

ABSTRACTS

A Tribute to Fr. Benjamim Videira Pires, S.J.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of Fr. Benjamim Videira Pires’ birth (1916-1999), the *Review of Culture* invited several distinguished scholars and researchers to contribute with articles about the life, thought and work of one of the most outstanding and influential personalities in Macao’s cultural circles in the 2nd half of the 20th century. Those articles have been included in this issue of the Review’s International Edition.

Missionary, educator, historian and writer, who excelled in both prose and poetry, these varied facets of his involvement in civic and cultural affairs are analysed in my introductory notes. It was a privilege, indeed, to have known him personally and to have had many opportunities to understand the merits and value of his remarkable contribution to the development of education and culture in Macao, where he spent five decades serving the Catholic Church, the youth and the people of this territory. Many additional inputs have been provided by his brother Francisco, also a Jesuit priest, as well as a university professor and philosopher, who wrote his biography published by the International Institute of Macau in August 2011. [Author: Jorge A. H. Rangel, pp. 6-20]

Fr. Benjamim Videira Pires: The Trajectory of a Macao Educator and Historian

Father Benjamm Videira Pires was born in a confrontational and unstable period that Portugal lived since the establishment of the Republic, reflected in Macao. Reflexes that were felt in the Territory when China implemented the Republican regime whose turbulence truly would last until the victory of Mao Zedong in the civil war (1946-1949). This end of the period would pick up Father Benjamim Videira Pires in the Mission at Shiu-Hing, where he learned Chinese language and culture.

On the centenary of his birth we honour the memory of a Jesuit that gave Macao the best of himself in half a century residence in the Territory as educator and, above all, as a historian. We propose in this article follow the route of Father Benjamim Videira Pires in Macao (1949-1998) drawing you as accurate a picture as possible, and addressing two of its dimensions: Educator and historian. We have divided this work into five parts: birth and academic and religious (1916-1948); the first years in Macao; Father Benjamim Videira Pires: Educator; Father Benjamim Videira Pires: Historian; Final considerations. [Author: Aureliano Barata, pp. 21-31]

Macao’s Cultural Identity in Benjamim Videira Pires’s Ideology

This investigation tries to revisit Benjamim Videira Pires’s work, more specifically the way how to think Macao’s history. The Territory’s cultural identity projects a linguistic diversity that can be seen in the singular different ways of living, thinking and also acting which are uniquely oppositional. Look for a convergence and synthesis between the civilizational extremes was one of the greatest works of Benjamim Videira Pires. [Author: António Aresta, pp. 32-40]

The Miscegenation of Benjamim Videira Pires

This article explores the theme of Benjamim Videira Pires miscegenation, from cultural, philosophical and existential point of view. And try to follow the model of a criminal research when explaining life and existential options of Priest Benjamim, as well as in an analysis of his adventures in Macao. The result is the creation of a fictional biography, based on facts and on author’s understanding of Chinese and Portuguese psychology. [Author: Ana Cristina Alves, pp. 41-51]

Benjamim Videira Pires’ A Embaixada Mártir: Christianity and its Circumstance

From the wide work of Benjamim Videira Pires, *A Embaixada Mártir* is the tittle that reflects with most clarity the Christian environment in which he was educated, and best expresses the apologetic vision that always informed his views on the Portuguese legacy on the world. The tittle refers to one of the book’s objectives: to reveal a historical fact that testified, through the vision of a committed historian, fully dedicated to his missionary work such as Videira Pires, the intertwining between the Catholic faith and the Portuguese presence in the world.

A Embaixada Mártir is a historical monograph which reports the tragic circumstances of the death of sixty-one Catholics that were part of the special mission that the Macao Senate sent to Japan in 1640, one year after its closure to the boats from Macao provenance.

Seventy-four people, four of which with diplomatic roles, left Macao in June 1640 towards Nagasaki, with the intent to revert that policy. But shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu interpreted the envoy as disrespect to his order and sentenced all its members to death, having spared only thirteen people to report the event upon their return to Macao. The relevance of the martyrdom, valued by the author, consists in their refusal to deny their faith. Videira Pires is an example of a cultivated Jesuit that conjoined his Christian education with a wide humanistic and historic culture, allowing his recognition as one of the great historians of Macao. [Author: Celina Veiga de Oliveira, pp. 62-60]

Rising on the Eastern Sky

On 8 July 1995, the newspaper *Tribuna de Macau* devoted a whole page to Father

Benjamin Videira Pires who, this year in October 30, would turn 79 years old and would complete 47 years of living in Macao. Some investigators and friends of Father Videira Pires were invited to participate with texts about him. I was one of them, contributing to a biographical character article named ‘Pe. Benjamim Videira Pires: de Mirandela a Macau’. Based on this and other articles that other authors wrote about the same topic, I wrote this less formal, free and even fictionalised text. I say it’s fictionalised because part of this narrative was build from some interpretations of his poems, using them as opinions, feelings and his assessments about Macao. [Author: Jorge de Abreu Arrimar, pp. 61-65]

