

Late 17th century portrait of Alexandre de Rhodes.

Alexandre de Rhodes

The First French in Macao

The Jesuit Alexandre de Rhodes (1591/93-1660)

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The first Frenchman who lived and worked more than twelve years in Macao was the famed Jesuit Alexandre de Rhodes, mainly recognised for his missionary work and referential publications on 17th century Vietnam. Born in Avignon, between 1591 and 1593,¹ into a family of Jewish origin, he died much farther away in Isfahan, Persia, on 5 November 1660, at the start of a novel but unaccomplished religious mission. Alexandre de Rhodes began the novitiate still very young in Rome, on 14 April 1612, studying Theology and Sciences with the reputed Jesuit mathematician Christoph Clavius (1537-1612). He then decided to dedicate his entire life to the overseas evangelic efforts of the Society of Jesus, requesting a missionary appointment to Japan. Later, in 1618, his superiors agreed to send him to the Portuguese territories in the East, and the Jesuit left Rome at the beginning of October 1618, arriving in Lisbon the next year in mid-October: the Portuguese patronage rights in Asia obliged any Catholic missionary to leave from Lisbon with express royal authorisation.

Departing from the Portuguese capital on 4 April 1619 aboard three vessels of the regular annual

'route of India' (*carreira da Índia*), the Jesuit crossed the Good Hope cape on 20 July,² and after a dangerous voyage that included an outbreak of scurvy arrived safely in Goa on 9 October 1619 [19]. Alexandre de Rhodes lived two and half years between Goa and Salcete assisting with the local Jesuit religious work and schools. Firmly decided to reach Japan, the Jesuit embarked on 12 April 1622 to Malacca on the ship of the new appointed captain of the Portuguese fortress. Traveling through Cochin, Manar and Negapatan, the vessel arrived in Malacca on 28 July, but the Jesuit was obliged to stay nine months in the Portuguese Malay enclave [44]. Finally, experiencing a dangerous one month voyage threatened by Dutch ships, Alexandre de Rhodes arrived in Macao on 29 May 1623, 'four years and a half after my departure from Europe' [54], as he wrote in his travel memoirs.

After one year in Macao, the Jesuit superiors decided to engage him in the Cochinchina missions. Alexandre de Rhodes departed in December 1624 to the southern kingdom, ruled then by the Nguyen Lords, reaching after a fast trip of nineteen days the Jesuit local mission in Hue which was opened up in 1615 by the Napolitan priest Francesco Buzomi and the Portuguese Diogo Carvalho. In this period (as in the recent past), the territory that the Vietnamese historians designate Dai-Viêt, north of Champa and south of China (very roughly prefiguring the core part of the independent country that is nowadays

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Vietnam), was mainly divided in two north and south realms, identified in the Jesuit missions as Tonkin³ and Cochinchina.⁴ Between 1627 and 1775, two powerful families had partitioned the country: the Nguyen ruled the South and the Trinh Lords ruled the North after a war that gave the Portuguese traders in Malacca and Macao the opportunities to sell weapons, technologies and several commodities. Although the Trinh and the Nguyen rulers maintained a relative peace for more than a hundred years, political and military rivalries in both kingdoms were recurrent, including several rebellions of armed militias. In consequence, the Jesuit mission organised through Macao in these territories was unstable and dangerous, and the missionaries were often expelled after some briefly tolerated periods of Catholic evangelisation.

Settled the first time in Cochinchina, Alexandre de Rhodes decided to learn Vietnamese daily with local interpreters and the Portuguese Jesuit Francisco de Pina,⁵ 'who is an expert in the language of the country, which is completely different from Chinese, and serves the kingdoms of Tonkin, Camban and Cochinchina' [87]. In fact, Francisco de Pina was at the time the only Jesuit able to preach in Vietnamese, while the other two missionaries joined by Alexandre, the former Francesco Buzomi and the Portuguese Jesuit Manuel Fernandes, were preaching through interpreters [87-88]. At the end of 1625, this Jesuit mission in Cochinchina gathered ten missionaries in three different residences in Hai Fo (Hoi Pho), the main port of Portuguese trade,⁶ Dinh Ciam and Nuocman; while another evangelic front had flourished in Tonkin, namely in Kecio (Hanoi), since 1626 due to the missionary efforts of Father Giuliano Baldinotti⁷ following the increasing Macanese trade in the region.

