees. These are of a semicircular form, and often three or four feet in diameter. I once saw the natives take a bees' nest, and a very interesting sight it was.<sup>122</sup>

The traditional East-Timorese landscape was also profoundly changed by cattle introduction and growth. The buffalo, in the first place, probably introduced from mainland Southeast Asia. Animal of hard rural

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<sup>121</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 13.

<sup>122</sup> WALLACE, Alfred Russel. *The Malay Archipelago*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1869, p. 207.

work, particularly in lowland rice fields that spread in the few plains of the territory, the buffalo was also a symbol of wealth, prestige, festive attraction and that crucial element of *barlak* negotiations (how many buffaloes “worth” marriage with a woman of powerful families?). Features responsible for the abundance of buffalo herds, unfortunately much scarce after the successive political problems that East Timor has faced since World War II. In a popular alternative and much lesser expensive, one still finds goats, sheep and mainly pigs dominating the domestic economy, followed by countless poultry circulating everywhere in villages, public and private houses, and even cities’ streets. The only original East-Timorese ecologic animal specialization seems to be the local horse, a small but robust cargo transporter, fast and remarkably adapted to the rugged mountains. In odd contrast, East Timor beautiful maritime landscapes were poorly explored. Fishing activities mobilized much more some rare communities from coastal areas of the North rather than from the South, while only a few scant salt-pans arose in few seaside villages as one can easily witness today along the road between Dili and Liquiçá. Pre-colonial societies of East Timor were unable to mobilize investments in large vessels and maritime trafficking, surrendering its sea economy to the limited radius of action of those sort of pirogues known as *beiros*; thus wealthy owners of fishing boats and riggers didn’t merely exist. These relations between natural landscapes, resources, economic production and social positions were usually read in colonial accounts with the same categorical “lazziness” that we have found as early as 1633 in Fr. António da Encarnação relation. The former colonial governor Afonso de Castro in his well-informed book on “Portuguese Timor”, published in 1867, didn’t spare the words:

The *timores* are very indolent, and all the time that they do not employ to plow the lands, which is little, indulge entirely to the pleasures of idleness. They spend their days sitting on their heels, chewing betel and areca, and part of the nights around the fire eating roasted corn kernels. They lie down late and get up when the sun goes high. Their beds are mats made by women.<sup>123</sup>

Social differences were also expressed through clothes. Generally, traditional East Timorese clothing systems didn’t create vivid regional ethnic variations, have scarcely invested in apparatus garments that mainly followed the demands from great civic and religious festivals. Distinction occurs more in functions, through the lexicon and less in clothing products variety that, even made for special ceremonies, were merely focusing in head

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<sup>123</sup> CASTRO, 1867: 322.

and limbs decoration. The *ikat kepala* is a triangular piece of fabric and the primary cover for the heads of men and women, while the *manu fulu* is an apparatus plume, festive and warrior, exclusively male, mostly made up with chicken feathers to become a traditional distinctive of *liurais* and *datos*. Ornament for both sexes still widely used and now mostly recreated is the *kaibauk*, a crescent resembling buffalo horns for head decoration, today rarely produced in silver and much more common in simple brass. The former were exclusive of *liurais* and the later a warrior symbol of traditional militia, *arraiais*. The *kaibauk* appears in civic festivals and marriage alliances and is adorned with zoomorphic figurations, mainly of cocks and doves, obliging a single man to use it tilted to the left, while in the married leans to the right. Also a sign of social prestige is the *belak*, a silver or brass disc for the chest. It is decorated in its external face and exhibits central nipple ornamentation, looking like a solar shield. Men can use multiple discs, if they are now rich and, in the past, from *datos* status. One large disc pends from the neck, the others among themselves, while women generally only use a small size *belak*, sometimes in combination with several necklaces.<sup>124</sup>

The most typical men garment for festive seasons and important social gatherings is the *tais mane* or simply *tai*, a set of two pieces of cloth decorated geometrically with multicolored parallel lines. A more extensive piece lies down from the neck, and a smaller one hangs from the right shoulder. In major civic and religious traditional festivals but also in present-day partisan political demonstrations, men also use a *futu-kabun* or *hetik cnotac*, belts and corsets for hanging the *surik*, curled in rosette form, and pending in the front among the married while wrapped in the waist among the single. The social distinctions arising from these pieces are lost nowadays with the political democratization of their frequent use in any gathering. As for women, the first festive dress is made with the *tais feto* or *lau*, another reunion of two colored pieces, being the longer one used from the chest to the hip, and the small falls from the right shoulder further back than forward. For adorning arms, men wear *locu*, a metal bracelet of silver or brass used in the upper arm. Men and women also use *buti lima* and *kelu* or *keke*, wristbands with hoods, the *oda* as a leg bracelet, and the *morten*, unisex necklaces. Exclusive for women are *mamolik*, metallic earrings, and *ulu suku*, hair nails produced more in bone or buffalo horn than in metals. Other than some *tais* clothing decorations displaying local lineage motifs, East-Timorese traditional personal garments and ornaments follow up cultural expressions broadly spread in Eastern Indonesian cultures. Thus, nowadays is very common to find modern clothes and adorns that came from West Timor, Roti, Flores, and Sumbawa sold nowadays in the famous Dili

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<sup>124</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 14.

textile market as genuinely local and traditional. Nevertheless, the clothes social distinctions seemed to be still relevant in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as witnessed again by governor Afonso de Castro:

The *timor* clothing is simple. The man of the people covers only the pubic parts with a strip of cloth called a *hakpolike* (loin-cloth), but the chiefs wear the *tais*, a cotton cloth made in the country, which covers the body from the strap to the knee. In war no *timor* wears a loin-cloth, but a *tais* and other accessories, which form the honorable costume of those warriors. (...) The dress of women differs greatly from that of men. Those of the people wear a very narrow *tais-feta* skirt, which covers them from the middle of the chest to the feet; the shoulders and part of the breasts they bring naked. The chiefs' wives wear a cotton and silk *tais-feta*, but instead of tying it under their arms, like the women of the people, they tie it around the waist and cover the rest of the body with a *cabaia*, or a *baju* of calico, which is a kind of very short jacket.<sup>125</sup>

The most essential East Timorese traditional object of social prestige and symbolic status was and still is the *surik*. Representing the high social power of old lineages and the military might of *liurais* and *datos*, the *surik* is a traditional steel sword symbolically decorated in the wrist, adorned with horsehair and solemnly manipulated in collective festivals as well as a central gift in *barlak* alliance negotiations. Symbolic sword of military and clanic origins, the most antique *surik* have their own life, biographies and genealogies accounting heroic virtues of their aristocratic real and mythical owners, namely how many heads have they cut during wars. Nowadays, there isn't a single political meeting without an extensive exhibit of *surik*, but most are very simple plate imitations of former prestigious patterns. In contrast, the only accessible objects of some vague sociability halo are the collections of containers made both in wood and in bamboo that are used to store tobacco, lime and arecas' gum, in this case chewed up and then spited on wounds to cure and protect. These are perhaps the most scattered East-Timorese pieces throughout ethnographic museums and nowadays object of countless forgeries produced almost in industrial pace. Size, decoration, sketches and legends of these containers are able to measure the social prestige of their owners, but the most intricate and large traditional containers that are not sheltered in museums' collections were lost and can't help any social anthropological inquiry.

The distribution of social status through the exhibition of *tais*,

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<sup>125</sup> CASTRO, 1867: 322-323.

*belak* or *surik* requires the cultural context of the grand collective religious and civic festivals. At these special occasions, other traditional objects of communitarian sociability were also mobilized, namely some musical instruments nowadays scarcely reinvented and in disuse. It is the case of wind instruments, the *uruveivei*, made entirely of bamboo, and the *farafara*, carefully graved in buffalo horn to be used as the central social call bugle in highlands. Much more common are the bamboo flutes and bagpipes known as *kubi* and *kakei*. If these traditional cornets and flutes are dispensable, obligatory in any important social gathering are different drums, now a standard public instrument for everything. The most appreciated and rare are *lulic* drums, another apparatus object exclusively seen in the best East-Timorese ethnographic museum collections: big, broad, usually it has a torso format and can only be played by men. In contrast, indifferently, men and women under the right arm manipulate small drums, the *titir* and the *tipalu*. String instruments are uncommon in East-Timor traditional cultures, and they came mostly from foreign influences. The only regional exception is the *sasando* imported nearby from Roti and other Eastern Indonesian islands. It is a large palm tree leaf that gives the name to the instrument, used for amplifying the sound of eight to sixteen metal strings fixed vertically around a solid bamboo cylinder, being a traditional object very much praised by collectors of East-Timorese antiques.

These musical instruments are more than enough to excite collective festivals where some traditional dances and plays demanded their masks. An excellent example of a reunion of traditional clothes, ornaments, musical instruments, and choreography is the famous Viqueque dance Loro San, a cultural manifestation widely mobilized during the period of resistance to Indonesian occupation and manipulated nowadays to extoll an idea of *lorosae* populations in some cases with brash ethnical expressions. One discovers an ancient war dance performed in four circular movements following growing drums' beating, manifestation normally undertaken in front of a *liurai* house or an open place indicated by him. Much more arcane are the "dance of the eagle" in Ermera and the "dance of the snake" from Covalima, Suai, and Sabe recalling lost totemic cultures and lineages.<sup>126</sup> In the first case, six dancers accompanied by drums and gongs perform several movements of attack and counterattack through a rich scenic dialogue between two men and four women who symbolize the eagle fly. The snake dance is a welcome performance for foreigners gathering eight women and two men repeating serpentine movements until the final defeat of a symbolic reptile, thus becoming one of the most played and recreated shows in public

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<sup>126</sup> KING, Margaret. "The Eagle Dance of At Sabe", in: *Man*, Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. 65 (Mar. - Apr., 1965), pp. 49-50.

and political demonstrations. The social distinction meanings of these dances are nowadays tricky to understand.

Rich and symbolically different were the traditional cultures of East-Timor peoples now barely surviving through a fragmentary handful of memory realms even in the most remote villages or among the elders (*catuas*) remembrances still tied to old habits and orderly hierarchies. Nowadays, the set of cultural representations and practices undergone as traditional are long-term transformations of very arcane habits shifted by socio-economic development, cultural contacts and a colonial process recalling the first Portuguese circulation in the area labeled as “islands of Solor and Timor”, from 1515 on. Make no mistake, though, with this very simple word “Portuguese”. Many traders, adventurers and missionaries who frequented East-Timorese territories from 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>-century as “Portuguese” were also “Indian” or Luso-Indian, “Indonesian” or Luso-Indonesian, “Malaysians” or refugees from Malacca, Eurasian “mestizos” from different European remote backgrounds, Chinese emigrants, their Chinese-Timorese descendants, plus the *peranakan* “Chinese” coming from diverse trade areas of the Malay-Indonesian world. They were added up in late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries by exiles from Portuguese colonies and, more contemporaneously, from Portugal punished for their involvement in political riots or simply democratic opposition to Salazar dictatorship. These exiles and expatriates who came to atone for several crimes, sometimes hideous, as well as political opponents, were condemned to odd sentences obliging them to turn into settlers, colonial administration employees, teachers and even soldiers. Portuguese coming to East Timor from European Portugal – the so-called “metropolis” – were not admittedly many. Maybe not even one thousand, including the army, during the final colonial period ending dramatically in late 1975 with the retreat of the last Portuguese governor and his entourage. An event that most East-Timorese still don’t understand and represent bluntly as a dramatic “treason”. The twenty-five years of Indonesian occupation that succeed, albeit major political, economic and social impacts, still tried to mobilize former traditional East-Timorese powers in search of scarce local support. The consequence is almost a nightmare for any serious attempt to understand traditional social organization vestiges using scientific tools from history and anthropology. Now is awfully common to arrive to a remote village still pretending to display arcane lineage cultural values and to meet three old *liurais*: one claiming that he is indeed the traditional local *liurai* recalling a vague genealogy; a second showing a Portuguese colonial document appointing his father or grandfather as the legal local *liurai* with the rank of colonel; another yet explaining that he was appointed by Indonesian authorities as official *liurai*, and afterward confirmed by a Timorese governor; contradictions arising from folklore to politics that are, at least, an undeniable testimony of social traditions’ memory lasting resilience albeit its

reinvention, manipulation and political transferences engendering today an idea of “tradition” that has the most plural convenient and utilitarian uses and abuses. This cultural and profound social transformations, however, are not new and Armando Pinto Corrêa in his book on the “people of Timor”, published in 1934, remarks with some nostalgia that:

With the passage of time, the old traditional institutions are disappearing, the castes are leveled, the indigenous hierarchy is dismantled, and the chiefs lose their respect and the tributes they deserve and demand from the plebeian. Twenty years ago, there was no one who dared to sit next to a *maioral* and the promiscuity with which they now mingle to talk, chew or play was unknown. The chiefs who hold the pride of their hierarchy do not abound anymore, those who defend their prestige and compel the inferiors to keep their distance.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> CORRÊA, 1934: 44.





# IV

## PORTUGUESE AND LUSO-ASIAN LEGACIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA VIEW FROM BIDAQ, EAST TIMOR



In this chapter, I recall a personal field experience in East Timor, back in 2001, as well as a book that became one of my most critical academic references.<sup>128</sup> First published in English in 1954, the volume has this odd title: *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*. It perhaps is the founding work of history of religions as an autonomous scientific field, and it secured through 100.000 copies sold up to 1959 the US-wide academic reputation of the author: the Romanian émigré-scholar Mircea Eliade (1907-1986). Portuguese scholars probably know very well that, during the II World War, Eliade lived safely in neutral Salazar's Portugal as Cultural Attaché to the Romanian Embassy, between 1941 and 1944. We probably also need to remind that, in 1942, Eliade published in Bucharest, in Romanian, a book entitled "Salazar and the Portuguese Revolution", praising the "Estado Novo" dictatorship and concluding: "The Salazarian state, a Christian and totalitarian one, is first and foremost based on love".<sup>129</sup> Later on in his life, in the early 1980's, those criticizing the fascist youth militancy of Eliade in the Romanian Iron Guard movement mobilized precisely this book for attacking his scholarship legacy.<sup>130</sup> Nonetheless, I must clearly explain my position: I do believe that scientific classic authors and books have an intrinsic value regardless their ideological use, abuse or manipulations. Having highlighted this controversial theme, let's travel in time and space, as historians like to do even when from Singapore to East Timor the distance is relatively short in an Asian context. And returning to 2001 is almost timeless, which is something that we usually dislike since an old positivist tradition insists that historians only deal with the remote past, not with present events. My strong disagreement on this principle is not essential for the primary goals of this research.

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<sup>128</sup> This chapter was the text originally presented as keynote speaker to the International conference "Portuguese and Luso-Asian Legacies in Southeast Asia (1511-2011)", 28-30 September 2010, Singapore (ISEAS) and Melaka (UiTM). In the conference, I only shared an oral presentation and this text was afterwards revised following comments and suggestions of the participants.

<sup>129</sup> ELIADE, MIRCEA. *The Portugal Journal*. New York: State University of New York, 2010, p. 252.

<sup>130</sup> FISHER, Elaine. "Fascist Scholars, Fascist Scholarship: The Quest for Ur-Fascism and the Study of Religion", in: *Hermeneutics, Politics, and the History of Religions*, pub. online May 2010: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195394337.003.0012>.

## Bidao, 2001: Myth and History

At the beginning of April 2001, I have returned to East Timor invited by a former Ph.D. student and good friend from a well-known family of political resistants, here named J. G. Then, months before the first democratic elections for the Constituent Assembly, he had grand plans. He was working to build up a national research institute, to create courses of anthropology and other social sciences in East Timor University, in Dili, but none of these projects ever happened. Like the vast majority of all other very few East-Timorese holding a Ph.D., my friend is now still pursuing his upward political career. We spent two weeks traveling around the half-island only to witness the ever-lasting destruction spread-wide with the dramatic rampage, looting, bloodcurdling of villages, buildings, fields, roads that succeed to the 1999 UN referendum, which opened the path to the country's definitive independence restoration. We both returned dumpish to Dili, thus deciding to experience something more cheerful the day after. J. G. invited me to meet his elder cousin, A. G., head of the community introduced as the only one gathering true descendants from Portuguese: Bidao community, in the outskirts of Dili. In his early 70's, A. G. was still able to recall the primary school done in the old colonial Salazarist system and to speak elegant Portuguese. He was not the head of any organized social or cultural community but, much more vital for him, the president for several decades of the Catholic lay brotherhood (*confraria*) of Holy Mary of Bidao. In consequence, he was proudly in charge of setting a very popular religious procession every first of October, gathering thousands of faithful Catholics.

Described by missionaries and candidates to ethnographers that were colonial governors in the first decades of 20<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>131</sup> the former community of the fishermen village of Bidao, notable for the use of a Portuguese creole, vanished before the early 1960's with the growth of the capital.<sup>132</sup> Nowadays is part of the city and, although we can feel some rural ambiance through the countless pigs and poultry running everywhere, Bidao Lecidere as it is now labeled became an integrant part of Dili.<sup>133</sup> I didn't ear anyone recalling the old Portuguese pidgin, and A. G. explained to me that "it was a very corrupt Portuguese" from which he only remembered the word *mujer* for women as "if it was Spanish", he stressed.<sup>134</sup> The fragments

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<sup>131</sup> CASTRO, Alfredo Osório. *A Ilha Verde e Vermelha de Timor*. Lisboa: Agência Geral das Colónias, 1943, p. 56.

<sup>132</sup> MENESES, 1968: 367-371.

<sup>133</sup> [wikipedia.org/wiki/Bidau\\_Lecidere](http://wikipedia.org/wiki/Bidau_Lecidere).

<sup>134</sup> In the former Portuguese creole of Bidao the word for woman (mulher) was "muyer" according to BAXTER, Alan N. "Notes on the Creole Portuguese of Bidau, East Timor", in: *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages*, vol. 5: 1 (1990), pp. 1-38.

of a former historic community were in 2001 not more than a network of some twenty families with parental ties, and all represented in the 12 board members of the Confraternity of Our Lady of Bidao. The administrative *suco* of Bidao Licedere gathered at the time more than 10.000 people, including many refugees from the East, most speaking Makassae, as well as several local women married to Indonesian small traders and workers from West Timor and neighboring islands. Women then engaged in harsh processes of communitarian reintegration and repentance since they had been systematically accused of past collaboration with the Indonesian occupation. In result, ceremonial *barlak*, the referred gift-giving/gift-receiving customary alliance exchange system, were quite usual and I heard that some of these women and their families overcame their social shame by offering other than traditional buffalos significant sums of money, motorbikes and other material expensive goods to the families that accused them of collaborationism.

When I have asked A. G. about the history of old Bidao, the subject that most interested me, he replied that would unveil it during our visit to the nearby church of Our Lady. After lunch, we visited the church, in fact, a small and ruined chapel, and the head of its brotherhood pointed out to the image of the Virgin as the key for understanding not only the local history but also – as he tightly underlined – the entire history of East Timor. A lot of people followed us, namely tens of kids. Thus the chapel was completely packed. A.G. felt it was his moment. Standing near the Virgin image in the chantry's stairs, he spoke in Portuguese and *tetum* to explain the audience the real history of Bidao and East Timor. He began by clarifying that himself and Bidao's former inhabitants were all descendants from Portuguese, "true Portuguese from Portugal". Speaking with the accuracy of a professional historian, merging precise dates and names of the past, A. G. recalled the listeners that, in 1512, a Portuguese vessel, a big "nau", shipwrecked some miles off the shores of Timor, in the *taci-fetu*, the north female-sea. Miraculously, a priest and three sailors were able to escape and to swim several hours up to the shores of Bidao. According to A. G., the priest was a Dominican, named António Serrão, and he rescued in one of his arms an old image of Our Lady, thus only bravely swimming with the other free arm. It is the image still held by Bidao church. The other three rescued Portuguese became so enchanted by Timorese women's beauty that they promptly settled down, building houses, marrying and having large families, teaching the East-Timorese to fish and seafaring in the south seas. The Dominican priest erected the first church in Timor and spread the Gospels throughout the island, carrying with him the holy image of Mary that he always returned to Bidao chapel. A. G. closed his speech by supporting bishop Ximenes Belo's claim that East-Timor national flag under discussion at that time should have a cross since it was the Catholic Church through centuries of missionary evangelization that built up the country's singular identity.

Much longer and beautiful than this summary can ever tell, A. G.'s speech ended up in hearty ovations and shouts of “long life” to Bidao and Timor *Lorosae*.<sup>135</sup> Then, the speaker was kind enough to ask my opinion if he “was right”. I replied that I was amazed by Bidao’s history and congratulated him for an excellent talk. Honestly, I met A. G. several other times up to his death at the end of 2005, and I have never tried to correct his historical discourse, although he was always suspicious that I had kept my doubts. I thought at the time – and I still think – that any academic idea of historical “truth” or factual accuracy is not pertinent enough to embarrass this astonishing confusion of historical data subsumed in a communitarian myth. Nonetheless, the discomposure of A. G. version of Bidao history was quite simple to identify. There was a Portuguese shipwreck in 1512 during the first attempt to reach from Malacca the Moluccas, the Spice Islands, led by Francisco Serrão e António Abreu, names merged and confused in A. G. story. Serrão really shipwrecked but nine Portuguese and nine Malay of the crew were able to reach Hitu, north of Ambon.<sup>136</sup> There is not any notice of a Dominican priest aboard these vessels. As is well-known, Dominican missionaries settled first in Solor in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century as we will see and commenced from there the first evangelization experiences in Timor Island. The miraculous safety arrival of that Dominican Serrão from A. G.’s history of Bidao recalls that grand myth of Camões shipwreck near the Mekong mouth, then saving the *Lusíadas* manuscript in one hand and swimming with another, finally reaching Macau to finish his poetic masterpiece in a local cave.<sup>137</sup> Even the story of the three other Portuguese sailors rescued to built up Bidao “Portuguese” community resounds Pigafetta accounts on the first European contacts in Timor in search of sandalwood trade. It was then customary to negotiate trade conditions with Timorese *liurai* that generally sent some women previously aboard Portuguese vessels with gifts and other more audacious offerings. According to Pigafetta, sexual contacts were so frequent that venereal diseases spread fast in these Timorese trade areas identified as a Portuguese ill.<sup>138</sup>

The settlement of Eurasian populations in Bidao, speaking a Portuguese creole is plainly documented: they were part of 1200 inhabitants

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<sup>135</sup> The concept of Timor *Lorosae*, the “land where the sun rises”, was very popular in 2001 but almost disappear from the political landscape with the adoption of the official name of the country in 2002: Democratic Republic of East Timor (República Democrática de Timor-Leste).

