

# Religious Linkages between Macao and the Philippines

FIDEL VILLARROEL, O. P.\*

The religious linkages that existed between Macao and the Philippines for three centuries cannot be fully understood without taking into account the political and economic relations that strongly colored the history of both colonies. Paradoxically, in spite of their geographical proximity, Macao and Manila represented the farthest outposts of the twin Iberian empires of Spain and Portugal, whose explorers and missionaries met in the Far East after making a half circle in opposite directions around the globe.

## GEOGRAPHICAL AND POLITICAL SETTING

To begin with, the political relations between the two colonies were marked more by keen rivalry, mutual

\* Fidel Villarroel, a Dominican, born in Tejerina (Leon), Spain, is Chief Archivist and Professor of Church History at the University at the Santo Tomas, Manila. He has written twenty works, mostly dealing with Philippine history, with the Dominican missions in the Far East and with the University of Santo Tomas. He worked as assistant secretary of the Apostolic Nunciature of Manila for thirty two years (1959-1991). He is member of the Academia Filipina, Correspondiente de la Real Academia Española.

*Fidel Villarroel, dominicano, nasceu em Tejerina (Leão), Espanha, é Arquivista-Chefe e Professor de História da Igreja na Universidade de Santo Tomas, Manila. Autor de cerca de duas dezenas de obras, sobretudo sobre a História das Filipinas, as Missões Dominicanas no Extremo Oriente e sobre a própria Universidade de Santo Tomas. Durante trinta e dois anos (1959-1991) foi secretário-assistente da Nunciatura Apostólica em Manila. É membro da Academia Filipina e Correspondente da Real Academia Española.*



Illustration by Victor Hugo Marreiros.

mistrust and geopolitical competition than by understanding and cooperation, even in the Christian enterprise of colonizing and evangelizing their respective territories. The Portuguese always resented the Spanish presence near Macao, and not without reason. Unknowingly for sure, the Spaniards, based on the primitive state of cartography of that time, sailed westward across the Pacific going beyond the demarcation line set by Pope Alexander VI in 1492 and overstepping into the Portuguese area of influence. Both colonial powers met in the Far East (or Far West), and once they established their positions, they never abandoned them. In 1555, the Portuguese founded the city of Macao in South China establishing there a very profitable commercial center. Ten years later, in 1565, the Spaniards settled in Cebu and throughout the entire Magellan archipelago. But it was not until two centuries later, in 1750, that the Portuguese officially acknowledged the Spanish rights over the Philippines.

## SISTERS IN THE FAITH, RIVALS IN THE REST

Strangely enough, political relations between the two colonies were not made easier during the sixty years (1580-1640) when Spain and Portugal became united as one monarchy under the scepter of King Philip II



of Spain. The two Iberian nations continued to be as different as before, “one monarch, two administrations”. Actually, one of the express conditions of the union was that the two colonial empires should continue to be separately administered by two different Royal Councils, completely independent of each other as hitherto. And in religious affairs, the privileges of the Portuguese *Padroado*, which exercised important rights in Church matters, were respected by the Spanish monarch.

But more than politics, it was trade that, more often than not, caused the relations between the Philippines and Macao to be tense, mutually suspicious and even hostile. Both countries were set to benefit from their trade in oriental products coveted by Europe. It was with the traders, not with the conquistadors, that the missionaries of Spain and Portugal penetrated in China and Japan. If it was ‘in search for Christians and spices’ which brought the Portuguese to Asia, in the words of Charles Boxer, it can be said that Christians, silver and silk were the objects of the annual voyages of the Portuguese galleons yearly visiting Japan. In the case of the Spanish counterpart, the Acapulco Galleon annually coming to Manila engaged in the same trade of oriental and western products. For the purpose of our study, it must be noted that only by following these galleons can we determine the most relevant religious linkages that united Macao and Manila, especially in the first century of the two colonies.

Macao was founded in 1555 and the city of Cebu, in the Philippines, in 1565. Macao was named the “City of the Holy Name of God”, just as Cebu was placed from the beginning under the patronage of the “Holy Name of Jesus”, after the statue of the Santo Niño found there by the men of the Adelantado Miguel Lopez de Legazpi. Macao became a Diocese in 1580, one year after Manila had become a diocese in 1579, and fifteen years before the latter was raised to Archdiocese in 1595. But both ecclesiastical jurisdictions were totally independent of each other. In fact, both were tied to corresponding and rival royal *patronatos*, extremely jealous of the prerogatives granted by the popes on Church affairs. Macao was a suffragan see of Goa in India, while Manila was initially suffragan of the far distant Mexico across the Pacific. Understandably, therefore, the areas of religious relationship between Macao and Manila were not many

and not very close at the diocesan and hierarchical levels.

Returning to the question of the all-important commercial relations, the Macanese Portuguese were in a privileged position to engage in a voluminous and lucrative trade with China and Japan. In fact they claimed to be sole and exclusive intermediaries or agents between rivals and enemies China and Japan. The continuous trade of the Portuguese with China was rendered easy by their proximity across a common border. As for Japan, every year, from 1555 on, and for almost one century, the Macao government dispatched yearly a convoy of galleons, galliots and carracks (known as “the Great Ship from Amacon”) to the port of Nagasaki, leaving in July and returning in November. During three months of stay in Nagasaki, the Portuguese traded Chinese silk and other products highly esteemed by the Japanese for the silver of the rich Japanese mines for which the Chinese were insatiable. And what matters more for us in this study is that with the sails of the galleons there went to Japan the missionaries needed for the nascent Japanese Christianity, who disguised themselves as traders once the anti-Christian persecutions began early in the seventeenth century.