Unable to speak or understand Vietnamese, the Italian Jesuit invited Alexandre de Rhodes to assist him in the new Hanoi mission. He returned to Macao in July 1626 and from there traveled to Tonkin in March 1627, arriving at the port of Cura Bang to commence his larger Vietnamese mission, which lasted more than two years. As in Cochinchina, the Jesuit offered several gifts to the king, including a 'book of mathematics, in gold and Chinese letters, giving me the pretext to speak about the stars and the sky, and from here I introduce him to the Lord of Heaven.' [111]⁸ Based on these auspicious beginnings, the Tonkin experience is recounted with exaggerated optimism: Alexandre

de Rhodes stresses that he was able to convert 6.000 persons (this round number is a substantive, a quality rather than a quantity) and several bonzes: in this case a threatening success that worried the royal ruler, Trinh Tráng, who feared that the Catholic doctrine would undermine the Confucian-based authority of the sovereign as well as the mandarins' bureaucratic power.⁹ Expelled from Tonkin, Rhodes settled in Macao for ten years, taking the four solemn vows around 1635, studying without major success Japanese and Chinese, fulfilling the duties of 'Father of the Christians' (*Pai dos Cristãos*), the priest in charge of the newly converts, and teaching Theology (and probably Mathematics) in the Jesuit St. Paul's College.