<sup>136</sup> BARBOSA, 1989, 7-9.

<sup>137</sup> TEIXEIRA, Manuel. *A Gruta de Camões em Macau*. Macau: Imprensa Nacional. 1977

<sup>138</sup> “The disease of St. Job was to be found in all the islands that we encountered in that archipelago, but more in that place [Timor] than in others; it is called *for franchi*, that is to say, the Portuguese disease” (Pigafetta, Antonio. *The First Voyage around the world (1519-1522)*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007, p. 118 [193]).

of the fortress of Lifao, sieged by the Dutch during several months, and then obliged to reach refuge in 1769 in Dili area, at the time a swampy territory. In that thousand people, including only five or six Portuguese, the majority had already been previously resettled from Larantuka, in Flores Island, to the Portuguese or Eurasian enclave of Lifao.<sup>139</sup> These *larantuqueiros* probably were the forefathers of A. G. and the other few families of Bidao still recalling a Portuguese offspring. The transformation of these historical events in a communitarian myth is part of a different process of cultural identity, mobilizing cultural memory devices, not academic history. In fact, any community, any nation-state needs myths, then spread through collective memory places transformed in public statues, street-names, civic commemorations and all the identity structures and events that we all know and practice. In consequence, I didn't ever contradict A. G. story, and this is the very first time that I speak in public and write about it.

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<sup>139</sup> BOXER, Charles R. *The Topasses of Timor*. Amsterdam: Indisch Instituut, 1947.



## Portugal is in Heaven

Regardless the contradictions of the mythical story of this curious but largely invented Portuguese community of Bidao, I was so pleased and thankful by the welcome and personal attention received that I decided to invite A. G. and his Brotherhood colleagues for a next day lunch offered by myself. I asked J. G. to help me, and everything was promptly organized for honoring my invitation. The following day, a Saturday, instead of twelve to fifteen expected guests, at least fifty people were waiting for me in a simple restaurant – lets generously call it like this – nearby Bidao church. My first reflex was to count my money, then US dollars and Indonesian rupees, since it was not yet possible and prudent to use credit cards. J. G. calmed me down promising that the lunch would be as good as cheap. It was as magnificent as pleasant. We started with East Timorese big prawns, known as “singa”, followed by pork meat, “midar”, with vegetables, “cacun filan”, and the famous skewered mixed meat, the local “sasete”. The dessert was the sweet Timorese version of Indian-Goan “bebinca,” and the lunch served with a lot of Australian red wine bottles. At the end, we all drank Timorese coffee, not particularly well roasted, and several glasses of East-Timorese aqua vitae, “tua sabu”, a powerful brandy-alike spirit made from a palm tree, the quite common “arenga pinnata”.

After probably two hours of eating too much and the most generous drinking, everybody was really more than simply happy. Thus, we discussed everything and there were the most contradictory ideas for the future of East-Timor as an independent nation. Glass of *tua sabu* after glass and plenty of cheers, the discussion arose and the presents were clearly divided in two groups, one firmly defending the positions of FRETILIN, the others criticizing it. I decided to still the soaring political debate inviting them to remember their past during Portuguese colonial Timor and their fight along the resistance period, two subjects that normally East Timorese then over forty years old appreciated.

The cousins A. G. and J. G. were courteous enough to put me at the top of a set of plastic tables surrounded by East Timorese able to speak Portuguese. Thus, my neighbors immediately started recalling their adventures in primary school, some in Catholic seminars, then remembering recent stories of resistance through the most fantastic strategies to deceive the Indonesian military and police occupation forces. When I expressed my interest in knowing more about the last years of Portuguese colonial presence in East Timor, the former political division returned: some defended the idea that Portugal had not ever been a colonialist power, while others accused Portuguese administration over the territory with the prevailing sins of any European colonialism. To avoid new hot debates, I started asking neutral questions on Portugal, namely inquiring my guests if they have ever been in

my country. None of them visited Portugal, and they knew the country very vaguely from some youth memories learned in school, in the army, some few through subaltern jobs in the colonial administration. The memories became so confused that I didn't resist asking them if they really knew where Portugal is. One of my close neighbors immediately replied: "everybody knows that Portugal is in Africa near Angola and Mozambique". A huge debate immediately divided the presents, some able to say that Portugal is in Europe, but others were insisting that it was really in Africa, and one or two even suggesting that the country was in Asia. A. G. decided to end up the debate, and recalling his leadership position to conclude: "it doesn't matter; Portugal is in heaven!"

I realized then, and I have confirmed it in the following years in Tugu, near Jakarta, among the Malacca's kristang and many people in Cambodia, Myanmar or Sri Lanka still using Portuguese-alike names, these Luso-Asian communities built up their sense of communitarian identity not only through this kind of myths but they also have a mythical idea of Portugal. They don't know the country, even less its history, but preserve a very vague and mythical sense of a benign paternal identity that they just labeled Portugal.

## The myth of the eternal return

Historians usually don't like myths. They don't generally study mythical subjects since academic historiography built up from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by personalities as Leopold von Ranke was based in very positive knowledge collected directly from "true" documents, mainly official ones. Portuguese historiography barely researched myths, including the critical mythical topics of national history commonly discussed between odd spiritualities and mysticism by candidates to philosophers and strange essayists. Therefore, myths related with the miraculous foundation of Portugal, exiled and mythical Sebastianisms or the crucial role of the kingdom in general *historia salutis* of humankind as Father António Vieira explained in his *History of the Future*, are not popular topics among academic historians. Neither is the vast field of mythmaking during the period labeled as the history of Portuguese discoveries and expansion: in rigor, there is not a single title or paper available. Portuguese academic historiography is still too positivist and conservative to break down with the shared nationalistic myths of Portugal as a unique universal discoverer back in 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, the golden age of national history and the most impressive resource of memory realms. Have you built up a new grand bridge to cross the Tejo river in Lisbon, in 1998? Let's name it off course Vasco da Gama!

Lacking expertise from my historian colleagues, I still need to recall Mircea Eliade key book on cosmos and history: the myth of the eternal return. Although quite complicated and profoundly grounded in difficult erudition twists that we are not anymore able to match nowadays, Eliade's thesis is not difficult to understand. In fact, most of the key theories in history and social sciences are generally simple, straightforward, and that's the reason explaining why they last. According to Eliade study, the "eternal return" is a belief – mainly a cultural and religious belief and behavior – in the social ability to return to the mythical age of a community, a territory or a society, and to become contemporary with the events described in their foundational myths.<sup>140</sup> Eliade concluded that the power of important memorial things resides mainly in its origin.<sup>141</sup> The Romanian scholar explains in the first pages of his book that the research was suggested by Maurice Halbwachs *Historical memory and collective memory*, a work published in 1950. The book of this Emile Durkheim's disciple stresses the following principle: "history is interested primarily in differences and disregards the resemblances without which there would have been no memory since the

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<sup>140</sup> ELIADE 1954: XI.

<sup>141</sup> ELIADE 1954: 141.

only facts remembered are those having the common trait of belonging to the same consciousness".<sup>142</sup> Later on, in a set of referential studies comparing mythologies from different civilizations, Claude Lévi-Strauss reformulated Eliade's theory to explain that the myth's purpose always is to "mediate" social and cultural oppositions, thereby resolving essential tensions or contradictions found in human social and cultural life.<sup>143</sup>

Eliade's theory is also helpful through the use of that very rare category of *return*, a concept ordinarily alien to historians much more engaged in historical evolution from the past to the present. In general, the historiography of Portuguese maritime expansion and later colonial empire forgets to study the return, which stands as a critical research subject in Portuguese circulation in Asia. In the foundational 1498-99 Vasco da Gama famous maritime voyage to India, the return is much more important than the arrival to Calicut in India guided by Christian prisoners, and Muslim pilots exchanged and contracted in Malindi and aware of the Indian Ocean trade routes. The return made against the monsoon winds took 132 long days to reach back Malindi, and from the original 170 crewmembers of the fleet, only 55 returned to Lisbon.<sup>144</sup> The return can also be the dramatic end of the first Portuguese Vice-Roy in India, Francisco de Almeida. He died in March 1510 attacked near current Cape Town by local Khoikhoi villagers to whom his crew robbed cattle. A death that is recalling that other of Fernão de Magalhães – the popular Filipino Magellan – killed in Mactan, near Cebu, in April 1521. Armed as a glorious medieval knight and convinced of the enormous superiority of his small militia facing hundreds of local warriors under the guidance of the famous Lapu-Lapu. An event that the Italian chronicler of the great world voyage, Antonio Pigafetta, read as a martyrdom, while national historiography in the Philippines understands it as the first victorious indigenous, if not nationalist, clash against colonialism.<sup>145</sup>

Aware of these and countless other accounts, afraid of the traveling dangers of returning to Europe and aware of the advantages of the intra-Asian trade, Portuguese soldiers, traders, and adventurers soon realize that they could become wealthy without returning to Portugal, a poor rural country, gathering few more than 1.5 million inhabitants. From the estimated 60.000 Portuguese that reached Luso enclaves in Asia from early

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<sup>142</sup> HALBWACHS, Maurice, 1992. *On Collective Memory* (transl. Lewis A. Coser). Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 2.

<sup>143</sup> LÉVI-STRAUSS, Claude, 2001. *Myth and Meaning*. London-New York: Routledge, pp. 5-11.

<sup>144</sup> VELHO, Álvaro, 1999. *Roteiro da primeira viagem de Vasco da Gama à Índia*. Porto: Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto.

<sup>145</sup> SOUSA, Ivo Carneiro de. Sousa. "Peregrinatio, Pecado, Sexualidade e Mentalidade Mercantil. Discutindo o Livro de Antonio Pigafetta sobre a Grande Viagem de Fernão de Magalhães", in: *Revista de Cultura (Edição Internacional)*, 17 (2006), pp. 54-66.

16<sup>th</sup> century to the first decades of 17<sup>th</sup> century, less than 10% returned to Europe.<sup>146</sup> The Luso-Asian heritage in Southeast Asian spaces must trace back the diverse stories of these Portuguese and their descendants, clientele, allies, servants, slaves and countless local women that build up a real shadow empire based on the advantages of Portuguese maritime supremacy in the region, offering faster, cheaper and mightier ships. If one doesn't know anything about this unofficial empire, one significant example is enough. In fact, commercial activities and social mentality of Portuguese, Eurasians, and locals engaged in the precious profits of this shadow empire can be paradigmatically remembered in 1552, when the most famous Jesuit Francis Xavier died in the southern Chinese island of Sangchuang, near the mouth of the Pearl River delta. Albeit the presence of hundreds of Portuguese traders smuggling in the island with Chinese merchants from Guangdong, none assisted to the burial sample ceremony of the Jesuit missionary. His corpse remained unburied several days till the Sunday after his death. Portuguese traders in this *Sanchoão* island didn't even show any particular care towards the deceased Xavier, and he was buried almost alone. No one followed the Jesuit to the modest grave but António, slave, and servant of the missionary, the pilot Francisco de Aguiar and two mulattos who carried the coffin.<sup>147</sup>

Xavier's fiery preaching of conversion of China and his harsh criticism of the mercantile ethos of Portuguese wealthy private traders were embarrassing the profitable exchanges with Chinese merchants. These traders that forgot Xavier became founders of Macau. Unsurprisingly, the first Jesuit Bishop settled in Macau – but not yet formal bishop of the enclave –, Belchior Carneiro frequently wrote with pessimism about this ongoing clash between Christian morals and traders' unethical life. In his almost unknown manuscript *treatise on marriage*, written in Latin, tens of concrete cases critically highlight the sinful situation of Portuguese merchants in the 1580's throughout several Far East and Southeast Asian trade routes. Most of them, namely the very powerful traders, married at the same time in Macau and Japan, some also in Indochina, Sri Lanka, and India, keeping women and descendants in the major commercial harbor-towns. In one of the extreme cases analyzed in the manuscript, the Jesuit Bishop debates the immoral situation of a Portuguese rich merchant established in Macau, originally born in central Alentejo, that married with eight diverse women in different places. A process was open against the trader in Macau, but he

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<sup>146</sup> GODINHO, Vitorino Magalhães (1981). *Os Descobrimentos e a Economia Mundial*. Lisboa: Editorial Presença, I, pp. 30-35.

<sup>147</sup> SOUSA, Ivo Carneiro de. "St. Francis Xavier's Letters From China (1552)", in: *Revista de Cultura (Edição Internacional)*, 19 (2006), pp. 65-66; SOUSA, Ivo Carneiro de. "S. Francisco Xavier no Sudeste Asiático: Evangelização, Solidão e Obras de Misericórdia", in: *Revista de Cultura (Edição Internacional)*, 19 (2006).

defended himself through a civil lawyer convoking an astonishing concept of “cultural diversity”. The trader argued that, for increasing his commercial chances, he was obliged to make several alliances forcing him to marry with daughters of influential Asian merchants, a sort of gift-giving/gift-receiving system. However, he firmly explained that he didn’t commit any sin since was only married to a singular woman through the Catholic church in Macau while with the other women he had just married following their local mores. Far from Portugal, the country became for this kind of persons an illusion, a myth. Eurasians descendants of these Portuguese adventurers turn mythmaking in a critical identity structure.<sup>148</sup>

There was in Southeast Asian past the most diverse people moving a Portuguese name in several localized enclaves. Traders were investing and exchanging profitably far from the moral control of the Catholic Church. Merchants were building commercial routes ignored by the official power of the Portuguese State of India. Portuguese that have never returned to Portugal discovering wealth enough to support extended families and clienteles in Asian territories. Communities of Eurasians arose from descendants of Eurasians that already were the offspring of generations of Eurasians. Plus communities, as in the case of Bidao, recreating a very vague idea of Portugal to affirm a unique cultural identity proudly Portuguese but mainly as a legitimation for being independent East-Timorese. In consequence, researching Luso-Asian communities in Southeast Asia is a task that cannot be ever fulfilled mobilizing the traditional arsenal of Portuguese chronicles and official documents. They are not there, but they do exist under that mythical idea that “Portugal is in heaven”.

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<sup>148</sup> SOUSA, Ivo Carneiro de Sousa. *The Bishop and the merchants in Macau: D. Belchior Carneiro and Portuguese trade culture in Far East*. Macau: ICAM-IH, 2009.



V

**PHILIP II, EAST TIMOR, THE PHILIPPINES**  
AND THE TRUE KING OF TIMOR AND PORTUGAL





When I had visited East Timor some months before the formal declaration (or, better, restoration) of independence on May 20, 2002, I went to the Manatuto district in the northeastern region to attend some meetings and other research field commitments. I was quite surprised with the sound, warm relations and daily fussy fraternization between local people and a company of Filipino soldiers at that time under the UN peacekeeping forces. I have asked several persons from different social and cultural backgrounds about the reasons for those close brotherly relations, and almost all my informants explained to me that the “peoples of the Philippines are very similar to us, the East Timorese.” When I turned my attention from those peacekeeping officials to some of the most important East Timorese institutions working in place, I was immediately obliged to recognize the dominant Catholic Church assistance. Then as active in social aid as in spiritual comfort in any corner of the country, Manatuto included, which contributes to explaining why still nowadays perhaps 95% of Timor’s inhabitants identify themselves as firm Catholic believers. In the East Timorese church, there were dozens of Filipinos priests working, teaching and preaching in several different areas. One of the rare non-East Timorese parish curates was the Filipino priest of the Bobonaro district, and some other Filipino fathers had as well very relevant ecclesiastical tasks. The general vicar of the Dili diocese was an active Filipino clergy. It was also the case of the secretary for social communication. There were also several other Filipino friars and nuns, from Salesians to Franciscans, leading church hospitals, brotherhoods, charity works or even directing some interesting popular pharmacies offering the alternative medicines that are generally preferred by the ordinary East Timorese people, who distrust the expensive western drugs. The situation didn’t change today, and Filipino religious personnel are an essential component of East Timor Catholic Church pastoral and social work. It is the leading case, among several others, of the director of the Jesuit Social Services, the Filipino father Erik John Gerilla, presently engaged in several projects of water distribution to Dili and Ermera schools, meritorious examples of effective assistance programs reaching the population.

I was even much more surprised when I found in my return to the capital full of “Filipino” wonders not one but several collections of silver Spanish reales from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries among the few remains of the former Dili Museum then kept in temporary storage.<sup>149</sup> These reales knew in English as the “Spanish dollar”, reminded us of the sizeable paramount invasion of American silver coins carried by traders and colonizers of the Philippines who sailed the arduous Pacific route from Acapulco, but were also trading with China, Macau and throughout Southeast Asia. I was also astonished when I have realized that most of the apparatus traditional East Timorese jewelry had been precisely made with these old Spanish silver reales, including the very global *real de a ocho*, conveniently smelted and then hand worked. One can as well observe several traditional *kaibauk* ornamented with those famous *reales de plata* that crossed the world, used proudly by local men and women in the major social and religious festivals. This cultural legacy is so strong that the rare traditional jewelers still working, at the time mainly for the foreigners of several UN and NGO offices, continued to prefer getting silver from those 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century large Mexican pesos that one can still try to bargain at the textile market in central downtown Dili.

The questions that came to my mind, from the “warped” perspective of a professional historian with some decades’ experience, were several. Where in time and space did these old American silver reales and later Mexican pesos come from, which still constitute today some of the most important traditional treasures of local “kingdoms” (*liurai*) and sacred houses (*uma lulik*)? How can one explain these friendly relations with Filipino soldiers and officials who, from parish priests to the ordinary people, are considered “brothers”? How can we tell the Filipino influence and presence in the East Timorese Catholic Church that still lasts? Is the similar dominant Catholic background of both countries and populations the critical explanation?

A general prior answer must take into consideration that, despite centuries of often-violent Portuguese colonization, including recurrent wars up to the Manufahi dramatic conflict, in 1911-12, East Timor didn’t become Portuguese, European or Western. It is and will always be a “Southeast Asian” country, thus having coherently applied immediately in 2002 to ASEAN membership. However, as it is well known, Southeast Asia is a very recent concept coming from the II World War military cartography, and most academic efforts to identify common anthropological backgrounds among the different countries within this classification have generally failed to stress but some generalities shared by most human historical pre-industrial

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<sup>149</sup> A former inventory of this museum is available in *Katalog Pameran Koleksi Warisan Budaya*. Timor-Timur: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan/Direktorat Jenderal Kebudayaan - Museum Negeri Propinsi Timor Timur, 1995-1996, 2 vols.

societies.<sup>150</sup> Therefore, intrinsic fraternal relations between Southeast Asian national populations are not a manifest token, and the past is full of dramatic wars and conflicts between these diverse regional neighbors. Moreover, friendly relations coming loosely from the several different East Timorese local populations, urban and rural, towards foreigners (*malai*), any foreigners are very rare, and the normative attitude still is of cultural distance with the habitual exception of the more cosmopolitan small political class in Dili.

Other Southeast Asian national missions working in East Timor were not viewed with the reverence and respect addressed to the Filipinos' soldiers, but only as a necessary presence in the context of the peacekeeping process then directed by UN forces based in approved Security Council mandatory resolutions and international commitments. It was not feasible to remotely perceive any East Timorese close and friendly relations with Malays, Thais, Singaporean and even less, of course, with Indonesians, in this case, regarded with mistrust from journalists even to solidarity groups' representative that claimed then to have always supported in the past East Timor independence fight. On the contrary, I have experienced an ambivalent suspicion. I heard several Thai, Malay and Singaporean officials and UN administrators talking about the inability of the East Timorese to build a coherent nation, and reversely I have also listened several local political leaders talking about the lack of support that their liberation struggle received from ASEAN countries. Probably, as always, the "truth" is more complicated and balanced. But I have never heard anybody (with a single exception that I will study later), on either side, complaining about the Filipino mission or, vice versa, Filipinos criticizing or bantering, as most of the others did, Portuguese included, about the first imbalanced steps of that new country. A real trembling baby, then again reborn independent, re-aged only few months, which for a historian that is accustomed to dealing with Braudelian *longue durée* processes means almost nothing. In this perspective, the very special East Timorese-Filipino fraternal relation must demand new insights, perhaps the views of history.

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<sup>150</sup> EMMERSON, Donald K. "South East Asia – what's in a name", in: *Journal of South Asian Studies*, XV (1984): 1-21.

