

ABSTRACTS

The Tradition of “Bandas de Música” in Macao

Macao has often been regarded, somewhat disparagingly, as a place of singular characteristics, where exoticisms abound. This (mis-)conception has resulted in all kinds of distortions about the local culture. Good examples are films such as Jean Delannoy's *Macao l'Enfer du Jeu* (1942, based on the novel of the same name by Maurice Dekobra) and Josef von Sternberg's *Macao* (1952, with Robert Mitchum and Jane Russell) or the operetta in three acts *Cin-ci-là* by the Italian composer Virgilio Ranzato (1882-1937). The action invariably takes place in a fairy-tale country, with Macao serving as a background foil chosen not for its historical specifics, but as a manifestation of a generic Orientalist trope – the sort of place where strange things ‘do happen’. First visited by navigators, adventurers, merchants and missionaries, to whom the enclave represented a European gateway to East and Southeast Asia (then truly a place of exotic and contrasting cultures), Macao has been inhabited, since the middle of the 16th century, by the Portuguese. Along with the Chinese, the Portuguese exerted a very strong influence over the centuries, shaping a cultural identity of unique characteristics which found its repercussions in different aspects of the city's life, music among them. Many studies have been published about Macao as a meeting point of contrasting cultures. However, very little information can be found about music in Macao, although music—like everywhere else—may safely be assumed to have played a significant role in Macanese history and society.

This article investigates a particular aspect of music in Macao – the role of the military and municipal bands focusing on important events related to the history of the “bandas de música”, as a Portuguese musical phenomenon, the development of the military bands in Macao from ca. 1820 to 1912, the history of the Municipal Band, from 1912

to 1920 and the events which contributed to its decline between 1928 and 1935.

[Author: Oswaldo da Veiga Jardim Neto, pp. 6-43]

The “Macao Hymno”

This article focuses on the “Macao Hymno”, composed by Melchor Vela. The existence of this work, dedicated to the Leal Senado, once again demonstrates the significance of the municipal tradition in Macao as well as representing an example of the kind of music played by military bands in the late nineteenth century in Macao. Since it was not possible to reconstruct in detail the instrumental formation of the military bands in Macao in the nineteenth century, the analysis of the score of the “Macao Hymno”, which was performed several times between 1896 and 1901 by the Banda de Música da Guarnição de Macau, provides some hints as to the instruments that comprised the band at that time. Based on a facsimile of the original manuscript, a modern edition has also been prepared and included.

[Author: Oswaldo da Veiga Jardim Neto, pp. 44-73]

Chinese Tokens of Esteem in the Collection of Dr. António do Nascimento Leitão

In the collection donated to the Museum of Aveiro by Dr. António Nascimento Leitão, doctor of Aveiro who served in Macao during the first decades of the 20th century, various tokens of esteem can be found. These belong to the three types used by local Chinese, offered not only to the divinities from the vast popular pantheon but also to outstanding people among them, in parallel with the divinities, doctors who successfully cured the problems of the family that offered them. Although many of the tokens in temples have been mistakenly compared to the votive offerings of the West, those given to doctors are truly original. On the one hand they represent oriental mystical thought and on the other the cultural values that continue

to be cultivated in many parts of China—“talent” and “reciprocity”—connected to the notion of “face” and the reinforcement of social bonds. The older tokens of esteem were registered on wood, carved or inlaid with mother-of-pearl, or in finely embroidered silk.

Later, mirrors came to be preferred as offerings to doctors, because. Apart from their beauty, they were believed to possess the power “to reflect” the negative influences borne by sick people in their delicate state of health. At times these mirrors entirely covered the walls of the clinics of more famous Chinese doctors in Macao with finely crafted tokens displaying the four classic characters of *cheng yu*, artistic borders and other auspicious motifs, at times coloured.

The collection of Dr. António Nascimento Leitão includes two examples that depart from the model usually found in Chinese doctors' clinics. They are two figures in padded coloured cloth, applied over wood, representing two emblematic figures of longevity—Shou Xing Gong and Magu—perfectly complementing each other in what could be a pledge to harmony (*yin/yang*) as the fundamental concept of health.

In this article these tokens are briefly analysed as ornamental objects charged with symbolism, an expression of the common identity of the Chinese people, which has good relationships between people as its underlying principal, just as good relations between people and their anthropomorphic deities are the guarantee of peace and good fortune.

[Author: Ana Maria Amaro, pp. 74-93]

The (De)Cannibalisation of the Portuguese

Claims of Portuguese “cannibalism” have been reproduced frequently and formalised by some Chinese historians in the 20th century. Any serious and responsible historian, when citing these sensationalist “rumours”, should adopt less categorical language. Should they fail to do so, they will either

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substantiate them or mislead their readers. The emergence of this myth to arouse popular hatred against the Portuguese during the reign of Jiaping is comprehensible if we take into account the historical circumstances of the time. Absolutely incomprehensible, however, is its dissemination on a world scale in the mid-20th century.

With recourse to Chinese sources, the article seeks to eradicate this “myth” by explaining its origins and its political objectives. It concludes that the Portuguese ‘cannibalism’ was completely fabricated for local political ends. It is common knowledge that the Portuguese were never anthropophagous. It is, therefore, only fair to demystify such accusations which have persisted for centuries and even been repeated in our days by some less informed historians. [Authors: Jin Guo Ping and Wu Zhiliang, pp. 94-104]

***Shenshi* in Macao in the Mid-Qing Dynasty**

Shenshi were a significant part of social interaction in China, as well as in Macao. Although they emerged in Macao at a comparatively late stage, they were instrumental as intermediaries between the local authorities and the general population.

Their economic and social privileges brought with them a full awareness of their social obligations, particularly in the field of education. *Shenshi* in general defended community interests and acted as mediators in the event of conflict, but somewhat differently from their counterparts in the rest of China, those in Macao were also involved in foreign relations, which can be understood in the light of Macao’s particular circumstances.

[Author: Yang Renfei, pp. 105-117]

Reports on Silk. References to Chinese Silk in 16th- to 18th-Century Documents and Their Impact on European Society

Of the many themes dealt with in European printed documents relating to the Celestial Empire (particular

in the 16th to 18th centuries), Chinese silk was worthy of extensive analysis and enduring attention from both authors who approached the subject and their readers. This broad complex subject requires different approaches besides those which have tended to dominate the Portuguese understanding of the theme, which tends towards an appreciation of economic factors in which silk is only understood as the subject of commercial transactions and a generator of wealth. Although the information on this subject confirms this predisposition, it also reveals the impact that the intrinsic properties and production of raw silk had on the Portuguese and other Europeans who dealt with it in different contexts in both East and West.

Given the considerable number of reports on China published during the period in question, the author presents some of the information relating to Chinese silk disclosed in these documents into the mental and cultural framework which shaped the behaviour and sensibilities of Europeans and Chinese at the time. [Author: Maria João Pacheco Ferreira, pp. 118-139]