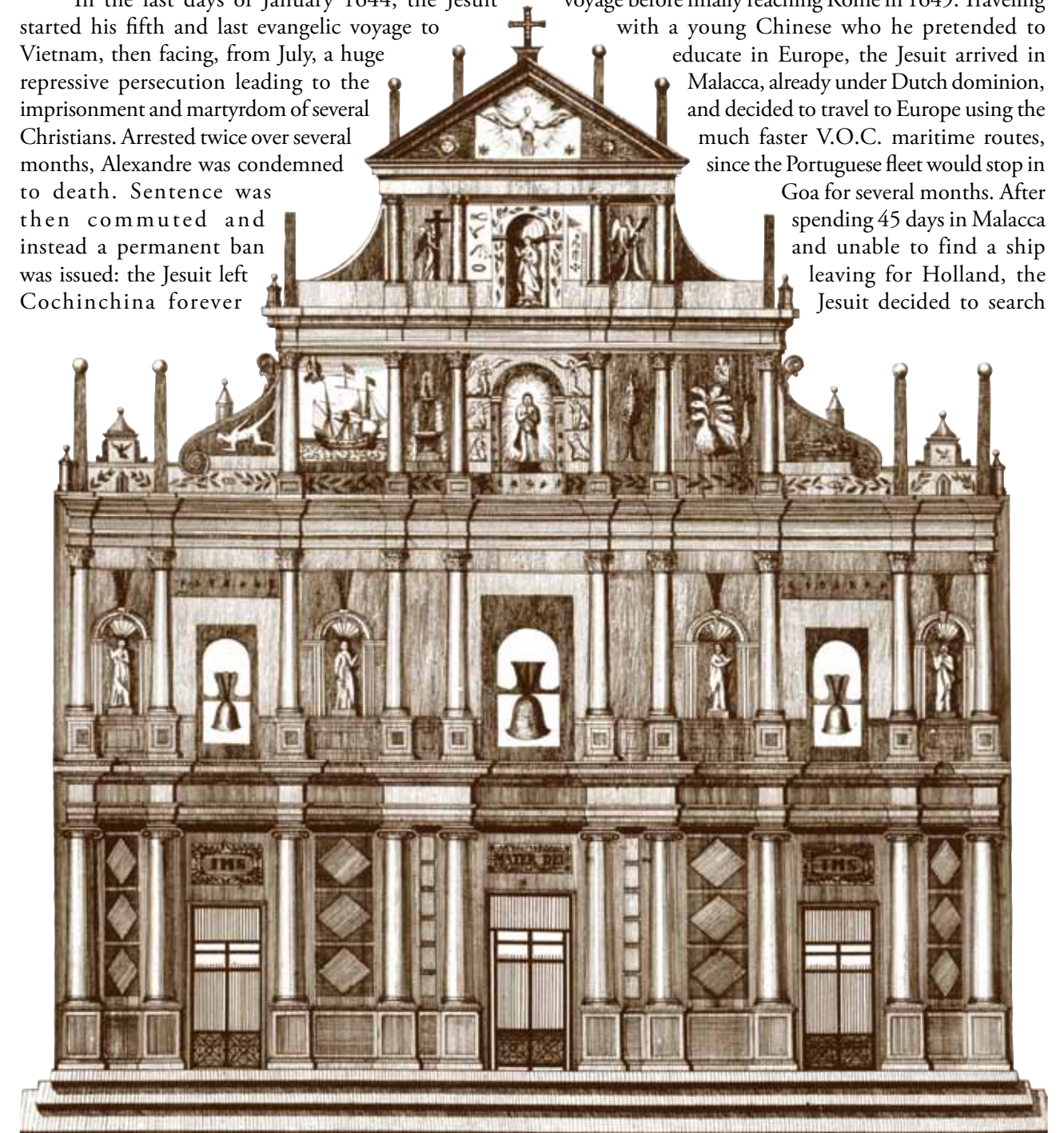
In February 1640, Alexandre de Rhodes returned to Vietnam 'with the hope of winning the Kings' spirit and to restore the realm of Jesus Christ in the country' [145], carrying several rich gifts in silver gathered in Macao. At the beginning of 1641, after one year of religious evangelisation, mainly in the harbor-town of Turan (where Da Nang is nowadays), the Jesuit moved to the province of Cham (Ciam), settling in Hoai Phoi 'where is done the main traffic of the Portuguese, Chinese and Japanese' [156-157]. After six months of religious labor, Alexandre was again expelled, and on 2 July 1641 left in a Spanish vessel to Manila. Five weeks afterwards, the Jesuit was in Macao, but returned in four months to Ciam aboard a Macanese trade ship, having a single companion, a young Vietnamese catechist. Immediately, Rhodes visited the governor of Ciam in Hoai Pho, who was very hostile to the missionaries, and offered him several expensive gifts, and then reached the royal court in Hue with a group of Macanese traders, presenting the king with 'several new watches marked with Chinese letters' [185]. In the next two years, Alexandre de Rhodes traveled through most of Cochinchina, but was forced to return to Macao at the end of 1643, on this occasion forced by Macanese traders afraid of the damage to their profitable commerce that could be caused by these challenging religious activities opposed by local rulers, and carried by missionaries from Macao transported in their own mercantile ships. In fact, during this period, after the loss in 1639 of the wealthy silver trade in Japan and the Dutch occupation of Malacca in 1641, the trade between Macao and Cochinchina increased and was particularly relevant for the economic recovery of the Portuguese

enclave in South China. The Macanese trade ships negotiated tea, porcelain and other Chinese goods, and the main return cargo consisted of sugar—which was commercialised in South China but also sent to India—eaglewood and raw silk sold to the Dutch in Batavia (Nguyen 2009, p. 358).

In the last days of January 1644, the Jesuit started his fifth and last evangelic voyage to Vietnam, then facing, from July, a huge repressive persecution leading to the imprisonment and martyrdom of several Christians. Arrested twice over several months, Alexandre was condemned to death. Sentence was then commuted and instead a permanent ban was issued: the Jesuit left Cochinchina forever

aboard a Macanese trade vessel on 3 July 1645. Arriving in Macao on 23 July, he was firmly advised to return to Europe.