## The Captaincy of Solor-Timor

It is challenging to find any historical evidence when researching the first Portuguese contacts in the Timorese islands, a faraway periphery even for the Portuguese traders, soldiers, missionaries and adventurers in the Moluccas' small spice islands and the Malacca enclave. In fact, Eastern Indonesia, from Java to Timor was firstly recognized by the cartographic expertise of a young Portuguese pilot, Francisco Rodrigues, a prominent member of the first Portuguese expedition to the Moluccas, in 1511-1512.<sup>151</sup> Rodrigues and his companions did not navigate close to Timor and its adjacent islands, but in his famous manuscript seafaring *Book* and *Atlas* he drew from local trade maps, Javanese or Chinese, the first representation in Portuguese cartographic style of Timor, Flores, and Solor. Although baffling this tiny island with Eastern Flores and Adunara, in contrast, the island of Timor was carefully represented and, albeit incompletely sketched, has received an explicit informative legend: "This is the island of Timor where the sandalwood grows".<sup>152</sup>

An active Portuguese trade circulation in the region was organized only from 1515 and reproduced the same commercial, simple pattern up to 1556-1561. In summary, this period combined official and private enterprises of merchant-riggers using their vessels, including junks, sent every year to load sandalwood logs in Timor sold in return through Malacca to Chinese and Indian markets. Territorial fixation even provisional, seasonal or in the trade factory form didn't exist, and consequently, no institutional bodies, resident staff, and permanent equipment were necessary. Portuguese epochal documents referred to the area as "Islands of Solor", covering the set of islands from Flores and Alor to Timor merely identified as a loading platform for the generous recollection of white sandalwood trunks exchanged against cheap Indian textiles, manufactures, and metallurgies. Timor white sandalwood turned into incense, soap, perfume, repellent and manipulated for various medicinal uses, was then exported through intermediary Javanese, Malay, Bengali and Chinese merchants settled or trading in Malacca. The sandalwood trade had previously attracted Chinese merchants since the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and the commercial route intensified further during the 15<sup>th</sup> century through Malacca, then a tributary state of the Chinese emperor.

The Portuguese of the conquered enclave of Malacca planned between 1515 and 1519, to officially control the annual sandalwood trade, either

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<sup>151</sup> CORTESÃO, Armando. *The Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires and the Book of Francisco Rodrigues*. London: The Hakluyt Society, 1994; SOUSA, Ivo Carneiro de. "The First Portuguese Maps of China in Francisco Rodrigues' Book and Atlas (c.1512)", in: *Revista de Cultural Review of Culture. International Edition*, ICM, 41 (2013), pp. 6-20.

<sup>152</sup> CORTESÃO, 1994: Pl. XXVII.

directly or as a complementary commercial scale within the spice trade of the Moluccas, following the rhythm of the monsoons, but the Malacca captaincy didn't always have available resources in ships and personnel. Thus, private wealthy Portuguese merchants usually associated with other local traders sponsored most of the annual voyages to Timor that didn't request much capital investment. In 1522, the Italian adventurer Antonio Pigafetta lively witnessed this trading process. Sailing on the *Victoria* with the few survivals of Magellan's circumnavigation expedition, Pigafetta reached the northwestern coasts of Timor and had described the commercial exchange system in the region of Ambenu. The Italian voyage account has identified the presence of Javanese and Malay merchants attracted chiefly by the sandalwood trade, but also by slave and beeswax recollection, in this case, sold to the regional batik production areas.<sup>153</sup> Portuguese merchants sponsored these Javanese and Malay traders very often, but also sailed to the northern coastal regions of Timor, less often to southern ports. Until the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, there were no signs of any permanent or seasonal trade systematic settlement or any other stable residential interest in Timorese territories. Although, as Pigafetta explained in detail, and we already know Portuguese traders' sexual contacts in these mercantile exchange areas in coastal Timor were so frequent that venereal diseases, the *male di San Giobbe* of his chronicle, were commonly identified as *mal portoghese*.<sup>154</sup>

The navigation to this Solor-Timor islands complex followed as we have already seen the regional monsoon system: vessels departed twice from Malacca, at the end of September and beginnings of February, returning either in June or in October.<sup>155</sup> In spite of these four or one month's gaps, Portuguese merchants stayed mainly on the northwestern Timor natural ports only as long as it took to complete their exchange dealings and load their ships with some hundred trunks of sandalwood. Generally between 500 to 800 logs, a mercantile activity taking no more than one to two weeks.<sup>156</sup> There was no need for local warehouses or factories, and the Portuguese traders found instead favorable harboring at the small island of Solor, which offered better anchorage conditions and allowed secure control of the Flores Strait but demanded some temporary settlement, waiting for the monsoon changes.

Portuguese permanent presence in this Solor-Timor most Eastern islands geographic complex is not a trade or political achievement. It is the work of Catholic missionaries. In 1558, the new Malacca diocese received a

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<sup>153</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 11.

<sup>154</sup> PIGAFETTA, ANTONIO. *Primo viaggio intorno al globo terraqueo* (ed. Carlo Amoretti). Milano: Giuseppe Galeazzi, 1800, p. 172.

<sup>155</sup> Sã, 1955: II, 345.

<sup>156</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 12-13.

Dominican bishop, Friar Jorge de Santa Luzia, who charged the priests of his order with the official evangelization of those Eastern islands.<sup>157</sup> Following late 16<sup>th</sup>-early 17<sup>th</sup> century Dominican sources sometimes factually more than exaggerated, the evangelization of the insular region, namely in Solor, Alor, Eastern Flores and Northwestern Timor was a considerable success: the missionaries built up several churches and created different parishes for more than 100.000 newly converts.<sup>158</sup> These Dominican priests were in fact very experienced missionaries trained in Eastern Africa throughout the missions along the Zambezi River, the Monomotapa old “kingdom”, Sena and Cuama regions. In consequence, they represented the populations in Solor-Timor islands as “black” and “cafres” from the Arabic kafir for unbelievers. Despite these triumphal Dominican memories, the Dutch sources from the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century did recognize Portuguese Catholic evangelization in Timorese Eastern islands but only accounted 12.000 indigenous neophytes.<sup>159</sup> The Dominican missionaries, mainly Portuguese along with some very few Spanish friars, built up in 1566 a fortress in the small island of Solor, baptized Our Lady of Piety (*Nossa Senhora da Piedade*). They also got from the governor of the “State of India”, Luís de Ataíde, in 1571, the official right to appoint its captain. The fort seems to have kept a short but irregular garrison being mobilized to support the new Catholic populations against the recurrent attacks of local Muslims as well as assaults coming from Javanese and Makassar vessels. However, from 1580, with the Iberian union dual monarchy system, this privileged situation of the Dominicans in Solor changed. The accession of Philip II to the Portuguese throne introduced some shifts in the traditional structures, dynamics and especially in the hierarchies of commercial centers and peripheries in Southeast Asia, mainly transferring the core trade area to the South China Seas, between Macau and Manila and its connections to Mexico through the Acapulco galleon route.

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<sup>157</sup> CÁCEGAS, Fr. Luís & SOUSA, Fr. Luís de. *Segunda Parte da História de S. Domingos*. Lisboa: Typ. do Panorama, 1866: III, 341-342.

<sup>158</sup> CÁCEGAS & SOUSA, 1866, III, 342.

<sup>159</sup> RICKLEFS, Merle Calvin (1991). *A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1300*. London: MacMillan. p. 25.

## The Iberian Union and the Portuguese “Oriental” Empire

After the death of D. Sebastião in northern Africa, in the tragic battle of the “three kings” of al-Qasr-al-Kabir, in July 1578, his old and ill great-uncle the Cardinal D. Henrique, former Chief Inquisitor succeeded to the throne. His death in 1580 brought a crisis of succession in which several claimants confronted each other. The most important were King Philip II of Spain, son of D. Isabel of Portugal and grandson of king D. Manuel; the Duchess of Bragança, D. Catarina; and a nobleman, D. António, Prior of Crato (1531-1595), the illegitimate son of Prince Luis and a pretense “new-Christian” woman as were then identified the former Jewish forced to Catholic conversion. The latter was the most popular claimant among the common people and trade bourgeoisie from the main cities, Lisbon, Porto, Setúbal, Santarém, but perhaps due to his mother’s alleged socio-religious status, he did not obtain distinguished support among the Portuguese high aristocracy and clergy. Still before the death of the Cardinal D. Henrique, suffering a terminal disease, in an attempt to prevent D. António from being proclaimed king and taking control of Lisbon, Philip II carried out a large diplomatic offensive, and at the same time assembled a powerful army in the region of Spanish Extremadura. When news of D. António’s acclamation in Santarém reached Philip II, the king ordered a military incursion. A contingent of 30,000 soldiers invaded Portugal, easily defeating D. António army, forcing him to abandon Lisbon, then finding refugee in Porto, after that disappearing for some time before spending many years of exile in Europe up to die in Paris, in 1595.<sup>160</sup>

After this formidable show of force, followed by juridical persuasion and social insinuation, Philip II did not face any opposition in proclaiming himself king at the Cortes of Tomar, in April 1581, receiving large support from the rests of the Portuguese aristocracy that had not died or have been taken captive during the Moroccan misadventure of D. Sebastião. The most critical aspect of Philip II enthronement was his solemn promise to instate a political regime maintaining exclusive Portuguese jurisdiction in the entire kingdom without annexation to Spanish legislative and administrative control in any sphere. It was a unique system of dual monarchy through which Portugal continued to be an independent kingdom but having the same monarch as Spain. The assembly gathered in Tomar also agreed that the government management should be handed to the recently created Council of Portugal, formally obliged to function strictly with the king. If the

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<sup>160</sup> HERMANN, Jacqueline “Um rei indesejado: notas sobre a trajetória política de D. Antônio, Prior do Crato. An undesired king: notes on the political career of D. Antônio, Prior do Crato”, in: *Revista Brasileira de História*, São Paulo, V. 30, n° 59 (2010), pp. 141-166.



monarch left the kingdom, the government could only be carried on in the presence of a viceroy of royal blood or by a board of governors. In practical terms, Tomar Cortes accorded that all institutions would be subject to rules holding Portuguese kingdom autonomy, laws and traditions: no foreigners – that is, no one who was not a native of Portugal – could occupy any Military, Justice, and Treasury positions. The exclusion was also applied to the clergy (prelature, abbeys, benefices, and chaplains), as well as to the appointment of new leading members of the influential religious-military orders incorporated since D. Manuel under the domain of the Crown. All this judicial-legal prudence regarding Portugal's autonomy came with a gift-receiving counterpart. Philip II requested the proxies of the three states (clergy, nobility, and people) assembled in the Tomar Cortes to swear allegiance to him and to his heir, D. Diogo, a formal homage that the previous monarchs, D. Manuel, D. João III or D. Sebastião had never required.<sup>161</sup>

Regarding the different Portuguese overseas territories, the Cortes of Tomar did establish *de jure* the absolute political and administrative separation of the respective colonial empires. To reinforce this decision, the recently proclaimed Philip I of Portugal sent firm royal orders via Goa and Manila, clearly forbidding his dual subjects in Eastern Asia from entering areas reserved to the country of which they were not native. In any case, when news of Philip II's accession to the throne of Portugal reached Manila, the Spaniards in the Philippines, governor, clergymen, merchants, and countless private adventurers, rejoiced on the perspective of a new forthcoming era of joint commercial and missionary Luso-Spanish initiatives. They also manifested their renewed interest in penetrating furthermore in China and in accessing the spice trade of the Moluccas, until then prohibited, in many cases militarily and brutally, by the dominant Portuguese presence.<sup>162</sup>

Manila's enthusiasm, however, did not find a favorable echo throughout the Asian Portuguese enclaves. In Goa, to start, the swearing of allegiance to the new Habsburg monarch of Portugal took place only on September 3, 1581, after two days of hard negotiations motivated by the doubts of the State of India governor, Fernão Telles de Meneses, who had been raised at Lisbon court with the defeated candidate D. António, Prior of Crato, from whom it was suspected he had been already receiving rebellious

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<sup>161</sup> SCHAUB, Jean-Frédéric. *Portugal na Monarquia Hispânica*. Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 2001, pp. 21-22.

<sup>162</sup> SILVA, C. R. de. "The Portuguese and the Trade in Cloves in Asia During the Sixteenth Century", in: PEARSON, M. N. *Spices in the Indian Ocean World*. London: Routledge, 1996.

letters.<sup>163</sup> In Malacca, opposition to the formal and public swearing of allegiance to Philip II as new monarch of Portugal was led by the captain of the Portuguese enclave himself, D. João da Gama, grandson of Vasco da Gama. Prestigious navigator, famous for his explorations in the Pacific, João da Gama contradicted the requests received from the galleon S. Pedro captain Leonel de Lima and delayed the ceremony until November 23, 1581.<sup>164</sup> In the Moluccas small Portuguese fortresses, the situation was even stranger. The captain of the new fort of Tidore, Diogo de Azambuja, lacking communications from Goa and Malacca, was only informed of Philip II's rise to the Portuguese throne by the governor and captain-general of the Philippines, Gonzalo Ronquillo de Peñalosa, on March 10, 1582, when he received a ship from Manila commanded by Francisco Dueñas.<sup>165</sup> The Spaniard formally communicated the captain the dynastic union between Portugal and Spain under Philip II, then taking the opportunity to gather strategic information on Ternate. Even more complicated was the recognition and formal allegiance oath of Philip II in Macau. His accession to the throne raised suspicions among the Portuguese of the enclave, who feared both the hegemonic political and commercial ambitions of the Spaniards from Manila and their intromission in the South Chinese trade intermediated through Macau. The dynastic succession novelty came with the visit to the Luso-Chinese enclave of the Spanish Jesuit Alonso Sanches, after having spent two months on Chinese territory. Arrived in Macau, he met the Company of Jesus visitor, the influent Italian father Alessandro Valignano, who made careful and skillful prudent contacts to transmit the coronation of Philip II as king of Portugal through the Portuguese Jesuits' authority mediation. News on the dynastic union in Macau and elsewhere in the Portuguese enclaves in Asia were gradually but carefully disseminated in a very piecemeal manner, mainly trying to omit those much more controversial aspects of the political transition: the invasion of Portugal by Duke of Alba's army that defeated D. António in the Alcântara battle and forced the acceptance of Philip II; the sack of Lisbon and Cascais that followed; and the mysterious disappearance of the popular claimant Prior of Crato. At the same time, there was also in Macau an attempt to conceal the dynastic union from the Chinese

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<sup>163</sup> COUTO, Diogo do. *Década Décima da Ásia*. Lisboa: Livraria Sam Carlos, 1974, pp. 42-53; SANTOS, A. Jeronimo. "Javier, S.J. Arzobispo electo de Cranganor", in: *Studia Missionalia*, Roma: Pontificiae Universitatis Gregoriana, VI (1952), pp. 164-165.

<sup>164</sup> COUTO, 1974: 149-157; *RELAÇÃO das náos e armadas da Índia* (ed. Maria Hermínia Maldonado). Coimbra: Biblioteca Geral da Universidade de Coimbra, 1985, p. 85.

<sup>165</sup> COUTO, 1974: 307-312; LOBATO, Manuel. "Implementar a União Ibérica na Ásia: o relato da viagem de Francisco de Dueñas de Manila a Maluco em 1582", in: MENESES, Avelino de Freitas de & COSTA, João Paulo Oliveira e (eds.). *O reino, as ilhas e o mar-oceano. Estudos em homenagem a Artur Teodoro de Matos*. Ponta Delgada – Lisboa: Universidade dos Açores-CHAM, 2007, II, pp. 785-811.

authorities, as it was feared they would become immediately doubtful given the “dark” fame protractedly spread by the Portuguese settled in the enclave that the Castilians were insidious spies, brutal aggressors and dangerous conquistadors, representation that had begun to be proved true with the Spaniard military occupation of Manila, in 1571, and thereafter of the island of Luzon placed under the government of the viceroy of New Spain in Mexico City. Only on December 18, 1582, did the Portuguese of Macau gathered in the *Leal Senado* finally agreed to swear allegiance to Philip II, after much hesitation.<sup>166</sup>

The peculiar, fragile and strategic morphology of the Portuguese maritime empire in the East, a network of cities, fortresses and factories’ enclaves defended from the sea, lacking any control of territorial hinterlands, made it difficult to comply with the policy of restricted administrative overseas separation decreed by Philip II. There also was an ongoing missionary cooperation and trade alliances between private merchants of Macau and Manila where a Holy House of Mercy, a Misericórdia, was inaugurated in 1594 sponsored by Macanese merchants. The areas of Spaniard and Portuguese influence in the Far East were as well so distant in time and space – many months and years of voyage – from the respective centers of decision in Madrid and Lisbon and even from the viceroyship in Goa, West India, and New Spain in Mexico, that it was difficult to impose such exclusive controls on local powers, religious orders and private enterprises used to cooperate, legally or without official approval lingered to receive or to communicate. The lack of any Iberian effective continental occupation of vast East Asian territories left several intermediary zones of maritime circulation but not control, including many small peninsulas and islands, utterly open to breaches of these royal directives. These areas were prey to the vivid activities of private merchants, mercenaries, and various adventurers, spreading in the South China Sea and Southeast Asia, from Borneo to Timor, Moluccas and Mindanao.

In fact, Portuguese overseas institutions in Asia, namely the vice-Roy or governor in Goa and the captains appointed to the enclaves’ fortresses, controlled only a few fragile peripheral spots in the Eastern part of the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, mainly supported throughout unstable alliances with local “kings”: the fortresses of Ternate (1522-1575) and Tidore (1578-1605) in North Moluccas archipelago, Ambon (1569-1605) and Makian

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<sup>166</sup> TEIXEIRA, Manuel. “Macau prestou fidelidade a Filipe II de Castela”, in: *Macau e a sua diocese*. Macau: Tipografia do Orfanato Salesiano, 1940, I, pp. 115-141.

(1602-1605) today also part of the Maluku/Moluccas' province,<sup>167</sup> and in the Timor islands area other than the referred Solor fortress, Dominican missionaries built up also around 1595 a fort in the tinny island of Ende, southern Flores.<sup>168</sup> Other than these fortresses with their official and unofficially appointed captains, whenever they existed, there was several private Portuguese as well as some Spaniards trading, settling and offering their services in the region building up a sort of “shadow empire” that is normally neglected by historiography research. Nonetheless, the number of Iberian, Portuguese, and Spaniards, in the Far East and Eastern Southeast Asia was really small. The Christian communities settled in Macau and Nagasaki at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century didn't reach more than two thousand Portuguese, albeit their much more numerous Eurasian descendants and Christianized slaves. In-between, only some hundred Spaniards were to be permanently found in the vast Philippines archipelago, but concentrated in the port of Manila and a few harbors located on the western coastline of Luzon.<sup>169</sup>

The Spanish-Portuguese dynastic union was, as Fernand Braudel so rightly asserted, an extraordinary event, which marked the great Iberian shift to the Atlantic, to Brazil and the gold and silver of Mexico and Peru. Much less studied is the impact of Philip II's coronation in Portugal on Eastern Asia. Since there still is very little knowledge available on those shadow empires of private merchants and adventurers, historical research didn't yet study the all set of new mercantile opportunities potentiated within the dynastic union framework. Nevertheless, the new imperial Iberian context favored a clear militarist turn in the different Asian enclaves under the Portuguese and Spanish influence. Grounded in Manila, a renewed strategy for entry into China and the Moluccas was designed, which included frenzy projects for the conquest of the middle empire and much more feasible plans for the control of Ternate and Tidore. In parallel, the so-called Portuguese State of India based in Goa implemented its martial projects, such as the doss attempt to conquer the Islamic sultanate of Aceh, project encouraged by the highest Catholic religious actors in Malacca, aiming to recover from the positions

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<sup>167</sup> LOBATO, Manuel. “ ‘Não menos forte que cerca de colmeias’. Crónica de uma investigação sobre arquitectura militar nas ilhas Molucas: do trabalho de campo à evidência documental”, in: MARTINS, Ana M. & ALBINO, Teresa. *Viagens e missões científicas nos trópicos*. 1883-2010. Lisboa: IICT, 2010, pp. 162-167; LOBATO, Manuel. “A influência europeia na tradição arquitectónica das ilhas Molucas. Alguns exemplos de Ternate, Tidore e Halmahera”, in: *Revista de Cultura / Review of Culture. International Edition*, n.º. 35 (2010), pp. 114-128.

<sup>168</sup> CÁCEGAS & SOUSA, 1866, III, 347.

<sup>169</sup> JAVELLANA, B. Rene. “Organizing a Colony”, in: DALISAY, Jose Y. (ed.). *Kasaysayan, The Story of Thr Filipino People*. Manila: Asian Publishing Company, 1998, III (“The Spanish Conquest”), pp. 74-76.

lost during the 1570's in the Moluccas.<sup>170</sup> These several military offensives mobilized a common belief in a new Iberian superiority but barely reached any territorial and commercial successes. However, among these different might initiatives generated by the imperial optimism of Philip II's rise to the throne of Portugal, the military Spanish aid to sieged Portuguese enclaves was effective: in 1583, for example, the captain of Ternate requested military help from Manila, which agreed to send military assistance by precisely invoking the dynastic union. Commanding ten ships, Juan Ronquillo enhanced the Portuguese resistance in military action against Javanese merchants and local insurgents, process ending in considerable violence and closed with the burning of several Javanese ships loaded with cloves.<sup>171</sup>

Despite Philip II's promises to respect the Portuguese political and exclusive commercial management in their Asian enclaves, in practice, the monarch carried out significant changes in the oriental overseas empire in the first years of his reign, both regarding personnel and structures as well as new international integration. In fact, the appointments for the Portuguese highest official government positions in the East started immediately privileging a metropolitan aristocracy to the detriment of the overseas nobility, following the clientele system that has its paradigm in the leading power of Cristovão de Moura, the first Marquis of Castelo Rodrigo, and mainly proponent of the new viceroy and captains for the most important places.<sup>172</sup> At the same time, Philip II promoted a wide transfer and exchange of skilled men, funds, and supplies for maritime enterprises, which included pilots, cartographers, ships, and soldiers shared in the same armadas.<sup>173</sup> Changes connected to the most critical global transformation on Portuguese overseas epochal situation: regardless the kingdom respected legal autonomy it was quickly dragged into the various Spanish wars in Europe leading to a vast increase of Dutch and British attacks to Portuguese enclaves in the East. Other than these, Philip II did factually intervene in the institutional appointment for overseas institutions, as can be followed regarding Solor-Timor islands captaincy.