Thought and Action of Benjamim Videira Pires in Religião e Pátria

The sometimes forgotten Benjamin Videira Pires (1916-1999) lived in Macao during the second half of the 20th century and his position as director and chief editor of the *Religião e Pátria* magazine (1955-1968) needs to be highlighted. This magazine, as its name suggests, was focused by the promotion and defense of catholic values, a deep commitment to Christian spirituality, and Portuguese patriotism rooted in the prevailing nationalism in Portugal. *Religião e Pátria* became an important communication medium for the Portuguese in Macao, a non-sovereign mercantile republic where extremes were able to conciliate, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Japan and Timor and a repository of the social and cultural life of Macao in the second half of the last century. In *Religião e Pátria* we find an eclectic range of works authored by Benjamin Videira Pires, from poetry, theatre, storytelling, history, missionary preaching and journalism; this intellectual legacy being the focus of this article, will draft an analysis to its value and meaning in both historical and contemporary sense. Indeed, the works of the author are vast and diverse, ranging from prose to poetry

and covering a number of themes. The reason to explore his literary contribution in *Religião e Pátria* is due to the fact that this is one of his least known facets, although some of the articles are included in his books. We are standing before an author who made an invaluable contribution to Macao’s intellectual landscape of the 20th century. His works should, therefore, be the subject of thorough analysis and perhaps a complete new edition effectively remembering and honouring him as we celebrate the centenary of his birth. [Authors: Jorge Bruxo and Maria de Lurdes N. Escaleira, pp. 66-78]

Categorizing the Early Literature of Macao and the Role of Tang Xianzu

The first few sections of this article deal with the issue of ‘Macao Literature’, or *Aomen wenxue*, and how one may define such a concept. It is explained that the English term for this category may not imply the same as the Chinese term. One problem concerns languages, demographic groups, and Macao’s multicultural society. The question arises how we should link these dimensions to ‘Macao Literature’. Furthermore: What can we say about the relations between ‘Macao Literature’ and other literatures? Should we organise them in hierarchical systems? For instance, is ‘Macao Literature’ a subordinate entity under ‘Chinese Literature’ and/or ‘Portuguese Literature’? Would it make sense to also consider additional concepts, for example Lingnan *wenxue* (Lingnan Literature), *chengshi wenxue* (‘urban literature’), *haiyang wenxue* (‘maritime literature’), etc.? If Xiangshan is brought in, one could also envisage a twin arrangement: *Zhu Ao wenxue* (Zhuhai and Macao Literature). Finally, for those believing in Marxist criteria it should become necessary to connect literary activities, as part of a local superstructure, to the socio-economic setting of Macao—not only in a synchronic sense, but also on a diachronic axis. Here it may

(or may not) be useful to distinguish between a maritime vantage point and ‘conventional’ views, directed from the interior to the coast. The last part of the article comments on the case of Tang Xianzu, often placed at the beginning of ‘Macao Literature’. This is followed by a brief conclusion with some references to Luís Vaz de Camões. How can we relate these two and their works to the category ‘Macao Literature’? The general aim of the discussion is not to solve open issues but to explore the possibilities of combining concepts with literary examples. [Authors: Cai Jiehua and Roderich Ptak, pp. 79-100]

Macao in Henrique de Senna Fernandes’ Novel Os Dores

In this article we start from the belief that ‘[the] literary text is one of the means to access the comprehension of the world, it is a research tool containing the world’s written output ...’. Having as object of study the novel by Henrique de Senna Fernandes, *Os Dores* we propose an insight into Macao and its spaces made unique by those who inhabit them, and by the contrast between a bygone era and what is present now, providing a wealth of sensations, journeys and travelled routes and paths still to be trodden. This approach highlights essentially the space, not only physical but also the social space in which the characters move Jin, to which they may or may not belong, and also the psychological realm of their personalities, their moods or emotions resulting from the action experienced. Through a sometimes descriptive, sometimes narrative literary discourse, the author reports events linked to time and places, to known or imagined experiences, using descriptions of different characters, of spaces and of the time period in which the plot unfolds. His memories take us to the beginning of the 20th century to a city divided into two distinct areas, each inhabited not

only by psychologically different people, but also by dwellers with different socio-cultural status.

This division is real, it exists in the idea of a permanent permeability between both spaces, determining, ultimately, the lives of the characters, the way they relate to each other and how they are seen by the Other.

Aware of what is happening around him, the author draws our attention to a relevant aspect, confirmed over the centuries, the changes that result from the influence that comes mainly from abroad.

[Authors: M. de Lurdes N. Escalreira, Fernando Manuel Margarido João, pp. 101-123]

The Timor-Macao Sandalwood Trade and the Asian Discovery of the Great South Land?

Known to China and India from an early period as the prime source of sandalwood, the island of Timor (meaning east in Malay) also attracted the attention of the first arriving Portuguese in Southeast Asia. By the end of the 17th century, however, Timor Island emerged at centre-stage of intra-colonial rivalry in the eastern archipelago, just as Portugal (and Holland) in their joint conquest of Timor were, respectively, obliged to accommodate to local and regional power networks as much overarching Chinese trade networks that made their ventures commercially viable. As this article highlights, it is important to consider the way that the European trade with Timor fitted into or, at least, interrupted age-old Asian tributary and long-distance trading networks. Lying some 500 kilometres off northern Australia, Timor Island would appear to be a jumping off point for voyages further south, and that was the case with Macassan seafarers in the early 19th century.

In the light of the above, this article seeks, first, to offer a reprise upon the Chinese sandalwood trade with Timor Island, second, to configure the way that European traders, respectively Portuguese and Dutch, muscled in on the trade,

and, third, to sift the evidence as to an Asian versus Portuguese discovery of Australia.

[Author: Geoffrey C. Gunn, pp. 124-148]

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《文化雜誌》編輯部

INSTITUTO CULTURAL do Governo

da Região Administrativa Especial de Macau

Revista de Cultura

Praça do Tap Seac, Edifício do Instituto Cultural

Macau, China