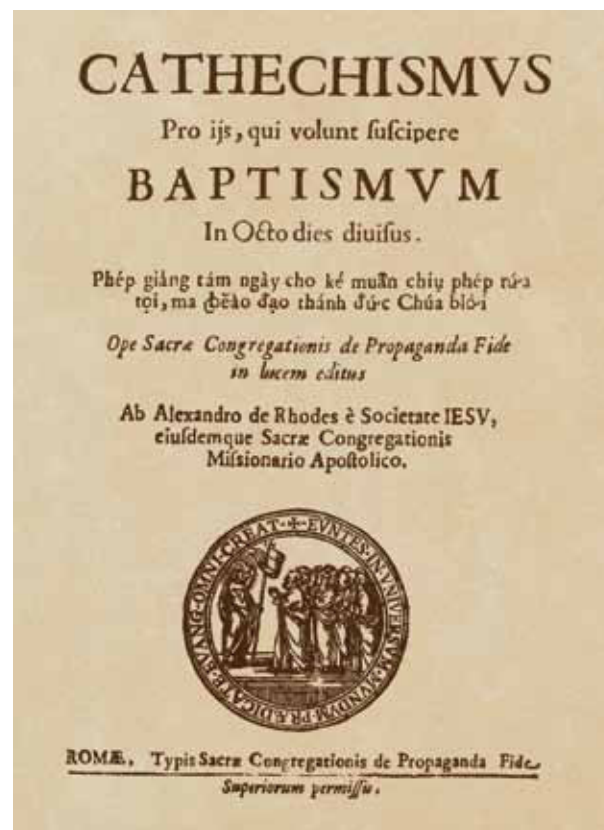
On 20 December of the same year, Alexandre de Rhodes departed from Macao aboard a fleet of eight Portuguese ships to experience the most fantastic voyage before finally reaching Rome in 1649. Traveling with a young Chinese who he pretended to educate in Europe, the Jesuit arrived in Malacca, already under Dutch dominion, and decided to travel to Europe using the much faster V.O.C. maritime routes, since the Portuguese fleet would stop in Goa for several months. After spending 45 days in Malacca and unable to find a ship leaving for Holland, the Jesuit decided to search



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for transportation in Batavia. This was a disastrous decision: Alexandre de Rhodes stayed in the future Jakarta for eight months, three of them in prison [373]. Freed, he reached Banten and took a Macanese trade vessel to Makassar, but after five months returned to the same western Javanese harbor in a British ship. From here, another British vessel transported the Jesuit to Surat where he spent four months. Next, another British trade ship led him to the port of Comoran (Khorramshahr), in Persia [403]. The Jesuit opted then to reach Europe by land. He soon arrived in Shiraz, but spent 30 days to find Isfahan [406]. He waited four months for an Armenian caravan of merchants that took him to Yerevan 'near the great mountain that is said to be the one where Noah arch rested after the flood' [417]. Spending three months in Yerevan, Alexandre traveled to Erzurum (Karin) and then to Tokat, in Anatolia, cautiously crossing the Turkish territories of the Ottoman Empire [428]. Finally, after 'traveling by land one year less one day, I arrived happily at Smyrna on March 17, 1649, having entered Persia on March 18 of the prior year, 1648' [432]. In the Aegean port of Smyrna, the Jesuit embarked aboard a Genoese trade ship that took him 'through the all Mediterranean Sea which seemed to me a very small journey compared to the great seas that I crossed' [433]. Arriving in Genoa, Alexandre de Rhodes returned to Rome on 28 June 1649 [434], more than 30 years after his departure.