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<sup>170</sup> AMIRUL, Hadi. *Aceh and the Portuguese*. Montreal: McGill University – Institute of Islamic Studies, 1992.

<sup>171</sup> LOBATO, Manuel. “As Molucas e as Filipinas no tempo dos Austrias. Tensão, convergência e acomodação entre os impérios Ibéricos na Ásia”, in: comunicação apresentada ao *Colóquio Internacional Portugal na Monarquia Espanhola. Dinâmicas de integração e de conflito*. Lisboa: Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa – Instituto Cervantes, 26-28 Nov. 2009.

<sup>172</sup> ALVAREZ, Fernando Bouza. *Portugal no Tempo dos Filipes. Política, Cultura, Representações (1580-1640)*. Lisboa, Edições Cosmos, 2000, p. 203.

<sup>173</sup> MONCHET, Koldo Trápaga. *Las armadas en el reino de Portugal en los reinados de los Felipes (1580-1640)*. Madrid. Fundación Española de Historia Moderna, 2016.

## Philip II and the colonial administration of Timor-Solor

Philip II decided in the first years of his Portuguese reign to integrate the Solor-Timor captaincy in the crown offices and tried to redefine its peripheral position. The royal decision withdrew the right of appointment from the Dominicans, and in an unprecedented but novel strategic move allowed for the nomination of local Portuguese residents, known as *casados* (married), and even Eurasians. The king contributed for the historical process leading to 17<sup>th</sup> century political, social and trade regional predominance of the so-called *topasses*, *topaz* or even *topázio*, words trying to find a “color” or image for the mixed races offspring. In fact, in March 1583, Philip II appointed António de Andria captain of Solor-Timor, a *casado* from Malacca with vast military experience in the region, but not born in European Portugal, which in strict legal-juridical terms did overcome the formal political commitment of nominating only native Portuguese for the overseas colonial offices.<sup>174</sup> However, lacking proper installments, involved in some local ventures and facing the hostility both of the Dominicans and the Islamized neighboring communities, it seems that Andria came nowhere near to fulfilling the narrow confines of his captaincy since no factual achievements are credited to his rule. Aiming to enhance the official cargo as a royal proxy, Philip II ordered in 1589 the Viceroy of India, D. Duarte de Meneses, to reduce the ordinaries of the Dominicans on Solor-Timor islands and to transfer it to the captaincy management.<sup>175</sup> Moreover, aiming to redefine the strategic regional interest of this practically last frontier of the Portuguese oriental empire, Philip II made an effort to approach the captaincy of Solor-Timor to the general government of the Philippines in order to broaden trade routes, connections to the Moluccas, support to Spanish pretensions in Borneo and common missionary evangelization, which was followed by his successors.<sup>176</sup>

Dated from the end of the 1590's, several visits of merchants and missionaries did link Solor-Timor islands to the Philippines, bringing to these parts the first Spanish silver reales documented in official reports and even new place names as Baguia, from Tagalo, or Lospalos, from Castillian.<sup>177</sup> These genuinely global coins would rapidly become objects of decoration

<sup>174</sup> Instituto dos Arquivos Nacionais/Torre do Tombo (IANTT), *Chancelaria de Dom Filipe I*, Livro 15 de Doações, fls. 28-28v.;

<sup>175</sup> IANTT, *Chancelaria de Dom Filipe I*, Livro 28 de Doações, fls. 81-81v. – n.º. 383.

<sup>176</sup> IANTT, *Chancelaria de Dom Filipe II*, Livro 2, fls. 117-117v.; Livro 6 de Doações, fls. 132v.-133; Livro 7 de Doações, fls. 189-189v.; Livro 10 de Doações, fl. 321; Livro 20, fl. 276v.; Livro 23 de Doações, fl. 316v.; Livro 29 de Doações, fls. 193-193v.; Livro 31 de Doações, fl. 101, *Chancelaria de Dom Filipe III*, Livro 23, fls. 349v.-350; Livro 29, fl. 373v.; Livro 40, fls. 255-255v.

<sup>177</sup> CÁCEGAS & SOUSA, 1866: III, 338.

rather than a circulating currency in this utmost Eastern islands that shift towards dominant monetary economies only from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century on when Portuguese colonial administration imposed the Macanese pataca in Timor as taxation unit. Still, the vast project of Philip II to reorganize these peripheries did not succeed in this region but got much more impact in the Moluccas through the 17<sup>th</sup>-century Spanish temporary control of Tidore and Ternate. Anyway, when the Dutch V.O.C. traders, soldiers, and administrators built up in 1616 Batavia, new commercial centralities, competition, and networks arose, as its well-known, thus definitely confining Portuguese presence to some areas of Flores around Larantuka and after that to Lifau, today in East-Timor Oecussi enclave. A presence due much more to those *topasses* or “black Portuguese” that were able to build particular and localized communities far from the official control of Goa and outlying Lisbon, mostly by merging a popular Catholicism with arcane cultural traditions from the peoples of Timor and adjacent islands.

## The East-Timorese King of Portugal and Timor

There is, however, another clue as odd as surprising that still bridges today East Timor to Philip II, although an entirely rebellious memory path. It is worth remembering that, albeit the support received in the Tomar Cortes, the loyal homages paid by the majority of the Portuguese high nobility and clergy and the king settlement in Lisbon for almost two and a half years, Philip II felt since the beginning a continued popular opposition sometimes expressed openly through violent riots as well as through more contained criticism spreading several anti-Spanish rumors. This resistance that was mainly a kind of widespread nationalist-alike traditional repugnance to “Castillian” predominance encouraged a messianic creed centered on the idea of the savior return of D. Sebastião to Portugal since many still believed that the young king didn’t perish in the fields of Morocco. This “Sebastianism” spread in different prophecies and influenced some popular movements. In March 1580, an artisan from Angra do Heroísmo, in the Azores, declared that he was the waited king gathering some local emotion. Later, in 1584, it was a peasant from a village of Penamacor who proclaimed that he was the true D. Sebastião and seek popular support. In the same year, a former Carmelite novice also presented himself as the disappeared king. One year after, it was the turn of a hermit, born in Azores, Mateus Álvares who was acclaimed king in Ericeira, northwest of Lisbon. In 1594, it was a baker, Gabriel, that declared to be D. Sebastião only to be tortured and arrested along with several other future candidates, appearing and always disappearing among popular settings and committed religious, mystical circles.<sup>178</sup>

A body of coherent intellectual beliefs was soon organized in textual form, namely by an exiled clergyman, D. João de Castro, descendant from the famous homonymous Portuguese viceroy and governor of India.<sup>179</sup> Related to the exiled circles of the defeated D. António, Prior of Crato, Castro alleged to have discovered prophetic verses attributed to a shoemaker from Trancoso, called Gomes Anes Bandarra that announced, from 1530, the advent of a new era under the action of a mystical king.<sup>180</sup> Identified with D. Sebastião, these messianic promises were also fuelled by many other religious friars and priests reading in this Sebastianism a special mystical mission assigned to Portugal

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<sup>178</sup> AZEVEDO, João Lúcio de. *A Evolução do Sebastianismo*. Lisboa: Livraria Clássica Editora, 1947.

<sup>179</sup> CASTRO, D. João de. *Discurso da vida do sempre bem vindo, e apparecido Rey Dom Sebastião nosso senhor o Encuberto*. Paris: Martin Verac, 1602.

<sup>180</sup> CASTRO, D. João de. *Paraphrase e Concordancia a algumas prophecias de Bandarra, Çapateiro de Trancoso*. Paris: Martin Verac, 1603.



for the sake of the universal *historia salutis*.<sup>181</sup> These ideas reappeared in Venice in 1598 when a young adventurer presented himself to the Doge as D. Sebastião, returned to Europe after much travel and adventures throughout Africa. Arrested in Venice but released in 1600, he was welcomed by D. João de Castro and the exiled groups.<sup>182</sup> He was not Portuguese, but from Calabria, named Marco Tulio Catizone. Although unable to speak clearly Portuguese and very different physically from the blond young D. Sebastião, D. João de Castro and the other exiled recognized him as the king and attempted to gain support in France and Tuscany for their cause. Handed over to the Spanish in Naples, Catizone was sentenced to the galleys in 1602, but the following year he seems to have been arrested in Cadiz coasts accused of preparing a “Sebastianist” insurrection.<sup>183</sup> The false D. Sebastião and all those implicated in these messianic events were sentenced to death: did they disappear?

There was back in 2002 at least one political East Timorese leader that patiently explained to me that one should not trust too much the Filipinos due to their “Castilian” colonial ancestry, something I was told would only harm the “greater interests” of Portugal in Timor. This East-Timorese singular politician, Jacob Xavier, and his supporters, normally elder Mambai from Manufahi and Ainaro, belonged to a very original monarchic political party, the Peoples’ Party of Timor (*Partido do Povo de Timor*, PPT), which, in the elections for the Constituent Assembly, on August 30, 2001, elected two deputies with 7322 votes (2,01%).<sup>184</sup> The main political proposal of the short party program was the creation of a “House of *Liurais*”, a senate-like monarchic institution, gathering the traditional kings of East Timor. However, during the Assembly works up to 2006, the party was only noted for its late 2002 proposal for the adoption of the Portuguese escudo as East-Timor currency, although Portugal was already since the first of January of that year using the common Euro. The main idea of empowering the traditional *liurais* through a senate was previously forwarded by one of the most polemic founders in 2000 of the People’s Movement of East Timor later turning into our PPT, Ermínio da Silva Costa. Former APODETI (the integrationist 1974-1975 party) leader, he was a preeminent member in 1999 of the criminal and bloody pro-Indonesian militia UNTAS. Avoiding these inconvenient grassroots, PPT leader Jacob Xavier gave to the party and its

<sup>181</sup> CASTRO, D. João de. *Da quinta e ultima monarquia futura*. Paris, 1597. BNL - cod. 4371.

<sup>182</sup> CASTRO, D. João de. *Segundo Aparecimento del Rey D. Sebastião Nosso Senhor*. BNL – cod. 4390 [1604-1605].

<sup>183</sup> SERAFIM, João Carlos Gonçalves. “Elevar um rei com vaticínios: textos e pretextos no caso do Rei D. Sebastião de Veneza (1598-1603)”, in: *Letras: Revista do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Letras*, Universidade Federal de Santa Maria, n.º. 49 (dez. 2014), pp. 77-96.

<sup>184</sup> SOUSA, Lurdes Silva-Carneiro de. *Some Facts and Comments on East Timor Constituent Assembly Election*. Lisboa: CEPESA, 2001, p. 14.

leading monarchic ideals his own unique personal historical legitimacy. In public elections' meetings and rallies, Xavier presented himself as the true king of Timor and, astonishingly, also of Portugal, suggesting as well to be member of the Windsor House, nephew of the British queen, friend of the Kennedy, close to the Champalimaud and Mello prominent Portuguese families, and supported by the last governor of Macau, general Rocha Vieira. Solemnly, throughout several electoral gatherings, Xavier seriously declared that he was, in fact, and *de jure*, the only legitimate claimant to be king of Portugal. When my East-Timorese friends and colleagues told me, normally mocking, about these grand royal claims of Jacob Xavier, I immediately search for a meeting with the singular "king of Timor and Portugal". He was glad to meet me and to highlight my wonders promptly although averting those more fantastic British-American connections and other several eccentricities. Born in Hatumera, in 1936, baptized more than 10 years later Francisco Xavier as the famous Jesuit "Patriarch of the Orient", but thereafter rather using the name Jacob, he studied in Ainaro primary school and the Dare seminar, thus having followed the Salazar dictatorship schooling system, full of radical nationalism, grand maritime discoverers' heroes and a strong faith in the multi-racial Portuguese colonialist official ideology. Later he studied in the St. Joseph Seminar in Macau where he lived several years. Recalling his diligent student's past and testing my historian's knowledge, Xavier slowly unveiled the mysteries of the history of Portugal after D. Sebastião disappearance in Morocco, only to prove that he was a proud direct descendant of D. António, Prior of Crato. According to his account, Xavier was the living memory of the true but still largely ignored history of D. António. Contrary to all historical evidence, he found exile, naturally disguised, in the Portuguese enclaves in Asia, first in Goa with the complicity of his friend the governor Telles de Meneses that we have already met, then escaping the Spaniards by running from place to place up to find safe haven in Timor. There, the king married and had several sons and daughters, being naturally Xavier the contemporary lasting offspring of this royal lineage. He also remarked that all Portuguese should know as he learned from his ancestors as well as in school from old Portuguese priests that D. António was the legitimate king of Portugal, elected and acclaimed by the people, from whom Philip II had usurped the crown and kingdom that he governed with terrible tyranny up to the 1640 Restoration Revolution. In consequence, being legitimate descendant from D. António, Jacob Xavier is the true king of Timor and Portugal. He and his party are not for sure going ever to be close to winning any elections in East Timor by agitating this monarchic discourse, but Jacob Xavier won already his unique story. Dead in 2012, Xavier has now a convenient Wikipedia entry merging in German some true facts of his political life with the most extravagant fiction: [https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacob\\_Xavier](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacob_Xavier).



VI

SANDALWOOD, TRADERS, MISSIONARIES  
AND CHINESE EMIGRANTS

HISTORY OF MACAU-EAST TIMOR RELATIONS



In the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, from 1975 to 1999, the connections between Macau and East Timor were intense and well-marked by generous solidarity. The dramatic political events that postponed during twenty-seven years until 2002 the formal restoration of Timor-Leste independence had forced many East Timorese, including hundreds of Chinese-Timorese and their descendants to find refuge, a safe haven in Macau where they have been welcomed by public and civil society support. Several East-Timorese associations and solidarity groups were very active in Macau promoting conferences, debates, contributing to keep the “Timor problem” alive in the international agenda. Tens of East-Timorese studied in Macau, several resistant leaders from lawyers to priests rebuilt their lives and action through the territory that was also able to organize some interesting academic lectures, books and papers on diverse subjects highlighting the Timor drama. Despite these intense contemporary communications, knowledge on the lingering history of Macau-Timor relations remains an unfinished research subject.

Chinese traders long before the Portuguese arrival to those insular Eastern regions knew already the “islands of Timor”. They were early identified by several Asian economies as the primary regional area for sandalwood recollection and profitable trade. The singular white and yellow sandalwood trees of Timor produced a timber that, cut in logs or reduced to powder, made several impressive fragrant products most demanded in Asian markets: burning sticks and incense to China, soap and perfumes to India, and oil and medicines for all. In fact, documented references to sandalwood trade date back at least to the 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> centuries, following the spread of Hinduism and Buddhism in Southeast Asia through missionaries and traders that discovered in the intense fragrance of sandalwood combustion a might votive devotional instrument.<sup>185</sup> In the middle empire, sandalwood was not only handled in these religious manifestations but was also manipulated in imperial burial ceremonies, in consequence becoming a highly searched

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<sup>185</sup> MCHUGH, James. *Sandalwood and Carrion: Smell in Indian Religion and Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

incense among the aristocracies. In parallel, numerous medicinal recipes took advantage of the astringent and tonic powers of sandalwood: several Hindu-Buddhist inspired natural and pharmacological treatises taught how to mix the timber powder with water and milk as a remedy to cure high fevers, gonorrhoea and to strengthen the heart rate. It seems to have been precisely these medical applications and cosmetic fruits that have transported the first sandalwood fragments to European high courts and monastic spaces during the Renaissance by the trade intermediation of Venice. It was well known through Caterina Sforza (1463-1509) famous *Gli Experimenti* the use of sandalwood as a cosmetic and, solved in rose-water, as a migraine painkiller recommended among some selected European cosmopolitan women of very dominant social positions.<sup>186</sup>

Sandalwood was, therefore, a good of enormous commercial interest that called the attention of Chinese merchants and adventurers since the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Junks from South China sailed to Timor islands in search of the precious white sandalwood with some regularity until the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, after that doing trade exchanges through the intermediation of the Sultanate of Malacca, a vassal state of the Middle Empire, gathering a critical commercial community of overseas Chinese. In this period, organized around 1436, the Chinese commercial manual entitled *Xing Cha Sheng Lan* (星槎勝覽, Wonderful View of Xingcha), describes with some detail the sandalwood load system in Timor, accounting twelve commercial areas headed by a local *liurai*, a memoir close to the relation that we have followed in Antonio Pigafetta's account, written eighty years later. Crossing both texts, it seems clear that in the 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> century sandalwood trade was part of the commercial emporium of Malacca – or Anthony Reid “Age of Commerce” – that received abundant logs' cargos carried by diverse South China and Southeast Asia private maritime traders' ships, then sent to the markets in the Indian Ocean and in the Pearl River Delta centered in Guangzhou.

The chronological continuation of this long-term sandalwood trade history leads to 16<sup>th</sup>-century Portuguese intervention in the region. After the conquest of Malacca, in 1511, headed by the maritime might of Afonso de Albuquerque, the regional commercial networks were rapidly identified through systematic inquiry among the different traders' communities settled in the great Malay city-port. The process that gathered the precious information for the famous “Oriental relation” (*Suma Oriental*), written by the apothecary and future first Portuguese ambassador to China, Tomé Pires.

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<sup>186</sup> SFORZA, Caterina. *Ricette d'amore e di bellezza di Caterina Sforza, signora di Imola e di Forlì* (ed. Elio Caruso). Cesena: Il Ponte Vecchio, 2009, p. 101; *Caterina Sforza a Gli Experimenti: A Translation* (ed. Gigi Coulson). [sn]: Independent Publishing Platform, 2016.

The manuscript volume that accounts in detail all regional “kingdoms”, from geography to trade, also includes pertinent, and lucrative, trade information under the name of Timor, starting by explaining the geography of the word:

All the islands from Java onwards are called Timor, for timor means “east” in the language of the country as if they were saying the islands of the east. As they are the most important, these two from which the sandalwood comes are called the islands of Timor. The islands of Timor have heathen kings. There is a great deal of withe sandalwood in these two. It is very cheap because there is no other wood in the forests. The Malay merchants say that God made Timor for sandalwood and Banda for mace and the Moluccas for cloves and that this merchandise is not known anywhere else in the world except in these places, and I asked and enquired very diligently whether they had this merchandise somewhere else and everyone said not.<sup>187</sup>

Other than the interesting information on the inquiry process conditions carried on recent conquered Malacca, it seems clear that during this period the “islands of Timor” were part of an Eastern trade complex gathering local sandalwood to mace in Banda and cloves in the Moluccas, thus building up a broader idea of “spices islands”. Pires’ information stresses sandalwood trade facilities and advantages, “cheap” and “abundant”, being the “two islands” referred in the relation precisely Timor (the “great island”) and Solor, although in this case meaning the set of islands from Sumba up to this Eastern insular periphery. The “Suma Oriental” proceeds by explaining the maritime access conditions to this sandalwood trade, thus adding:

The voyage to Timor is remunerative and unhealthy. They leave Malacca in the monsoon and on their way to Banda; they say that on this route there are reefs between the lands of Bima and Solor that the junks are lost unless they go through the channel, and there is this risk for about half a league, and that is good to enter by day.<sup>188</sup>

Pires’ precious account, dating from 1512, is supplemented by another epochal Portuguese source, an untitled manuscript volume usually referred, at least with some imagination, as the *Book of what he saw and heard in*

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<sup>187</sup> CORTESÃO, 1994: 203-204.

<sup>188</sup> CORTESÃO, 1994: 204.



*the East* written by Duarte Barbosa,<sup>189</sup> registrar and interpreter in Cananor (Kannur in Kerala) and later one of forty Portuguese that embarked in Magellan world circumnavigation to be killed in Cebu the first May, 1521. Barbosa account witnesses firstly the luxury display of sandalwood in the Indian court of the Samorim of Calicut, describing his feminine harem showing glamorous women

very well adorned with many necklaces of stones, with many gold beads of very subtle work, and golden shackles on the legs and many bracelets of gold, with many rings, very rich clothes that, from the waistband down, were made of rich silk, and from the waist up, they were naked, as they always walk, smeared with sandalwood and with other very scented things.<sup>190</sup>

Organized from information gathered mainly among traders in Cochin, Cananor and Calicut, probably completed around 1516, the year in which Barbosa returned to Portugal, the memoir also presents in continuation a brief previous summary of the general situation of Timor in the regional context of Malay-Indonesian archipelago's commerce, explaining its natural resources and trading pattern as well as navigation access departing from Java to the "spices islands":

From this place many ships sail to the Molucca Islands, which will be mentioned further on, to ship cloves, and they carry there as merchandise Cambay cloths, and all sorts of cottons, silks, and other stuffs of Palecate and Bangala, quicksilver, tin, copper unwrought and wrought into bells, and in a coin which they bring from China, like ceutis of Portugal, pierced in the middle, pepper, porcelain, garlic, and onions, with other things and drugs from Cambay; and they traffic much in them. So they navigate in these ships to other islands which are scattered over all the sea, that is to say, to Timor, whence they bring white sandal, which the Indians make great use of; and they carry to them iron, hatchets, knives, swords, cloths of Palacate and Cambay, copper, quicksilver, vermilion, tin and lead, little beads from

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<sup>189</sup> The main classic English version prefers the title BARBOSA, Duarte. *The book of Duarte Barbosa: an account of the countries bordering on the Indian Ocean and their inhabitants*. London: Hakluyt Society, 1918. The first English edition was made in 1866 by this same famous Hakluyt Society as BARBOSA, Duarte. *A Description of the coasts of East Africa and Malabar in the beginning of the sixteenth century, by Duarte Barbosa, a Portuguese*. London: Hakluyt Society, 1866.