For their part, the Spaniards of Manila were also in need of buying the exotic and much-coveted products of China and Japan for their trade with Mexico, Spain and Europe, carried by the Acapulco Galleon. The trade of the Spaniards with Japan was done directly and was never as voluminous as that of Macao, while their dealings with the Chinese were done either directly or through Macao. Portuguese ships did come to Manila during the seventeenth century with considerable frequency, particularly after 1622, when the Spain-Japan commercial relations were cut off by the Shogun. Even after that trade was unilaterally cut off by Japan, Spanish missionaries from the Philippines continued traveling to Japan secretly in Chinese junks.

#### MACAO AND THE FILIPINO SAINT LORENZO RUIZ

This triangle of commercial interchanges, that is, Manila-Macao-Nagasaki, set the stage for special religious linkages between Macao and Manila during the critical period of the anti-Christian persecutions



## HISTÓRIA / Religião

waged by Japan. The edict of general persecution issued by Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1614 shook the entire Christian edifice to its foundations. The European missionaries, both the Macao-based Jesuits and the Manila-based friars, were ordered to leave Japan, and they were put on board two ships in November of that year to be deported to their respective cities. Those who dared to remain secretly were sought, arrested and sentenced to cruel martyrdom for their Christian faith. The missionaries of both Iberian nations, plus a few of other European nationalities, though often disagreeing on methods of evangelization, died for their faith together, united in the most fraternal and extraordinary bond of witnessing by martyrdom. Among the many thousands of Christian martyrs of Japan in that long persecution, 205 were beatified two centuries later by Pope Pius IX in 1862, and 16 more beatified in Manila by Pope John Paul II in 1981 and canonized in Rome in 1987 by the same Pope.

For the Philippines the most outstanding and relevant martyr of that persecution was the layman Lorenzo Ruiz, and what is interesting for our study is that Macao played an important role in our knowledge of his martyrdom and in the process of his canonization. It can be truly said that without Macao that process would have been rendered almost impossible. Lorenzo Ruiz, a native of Binondo, left Manila in 1636 in the company of a group of Dominicans bound for Japan to an almost certain death. At the time of departure, Lorenzo was not sure of the destination of the ship, for, as he said later, he thought they were going to Macao, but for better or for worse, or for both, and providentially indeed, the destination was to be Japan. Soon after secretly landing in Okinawa, they were found by the agents of the authorities and arrested, and one year later, 1637, they were carried to the mainland Japan, to Nagasaki, where they were thrown into jail, cruelly tortured and sentenced to be executed for their Christian faith in September of that year 1637.

It was also providential for the martyrs that the Portuguese ships sent from Macao that year 1637 were anchored at Nagasaki Bay at the time of their martyrdom. That convoy was one of the most impressive ever organized by the Portuguese colony. It carried "a total of 942 men, including about 150 pure Portuguese". The Macanese traders remained in Japan from August 23 to November 6. And as in previous

years, the crews and traders were lodged in houses built for them by the Japanese government many years before, in a reclaimed area in the Nagasaki waterfront facing the city streets along the harbor. From the windows of their houses, on September 27, 1637, the Macanese saw a procession of five Christians from Manila, three of them priests and two laymen, being led on horseback to their execution on a hill near the city walls, a hill also visible from the houses and the ships. The three were Dominican (a Spaniard, a Frenchman and a Japanese), and the two laymen were a Japanese leper named Lázaro and the Filipino Lorenzo Ruiz.

A Macanese eyewitness who saw them marching in the middle of a hostile crowd behind banners describing the motive for their execution reported the order of the procession: "In second place, he says, there went the mestizo Lorenzo Ruiz, honoring his country and his pueblo of Binondo for having valiantly suffered so much for the Lord and for going joyfully to die for his faith." Many of the Portuguese were able to see the victims being executed by hanging and beheading.

The witnessing of this dramatic scene by the Portuguese was going to have a transcendental importance. By the middle of November, as the Portuguese galleons made their return entry into Macao harbor, a Philippine Dominican, Fr. Francisco Pinelo, accidentally passing by that city on his way from Manila to Spain, was among the Macanese crowd that welcomed the traders and heard them tell the story of the martyrdom of Lorenzo Ruiz and companions. Fr. Pinelo rushed to the Episcopal Curia to ask for the holding of a canonical process before the ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese of Macao, so as to formally and officially put on record for the Church the verbal testimonies of the eyewitnesses for a possible initiation of a beatification Cause in the near future. The canonical inquiry was actually held at the end of that year with nineteen Portuguese testifying before an ecclesiastical tribunal of the Diocese of Macao.