<sup>190</sup> BARBOSA, Duarte. em *Livro do que Viu e Ouviu no Oriente Duarte Barbosa* (ed. Maria Augusta da Veiga e Sousa). Lisboa: Publicações Alfa, 1989, p. 80.

Cambay of all sorts. And in exchange for these things they carry away the before named sandal, honey, wax, slaves.<sup>191</sup>

Further, in the manuscript, Barbosa opens a short chapter entitled Timor, repeating the previous information added by small political and religious details confirming Pires' description:

Having passed these islands of Java Major and Minor, forty-two leagues distant from Java Minor to the east south east there are many other islands great and small, inhabited by Gentiles and by a few Moors, amongst which there is an island called Timor, which has a Gentile king, and a language of its own. Much white sandal grows there, and those who go for it carry as goods to this island iron hatchets, large and small, knives and swords, stuffs from Cambay and Palecate, porcelain, small beads of all kinds, tin, quicksilver and lead. They also ship in this island honey, wax, slaves, and some silver, which is found in these islands.<sup>192</sup>

The following decades of Portuguese access to Timor-Solor sandalwood trade, from 1515, have been already identified in the previous chapter, but it is worth to resume the chronological process after the Dominican erection of the fortress of Solor when the Dutch trading competition reached these Eastern islands and, in the same period, Macau also began appearing as a commercial player in the region. Let's recall that the first maritime trade Dutch expeditions to Indonesia are still prior to the organization, in 1602, of the famous V.O.C., the very capitalist United East India Company, gathering several private enterprises and traders under a monopoly system granted in Amsterdam by the General States of Netherlands, created after the revolt against Philip II in 1579-1581. In fact, the first Dutch expedition to Indonesia, reaching Banten, in the western end of Java, dates from 1595-1597, and although having only returned to Holland 94 of the 248 original crewmembers, the cargo of 245 bags of pepper, 45 tons of nutmeg, and 30 bales of mace was more than enough to attain a huge profit. The following trade mission, organized between 1598 and 1600 reached Banten again and on its return to Amsterdam ended up in an astonishing commercial success through which the original investors got profits of more than 400%. After that, the VOC arrived at Malay-Indonesian seas with powerful ships, a lot of capital and might mercenaries that started competing and fighting the Portuguese trade interests in the area in the framework of the referred

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<sup>191</sup> BARBOSA, 1866: 192; BARBOSA, 1989: 151.

<sup>192</sup> BARBOSA, 1866: 199; BARBOSA, 1989: 156.

dynastic union and Spanish wars with Holland and England.<sup>193</sup>

Dutch attacks reached Timor-Solor islands. From January 27 to April 18, 1613, V.O.C. ships and soldiers besieged the fortress of Solor up to the surrender of the few Portuguese *casados* trying to defend the place. Renamed Fort Henricus, it was two years after abandoned by the Dutch that didn't find any trade advantages in the area. Soon, in 1618, the Dutch decided to reoccupy the fortress again only to abandon and destroy it some months later. In 1631, meaningfully, Portuguese merchants rebuilt the fort and installed missionaries led by the Dominican Fr. Miguel Rangel, the future bishop of Cochin, mobilizing generous alms given by traders from Macau. However, five years later, in 1636, besieged afresh by the Dutch, the Portuguese left for the last time the Solor fortress. The fort was finally abandoned in 1653 when the VOC reorganized its regional settlement in Kupang, West Timor, thus opening a long-term very complicated process of disputing alliances with powerful local polities that gradually created the East/West colonial partition of Timor.<sup>194</sup>

In consequence, for the sparse Portuguese and Dutch presence Timor territories and peoples became a recurrent source of rebellions and countless local wars extending up from the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century to late 19<sup>th</sup>-early 20<sup>th</sup> century colonial pacification processes.<sup>195</sup> Macau was several times called during this period to help the fragile Portuguese authorities in Timor. In 1701-1702, to open, ships and soldiers sent by the Leal Senate of Macau were able to control the rebellion led by the *topasse* leader Domingos da Costa, spreading from Larantuka to Flores, Alor and the northwestern littorals of Timor.<sup>196</sup> Later, in mid-18<sup>th</sup> century the famous rebellions led by Francisco de Hornay and António da Costa (son of the former Domingos), the leading *larantuqueiros* warlords, gathering through clientele systems several Timorese kingdoms allies, have defied most of the Timor-Solor appointed governors to be saved through the intervention of trade ships from Macau as in 1765 by the Santa Catarina, commanded by José Pedro Tavares and sent by the Leal Senate.<sup>197</sup> Nonetheless, the survival of a Portuguese presence in the region was largely the consequence of this localized Eurasian *topasse* clientele power along with sandalwood trade moving from Larantuka, in

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<sup>193</sup> TARLING, Nicholas (ed.). *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, I (From Early Times to C.1800), pp. 356-360.

<sup>194</sup> SCHOUTEN, Maria Johanna. "Apart and Together: the Portuguese and the Dutch as neighbours in and around Timor in the nineteenth century", in: SOUSA, Ivo Carneiro de & LEIRISSA, Richard Z. (eds.). *Indonesia-Portugal: Five hundred years of historical relationship*. Lisboa: CEPESA, 2001, pp. 201-212.

<sup>195</sup> KAMMEN, Douglas. *Three Centuries of Conflict in East Timor*. Singapore: NUS Press, 2016.

<sup>196</sup> LA TOUCHE, Bouvet de. *Journal du Voyage de la Chine*, in: MADROLLE, Claude. *Les Premiers voyages français de la Chine*. Paris: Augustin Challamel, 1901, pp. 213-214.

<sup>197</sup> MORAIS Alberto Faria. *Solor e Timor*. Lisboa: Agência Geral das Colónias, 1944, p.138.

Flores, to Lifau, in Oecussi.<sup>198</sup> Besieged during months by the Dutch, suffering terrible privations and famine, Lifau's Christian population, artillery and other goods were only evacuated in August 12, 1769 thanks to two trade vessels from Macau, S. Vicente and Santa Rosa, then arriving to the shores of Dili from where colonial Portuguese Timor was really built up.

Rebellions, clashes, local wars continued in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the Eastern part of the island, and the normally helpless Portuguese governor was recurrently helped by Macau traders, ships, and capital. In 1817, for example, one finds the annual trade vessel from Macau, sponsored by the Leal Senate, aiding the governor and his fragile militia to fight the Dutch occupation of the Atapupu harbor, strategic due to its Chinese trading community;<sup>199</sup> in 1821, it is again a ship from Macau, named Conceição, that helped the governor in Dili to repress a rebellion in Batugadé; later in 1861, two vessels sent by the Leal Senate of Macau contributed to defeat the Vatuboro insurrection; the first Maubara rebellion, in 1867, was also controlled with ships and soldiers coming from Macau; the same Macanese help can be found during the violent Liquiçá wars, between 1870-1872, and there would probably be many others examples up to the Manufahi wars if these themes could be properly studied through systematic social historical research.<sup>200</sup>

Reversely, there are examples in which Timor rebellions came oddly from influent Macanese exiled in the territory. In 1789, for example, José Carvalho, a “son of Macao” presented as “very intriguing and very much attached to liqueurs” was appointed by the governor João Baptista Vieira Godinho regent of the kingdom of Lacluta. Thereupon, allied to the mighty king, *liurai* of Luca, one of the oldest Timorese “kingdoms”, Carvalho promoted a violent rebellion trying to snatch the governor power in Dili. The arrival of the annual trade vessel of Macau, with some soldiers, African slaves and Chinese workers, was able to defeat the rebels after some navy canon shots. Carvalho returned arrested to Macau, but official documents don't reveal his following fate.<sup>201</sup> Several other examples could easily underline other close historical urgent relations between Timor and Macau that was as well interchanging the institutional status of the Portuguese settlement in the far Eastern Malay-Indonesian archipelago.

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<sup>198</sup> HÄGERDAL, Hans. “Rebellions or factionalism? Timorese forms of resistance in an early colonial context, 1650-1769”, in: *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 163-1 (2007), pp. 1-33.

<sup>199</sup> CASTRO, Afonso. *As Possessões Portuguezas na Oceania*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1867, p. 281.

<sup>200</sup> CASTRO, 1867: 122.

<sup>201</sup> CASTRO, 1867: 278.

## Political, Institutional and Administrative relations

The first governor and captain-general of the islands of Timor-Solor was António Coelho Guerreiro who took possession of the royal appointment precisely in Macau, in June 1701, gathering in the enclave about 100 soldiers, some Eurasian and several Chinese, plus military equipment and 200 piculs of rice to briefly govern between 1702 and 1705 the captaincy installed in Lifau, in today's Oecussi enclave.<sup>202</sup> Albeit this Macanese placement, in official political terms, Timor-Solor captaincy remained governed by the Goa-based "State of India" Portuguese colonial authorities. Despite losing direct maritime voyages to Timorese territories from 1790, only half a century later the jurisdiction was transferred to the Macau government much closer and able to support the Portuguese presence in Timor islands. Viceroys in India have acknowledged during the 18<sup>th</sup> century in several official documents the growing importance of direct trade communications between Macau and Timor as in the instructions given by the State of India governor, Frederico Guilherme de Sousa Holstein (1737-1790), to the new general-captain of Timor-Solor, João Baptista Vieira Godinho (1742-1811). Born and dead in Brazil, governing the islands between 1785 and 1788, Godinho was formally authorized to receive and support every year a trade vessel from the Leal Senate of Macau in a regime of sandalwood trade monopole that goes back, as we will see, to 1689, but also in charge of exchanging local goods, other timber resources, slaves and beeswax, to Java and Sulawesi along with Chinese cargo, mainly tea.<sup>203</sup>

The colonial administrative dependence of Timor-Solor from Goa authorities changed with the advent of liberalism in Portugal, despite its different political echoes in these distant colonial enclaves. In fact, the liberal revolution of 1820 and its aftermaths was strategically used by some of the most influential authorities in Macau to discharge some of the military and economic obligations towards Timor regarded as expensive and useless. Paradoxically, it was the utmost conservative and anti-liberal political Portuguese leader in Macau, the famous ouvidor Miguel Arriaga Brum da Silveira (1776-1824) that decided to help Lisbon and Goa far rule in Timor-Solor. Enriched by its participation in the opium trade, controlling large sectors of the Macanese trade bourgeoisie and able to reach the influent Chinese mandarins and merchants' corporations in Guangzhou, Arriaga planned the reinforcement of the colonial direct communication between

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<sup>202</sup> FIGUEIREDO, Fernando. "Timor", in: MARQUES, A. H. de Oliveira (dir.). *História dos Portugueses no Extremo Oriente*. Lisboa: Fundação Oriente, 2000, III, pp. 708-715.

<sup>203</sup> MOTA, Filomena Ferreira Teodósio. *João Baptista Vieira Godinho: governador e militar*. Lisboa: Comissão Portuguesa de História Militar, 2005.

Macau and Timor, imagining a mercantilist project to turn the Eastern islands in an agricultural supplier of Macau through the systematic expansion of rice production.<sup>204</sup> A classic colonial program of economic monoculture, after that a leading strategy to be found up to the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century although changing unsuccessfully from rice to sugar, cotton and later pineapples, before the much effective introduction of coffee around 1815, then dominating Timorese exports from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century on.<sup>205</sup>

In 1836, the colonial administration of Timor-Solor became dependent from the Macau governor, although still in the administrative framework of Goa State of India. In this period, enhancing the political association of both territories, between 1822 and 1843, a deputy jointly represented Macau and Timor in the Parliament of Lisbon. Next, a royal decree published on September 20, 1844, created the “Province of Macau, Solor and Timor”, finally independent from Goa direct administration. This new provincial government was formally placed in Macau, while a subaltern or sub-governor resided in Dili. The Macau government was officially obliged to contribute to the Timorese budget through a regular annual subsidy, plus military aid and healthcare supplies in personnel, equipment, and medicines. However, during this period so clearly affected by the first Opium War and the Portuguese sovereign colonial offensive in Macau up to 1849, local traders and ships promoted minimal commercial exchanges with Timor, thus unable to contribute to sustaining those financial and other obligations. In consequence, the political association of the two territories faced new changes again.

Since 1844, the representation of Macau and Timor-Solor in the Portuguese national parliament was divided into two constituencies each electing its deputy, but the Macanese elites were able to manipulate the electoral process also in Dili easily. Therefore, in 1850, the government of Timor-Solor became independent of Macau through the appointment of the new governor José Joaquim Lopes de Lima who received broad royal powers to negotiate with the Dutch the colony frontiers and the massive debt of the Dili government. An agreement was reached with the Dutch government in Batavia in exchange of the alienation of several Portuguese enclaves in Eastern Flores, some small adjacent islands, namely Solor, Pantar, Wetare, and a few emplacements in Western Timor.<sup>206</sup> In 1856, however, the colonial administration of Timor (Solor was already officially gone to the Dutch) returned to the State of India in Goa up to the administrative reform that

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<sup>204</sup> FREITAS, José de Aquino Guimarães e. *Memoria sobre Macáo*. Coimbra: Real Imprensa da Universidade, 1828, pp. 71-72.

<sup>205</sup> SILVA, Hélder Lains e. *Timor e a Cultura do Café*. Lisboa: Junta de Investigações do Ultramar, 1956.

<sup>206</sup> SCHOUTEN, 2001: 201-212.

decided again in 1863 the disintegration and some institutional improvements: Dili was formally promoted to the status of “Portuguese city”, head office of the governor that received a War Council and a Treasury Board for the territory, but only able to effectively function in late 19<sup>th</sup> century. In any case, in 1866, the colony of Timor, as it was then officially labeled, returned to Macau direct administration, then forming part of what was designated simply as “Province of Macau and Timor”. A political decision that was not accepted peacefully by the Macanese Leal Senate that didn’t recognize any substantial trade benefices coming from Timor while the local government was obliged to sponsor a military contingent mobilized to serve two years in Timorese territories, a quite costly situation that did last until 1896. This year, finally, Timor was detached from Macau and became an “Autonomous District” directly dependent on Lisbon.<sup>207</sup>

All these twists and some formal institutional novelties do not appear to have elicited any significant colonial political enthusiasm and, on the contrary, received the most strong criticism from the famous governor of Timor Afonso de Castro, military, deputy, important essayist and chronicler of the Portuguese presence in the East, author in 1867 of that important book entitled *The Portuguese possessions in Oceania*. Referring to that recent return, in 1856, of Timor government to the administrative control of Goa, Castro seriously wrote:

The decree of September 23, 1856 detached Timor from Macao, and annexed it to Goa. Instead of the correspondence of the government of the possession to be directed to Macao went to Goa. The mentioned decree didn’t produce any other effect. From the annexation to India, the same results had been achieved as from the annexation to Macao, that is, Timor remained in the same misery, the same lack of personnel, the same lack of public force to keep authority; and finding the finances of Goa in unsatisfactory condition, the metropolis had to help Timor with a subsidy to meet the charges.<sup>208</sup>

The implantation of the Republic in Portugal, in 1910, reinforced this autonomy, albeit the severe Manufahi wars between 1911 and 1912, suppressed with the support of the gunboat “Pátria” sent again from Macau, plus the mobilization of a company from Mozambique.<sup>209</sup> Achieved the colonial pacification of the territory and finally settled the political

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<sup>207</sup> FIGUEIREDO, 2000: 714-715.

<sup>208</sup> CASTRO, Afonso. *As Possessões Portuguezas na Oceania*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1967, p. 367.

<sup>209</sup> PÉLISSIER, René. *Timor en Guerre. Le Crocodile et les Portugais (1847- 1913)*. Orgeval: Péliissier, 1996.

boundaries of “Portuguese Timor” formally with the Netherlands, in 1914, the colony acquired the political geography that lasted up to the declaration of independence on November 28, 1975, followed on December 7 by the violent illegal Indonesian invasion. The restoration of the independence, in May 2002, opened up, as is well known, a new process of boundaries discussions, in the center of the island with Indonesia regarding some small territorial disagreements, and in the Timor Sea with Australia,<sup>210</sup> generating much more delayed controversy that seems nowadays definitely closed through the bilateral agreement signed last March 6, 2018, in the UN headquarters in New York.

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<sup>210</sup> BALINT, Ruth. *Troubled Waters. Borders, boundaries and possession in the Timor Sea*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2005.



## Trade: sandalwood and slaves

Trade maritime relations between Macau and Timor islands are documented since 1634 but were probably already active from late 16<sup>th</sup> century. In that year, a Macanese commercial vessel sponsored by the Leal Senate and the Holy House of Mercy, the powerful *Misericórdia*, reached the northwest coasts of Timor to load sandalwood logs, returning to Macau with about 200-500 trunks, deposited in the Town Hall warehouses and then sold in public auction.<sup>211</sup> It also seems clear that Macanese trade in Timor islands other than sandalwood cargos was also getting slaves. In fact, in the tragic list of the martyrs of the Macanese embassy to Nagasaki in 1640, slaughtered and unable to reopen trade with the archipelago, there is a 16-year-old Timorese slave named Alberto, accompanied by another 40-year-old slave, António, a native of Solor, both owned by Portuguese merchants.<sup>212</sup> Since Philip II had forbidden in 1589 enslavement of Philippines' indigenous, Macau became the most crucial slave trade regional market, and the Timorese men and mainly women fuelled it along 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>213</sup>

After the Dutch conquests of Malacca in 1641 and Makassar in 1667, the maritime connections between the Indian Ocean, Southeast Asia, and South China seas changed and Macanese traders, taking advantage of their privileged access to Guangzhou markets, exchanged several Chinese goods, namely tea, in Batavia and from here reached the Eastern Indonesian spices areas. From 1689 up to 1785, the Leal Senate of Macau got the monopoly of Portuguese sandalwood trade in Timor-Solor islands building up an annual seafaring system known as the “ship of the ways” (*barco das vias*). The name in plural makes some sense: wealthy merchants from Macau showed no particular commercial interest in singular direct communication with Timor that was only a scale, generally for one ship, within the annual trade to Batavia, Sulawesi and, in the return trip to Macau via Cochinchina. In

<sup>211</sup> BOXER, Charles R. *Francisco Vieira de Figueiredo: a Portuguese merchant-adventurer in South East Asia, 1624-1667*. Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff Verhandelingen van het Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-Land en Volkenkunde, 52, 1967; SOUZA, George Brian de. *A Sobrevivência do Império: Os Portugueses na China (1630-1754)*. Lisboa: Publicações Dom Quixote, 1991, pp. 124-135.

<sup>212</sup> *Relação da Gloriosa Morte de Quatro Embaixadores Portuguezes na Cidade de Macao, com cinquenta e sete christãos da sua companhia, degolados todos pela fé de Christo em Nangasachi cidade de Iappão, a tres de Agosto de 1640, com todas as circunstancias de sua Embaixada, tirada de informações verdadeiras, & testemunhas de vista*, (ed. de Charles R. Boxer). Lisboa: Imprensa da Armada, 1934, pp. 8-49 (BRANCO, João Diogo Alarcão de Carvalho. *A morte dos embaixadores de Macau no Japão em 1640 e o padre António Cardim*. s. l., s. n., pp. 9-11).

<sup>213</sup> SOUSA, Ivo Carneiro de. *A Outra Metade do Céu. Escravidura e Orfanidade Femininas, Mercado Matrimonial e Elites Mercantis em Macau (séculos XVI-XVIII)*. Macau: St. Joseph University Press, 2011.

average, two to four trade ships were sent from Macau to Batavia loaded with Chinese tea. One of the vessels would then go to the Timor islands exchanging textiles, metal manufactures and rice for sandalwood logs, slaves, beeswax, turtle shells, corals and some other complementary products collected at the ports of Citrana, Lifau, Dili, Hera and Tolecao on the north coast of Timor.<sup>214</sup>

In an attempt to improve the commercial attractiveness of the sandalwood monopoly, the Leal Senado issued licenses since the beginning, in 1689, authorizing Chinese merchants to invest in freights directly to Batavia, and from there to Timor-Solor. Usually, a third of the commercial ship space was reserved for the rigger and the remaining two distributed between private traders and Macau institutions, from the governor to the Misericórdia, but also including convents, the orphans' judge or, since 1728, St. Joseph seminar. All annual trade voyages to Batavia, Timor and all the other commercial destinations in Southeast Asia, India, the Bengal gulf and sometimes reaching as far as Mozambique, were drawn by the Leal Senate under a system framed by ship tonnage, capital investment and social status of the competitors. In practice, trade voyages were entirely dominated by a small urban merchant bourgeoisie that controlled the two central Portuguese institutions: the Leal Senate and the Misericórdia. Since it was precisely the Misericórdia the main warrantor of the voyages through loans given in silver to ship-owners and traders, the Macanese bourgeoisie investments risks barely existed. In fact, trade trips to Batavia and then to Timor were very lucrative. Each ship loaded between 1800 and 2000 piculs of sandalwood quickly sold to the Chinese market. Since this Timor voyage was also frequently doing trade scales in Sumbawa, Bali, and Madura, before returning to Batavia, several other complementary exchanges could include exotic local fauna and flora. Arrived in Batavia, the Timor ship would sell part of the slave cargo, mainly feminine, and most of the beeswax for the local batik manufactures, although the candles private and religious factories in Macau also bought it. Other than sandalwood, East Timorese slaves had an essential demand in Macau being owned by privates as well as by institutions since they were frequently employed in hospitals, convents, and public works or hard manufactures as the production of artillery.<sup>215</sup>

Timorese slaves in Macau became even more present in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In fact, a royal decree from 1758 decided to forbid Chinese slavery in Macau but also disallowed the bishop, D. Bartolomeu

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<sup>214</sup> SOUSA, 1995: 9-10.

<sup>215</sup> SOUSA, 2011: 126-127.

Manuel Mendes dos Reis of interfering in the imports of Timorese slaves.<sup>216</sup> The bishop was leading a moral campaign against the irregular presence of countless young female slaves from Timor in most of the wealthy Macanese traders' households, but the traffic seems to last up to the final decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Albeit the legal abolition of slavery in the Portuguese empire, in 1869, it became difficult to apply the new liberation law in Macau and East-Timor. In a letter dated from September 20, 1886, the governor of Macau confesses to the government in Lisbon that he doesn't have resources enough to repress slavery traffic in Timor.<sup>217</sup> One year later, on April 27, 1887, the Macanese government reports peremptorily to the Portuguese Ministry of Navy and Overseas Affairs:

Macao cannot provide the means by which the government of Timor can end the slave trade that exists among some peoples of the kingdoms of Timor. The government must commit itself to ending an abuse that damages the good name and dignity of our country.<sup>218</sup>

In contrast with the persistence of slave traffic, Timor sandalwood trade has sharply declined in the final decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Natural reserves were almost depleted through the centuries-old Portuguese and Dutch substantial uncontrolled exploration. In 1752, the VOC abandoned the monopoly of sandalwood held in Kupang, allowing other traders to load without limits logs from West Timor areas, which left the commerce in the hands of Chinese merchants. In the following years these traders also spread in the Eastern coastal regions under Portuguese control and at the end of the century about 300 Chinese families, mainly from Macau and Guangzhou regions, were dominating the final period of sandalwood foreign trade sending via Makassar large amounts of trunks to the markets in China. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, along with the natural resources exhaustion, new competitive production areas arose in international trade: red sandalwood from East Africa, namely Mozambique, and white from Papua-New Guinea from here introduced in Australia that is nowadays the leading world exporter. Either way, Macau lost the monopole of Timor sandalwood in the 1780's, and the governor in Dili João Baptista Vieira Godinho (1785-1788) tried to promote a free trade system through Goa aiming to enlarge markets and merchants' interests.<sup>219</sup> The proposals, however, only mobilized a renewed attention of other foreign private traders settled in Macau: in

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<sup>216</sup> BOXER, Charles. *Fidalgos in the Far East (1550-1770). Fact and Fancy in the History of Macao*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1948, p. 239.

<sup>217</sup> AHM, Administração Civil – 27855, fl. 57v.

<sup>218</sup> AHM, Administração Civil – 27855, fl. 47.

<sup>219</sup> SOUZA, 1991: 158-160.

1790 the Armenian Chamber of Commerce, established in the enclave for half a century, but represented by Wartan Casper, a resident of Batavia, sent to the Portuguese Minister of Overseas Affairs, Martinho de Melo e Castro, a formal request to open a trade house in Dili.<sup>220</sup> The proposal sought to ensure the annual regularity of Macau-Timor maritime trade with passage through Batavia and connection to the French factory in Surat but demanded the exclusion of Chinese traders from Makassar and other regional centers. Although advantageous from trade perspectives, the proposed conditions were politically unacceptable, since the Macanese Armenian association demanded the right to appoint the Dili governor for six years and to place an agent-procurator with full judicial powers.

Macau also helped the fragile finances and small budgets of the Portuguese colonial government in Timor, but these economic themes have yet to mobilize solid research based in sound documentary evidence. On October 15, 1896, for example, the colony of Timor received a direct subsidy from Macau worth 60.000 patacas that, renewed in 1909, suggests a very significant ongoing amount of transfers. At the same time, the Portuguese administration of Timor accumulated a vast recurrent budget deficit amounting in 1904-1905 to 102 thousand *reis* that were entirely supported by Macau. Part of this debt funding came from the National Overseas Bank (BNU), installed in Macau since 1901, and opened in Dili in 1912. Trying to increase the volume of foreign investments, from 1920 the BNU adopted the Macau *pataca* as the currency of the colony but also accepting deposits in Chinese bills. The Portuguese government in Lisbon began subsidizing colonial Timor systematically since 1912, but only after the Japanese occupation during the Pacific War, between 1942-1945, the whole budget of the territory was guaranteed by the central government.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> FIGUEIREDO, 2000: 708-715.

<sup>221</sup> FIGUEIREDO, 2000: 710-715.

## Chinese emigration to East Timor

Trade relations between Macau and East Timor were also fuelled by the settlement of Chinese in the territory, another subject still waiting for proper systematic serial research. Recalling Miguel de Arriaga proposals for Timor, in 1817 the influential Macau *ouvidor* suggested that other than massive rice production that he had already propounded, the colony should also experiment cotton culture through the emigration of Chinese farmers. The following year, Arriaga went further proposing to Lisbon the creation of a commercial company for Timor trade also able to introduce sugar cane production that could be done again through systematic Chinese emigration based in Macau. Returned to Macau in 1823 after his exiled in Guangzhou during the liberal-conservative known clashes in the enclave, Arriaga sent a long letter to the Ministry of Navy and Overseas requesting Lisbon to send a “naturalist” to properly study in Timor and adjacent islands the conditions for sheltering Chinese settlers.<sup>222</sup> This proposal reached the Macanese Leal Senate that has multiplied in the late 1830s the appeals sent to the overseas authorities in Lisbon to allow the emigration of Chinese farmers to Timor. Finally, in 1837, the ministry of Navy and Overseas Affairs requested the Leal Senate to promote Chinese agricultural “colonization” of Timor. In the mid-19th century, there were already more than 2.000 Chinese settled in Portuguese Timor, but very few were farmers, most controlling the small retail trade in Dili and other centers. Thus, in 1861, the influent journalist and writer that was António Feliciano Marques Pereira (1839-1861), then working as superintendent of the Chinese emigration of Macau, explained that the Chinese of Dili constituted the most useful part of the population being the best retailers, masons and carpenters of the colony.<sup>223</sup> In consequence, in August 1866, when Dili was practically reduced to ashes due to an uncontrolled violent fire, the city was rebuilt with the generous work and financial support of the local Chinese plus the remittances sent from Macau.<sup>224</sup>

From the last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century up to 1905, data on Chinese emigration to East-Timor is still satisfactorily preserved for several different years in Macau historical archives through collections of ships passengers’ relations and passports books. Thus, on July 15, 1880, one can access the list of Chinese condemned to exile in Timor embarked in the gunboat “Tejo”: Fu-Aquan, Chung-on and Hi-Assam for robbery; Chang-Achan for “theft and abuse of trust”; Lui-Cok for “stealing and resisting the authority”; Lasis-pung for thievery; Lam-Achong, Lu-Achong

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<sup>222</sup> AHM, Administração Civil – 27845, fls. 19-21v.

<sup>223</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - pasta 30-27

<sup>224</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - pasta 30-27.

and Ma-Achong for “violent theft”; Con-assi for “theft thwarted”; and the prisoner Fu-Aquan was allowed to travel with his wife.<sup>225</sup> In February 11, 1882, new Chinese prisoners are sent from Macau to Dili aboard a Dutch ship, the “Atjeh”: Chan-Acho and Chan-asseng for “violence and robbery”; Chan-achan for “theft and criminal association”; and Ho-ahip for “frustrated homicide”.<sup>226</sup> Ten years later, in December 12, 1892, in a British ship travelling from Macau to Dili, the administration enlists six Chinese prisoners classified simply as “bummers” to be employed in the colony public works.<sup>227</sup>

On July 28, 1884, in a British steamboat named “Timor”, the list of passengers embarked to Dili sums up to six Canossian sisters, two missionaries and 25 soldiers, several Chinese workers: 9 masons, 7 carpenters and 2 bricklayers.<sup>228</sup> Three years later, in May 7, 1887, the ship conducting the bishop D. António Joaquim Medeiros and his Chinese domestic, named Matias, including 14 African soldiers, also carried several other Chinese emigrant workers: 6 carpenters and 6 masons.<sup>229</sup> In May 4, 1889, a British steamship traveling from Macau to Dili, via Singapore and Surabaya, embarked 6 more carpenters, 6 masons and 5 domestic helpers, the last for the missions in Timor paid by the Macanese diocese.<sup>230</sup> Some months later, on September 3, the passengers’ list of the vessel “Dili” refers a female teacher, Astúria dos Santos Arroba with her two nephews, four soldiers, being one African, and three Chinese masons.<sup>231</sup>

On December 20, 1890, we found again the “Dili” traveling from Macau to Dili and, other than 13 soldiers, the Chinese emigrants are enlisted as “contracted for public works”: 4 masons, 3 joiners, 2 carpenters and 2 sawyers.<sup>232</sup> Almost two years later, on August 26, 1892, from Macau to Dili, the list of passengers of another British steamship includes 4 Chinese farmers contracted for the “foundation of a agricultural enterprise” in Timor.<sup>233</sup> Next, on April 6, 1895, the Macau administration only refers the departure to Dili of “67 Chinese with their respective passports”.<sup>234</sup> In the end of the century, on May 2, 1900, the list of passengers departing to Dili includes, among 4 soldiers, one African, 6 Chinese simply classified as “settlers for

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<sup>225</sup> AHM, Administração Civil – 27855, fl. 14v.

<sup>226</sup> AHM, Administração Civil – 27855, fl. 65v.

<sup>227</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fls. 41v.-42.

<sup>228</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27857 – cx. 1185, fl. 6.

<sup>229</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27857 – cx. 1185, fls. 98-98v.

<sup>230</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27857 – cx. 1185, fls. 97.

<sup>231</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27857 – cx. 1185, fls. 104-104v.

<sup>232</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27857 – cx. 1185, fls. 114-114v.

<sup>233</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 36.

<sup>234</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 101.

Timor”.<sup>235</sup> On 30 of this some month, the Macau administration also paid the trip to Timor aboard a British steam of a military lieutenant, a missionary and 7 Chinese migrants.<sup>236</sup> This same year, on August 3, the ship “Dili” has transported to Timor other than two missionaries, 3 Chinese farmers.<sup>237</sup> In this full year, on October 24, a British vessel conveyed to Dili a military major with his wife and three children, a lieutenant and his wife, a single captain, one missionary and 6 new Chinese settlers.<sup>238</sup> Closing this more than busy 1900’s voyages, on December 13, the list of Chinese emigrants to Timor is even more detailed: Lai-ngui and Huan-pac, tailors, Jong-a Chiang, baker, and Cam-suig, cooker.<sup>239</sup>

In the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, on April 11, 1901, the passengers paid by the Macau government whither to Dili gathered to a sergeant and his wife, two clerks for Timor customs and 6 Chinese farmers.<sup>240</sup> On July 26, have departed to Dili a captain with his wife, an 8 years daughter and a 6 years son, one sergeant, one corporal, four Canossian sisters and 9 Chinese settlers.<sup>241</sup> On September 4, aboard another British vessel, the Macau administration sponsored the voyage of two Chinese emigrants to Timor: Chau-son, carpenter and Hong-ao, cooker.<sup>242</sup> Next month, on October 24, along with a lieutenant and his wife, two Canossians, an apothecary and two corporals there was a single Chinese farmer migrant.<sup>243</sup> Next year, on May 7, 1902, the Macanese administration enlists the departures to Dili of a lieutenant, his wife, his 15 months son and his mother, plus two sergeants and the following Chinese emigrants: Ho-alfar, Sam-cao and Ho-cheong, farmers; Cam-rao and Li-sae, woodworkers; Ho-pae and Choi-ias, masons; Lung-pao, carpenter; Leon-lung, tailor.<sup>244</sup> On June 28, departs from Macau to Timor a judge, a sergeant, six corporals, two Chinese stokers and three Chinese settlers.<sup>245</sup> Next, on August 16, two soldiers have departed from Macau to Dili with two more Chinese stokers and a farmer.<sup>246</sup> Few months later, on October 2, a missionary, one lieutenant and three soldiers left from Macau to Timor with two more Chinese settlers.<sup>247</sup> The ship sorting from

<sup>235</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 52.

<sup>236</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 69.

<sup>237</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 58v.

<sup>238</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 61v.

<sup>239</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 62v.

<sup>240</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 67v.

<sup>241</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 70v.

<sup>242</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 71v.

<sup>243</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 73v.

<sup>244</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 79v.

<sup>245</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fls. 80v.-81.

<sup>246</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 82v.

<sup>247</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 84v.

Macao on November 9, transferred to Dili one sergeant, two corporals, one bugler, 9 soldiers and 6 Chinese settlers.<sup>248</sup> Only ten days later, on November 19, a British steamship left to Timor carrying two captains, two lieutenants, one with his wife, one soldier and only one Chinese emigrant.<sup>249</sup> The following year, on February 4, 1903, one sergeant, two corporals, one bugler and 12 soldiers departed from Macau to Dili along with 6 Chinese settlers.<sup>250</sup> Afterward, on March 9, the administration of Macau sent to Timor two corporals, 7 soldiers and only one singular Chinese settler.<sup>251</sup> Next, on May 9, the list of passengers to Dili gathered two lieutenants, one sergeant with his two daughters, three corporals, and 28 soldiers, being one African and another Indian, plus 5 Chinese emigrants.<sup>252</sup> On June 28, departed from Macau to Dili one missionary, one lieutenant, one soldier and 3 new Chinese settlers.<sup>253</sup> In the end of the year, on December 15, Macau sent to Timor four missionaries, one bookkeeper, 14 sergeants, one traveling with his wife, 5 soldiers, and 6 Chinese “contracted for public works”.<sup>254</sup>

The following year on February 18, 1904, the Macanese administration sponsored the transit to Dili of one captain, one military driver, three sergeants, one with his wife and two daughters, one corporal, one foreman and another Chinese settler.<sup>255</sup> On February 18, have departed from Macau to Timor two missionaries, one seminarian, one soldier and 6 Chinese settlers.<sup>256</sup> Next, on July 3, the Macanese government paid the voyages to Dili of a lieutenant with his wife, three daughters and three sons, and 3 new Chinese emigrants.<sup>257</sup> The following month, on August 13, left from Macau to “Portuguese Timor” one captain with his wife and a son, two lieutenants, two sergeants, 5 corporals, 4 soldiers, 7 settlers, being 3 African, plus 6 Chinese emigrant workers.<sup>258</sup> On December 13, the Macanese administration enlisted with maritime passages to Dili a treasurer with his wife, a machines’ driver, a seminarian, three novices, four sailors and 4 Chinese settlers.<sup>259</sup>

In the final documented year, on February 13, 1905, departed to Dili one colonel of artillery with his wife, one infantry captain, two administrative

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<sup>248</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 86.

<sup>249</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 85.

<sup>250</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 87.

<sup>251</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 88v.

<sup>252</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 89.

<sup>253</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 91.

<sup>254</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fls. 96-96v.

<sup>255</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 98.

<sup>256</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fls. 98v.-99.

<sup>257</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fls. 100v.-101.

<sup>258</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fls. 101v.-102.

<sup>259</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fls. 103v.



clerks, one customs' auxiliary, 19 sergeants, one soldier and 6 Chinese settlers.<sup>260</sup> Next, on April 7, the Macanese administration paid the transfer to Timor of one cavalry lieutenant with his wife, 7 sergeants, 5 corporals, one traveling with his spouse, and one Chinese stoker.<sup>261</sup> On June 9, the travelers to Dili paid by Macau included one captain with his wife and three children, two lieutenants, one judge with his spouse, a customs' official, two sergeants, three corporals, one soldier and 6 Chinese settlers.<sup>262</sup> After, on August 7, traveling to Dili along with the bishop of Macau, D. João Paulino, and three priests, the administration sponsored the trips of one sergeant, a machines' driver, two stokers, one sailor, two soldiers and 2 Chinese emigrant workers.<sup>263</sup> To close, on October 3, has departed from Macau to Timor one lieutenant with his wife and a 7 years old son, another of 4 and a daughter of 1, three soldiers and 3 Chinese settlers.<sup>264</sup>

Following the quantitative lessons of these official lists, other than the 20 Chinese accused of crimes and exiled in Timor, inventoried with huge gaps only for 1880, 1882 and 1892, the rest of the documents accounted 245 Chinese traveling to Dili sponsored by the Macanese administration: 83 (33,87%) are classified as "migrants", 65 (26,53%) as "settlers", 24 (9,79%) were masons, 18 (7,34%) are enlisted as "farmers", 17 (6,93%) carpenters, 8 "undifferentiated" workers, 6 "workers for public works", 5 domestic helpers, 4 stokers, 3 tailors, 3 joiners, 2 bricklayers, 2 sawyers, 2 woodworkers, 2 cooks and 1 baker. Although these official sources don't inform us on private emigration, namely sponsored by private companies from Macau or foreign, certainly very scarce, it seems surprising that adding migrants, settlers and farmers (67,74% of the total), which really means general emigrants, there still are more than one third of Chinese from diverse professions reaching East Timor, being mostly mobilized for civil construction. Probably, these Chinese emigrants did contribute for the economic development of "Portuguese Timor", but we are not completely informed on their social and cultural impacts. There is only a document in the archives of the Macanese administration in which the local government replies to requests for helping to control new clashes between Chinese migrants and Timorese *liurais*. Dated from July 25, 1894, the document acknowledges conflicts in the interior of Timor between Chinese settlers and local "kings", but the Macau government decides that it was unable to intervene since the relations between China and Portugal were under the "crown" direct responsibility and ongoing treaties'

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<sup>260</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fls. 106v.

<sup>261</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fls. 107v.-108.

<sup>262</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 112.

<sup>263</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 114.

<sup>264</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 117v.

negotiations.<sup>265</sup>

Chinese emigration to “Portuguese Timor” increased in these last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century also thanks to new and fast maritime transportation. In 1891, a direct line between Macau and Timor was contracted to the *Eastern & Australian Steam Ship Company*. However, the contract was never fulfilled. Regional maritime traffic to Eastern Indonesia was primarily dominated by the *Dutch Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij*, based in Batavia, providing monthly communications to Surabaya and fortnightly to Makassar with scale in Dili.<sup>266</sup> Later, in the early 1930’s, Portuguese press in Macau and English press from Hong Kong advertised a new Macau-Timor maritime regular connection through Singapore, Batavia, and Surabaya. The line functioned very irregularly in a monthly basis during almost five years with the support of Macau BNU that had invited the enclave exporters to trade on consignment with Timor. Supported by the local branch of the bank, in Dili, merchants were allowed to pay the sea freights only after selling the goods in the Portuguese colony.<sup>267</sup> BNU tried to implement the maritime line highlighting the products from Macau that could be profitably sold in Timor, namely industrial textiles, as well as those that it was interesting to import, mainly coffee. BNU offered “exceptional reduced” ticket prices for entrepreneurs based in Macau who wished to visit the Portuguese part of Timor, an invitation extended with generous discounts to groups, schools, excursionists or sportsmen. The company bankrupted, the maritime line vanished, and since 1938 Japanese ships making regular trips to Surabaya and Palau, between the Moluccas and Guam, were able to propose much lower fares for their stopover in Dili. In spite of these maritime investments, trade relations between Macau and Timor were in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century weaker than in the two previous centuries, although highly compensated by the remittances sent by the growing number of Chinese emigrants. In the last colonial census of “Portuguese Timor”, done in 1970, for a population of roughly 650.000, there were 6.120 inhabitants classified as Chinese,<sup>268</sup> plus an unidentified number of Peranakan that some sources estimated around 20.000.<sup>269</sup> Most of these Chinese and Chinese-Timorese living, working and, several thousand, born in East Timor left the country during the independence process in 1974-1975 and the first years of illegal Indonesian occupation, mostly emigrating to Australia, but some returning as well to Macau.

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<sup>265</sup> AHM, Administração Civil - 27858, Correspondência Externa, fl. 85v.

<sup>266</sup> *The Macao Review*, September 1930, p. 99.

<sup>267</sup> *The Macao Review*, November-December 1930, p. 158.

<sup>268</sup> Instituto Nacional de Estatística, Delegação de Timor. *Recenseamento geral da população e da habitação*. [S.l.]: I.N.E., 1970.

<sup>269</sup> COPPEL, Charles Antony. *Mapping the Peranakan Chinese in Indonesia*. Melbourne: Monash University, 1973.

## Catholic Ecclesiastic and Missionary relations

In 1874, by the Pontifical bull *Universis Orbis Ecclesiis*, Pope Pius IX decided to integrate Portuguese territories in Timor under the jurisdiction of the diocese of Macau. A critical move but doesn't mean the lack of previous ecclesiastical and missionary connections between the Portuguese-Chinese enclave and Timor-Solor islands. The problem on this field is that, along with several other themes, 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries Catholic religious exchanges between Macau and Timor are not yet studied, and demand a substantial primary sources research in several different archives in Macau, Portugal, Rome and elsewhere. Some sparse clues, however, are, at least, interesting.

In 1777, for example, the Bishop of Macau, D. Alexandre da Silva Pedrosa Guimarães, wrote a strong letter attacking the governor of Dili that he accused of scandalous behavior. Together with corruption and other arbitrariness, these reports led to his deportation to Mozambique, an event suggesting the paramount power of the diocese of Macau in Portuguese Timor affairs.<sup>270</sup> Later, in 1814, a royal decision sponsored the formation of five religious for the missions of Timor through the Dominicans of Macau. Despite these efforts, and indeed others still ignored, when the territory shifted into Macau bishopric ecclesial administration, the missionary situation in Timor was miserable. There was not a single Catholic missionary since 1834, and the local narrow Church, mainly settled in Dili, was accused in Macau of being surrendered to “superstitions”. Thus, in 1874, Father António Joaquim de Medeiros, rector of the Seminary of St. Joseph and future influent bishop of Macau, was appointed visitor for restoring the Timorese mission.<sup>271</sup> Regardless the lack of support from the local colonial government, seven missionaries arrived in Dili in 1877, four from Portugal and two priests from Macau, including Father Medeiros. The other missionary was a priest native from Guangzhou sent with the precise task of the catechization of the Chinese community in Dili. During one strenuous decade, Father António de Medeiros and the new missionaries restored the primary pastoral activities of the Catholic church in Portuguese controlled areas of Timor, erected an agricultural training station south of the capital, opened the Jesuit College of Soibada and a school in Lahane. The two Catholic schools had the same exact social goals: the education of the sons of the Timorese *liurai* to prepare them to become the future agents of the colonial administration and army, reserving as well the most diligent students as catechists.<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> TEIXEIRA, Manuel. *Missões de Timor*. Macau: Tipografia da Missão do Padroado, 1974.