Something more was brought by the Macao galleons, which would be of the greatest importance for the Filipino martyr, namely, a precious narrative rich with moving details of the circumstances of the execution of the martyr. It was written by the best possible eyewitnesses of the event, the interpreters of



## HISTORY / Religion

the court of Nagasaki. It bears the following title in Portuguese: "Martyrdom of the Fathers, Fray Miguel, Fray Tomás, Fray Vicente, Fray Antonio, religious of Saint Dominic, and of Lorenzo Ruiz, native of Manila, who came from Manila and arrived in Nagasaki on September 13, 1637." The interpreters narrate in full detail the dialogues between Lorenzo Ruiz and his Japanese judges, Lorenzo's initial and brief fears and doubts, and his final heroic stand in proclaiming his faith and in offering his life for God. A manuscript copy of the narrative was made by the Jesuits to be sent to Rome, while the original manuscript was carried to Manila.

On December 27 of the same year 1637, a *patache* (cargo boat) of Macao arrived in Manila bringing the news of the martyrdom together with the text of the narrative of the Japanese interpreters. Manila vibrated with Christian enthusiasm. At the sound of the church bells of Intramuros, the Manilans hurried to sing a *Te Deum* in the churches of Santo Domingo and San Ignacio (a Jesuit Father had also been martyred in Japan on another day) to celebrate the triumph of the Christian heroes. A contemporary Jesuit, Fr. Juan Lopez, Rector of the college of Cavite, who took part in the celebrations, wrote that the Portuguese eyewitness coming in the *patache* "did not stop telling about the courage, fervor and high spirit of this saintly mestizo (Lorenzo) who suffered cruel tortures with rare constancy, always preaching the divine law of God."

Further to contribute to the beautiful relations of that moment between Manila and Macao, a second canonical inquiry was conducted in Macao two years later about the death of Lorenzo Ruiz and companions. The proceedings of the ecclesiastical inquiry having reached Rome and then been lost, we cannot know how many Portuguese testified in it. What we know is that the Archives of the University of Santo Tomás still keep a list, drawn in 1650, of 120 Macanese who were ready to testify in favor of their martyrdom.

The glorious end of this stupendous story was written three centuries later. In 1981, after a lengthy canonical process, Pope John Paul II came to Manila, and on February 18, he beatified Lorenzo Ruiz and companions before one million devout and admiring Filipinos gathered at the Luneta Park and many more millions of television viewers throughout the world. Just before the Pope solemnly read the formal

declaration, three Catholic Bishops among the many Prelates concelebrating with the Pope stood up to make the "Petition for Beatification". They were Jaime Cardinal Sin of Manila, the Archbishop of Kyoto on behalf of the cardinal of Nagasaki and Bishop Arquimínio Rodrigues da Costa of Macao, the three dioceses where, at one time or another, canonical inquiries had been conducted about the death of the martyrs. Thus the three petitioners beautifully symbolized the religious links that had united in the distant past and at present the three dioceses and peoples of Manila, Macao and Nagasaki through the martyrdom of a simple but extraordinary Filipino, Lorenzo Ruiz, and his missionary companions.

## MANILA-MACAO AND THE CONTROVERSY OVER THE CHINESE RITES

On matters regarding China, the relations between Manila and Macao were more muddled and strained than with regard to Japan, even in the lofty fields of theology and methods of evangelization. Politics must be blamed for it. The missionaries of both colonies had to profess loyalty to their respective royal *patronatos*, that is, to the rights of their respective monarchs to intervene in ecclesiastical affairs, such as the right to provide for and to protect the work of evangelization in their respective territories. The Portuguese claimed exclusive rights to preach the Gospel not only in Goa, Malacca, the Moluccas and Macao, in which they exercised political dominion, but also in non-dominated countries like the whole of India, Malaysia, Indochina, China and Japan. Furthermore, no Spanish or European missionary had any business to travel to those areas except by the Portuguese route around southern Africa or to enter China except by way of Macao, and always after making an oath of allegiance to the rights of the Portuguese *Padroado*. Consequently, the Manila-based missionaries who tried to enter China but did not comply with the *Padroado* rights would find themselves in trouble with both the Chinese and the Portuguese.

To add more problems to the China mission, from the 1631 the work of evangelization was troubled by serious misunderstandings and controversies between the missionaries themselves, giving rise to the unfortunate controversy of the Chinese Rites, which



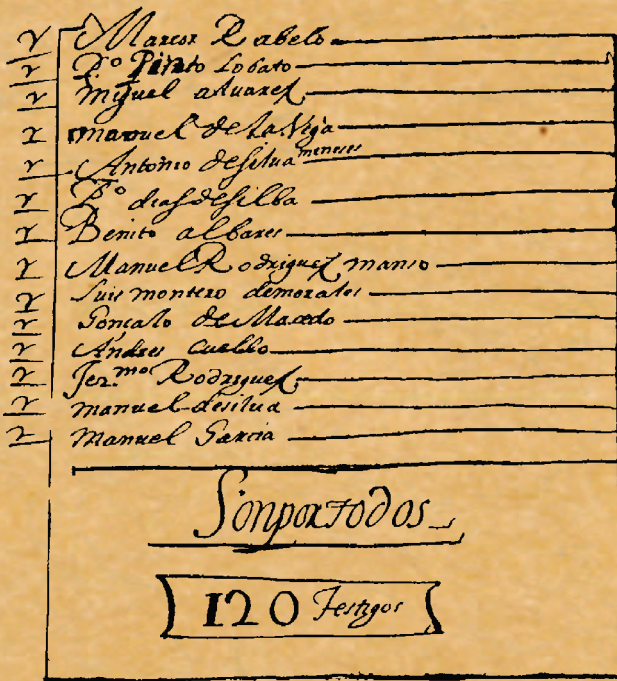
# Memoria De los Portugueses que se hallaron en la ciudad de nangasagua en el Reyno de castilla delos gloriosos reinados de el Rey. Antonio gonzales y sus companias P. Fr. Guillermo Courtet, P. Fr. Miguel de Oyarzun de