<sup>271</sup> TEIXEIRA, Manuel. *D. António Joaquim de Medeiros, Apóstolo de Timor*. Bragança: [s.n.], 1989.

<sup>272</sup> FERNANDES, Francisco Maria. *D. António Joaquim de Medeiros (Bispo de Macau) e as Missões de Timor. 1884-1897*. Macau: Universidade de Macau, 2000.

Established in Macau since 1874, the feminine congregation of the Canossians was apace invited to work in Timor.<sup>273</sup> In 1878, mothers Adelaide Pietra, Isabel Sequeira and Julia departed to Dili, but their vessel shipwrecked, forcing their return to Macau.<sup>274</sup> The following year, warmly welcomed by the local governor and the superior of the missions, Father Medeiros, the Canossians were forced to live in private homes, close to the wetlands of Dili in tough hygienic conditions. Difficult beginnings even more complicated with the general refuse of the inhabitants of Dili to deliver their daughters to Canossians' Catholic and moral education, which was attributed by the religious sisters to the huge Timorese "superstition". Five years of fiercely fight later, according to the Canossians, facing the hostile "climate and mores", the religious received their first building soon transformed in mission and school. Almost two decades after their first arrival, the Canossians inaugurated in 1897 a new residence in Manatuto with a feminine school.<sup>275</sup>

Missionary activities were later drastically reduced after the establishment of the Republic in Portugal, in 1910. Proclaimed the new regime in Dili, on October 30, and received the new anti-clerical republican laws, the colonial governor published on December 31, 1910, a decree expelling from "Portuguese Timor" the Jesuits, returned in 1899, and the Canossians, appropriating for the state their facilities: St. Joseph college in Dili, the school-nursery of Bidau, the college and missionary residences in Soibada. Next, the bishop of Macau, João Paulino de Azevedo e Castro, requested in this period an inventory of Timor mission' situation and the final report was more than indigent: all the missionary schools were completely abandoned. A former missionary in Timor from 1911, appointed the bishop of Macau in 1920, the future cardinal D. José da Costa Nunes began slowly rebuilding the Catholic action in the territory, but as late as 1938 there were only 20 missionaries in the colony normally complaining about the religious East-Timorese "ignorance".<sup>276</sup> An essay published in this period in the bulletin of Macau diocese by an anonymous missionary working in Soibada, explains that the critical problem for the mission was not the lack of priests or facilities but the East-Timorese profound attachment to their customary cultures and laws, classified as "superstitions".<sup>277</sup> In an attempt to reinforce and reorganize the

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<sup>273</sup> TEIXEIRA, Manuel. *As Canossianas na Diocese de Macau: I Centenário (1874-1974)*. Macau: Tipografia da Missão do Padroado, 1974 (Sep. de *Boletim Eclesiástico da Diocese de Macau*).

<sup>274</sup> *Ta-Ssi-Yang-Kuo*. *Archivos e Annaes do Extremo-Oriente Portuguez* coligidos, coordenados e anotados por J. F. Marques Pereira. Lisboa, 1899, vol. 1, p. 77.

<sup>275</sup> FERREIRA, João Gomes "Relatório do Superior da Missão de Timor", in: *Annaes das Missões Ultramarinas*, Lisboa, ano I (1889), pp. 74-84.

<sup>276</sup> NUNES, José da Costa. "Padroado Português no Extremo-Oriente", in: *Boletim da Agência Geral das Colónias*, nº. 53 (Nov. 1929), pp. 40-45.

<sup>277</sup> VARIZ, M. M. "Portugal e as Missões de Timor", in: *Boletim Eclesiástico da Diocese de Macau* (Macau), ano XXXIV, n.o 394 (Janeiro de 1937), pp. 495-502.

Catholic Church presence in “Portuguese Timor”, Pope Pius XII decide by the *Bull Solemnibus Conventionibus*, published on September 4, 1940, to separate the diocese of Dili from Macau diocese, appointing first apostolic administrator Monsignor Jaime Garcia Goulart.<sup>278</sup> Born in the Azores, traditional long-term place of recruitment of the high religious personnel for Macau, Goulart was nominated bishop of Dili only after the end of the Japanese occupation on October 12, 1945, governing the new diocese up to 1967. His successor, José Joaquim Ribeiro faced the Indonesian invasion, resigning in 1977 to be substituted by the first native of Timor bishop, D. Martinho da Costa Lopes, a well-known defender of the East-Timorese fight for national dignity and independence. Next, in 1988, followed by the Nobel Peace laureate D. Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo.<sup>279</sup> Responsible, firstly, to approach the Catholic Church to East-Timorese peoples and cultures, afterward, transforming it in the most significant social and moral national institution in the difficult decades of resistance to illegal Indonesian occupation, these three bishops had very few connections to Macau. It was only the arrival of some East-Timorese priests between precautions and true exile that wakened Macau again in the late 1970’s-early 1980’s to the sufferings of the former Portuguese colony then dramatically occupied by Indonesia under the Suharto totalitarian regime.

It is worth to highlight that some few of these missionaries sent from Macau to East-Timor Catholic missions were able to account and to publish on their diverse experiences from the field. The first candidate to naive ethnographic missionary and a reasonable observer of Timorese play culture is father João José de Andrade (1894-1931), arrived in 1917 to Dili facing the aftermaths of the well-known Republican impacts in the vast decadence of missionary work on the colony. In 1920, Andrade published in the Macau dioceses always-curious *Bulletin* eight short articles in-between personal appointments and amusing accounts entitled “In Timor. Uses and customs”, presenting the following appellative subtitles: “The Major”, “The Funeral”, “Homage to Poetete’s Batuque”, “The Harvest of Corn”, “The Adulteress”, “A Case of Justice”, “The Foot Game” and “The Rooster Game”.<sup>280</sup> Much more influent, born in Famalicão, North Portugal, in 1890, dead in 1944, father Abílio José Fernandes worked 23 years in the “Portuguese Timor” missions reaching the position of its superior and first general-vicar of the newfound Dili dioceses. Fernandes also published some different articles in the

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<sup>278</sup> LENNOX, Rowena. *Fighting Spirit of East Timor: The Life of Martinho da Costa Lopes*. London-New York: Zed Books, 2001, pp. 23-24, 28, 32, 71.

<sup>279</sup> KOHEN, Arnold. *From the Place of the Dead: the epic struggles of Bishop Belo of East Timor*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999.

<sup>280</sup> ROSA, Frederico Delgado. “Missões de outra natureza: etnografias católicas em Timor, 1917-1931”, in: *Colóquio Timor: Missões Científicas e Antropologia Colonial*. Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, 24 25 de Maio de 2011, p. 1.

same important ecclesiastical *Bulletin* of Macau dioceses on several missionary subjects,<sup>281</sup> namely about the Soibada mission prior to the inauguration in 1936 of the seminar of Our Lady of Fatima,<sup>282</sup> and on D. José da Costa Nunes religious action in Timor,<sup>283</sup> becoming well notated by the book edited in 1931 with the aggressive title of “Historical and current outline of the missions of Timor and refutation of some falsehoods which were slanderously affirmed by a former governor of Timor”.<sup>284</sup> Engaged in systematic criticism and even appeals for the repression of East-Timorese traditional religious and cultural practices, from *lulik* sites to the ancestors rituals, this booklet that Fernandes had prepared for the Portuguese pavilion in the Paris International Colonial Exhibition of 1931<sup>285</sup> tried to fiercely contradict the arguments of our well-known Teófilo Duarte, governor of Timor and later, as already remarked, powerful minister of the colonies. In memoriam of Celestino da Silva, former lengthy colonial governor between 1894 and 1908, that book by Teófilo Duarte on “Timor: antechamber of hell?!” , published almost provocatively in the birth-place of father Abílio Fernandes, Fimalicão, in 1930, did present the missionary activities in the territory in late 19<sup>th</sup>-early 20<sup>th</sup> century through the most sinful portrayal:

The relaxation of the customs of the clergy was then greater than today; the cases of concubinage, of little scruple in the administration of the alms of the faithful, of political speculations with the relations maintained with chieftains, all these were cases not sporadic, but normal; so one can guess the violence of the accusations of a man [Celestino da Silva] who does not compromise with laymen, much less understood doing it with religious; and thus one can imagine the rage of a class based on its prerogatives of disciplinary independence, its scruples of autonomous power and the lack of repression on the part of their superior diocesan authorities.<sup>286</sup>

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<sup>281</sup> FERNANDES, Abílio José. “Timor”, in: *Boletim Eclesiástico da Diocese de Macau*, vol. XXIV, n.º 288 (1927), pp. 381-389.

<sup>282</sup> FERNANDES, Abílio José. “Missão de Soibada: relatório”, in: *Boletim Eclesiástico da Diocese de Macau*, ano XXIII, n.º 273-274 (1926), pp. 396-404; FERNANDES, Abílio José. “Mapa estatístico do movimento religioso na missão de Soibada e suas dependentes durante o ano de 1925”, in: *Boletim Eclesiástico da Diocese de Macau*, ano XXIII, n.º 273-274 (1926), p. 405.

<sup>283</sup> FERNANDES, Abílio José. “O senhor D. José da Costa Nunes e as missões de Timor”, in: *Boletim Eclesiástico da Diocese de Macau*, ano XXXIX, n.º 454 (1942), pp. 445-454.

<sup>284</sup> FERNANDES, Abílio José. *Esboço histórico e do estado actual das missões de Timor e refutação dalgumas falsidades entre elas caluniosamente afirmadas por um ex-governador de Timor*. Macau: Tipografia Mercantil, 1931.

<sup>285</sup> ROSA, Frederico Delgado. “Temor e orgias”: dimensões antissincréticas no arquivo missionário novecentista (Timor Leste, c. 1910-1974), in: *Anuário Antropológico*, Brasília, UnB, 2017, v. 42, n. 2, pp. 31-56.

<sup>286</sup> DUARTE, 1930: 76.

## Writing and Collecting East-Timor in Macau

These different aspects of historical relations between Macau and East Timor involving trade and people, wars or finances, administration, and religion produced some writings in a cultural and political Macanese context trying to understand and think oriental Timor. Decades prior to fathers Andrade and Fernandes papers and book, in 1844, the newspaper *A Aurora Macaense* published already an anonymous but entertaining text, undoubtedly written by another missionary working in the field, discussing that traditional ethnic-political divisions of Timor, highlighting the opposition Servião-Belu and the territorial expression of Portuguese, Dutch and *topasse* power.<sup>287</sup> The essay explains the Portuguese colonial system of alliances along the north coast from Batugadé, today in the border with Indonesian Timor, to Liquiçá and Dili; eastward alliances in Hera, Manatuto, and Vemasse; and the interior penetration to Balibó, Ermera, Atsabe and Maubisse. Next, the text criticizes the common practice of the Portuguese governments in Lisbon and in the African colonies of sending their worst criminals to Timor, suggesting colonization based in Chinese honest farmers and workers guided by Catholic priests that should include the urgent restoration of the abandoned missions of Solor and Larantuca.<sup>288</sup>

From 1881 onwards, Macau starts up an exciting but barely researched process of collecting natural and ethnographic goods in “Portuguese Timor” for the first colonial museums in Lisbon as well as for the increasingly popular world fairs and exhibitions. Invited by the Dutch government in Batavia, Macau with Timor failed to be present in the world fair of 1883, in Amsterdam, since the Portuguese government in Lisbon invoked unfinished colonial disagreements with Holland to refuse the call. The government of Macau was able to attend with important showcases, including natural and cultural species from Timor, the world fair of Anvers, in 1885<sup>289</sup> and, naturally, the great “eiffellian” Paris universal exhibition of 1889.<sup>290</sup>

Some documents highlight the initial phases of this process of imagining a colonial museum and idea of oriental Timor as a selected showcase for foreign visitors, Portuguese included. On April 13, 1881, the government of Macau officially requested the colonial administration in Dili to sent “collections of objects of the territory for the royal museums”,

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<sup>287</sup> “Timor”, in: *A Aurora Macaense*, II (1844), pp. 2-3.

<sup>288</sup> “Timor”, 1844: 3.

<sup>289</sup> CORDEIRO, Luciano. “Exposição universal de Anvers”, in: *Occidente*, Vol. VII, 8º Anno, n° 231 (21 de Maio, 1885), pp.113-116, 193-196, 211, 214, 235, 246, 267-270, 287.

<sup>290</sup> “A Exposição universal de 1889”, in: *A Ilustração*, Vol. VI, 6º anno, Paris, 1889, pp.190-193; *Exposição universal de Paris 1889*, in: *Occidente*, Vol. XII, 12º Anno, n° 383 (30 de Novembro, 1899), pp.178-179, 202-203.

including trees' seeds and shrubs of Timor with “their names, common and special applications”.<sup>291</sup> On the final of August, the Macanese administration received only “9 of the ten promised packages of natural products, one stayed in Makassar, but the products arrived damaged, gnawed by the rats and with white ant, which included those on alcohol flasks also completely deteriorated”.<sup>292</sup> Next, on November 11, the administration of Macau has collected the “products of Timor that arrived well packed except the European potatoes that came rotted”. The commission that collected the products was directed by “Major Vaquinhas that received an official laud”.<sup>293</sup> It is, therefore, worth mention that this major José dos Santos Vaquinhas arrived in 1864 in Timor as second-sergeant,<sup>294</sup> promoted to aspirant official in 1867,<sup>295</sup> since 1868 lieutenant,<sup>296</sup> transferred to Macau in 1873 to the infantry battalion,<sup>297</sup> becoming in 1874 captain and head of the military station in Taipa, then major and second commandant of the Macanese police guard, being later nominated interim governor of Timor between December 30, 1881 and May 3, 1882, officially decorated due to his military action in arresting the insurgent *liurai* of Laleia, D. Manuel dos Remédios.<sup>298</sup> Returned to Macau, Vaquinhas was appointed in 1885 president of the commission for the study of the new fortifications of Dili, and authorized to request retirement in 1888.<sup>299</sup>

Vaquinhas probably was one the most prolific authors on Timorese themes of all the Portuguese 19<sup>th</sup> century. Correspondent member of the Geographical Society of Lisbon, created in 1875, most of his articles were published in the society bulletin, including panoramic memoirs of the colony,<sup>300</sup> population statistics,<sup>301</sup> cartography,<sup>302</sup> boundaries,<sup>303</sup> intelligent

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<sup>291</sup> AHM, Administração Civil – 27855, fls. 37-39v.

<sup>292</sup> AHM, Administração Civil – 27855, fl. 48.

<sup>293</sup> AHM, Administração Civil – 27855, fl. 59.

<sup>294</sup> VALDEZ, Francisco Travassos. *Da Oceania a Lisboa*. Rio de Janeiro: Tip. Perseverança, 1866, p. 4.

<sup>295</sup> *Annaes do Conselho Ultramarino*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1867, p. 5.

<sup>296</sup> *Boletim da Província de Macau e Timor*, vol. XIV, nº. 1 (1868), p. 146.

<sup>297</sup> *Boletim da Província de Macau e Timor*, vol. XIX, nº. 28 (1873), p. 111.

<sup>298</sup> AHM, Administração Civil – SA/01/00331.

<sup>299</sup> *Boletim Militar do Ultramar*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1888, p. 88.

<sup>300</sup> VAQUINHAS, José dos Santos. “Timor”, in: *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, II, nºs. 9-10 (1881), pp. 733-741; VAQUINHAS, José dos Santos. “Timor”, in: *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, IV, nº. 7 (1883), pp. 307-328.

<sup>301</sup> VAQUINHAS, José dos Santos. 1882. “Estatística da População de Timor”, in: *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, III (1882), p. 747.

<sup>302</sup> VAQUINHAS, José dos Santos. “Timor. Cartas do Major José dos Santos Vaquinhas”, in: *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, IV, nº. 7 (1883), pp. 277-286.

<sup>303</sup> VAQUINHAS, José dos Santos. “Timor. - Território Pertencente a Portugal em 1883”, in: *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, IV, nº. 7 (1883), pp. 306-28.



ethnographic observations and remarks,<sup>304</sup> plans for economic colonization,<sup>305</sup> largely cored on coffee new capitalist investments, and, published after his death, an essay on the Catholic missions in the territory.<sup>306</sup> Most of these papers aim to rebuild and change the traditional dramatic representation of “Portuguese Timor” as unhealthy, deadly, pestilent, insalubrious, miserable and backward, preferring instead to describe the moderate pleasant climate of the uplands and the extraordinary fertility of the soil for coffee production, thus inviting the “Lisbon capitalists” to invest in the country since they would apace “acquire a great fortune”.<sup>307</sup> They never did.

Some decades afterward, an interesting study very influential in forging the colonial topic cultural representation of East-Timor comes from the book on *Macau and its inhabitants. Relations with Timor*, written by Bento da França (1859-1906), published in Lisbon, in 1897.<sup>308</sup> Former secretary of the government of Timor and, later, of Macau, França presents a summary of Portuguese presence in Timor since the Dominican settlement in Solor, dated in this book from 1561, up to the government of Afonso de Castro between 1859 and 1863. Most of the narrative recalls in a chronological sequence the main rebellions in Timorese territories: the revolt of 1724 against the governor António de Albuquerque Coelho (pp. 256-257); the violent attack to Manatuto in 1731 (pp. 257-258); the well-known Dutch fatal besiege of Lifao in 1769 (p. 259); the two Dutch military incursions into Atapupu port in 1817 and 1818 (pp. 264-265); plus a very detailed account of the rebellions of 1861 repressed by the militias gathered by the governor Afonso de Castro (pp. 269-271). The Timorese section of Bento da França’s book is also relevant for following the first Portuguese-Dutch frontiers negotiations in 1847 (p. 266), the pre-agreement reached in 1850 (p. 267), followed by the treaty signed by both countries in 1854, but afterwards unaccepted by the Dutch due to the lack of religious liberty of cult in Portuguese controlled areas, contradictions finally solved during some brief posterior years by the treaty of 1859 (pp. 268-269). In spite of the historical interest of these events, mostly copying that former title by Afonso de Castro of 1867, França’s essay is especially crucial to rebuilt a recurrent pattern of ethnocentric representation of East-Timorese peoples and cultures

<sup>304</sup> VAQUINHAS, José dos Santos. “Timor: Usos – Superstições de Guerra”, in: *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, IV, nº. 7 (1883), pp. 476-492.

<sup>305</sup> VAQUINHAS, José dos Santos. “Colonização de Timor”, in: *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, VII, no. 7 (1887), pp. 453-461.

<sup>306</sup> VAQUINHAS, José dos Santos. 1929. “Missão de Timor”, in: *Portugal Missionário*, 1929, pp. 311-313.

<sup>307</sup> VAQUINHAS, 1887: 453.

<sup>308</sup> FRANÇA, Bento da. *Macau e os seus habitantes. Relações com Timor*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1897.

from the paternalist perspective of Portuguese “civilized” colonialism:

It is a point of faith for us that the *timores* will always willingly accept our dominion when there are good examples from us, energy and strength, all tempered with respect for their more and uses in the reasonable part.<sup>309</sup>

These ideas have a long background in the Portuguese official and missionary representations of Timor, going back to 17<sup>th</sup>-century accounts, but our author updates the ideological perspectives with clear colonialist 19<sup>th</sup> century European lenses that included, in this case, the standard resource to the corrective military punishment of East-Timorese,

because they are prone to the marvelous and supernatural, it is worth that our worship pomp addresses their spirit through the senses; because of their peculiar indolence, they lack the work of strangers to create necessities, transforming vices into laborious sources; since they are indifferent to moral stimuli, it is necessary an armed force to overcome their inertia, to instill respect and to force them to shake off from their usual drowsiness.<sup>310</sup>

Much more well-known and celebrated as a major Portuguese writer in the Far-East, most studies forgot that Wenceslau de Moraes (1854-1929) was since 1875 a navy official that also visited Timor, first in 1885 as second-lieutenant, later in 1888 as chief-officer of the frigate “Rio Lima”, months after his first arrival to Macau where he returned in 1891 to become second-commandant of the port, then professor of Mathematics in the city new lyceum, finally consul in Kobbe, in Japan, the country and culture that he has completely adopted.<sup>311</sup> Moraes didn’t write anything particular on “Portuguese Timor”, although as we will see was quoted for some “sayings”, and since he only briefly visited the colony in two navy scales one can only gather some short appointments, not uninteresting, in his first volume of “Letters from Japan”, published in 1904. The references to East-Timor in these texts are notes in the context of the Portuguese participation in the National Industrial Exhibition of Osaka, in 1903, in fact, an international event for which Moraes tried without significant success to mobilize an

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<sup>309</sup> FRANÇA, 1897: 278.

<sup>310</sup> FRANÇA, 1897: 278.