Año De		1637	
Y	Don f. <sup>o</sup> de castel Blanco Cap. <sup>o</sup> maior	Y	Nuno Caele. de ponte
Y	Simon Vas de Pauia futor	Y	Manuel de Vega
Y	Don f. <sup>o</sup> de Espirita	Y	Manuel de Lamata
Y	Escuadr Coxen	Y	Domingo Mendiz Mouraon
Y	Gonzalo de silua	Y	Antonio de silua de menceu
Y	Manuel fernandez	Y	fr. <sup>o</sup> Ruiz
Y	Antonio Lobo de guerra	Y	Antonio ferrera de silua
Y	Saluador Coello moison	Y	Baltazar Piñero
Y	miguel de Pauia	Y	Gonzalo Ruiz
Y	Anastasio Caldiza de aluazanga	Y	Ignacio Montero de silua
Y	fr. <sup>o</sup> Carniso de guerra	Y	Ju. <sup>o</sup> Varro futor del Rey
Y	Simon Nello Carreto	Y	Antonio ferrera de silua
Y	Ju. <sup>o</sup> de Pauia de peira	Y	Melchor de Vazquez
Y	Antonio de costa benicho	Y	Alexo de miquita Cap. <sup>o</sup>
Y	Vasco Garbora de melo	Y	Antonio de silua feto
Y	Ju. <sup>o</sup> de coello de macedo	Y	Domingo Gonzalo de peira
Y	fr. <sup>o</sup> Montero Omo	Y	Domingo Caravalle
Y	Ruy dias de acobedo	Y	P. <sup>o</sup> de Crasto
Y	Gregorio de morais sarmiento	Y	Andae Garbora
Y	Pascual Correa	Y	Rodrigo sanches de Parado
Y	fr. <sup>o</sup> Ferrera de silua	Y	fr. <sup>o</sup> Goncalves Prieto
Y	Leonardo ferrera Maximino	Y	Sebastiao de taon de vera
Y	Amador Coello de melo	Y	Christoual tauare Coxen
Y	Joseph de guerra	Y	Antonio ferrera Caravalle
Y	Luis Montero de morais fr. <sup>o</sup> de morais	Y	Genito matinu
Y	fr. <sup>o</sup> de acobedo Ferrera	Y	Domingo Gonzalo de Parana
Y	Bar. <sup>o</sup> de Rocha pimentel	Y	Lorenzo Goncalves
Y	Luis de acobedo	Y	Ju. <sup>o</sup> de Alcar
Y	Antonio Valente de peira	Y	Manuel fernandes Alcar
Y	Luis ferrera	Y	Manuel Perez
Y	Mattheo de Valladares	Y	Ju. <sup>o</sup> de mouroa
Y	Jer. <sup>o</sup> Ruero	Y	Ju. <sup>o</sup> de acosta muno
Y	Bar. <sup>o</sup> me. <sup>o</sup> fagor	Y	P. <sup>o</sup> Goncalves
Y	Manuel de silua	Y	Baltazar de los Reyes
Y	Antonio de nro Verdade	Y	Ruy dias
Y	Manael de ferrera Pinto	Y	P. <sup>o</sup> dias de silua
Y	Diego de mendoza huxado	Y	Andres gomez
Y	Manuel de nro de daria	Y	Manuel albarex P. <sup>o</sup>
Y	Gonzalo de macedo	Y	Leonardo flores
Y	Andae Coello	Y	agustin de acosta
Y	Al.º Garay mendo	Y	Manuel aluarez
Y	Miguel de peira Garbora	Y	P. <sup>o</sup> Ruiz Rios
Y	Nicolas de abargay	Y	Ju. <sup>o</sup> de mouro de lucena
Y	Nicolas de acosta	Y	fernan Ruiz
Y	Papax Camo	Y	Ju. <sup>o</sup> de mouro Nello
Y	Antonio de Rocha	Y	Manuel fernandes
Y	Ju. <sup>o</sup> de guerra	Y	fr. <sup>o</sup> Ferrera
Y	Manuel Ruiz Manro	Y	Pascual Correa
Y	Antonio de guerra Neto	Y	Ju. <sup>o</sup> Rodriguez Tarana
Y	Manuel ferrera beltran	Y	fr. <sup>o</sup> dias Voto
Y	Jer. <sup>o</sup> de costa Lobo	Y	Antonio de figueroa
Y	Ju. <sup>o</sup> de mouro Nello	Y	fr. <sup>o</sup> Varro



## HISTORY / Religion

The 120 Macanese who were ready to testify in favor of Lorenzo Ruiz and companions, executed in September 1637.



lasted for one century. It is outside the scope of this study to enter into the issues of the controversy. In oversimplified terms, the Macao-based missionaries, all Jesuits, had, from the arrival in China of their first missionary Fr. Matteo Ricci in 1583, allowed their new converts to continue practicing certain ceremonies and rites used by the Chinese, which the Jesuits considered as civil in character. Forty years later, upon their arrival in 1631, the Manila-based friars (Dominicans and Franciscans) strongly objected to this method of missionary adaptation in the conviction that the rites were religious and pagan in character and therefore contrary to the Christian faith and practice. The two sides never came to agree on this matter. As for the Chinese themselves, the imperial and local authorities sometimes opposed the preaching of Christianity for being a foreign religion, and they even persecuted the missionaries and Christians, or they tended to be a bit lenient with those favoring the practice of the Chinese rites.

In the theological disputes that ensued, both sides tried to win the favorable support of the Holy See, but

to no avail, because the first decisions of the popes were made in accordance with the diverse presentation of the situation by the opposing parties. Sometimes, an anti-Christian persecution by the Chinese authorities would end in the expulsion of the missionaries to Macao. Several notable Dominicans (Frs. Juan Bautista Morales and Alfonso Navarrete, Bishop Pedro Sanz (canonized in Rome on October 1, 2000, with 119 other martyrs of China) and others, were exiled to the Portuguese colony, where they were charitably given lodging by their Portuguese confreres in São Domingos Convent, but received little sympathy from the Portuguese officials, even from the higher ecclesiastical authorities.

The sad conflict over the Chinese Rites came to a dramatic climax with the visit to the Far East of the Papal Legate Archbishop Thomas Maillard de Tournon in 1704-1710. Tournon was sent there by Pope Clement XI to put an end to the dispute among the missionaries, but his mission ended in failure after having experienced enormous difficulties and suffering in Manila, China and Macao. The first stage of the voyage, his passing through Manila, was bad enough, but it was not the worst. Having sailed from Cadiz, Spain, with the prerogatives of a plenipotentiary envoy and *legate a latere* of the Pope, Tournon sailed for the East by the Portuguese route of South Africa. A sea mishap diverted the boat to Manila, where his presence alarmed the Spanish authorities, unaware of his arrival. The legate had not obtained any credentials from the Spanish Royal Council to stay in any Spanish dominion, and the lack of this formality was taken in Manila as a violation of the royal *Patronato*. In modern diplomatic parlance he had to be treated as *persona non grata*. Although he was lodged in the Archbishop's palace, he was ungraciously told by the colonial government to leave the Philippines in the first ship bound for China.

To Macao he went, the legal entrance door of the legate to China, and from Macao he proceeded to Peking to discuss the matter of the rites with Emperor Kangxi. In Peking the legate was treated to a Palm Sunday welcome that would soon turn into a painful calvary. The imperial Court offered him a grand reception hoping for a decision in favor of allowing the Christians the practice of the rites. But the decision had already been taken at Rome, and the legate soon made public a Papal bull condemning the rites for the



## HISTÓRIA / Religião

Christians. Frustrated and angered, the emperor ordered the expulsion of the legate from Chinese territory, and he was escorted to Canton and finally to Macao. His deportation was followed by that of the Philippine friar missionaries who had sympathized with the legate all the way and with the decision of the Papal bull. Thus the Dominicans, Franciscans and Augustinian missionaries found themselves exiled in Macao, where they were treated now with less sympathy and greater hostility than they would have imagined.

For three years since 1707, the legate was kept incommunicado by the Macao authorities and treated with contempt and even abuse, consoled only by the spiritual company of the exiled Philippine missionaries and by some sectors of the Christian Macanese people. The Dominicans were fraternally received in the convent of their Portuguese brethren, São Domingos, but even in their monastic retirement they were not free from political persecution. Their convent was assaulted by the agents of the government, who deported the Portuguese Prior to Goa. In the midst of these acts of government and popular agitation, news spread through Macao that the Papal legate Archbishop Maillard de Tournon had been raised to the rank of cardinal by Pope Clement XI. The rumors were true. Six months later, a ship coming from Manila arrived in the Portuguese colony bringing the red hat and the

J 1637

L:

Martins do P. Fr. Miguel e Fr. Thomaz e Fr.  
Viana e Fr. Antonio da Legião de São D.  
Enlourenço de São J. de Manila, os  
Fr. Viana de Manila chegaram este  
Nagasaki em 13. de Setembro de 1637 -

As quatro horas da tarde do dia seguinte afindo dezenta e duas  
ostras e as mais amarelas e brancas e panola, e as  
levarão aonde as g. e as l. e perguntarão que homem era  
a) responderão que se ligava de ordem do Sr. D. São Domingos  
e, e as l. e que o Bapista não se pôde chamar o habito  
quando quizerão vir para o Bapista. por quem não queriam  
outra que partira de Manila, disserão q. hum anno, por  
guntarão, se sabia que avia fadiga, q. não poder vir.  
e o Bapista responderão que não somente elles sabião q. avia  
fadiga, senão q. por todo o mundo se sabia, e q. com todo  
isto vinha para salvar estas almas, e mostrar l. e o cami:  
nho da salvação e q. não se quer no j. m. e as como as gran. de. uca:  
nha, e perguntarão l. e se sabia falar o Bapista responderão  
q. não, que f. Fr. Miguel impetora a p. do. a lingua

37

Viana.