<sup>311</sup> DIAS, Jorge. “A Presença de Macau na Vida e Obra de Wenceslau de Moraes”, in: *Revista de Cultura*, II série, nos. 27-28 (1996), pp. 123-136.

impressive showcase of Portugal and its colonies.<sup>312</sup> Our author-consul main Timorese suggestion regards the coffee from the colonial territory that was already in this period its main exportation:

Why the Portuguese merchants of Macau and Hong Kong do not try to introduce the excellent coffee of Timor to Japan instead of letting it go to Makassar and other points of the Dutch colonies where it loses its name and qualities, since it is mixed with lower coffees? The answer is quite simple: because they do not want to. For they should, and they need to understand that, in the present age, individual and family well being, and consequently of the motherland, can only be achieved at the expense of persevering work and competition. Relying on the good fortune of a prized lottery ticket or God's benevolence (who has long since ceased to protect indolence) is bad business.<sup>313</sup>

It seems odd to find Wenceslau de Moraes writing so seriously on trade subjects since one century after the publication of most of his books, countless studies and the most diverse authors build up almost exclusively a singular cultural halo of a dominant figure of a rare orientalist-alike writer and thinker. Nonetheless, in these precious collections of letters, it also is the diplomat that speaks and mostly on projects to revitalize the Portuguese commercial presence in the Far East. Therefore, in a letter dated from January 8, 1903, trying to mobilize merchant companies from Portugal and the colonies for the upcoming Osaka grand industrial exhibition, Moraes presents an economic project also renewing the connections between Macau and East-Timor albeit its "savage" situation:

Macao must also become an important trading post: from its warehouses, well supplied, orders will be dispatched to the various points of the coast, and it must be remembered the fact that many Macanese Portuguese are justly scattered along those coasts, more or less related to the interests of the mother-country and desirous of its aggrandizement, and can be a precious help.

Do not forget to mention that our Timor, rich in natural products, but still almost in full savagery, and compensating still so poorly the sacrifices of the metropolis, will have everything to gain from the revival of Portuguese trade in the Far East.<sup>314</sup>

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<sup>312</sup> OLIVEIRA, Francisco. *Wenceslau de Moraes Permanências e Errâncias no Japão*. Lisboa: Fundação Oriente, 2004, pp. 19-23.

<sup>313</sup> MORAES, Wenceslau de. *Cartas do Japão. Antes da Guerra (1902-1904)*. Porto: Livraria Magalhães & Moniz Editora, 1904, pp. 9-10.

<sup>314</sup> MORAES, 1904: 111.

Albeit these scarce notes, it is worth acknowledge that our famous author kept a long friendship and correspondence with one of the most important and worldwide traveled Dutch anthropologists, Herman Frederick Carel ten Kate (1858-1931), who after lengthy researches in North America also made important fieldwork in India, Polynesia, Australia, Java and in the Lesser Sundas, including Sumbawa, Flores, Solor, Adunara and Timor, in this case from February 1 to April 9, 1891, publishing an important account of these voyages and researches in a referential impressive five volumes book.<sup>315</sup> Kate also settled in Kobe from 1898, practicing after that for eleven years Medicine, marrying a Japanese woman from Yokohama, thus suggesting that his close friend Wenceslau de Moraes' lifestyle was not singular among some European epochal grand intellectuals traveling and studying Asian societies until becoming fetching fascinated by Japanese civilization and culture. Herman Kate main anthropological principle that the study of non-Western peoples and cultures was a mirror to comprehend the "anomalies" of European culture had some epochal influence reaching in Portugal Mendes Corrêa and his studies on East-Timor.<sup>316</sup> We don't know if Moraes and Kate have ever discussed their contemporaneous voyages to Timor, but they visited together the Dutch pavilion in that 1903 Osaka exhibition, and our writer noted in another of his Japanese letters not without some regret:

The Dutch colonial section is also worthy of particular attention; among many articles it exposes are several samples of coffee, which reminds me with regret that Portuguese coffee is not included in the exhibition although the district of Timor, at short distance from Japan, produces excellent coffee.<sup>317</sup>

Another referential name bridging the history of Macau and East Timor is Jaime Correia do Inso (1880-1967). Arrived in 1908 for the first of several visits to Macau as second-lieutenant of the gunboat "Pátria", Inso was involved in 1912 under the prestigious command of the future admiral Gago Coutinho in the final phases of the Manufahi wars in Timor. Our navy official distinguished himself in the maritime defense of Baucau and, mostly, in the military offensive that expelled the rebels from Oecussi. Author of several books on Macau and a famous volume of *Visions of China*, several times reprinted in luxurious illustrated editions simply labeled as *China*, Jaime do Inso published a key memoir on the victorious Portuguese colonial

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<sup>315</sup> KATE, Herman F. C. *Verslag eener reis in de Timorgroep en Polynesië*. Leiden, E.J.Brill, 1894, 5 vols.

<sup>316</sup> CORRÊA, A. A. Mendes. *Herman ten Kate (um amigo de Wenceslau de Moraes)*. Porto: Universidade do Porto, 1932.

<sup>317</sup> MORAES, 1904: 160.

offensive during the most famous East-Timorese pre-independence rebellion: entitled *Timor – 1912*, the book resulted from two previous papers published in 1912 e 1913 in the *Anais do Clube Militar* accounting the events “for the relief of Timor” (“Em socorro de Timor”).<sup>318</sup> The two articles were later transformed into a larger and much more detailed book that opens the accounts by stressing the importance, almost “modern”, of the Manufahi wars in East Timor:

They presented a unique feature in our colonial campaigns, which was that of a trench warfare that would have been a precursor to the sap tactics of the Great War. Moreover, this campaign that went completely unnoticed in the metropolis was one of the most important that we had to sustain in the Overseas, in the last decades. Except for the campaigns of the Gungunhana and the Namarrais in East Africa, and the Dembos in West Africa, no other has exceeded it from the military point of view.<sup>319</sup>

Other than the particular military events of the campaign and especially the actions of the gunboat sent from Macau, the book by Jaime do Inso witnesses as an ethnographic survey the clash between two diverse cultures: a colonial and European system of values versus a traditional and ritual regime reflected in the war culture itself. In fact, our second-lieutenant is also a very diligent observer and explains to the readers the radical diversity of the Timorese idea of fighting cored in an old head-hunter culture:

The *timores* challenge themselves with screams, after exposing to each other the reasons why they make the war, and their goal is to obtain the head of an enemy to be considered *assuai* or valiant warrior. The heads after smoked always follow the *assuai* during the war before being transported to their respective lands where they will be exhibited like trophies of victory in the *lulic* or sacred trees. They are also used to make after the war a strange ceremony: the *tabedai* or the dance of the heads and, in front of these human remains, they sing a lugubrious and wild chorus called *lorsai*.<sup>320</sup>

Precipitated by the increase of the capitation tax from one to 2,10 patacas, the colonial economic and administrative Portuguese offensive in

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<sup>318</sup> INSO, Jaime. “Em Socorro de Timor”, in: *Annaes do Clube Militar Naval*, XLII (1911), pp. 11-37, XLIII (1912), pp. 21-47; INSO, Jaime. *Timor- 1912*. Lisboa: Edições Cosmos, 1939.

<sup>319</sup> INSO, 1939: 9-10

<sup>320</sup> INSO, 1939: 53.

East-Timor with new roads, names, signs, more soldiers and bureaucracy, increasing Chinese emigrants, vehicles and machines, including telephone lines and telegraphers, plus the electricity revolution led to profound interferences in the traditional cultural practices and social realms. The new prohibitions and fines on the killing of animals in public rituals and festivities, including burial ceremonies, the repression, and penalties on the use of certain traditional clothes in Portuguese official events and inside the schools along with several other socio-economic transformations provoked the Manufahi revolts ending in the first true colonial war of East-Timor. Jaime do Inso catches these paramount differences between Portuguese colonialism, now with a republican flag, and traditional Timorese cultures, still using the monarchic banner, thus trying to explain the causes of the war:

The first probably lies in the warlike and proud character of the *timores*, who for the same reason that we, when a stranger enters our house by force, do not readily accept interference in their home. This would be the more remote cause, aggravated with time and with more immediate causes. From these we heard that the principal was a proposed increase of the capitation tax from one pataca to two patacas and ten avos. I also heard that, in the first clashes with the people of Manufahi the rebels said to ours: “come here and get the two patacas, if you can”. Besides these, other causes were stressed as: the prohibitions of cutting sandalwood before a certain age; the payment of a tax of two patacas for every tree cut; the cadaster of coconuts trees and livestock; the implementation of a new tax on the animals slaughtered in the occasion of their *estilos*; being the last, the change of our flag with the advent of the Republic that the indigenous didn't seem to accept well. Thus, we heard that in Manufahi the new flag was ripped and burned and they hoisted up the old one.<sup>321</sup>

Jaime do Inso receives in Baucau on July 19, 1912, news of the Portuguese and Timorese allies victory in Manufahi by the occupation of Leulaco and Riaco strongholds after 40 days of offensive and violent clashes: 8.000 to 10.000 prisoners, apprehension of hundreds of shotguns and thousands of traditional weapons.<sup>322</sup> Watchful of any “oriental” signs, due to his knowledge of Macau, our author carefully accounts the Chinese population of East-Timor diverse reactions during the military campaign. In Baucau, writes Inso, after publicly announced the defeat of the rebellion:

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<sup>321</sup> Inso, 1939: 67-68.

<sup>322</sup> Inso, 1939: 172.

The Chinese did not want to fail to celebrate the important feat, so in the afternoon they smashed so many fireworks, *panchões*, in the air that the sentinel came to shout “to arms” surprised by that break of the restful in the bucolic Baucau.<sup>323</sup>

The text describes in continuation the small town, presented as “the most beautiful” of Timor, recalling “Sintra”, and summarizes its quite simple simulation of urbanism and the correspondent plain commercial facilities:

In a wide street and in little more is accumulated the main part of the town: the Palace, the fortification and some modest Chinese shops where the natives find their luxury of savages.<sup>324</sup>

Jaime do Inso is even more impressed when, resting during twenty days in Dili with “Pátria” crew, astonished discovered the local very well organized and most active Chinese community. Firstly, our second-lieutenant is surprised by the Chinese local school build up in a pagoda along a “club” near the town port:

During this stay in Dili, we had occasion to observe an interesting manifestation of Chinese life in this colony. We visited a kind of club that served, at the same time, as a commercial school, exclusively for Chinese and maintained by the Chinese community. In the classes, where they taught besides the Chinese language also English, we have seen instructive pictures on subjects of zoology and botany.<sup>325</sup>

Identifying the Chinese strong communitarian associations’ system that Inso knew already from Macau, our author is as well most touched by the cleanness and luxurious decorations of the Buddhist temple assisting the community, and didn’t resist following along with other officials of the Portuguese gunboat a welcome performance presented by the students:

Chinese, almost all young men, filled the place with joy and excitement, so that for a moment we judged ourselves out of Dili’s sad and gloomy silence, and our surprise reached its peak when we saw those Chinese boys transformed, without hen or cabaias, but wearing white uniforms and a cap, quickly formed in a courtyard at the instructor’s voice. They numbered, made evolutions, marched with grace, while one sang a patriotic hymn that the others accompanied in chorus. Would not

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<sup>323</sup> INSO, 1939: 173.

<sup>324</sup> INSO, 1939: 173.

<sup>325</sup> INSO, 1939: 101.

that be a vision of New China? Before leaving, they sang again with vibrant enthusiasm the same notes, which were incomprehensible to us, except in the aspiration that they displayed. Enthusiasm, order and instruction were what we observed in Timor, in a Chinese pagoda, in 1912.<sup>326</sup>

The text continues by contrasting this Dili Chinese community with the poor and scarce Portuguese living in the colonial capital, lacking sociability and lost in an intriguing environment, thus inviting Inso to close this critical remarks recalling Wenceslau de Moraes most famous saying on oriental Timor:

The Chinese, whom we normally consider semi-barbarians, even far from their homeland, in a strange and almost inhospitable land, were united, striving to live their life, whereas we could not have in Dili as a center of meetings or amusements more than a prehistoric billiard, in a sad, rustic shop, where one did not even want to enter. Add to this an atmosphere of intrigue and bitter passions, carried to a high degree by the depressing colonial milieu, and one will have an idea of what then was life in that ridiculous scenario of Timor that had previously been synthesized by Wenceslau de Moraes in these lapidary words: beautiful nature, misery and fevers!<sup>327</sup>

In spite of this misery, the Portuguese victory in this East-Timorese early colonial war led to a quite interesting social and cultural long-term change: new administrative territories arose, former kingdoms, namely the most rebellious were divided into several *sucos*, and novel chiefs were elected under Portuguese scrutiny only to legalize most of the former *liurais* rulers with, as we saw, ranks of majors and colonels of the colonial army. There was, therefore, in Portuguese colonialism strategies in East Timor an ongoing effort to integrate what was represented as “traditional power” in the colonial political and social processes mainly through a production of a subaltern elite, educated and Christianized through the new official schools and seminars, able to fulfill administrative, management and evangelizations tasks. This strategy that invented much more than preserved “traditions” became so attached to the East-Timorese elites that have even influenced the political ones that built up the process of independence in 1974-1975 and after that the

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<sup>326</sup> INSO, 1939: 102.

<sup>327</sup> INSO, 1939: 102.



national resistance to Indonesian occupation.<sup>328</sup> Among some political leaders that were still educated in colonial Portuguese schools or seminars one still finds the “evident” idea that traditional Timorese power needs to be preserved at least as a national commemorative key memory realm.

This is the main idea ordering the thought and writings of one of the leading contemporary figures of the East-Timorese exiled in Macau after the Indonesian aggression, on December 7, 1975. Name always present in Macau solidarity groups and events helping but also trying to study East-Timor history and culture, father Francisco Maria Fernandes (1935-2005) left us one of the essential books for the research of Macau/East-Timor historical relations. It is thus convenient to put him at the end of this list of efforts made in or through Macau genuinely aiming to understand East-Timor. Born in Lacló, near Manatuto, in 1935, sacred priest in 1965, famous by his action in supporting thousands of East-Timorese refugees in Atambua, West Timor, after the Indonesian invasion, Francisco Fernandes settled in Macau from 1989 up to his death, in 2005, commonly known through the simpler and fraternal name of “father Xico”. Author of a master dissertation defended in the University of Macau on D. António Joaquim de Medeiros,<sup>329</sup> his most important book was left in manuscript and recently posthumously edited, in 2011, respecting the entire work and original title: “Radiography of Timor Lorosae”.<sup>330</sup> It is not an academic dissertation but a sincere memoir of paramount love for his country culture and history that deserves some thoughtful attention from scientific research since the volume is an important source of the most diverse anthropological and historical themes on the past and present of East-Timor.

Divided in 23 chapters, some much more notes than a fluid narrative, Francisco Fernandes, *Radiography of Timor Lorosae* is an important essay for recalling again some foundational traditional myths (chapters V-VI) and legends (“Uran Wake”, chapter VIII), for studying the ancient kingdom of Lacló (chapter VII), the Portuguese colonial period (chapter XIII), the Japanese invasion of Timor during the II World War (chapter XV), the Indonesian occupation (chapters XVI-XIX) and, among other appointments, the book also offers a chapter on the “historical relations between Macau and Timor” (chapter XIV). This part that interests us most does a historical summary visit to trade and political connections to emphasize that from 1877, Macau “saved Catholicism in Timor” and, in consequence:

<sup>328</sup> HICKS, David. *Rhetoric and the Decolonization and Recolonization of East Timor*. New York: Routledge, 2015.

<sup>329</sup> FERNANDES, Francisco M. D. *António Joaquim de Medeiros (Bispo de Macau) e as Missões de Timor, 1884-1897*. Macau: Universidade de Macau, 2000.

<sup>330</sup> FERNANDES, Francisco M. *Radiografia de Timor Lorosae* (ed. Ivo Carneiro de Sousa). Macau: St. Joseph University Press, 2000.

Young people from Timor began to come to study in Macao, especially at the Seminary of St. Joseph, at the Infante D. Henrique Secondary School and at the Commercial School. And these former students of Macao formed an important part of the intellectual class of Timor before the occupation of Indonesia. More than 30 East Timorese priests who currently work in Timor, like the author, studied in Macao and were students with proper achievements. The secretaries-general of the three main East Timorese political parties that emerged in Timor in 1975 were former seminary students. The first President of the Republic of Timor-Leste, Francisco Xavier do Amaral, was a former student of the Seminary of St. Joseph.<sup>331</sup>

Francisco Fernandes does read the long history of relations between Macau and Timor as a major Catholic religious and missionary set of events, but in fact he also stresses the ineluctable role of the Church in the process of building throughout memory and history, resistance and nationalism the country that he preferred to label “Timor *Lorosae*”. However, since his book is as well an astonishing repository of ancient and local knowledge, revisiting countless cultural traditions and practices of the peoples of East-Timor, the final representation of the country bridging past, presented as “Eden”, and future, thought to become “Heaven”, thus reuniting arcane memory realms to a new idea of nationhood, is a proposal that mainly recalls “tradition” as the leading source of “national sentiment and spirit”:

Traditional organizations must be revitalized, beginning with “umakains”, “knuas”, through *sucos* to kingdoms. Their hierarchies and codes governing and regulating social life have specialized norms able to resolve even the most complicated disputes. Such a traditional system has been affirmed as effective throughout the history of Timor. It was the traditional authorities that ensured peace and harmony in Timor, even before the arrival of Europeans, Portuguese and Dutch. (...) And more. Nowadays, all the newly independent peoples proudly seek to drink from the source of their origins: their laws, their symbols, and their traditional values. A government that does not take pride in drinking from its traditional sources, preferring to copy the foreign models that have already failed in the countries of its origin, has no national spirit and feeling because it belittles the values of the nation.<sup>332</sup>

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<sup>331</sup> FERNANDES, 2011: 123.

<sup>332</sup> FERNANDES, 2011: 265.

If one puts together the papers from the “major” Vaquinhas and the books by the “secretary” Bento da França, the “second-lieutenant” Jaime do Inso and of our father “Xico” the same reverence regarding an East-Timorese “tradition” crosses their writings. However, although they recognize an arcane general power of “tradition”, these titles don’t account the same “tradition”, let alone the same set or examples of concrete “traditions”. The word “estilos”, for example, which all the four authors use to refer to traditional costumes and ritual ceremonies in East-Timor has very diverse meanings: in Vaquinhas most ethnographic paper the word means a sacrifice through the killing of pigs and buffalos;<sup>333</sup> for França is a military collective celebration with drums, drinks and a common meal;<sup>334</sup> Jaime do Inso uses it as a ritual process of “oracles” consultation;<sup>335</sup> and Fernandes explains the word as the traditional ceremonies related with the ancestors cults.<sup>336</sup> Although used in tetum, *estilos* is a Portuguese word that was already explained in Bluteau most famous Portuguese-Latin vocabulary, from 1712, among several other meanings as “costumes, way of doing” (costume, modo de obrar).<sup>337</sup> Truly, the number of Portuguese words commonly used from 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries that spread in colonial territories and became “traditional” are countless, being in some cases completely forgotten or fallen in disuse in contemporary Portugal as, for example, the fifteenth and sixteenth common “sertão” that, meaning then a region far from the sea, turned into a Brazilian symbol, first, of the colonial society and, later, of a certain idea of rural or natural territory characteristic of the country<sup>338</sup> therefore extolled as a national singular realm and a key literary locus.<sup>339</sup>

In East-Timor, the Portuguese words as well as other Malay, Indian or Chinese words coming with the colonial progressive domination that are mobilized even in serious candidates of anthropological-alike researches as “evident” traditional concepts defining the utmost arcane cultural profound practices are more than several: *arraial*, *moradores*, *bando*, *bazar* for social structures; *gentio* for gentiles or non-Catholics; *batuques* for several festivities and dances that can also be *estilos* and these refer to most traditional-alike rituals; objects as *catanas* and *matracas*; vehicles and plows are *carretas*;

<sup>333</sup> VAQUINHAS, 1883: 479.

<sup>334</sup> FRANÇA, 1897: 276.

<sup>335</sup> INSO, 1939: 26.

<sup>336</sup> FERNANDES, 2011: 90.

<sup>337</sup> BLUTEAU, Rafael. *Vocabulario Portuguez e Latino*. Coimbra: Colégio das Artes da Companhia de Jesus, 1712, p. 320.

<sup>338</sup> FILHO, Fadel David António. “Sobre a palavra ‘sertão’: origens, significados e usos no Brasil (do ponto de vista da Ciência Geográfica)”, in: *Ciência Geográfica*, Vol. XV, nº. 1 (Janeiro/Dezembro 2011), pp. 84-85.

<sup>339</sup> ROSA, Guimarães. *Grande Sertão – Veredas*. Rio de Janeiro: Livraria José Olympio Editora, 1956.

ships as *beiros* and *córcoras* or *corecoras*; fortresses as *tranqueiras* or political spaces as *sucos*. Systematic historical-linguistic research would certainly unveil a huge collection of several other words, plus trans-regional and transnational languages transactions, including the voyages of sayings, talking, readings and writings promoted by the development of colonialism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the revolution of transports, typographic capitalism, and the invention later of modern tourism. In consequence, the discourses, oral or written, visual or symbolic, on “tradition” are not only “naturally” rooted in the past, but are also trying to induce the future by intervening socially and politically in the present. Therefore, much more important than their vivid descriptions of “estilos”, “arraiais” or “bazares”, the texts from Vaquinhas, França, Inso or Fernandes highlight a common cultural tradition of resistance that is a mainly long-term history and memory of social resistance that really build up in East-Timor an independent nation. In rigor, to be and to become, a nation doesn’t always need to invent traditions; a history is more than enough, a memory is more than sufficient; a set of memory places is certainly illustrative, but a people with the “proud character” pointed out by Jaime do Inso is more than indispensable: it really is the only reason for the existence of a nation.



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