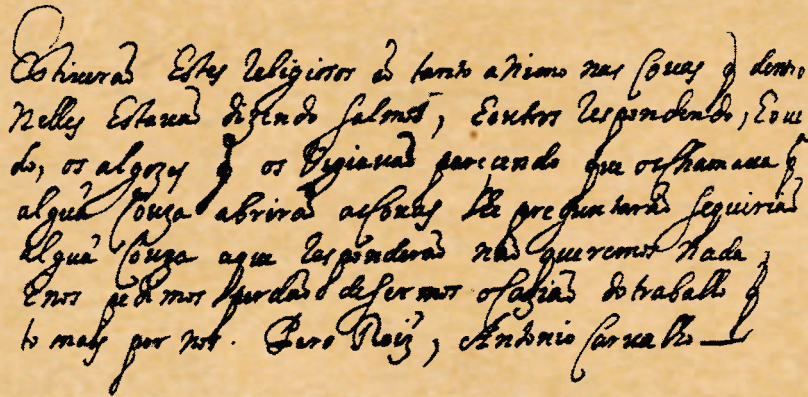
208

First and last pages of the narrative written by Pedro Rodrigues and António Carvalho, the interpreters of the court of Nagasaki.

other Cardinal's insignia for the imprisoned prelate, but whatever consolation he received by this benevolent gesture of gratitude from the Pope, the joy was quite brief. On June 6 of that year 1710, Cardinal Tournon died in Macao, reportedly of abdominal troubles and of apoplexy caused by moral suffering, ill treatment and grief.



## HISTORY / Religion



Encima Estes Religiosos de tanto a Nossas nos foy de dentro  
 Nelles Estava de grande salom, Eoutros respondendo, Eou  
 do, os algar, e os Vigianas parando que os thomasa  
 alguma coisa abriro as foyas de preguia tanta seguiria  
 alguma coisa aca respondendo na queremo nada  
 Ems pedimos foyda de foyda de foyda do traballo  
 to mais por nos. Puro Pais, Andrio foyda de

with irreparable damage to the very evangelical mission that the two Christian colonies were supposed to uphold and promote.

#### THE TOMB OF A PHILIPPINE BISHOP IN MACAO

The Spaniards of Manila had enough reasons to blame their Portuguese neighbors for carrying the rights of the *Padroado* to such extremes. But it has to be said that the Spanish royal *Patronato* could be just as intransigent when dealing with its rights in ecclesiastical affairs in the Philippines. The case of Bishop Tomás Badia is a typical example, and, strangely enough, it happened in the middle of the nineteenth century, at a time when the spirit of enlightenment, liberalism and anticlericalism had penetrated all strata of the national and colonial governments. By that time, the Church was no longer their concern, and the officials of the state had become indifferent and even hostile to religion. Unless, of course, the church ministers, missionaries and parish priests were useful to the state as a means of keeping the loyalty of the Philippines to Spain.

Meanwhile, the exiled Dominicans arrived in Manila in that year to an emotional welcome by their brethren, who received them as worthy imitators of their predecessors in the mission field of China. Unlike in the case of the martyrs of Japan, this time the religious links between the Philippines and Macao began and ended in bitter jealousies and misunderstandings and

In 1833, after several years of missionary work in Northern Luzon, the Dominican Fr. Tomás Badia, described by the historian Fr. Hilario Ocio as “a simple, straightforward, humble, God-fearing” friar, was sent by his superiors to the missions of Fukien, China. Upon request of the Most Rev. Jose Seguí OSA, the old and sickly Archbishop of Manila (1832-1846), Fr. Badia



## HISTÓRIA / Religião

was promoted to the episcopacy by the Holy See. Having gone to Singapore through Macao to receive the Papal Bull, he was consecrated Bishop in 1842 in the Malayan city of Penang. Although he was ostensibly nominated as Coadjutor to the Bishop of Fukien, the real purpose of the Bull was to make him Coadjutor to the Archbishop of Manila. However, the intent of the Holy See was one thing and its final implementation was quite another, for although all the canonical requirements had been fulfilled, there were legal flaws in his appointment. The Holy See had used, as it were, the back door of Singapore to provide a successor to the Archbishop of Manila.

When Msgr. Badia proceeded to Manila a few months later, he found himself in the middle of a political storm. He had been nominated without royal presentation, in violation of the royal *Patronato de las Indias*. The liberal-minded colonial government, treating him like an alien, gave him orders to leave the Philippines for China on the first available ship, while a consultation report on the matter was dispatched to Madrid by the colonial authorities. Msgr. Badia left the Philippines and sailed for Macao and from Macao to his mission of Fukien, from where, afflicted by sickness, he soon had to return again to Macao for medical treatment. But the restoration of his health was not the only reason for his return to the Portuguese colony. His services as bishop were required there by the local church. A new bishop had been nominated for the see of Macao in the person of Msgr. Nicolas Rodrigues Ferreira, and Badia was asked to act as his consecrator, which he did. Meanwhile, news arrived that Queen Isabella II of Spain had approved Badia's nomination as Coadjutor of the Archbishop of Manila, thus removing all obstacles to his taking possession of his pastoral office. But it was too late. The sick and troubled prelate never made it to the Philippines, for he died in Macao on September 1st of that same year 1844.

This time, the Portuguese *Padroado* made a generous gesture in favor of a *castelhano*. Upon representations by Bishop Rodrigues Ferreira, the Governor allowed the defunct prelate to receive dignified funeral services and a dignified burial. The funeral rites were attended by the Governor himself, the Senate of the city, the French Papal Delegate to China, all the missionaries residing in the city and a vast crowd of the faithful. His body was given burial in the Dominican church of São Domingos, the most central church in

town. His remains were laid to rest in a sepulcher still visible today to tourists and pilgrims. Over his tomb, in the presbytery before the main altar, a Latin epitaph dedicated to him is engraved, which reads:

THOMA BADIA  
HISPANE. EX PRAEDICATORUM  
ORDINE  
OPTIME. MERITE. VIR.  
PAX TECUM  
TIBI. EPISCOPO. YSAURAPOLITANO  
ATQUE. PHILIPPINARUM. ARCHIEP.  
COADJV-TORI  
QUI MACAI. OBIISTI  
HEV.  
KAL. SEPT. A.D. MDCCCXLIV  
ANNOS. NATVS. XXXVII  
HUNC. LAPIDEM  
NICOLAUS. MACAONENSIS.  
EPISCOPUS.  
LUGENS. POSVIT.

[Tomas Badia, Spanish, of the Order of Preachers, man of eminent goodness and merit. Peace be with you. To you, Bishop of Isaurapolis and Coadjutor to the Archbishop of the Philippines, who died in Macao, alas!, on September 1, 1844, at the age of 37. This tombstone was placed by the sorrowing Nicholas, Bishop of Macao.]

MACAO-MANILA AND INDOCHINA.  
CHRISTIAN MARTYRS AND A WAR

The only missionaries from the Philippines who preached in continental Asia during the eighteenth and the first part of the nineteenth century were Dominicans, and their mission fields were in China and Vietnam. Japan had remained tightly closed to the West since 1640, and the Formosa mission, closed in 1642, was not resumed until 1859. The Philippine Dominicans had a considerable number of missionaries in the continent, whom they sought to serve from a procure center and office established in a continental land—in Macao.

After several fruitless attempts in the seventeenth century, the Portuguese colonial authorities grudgingly consented that the Philippine Dominicans establish a Procuration House in Macao, which was actually



## HISTORY / Religion

opened in 1759 in a building located at the back of São Domingos church. That Procuration lasted until 1861 when it was transferred to the newly founded British colony of Hong Kong.

Those 102 years of Philippine Dominican permanent presence in Macao were eventful for the religious relations between that city and the Philippines. The Procurator had his hands full dealing with the accommodation of missionaries going to or coming from Manila; he had to attend to the material support of the missions of China and Vietnam by distributing the funds coming from Europe or the Philippines, he kept constant correspondence with the missionaries, and his procure house acted as post office between the same missionaries and their superiors in Manila, Madrid and Rome, and at all times it was a listening post for important developments in China and Vietnam. Some measure of the busy activity of the Macao Procuration is reflected in the abundant documentation on those missions extant today in the Archives of the Dominican Province of the Rosary, formerly called the Province of the Philippines.

Leaving aside all other aspects of the work and services of that procuration, we will limit our study to underlining the role it played in a mid-nineteenth century international conflict which involved Spain, France, the Philippines and Vietnam. We are referring to the French-Spanish military expedition of 1858 in Vietnam that ended in the annexation of the entire Indochinese peninsula to the French empire. The matter is worth noting, as it is totally bypassed in all history books on South East Asia.

One day in August 1857, two Vietnamese Catholic messengers arrived in the Dominican Procuration House of Macao, bringing a bundle of correspondence from the missionaries. A rapid reading of the letters left the Procurator Fr. Francisco Roy filled with profound dismay and consternation. A frightful persecution against Christianity had just been declared by the Annamite Emperor Tu-Duc. Other anti-Christian decrees had been issued in the recent and long past in Vietnam, even by Tu-Duc's grandfather Ming Manh, but Tu-Duc's decree proved to be more severe and destructive. In fact, it would end in the blood bath of thousands of Christian martyrs, many of whom were to be beatified by the Church on various occasions at the end of the nineteenth century and in the twentieth, and were included in the canonization of all the martyrs of Vietnam in 1988 by Pope John Paul II.

For the moment, the most alarming news for the Procurator Fr. Roy was that the authorities had arrested and imprisoned the Vicar Apostolic of the central missions, the Spanish Dominican Msgr. José Ma. Díaz Sanjurjo, once humanities professor at the University of Santo Tomás. Totally overcome, confused and helpless, Fr. Roy promptly brought the news to the Spanish consul in Macao, Don Nicasio Cañete y Moral. Could he perhaps make representations before the Annamite court for the liberation of the Bishop, the safety of the Christians and the freedom of religious worship? Cañete did not have a ship at his disposal in Macao to get closer to the coasts of Annam to establish contacts with agents of the imperial court or with the missionaries, and Manila was too far away for an immediate and urgent action, so the consul decided to contact the Minister Plenipotentiary of France in China, Mess. Alphonse Bourboulon, who had at his disposal the French fleet operating in the South China Sea. France, besides, had complaints of her own against the Annamite court for alleged abuses committed against French citizens in recent years.

Events succeeded each other very quickly now in the Far East and in Europe. Both diplomats, Cañete and Bourboulon, sought further information about the situation in Annam from the correspondence extant at the Dominican Procuration, and they decided to send to the Indochinese coast a French warship to demand satisfaction from the Annamite Court for alleged violations of human rights in the past against French and Spanish citizens and especially the freedom of the Dominican Bishop Sanjurjo and other Christians. As regards the Bishop, the diplomatic moves came too late. When the ship arrived at the coast of Annam, it was known that two months earlier Bishop Díaz Sanjurjo had been sentenced to death and had been beheaded on July 20 of that year in the city Nam-Dinh. Many other executions would follow. Reports were sent to Madrid and Paris about the events taking place, and as a result of them, and after numerous but rapid diplomatic exchanges of views between Paris and Madrid, both governments decided to intervene militarily in Annam in order to stop the violations of human rights against their respective nationals.

The rest is history. A naval force was sent to Vietnam to occupy some of its ports and to force Emperor Tu-Duc to submit to the European demands. France had a powerful fleet ready in the South China



## HISTÓRIA / Religião

Sea. Spain contributed a contingent of troops from its limited forces in the Philippines. As for the Filipino participation in that campaign, aside from the soldiers included in the Spanish division, the French navy hired the services of 900 Filipinos for their own fleet. The military campaign ended after four years of war with the victory of the invading forces. France annexed the whole of the Indochinese peninsula (Annam, Cochinchina, Laos and Cambodia) to its empire, while Spain, her imperial prestige and power in clear decline and exhaustion, was excluded by her ally from participation in the spoils of the war. She did not gain an inch of foothold on Vietnamese soil.

What the forgoing history is only intended to show is the rather unknown historical fact that an event of such transcendental importance for the future of South East Asia was initiated in the correspondence received from Vietnam by the Procuration House of the Philippine Dominicans in Macao.

## A MACANESE MADONNA AND THE POOR CLARES FROM MANILA

As a fitting colophon of this study, we might well conclude with a brief reference to two interesting religious events involving Macao and the Philippines, one related to the devotion to the Virgin Mary, and the other related to a group of Poor Clare nuns of Manila.

The famous Dominican historian Fr. Diego Aduarte, writing before 1640 his famous history of the early Philippine missionaries, tells us that the statue of the Virgin Mary of Piat, now venerated in that town in the province of Tuguegarao, was carved in Macao by some unnamed artist. That statue was brought to the Philippines about the beginning of the seventeenth century and was first placed in the town of Lallo (formerly called Nueva Segovia) in the Cagayan Valley. Then it was transferred to the pueblo of Piat. The Dominicans, who had brought the statue from Macao, decided to substitute it for a more beautiful one, transferring the Macanese statue to the city of Tuguegarao. But the newly converted Ibanags, who already nourished a deep affection for the Macanese statue, clamored for its return to Piat, and their wish was granted. Since then, Our Lady of Piat has been the object of popular veneration by all the peoples throughout the Cagayan Valley.

The other event worth retelling refers to the monastery of the Poor Clares that existed in Macao from 1633 until the middle of the nineteenth century. That monastery owed its existence to the convent of the same nuns in Manila, still existing today. The present Monasterio de Santa Clara of Manila was founded in 1623 by Mother Jerónima de la Asunción and a group of Sisters who came from Toledo, Spain, for the purpose of making a foundation of their Order. Today the beatification process of Mother Jerónima is in its last stages at the Holy See. In 1624, just one year after the foundation of the convent in Intramuros, a commission of Portuguese from Macao arrived in Manila to ask Mother Jerónima very insistently to destine some Sisters for the foundation of a monastery in their city. The saintly foundress wished to comply with the request of the Macanese commission, but several difficulties stood in the way, and in 1630 Mother Jerónima died.

Finally, in 1633 six Sisters from the convent in Intramuros, headed by their Abbess Mother Leonor de San Francisco, arrived in Macao and founded the projected monastery to the satisfaction of the Christian citizens, a monastery that was to flourish rapidly in vocations to the contemplative life. But not everything went well in its initial period. Eleven years later, in 1644, much to the displeasure of the community, the three Spanish Sisters of the founding group were expelled from Macao by dictates of the Portuguese *Padroado*. Those Sisters were returned to the mother monastery, making their return trip by way of Cochinchina, arriving in Manila on May 20, 1645. The nascent Macanese community was able to overcome this trial, and the monastery of Saint Clare of Macao continued to flourish until the Portuguese expropriation laws of the nineteenth century decreed its suppression. **RC**

**Author's note:** This article is basically the unpublished conference delivered by the author during the First Convention of the Philippine-Macao Tourism Association, held in Manila on June 1999.

George Chinnery, "Frontispiece with S. Domingos Church". Pencil on paper, 1839.