In Rome, the Jesuit pleaded for papal support in order to sponsor the human and financial resources needed for a renewed missionary project in Vietnam that Alexandre envisaged out of the Portuguese Patronage and political control. Witnessing the 'decadence' of the Portuguese presence in the East, described in detail during his return to Malacca at the beginning of 1646, De Rhodes proposed a new missionary program directed by the Propaganda Fide aiming to create a Vietnamese native clergy. The proposal received immediate Portuguese opposition and the indifference of the Vatican bureaucracy. In consequence, the Jesuit returned to France in 1653 and tried to obtain political and financial aid from French clergy, nobility and powerful businessmen, distributing his published accounts on Vietnam, and inflating the country's wealth in spices, silk, and gold mines (Campeau 1979, pp. 65-85). These contacts resulted in the creation, in 1659, of the society leading



Latin-Vietnamese catechism, written by Alexandre de Rhodes.

to the Paris Foreign Missions that found in François Pallu and Pierre Lambert de la Motte the first secular volunteers sent to Indochina as Apostolic vicars, although they were only able to reach Siam, in 1664. The Portuguese Patronage rights in the East were defied and a lasting missionary clash sprouted as part of the European colonial powers' increasing competition. Unfortunately, Alexandre de Rhodes could not find any transportation to return to Vietnam, thus materialising his religious projects; instead he was charged in 1656 by the Vatican with a mission in Persia where he died in 1660.

ALEXANDRE DE RHODES' PUBLICATIONS: THE EDITORIAL SUCCESS OF VOYAGES

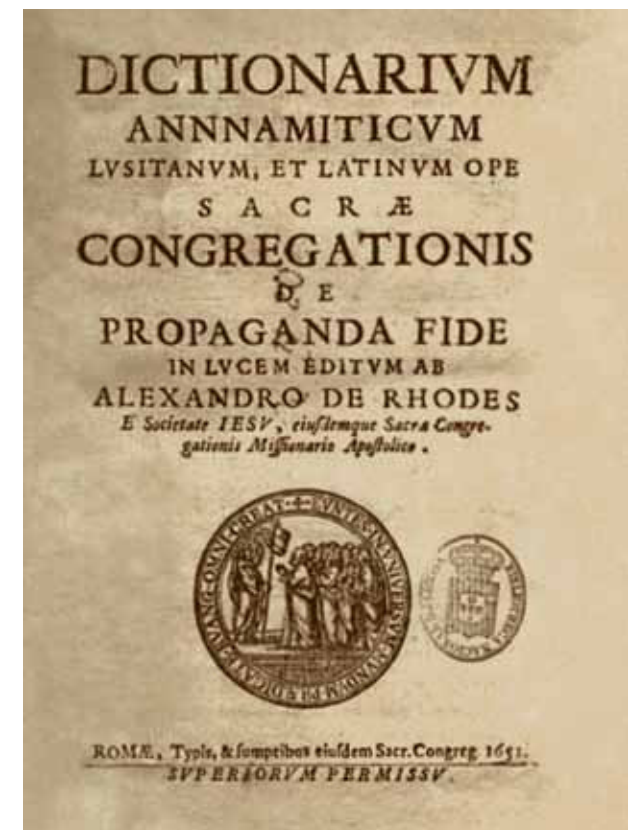
The last ten years of Alexandre de Rhodes' life were largely committed to the publication of his writings. Immediately after returning to Rome, the Jesuit published in the papal city, in 1650, a memoir on the Jesuit mission in Tonkin entitled in Italian *Relazione de' felici successi della santa fede predicate da'*

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padri della Compagnia di Gesù del Regno di Turchino. This book was translated into Latin to be published in Lyon, in 1652, with the title of *Tunchinensis historia libri II, quorum altero status temporalis hujus regni, altero mirabiles evangelicæ prædicationis progressus referuntur, cæptæ per patres Societatis Jesu ab anno 1627 ad annum 1646*. In the same year, a French edition appeared in Paris but entitled *Relations des progrès de la foi au royaume de la Cochinchine vers les derniers quartiers du Levant, envoyées au R. P. général de la Compagnie de Jésus, par le P. Alexandre de Rhodes, employé aux missions de ce pays*.

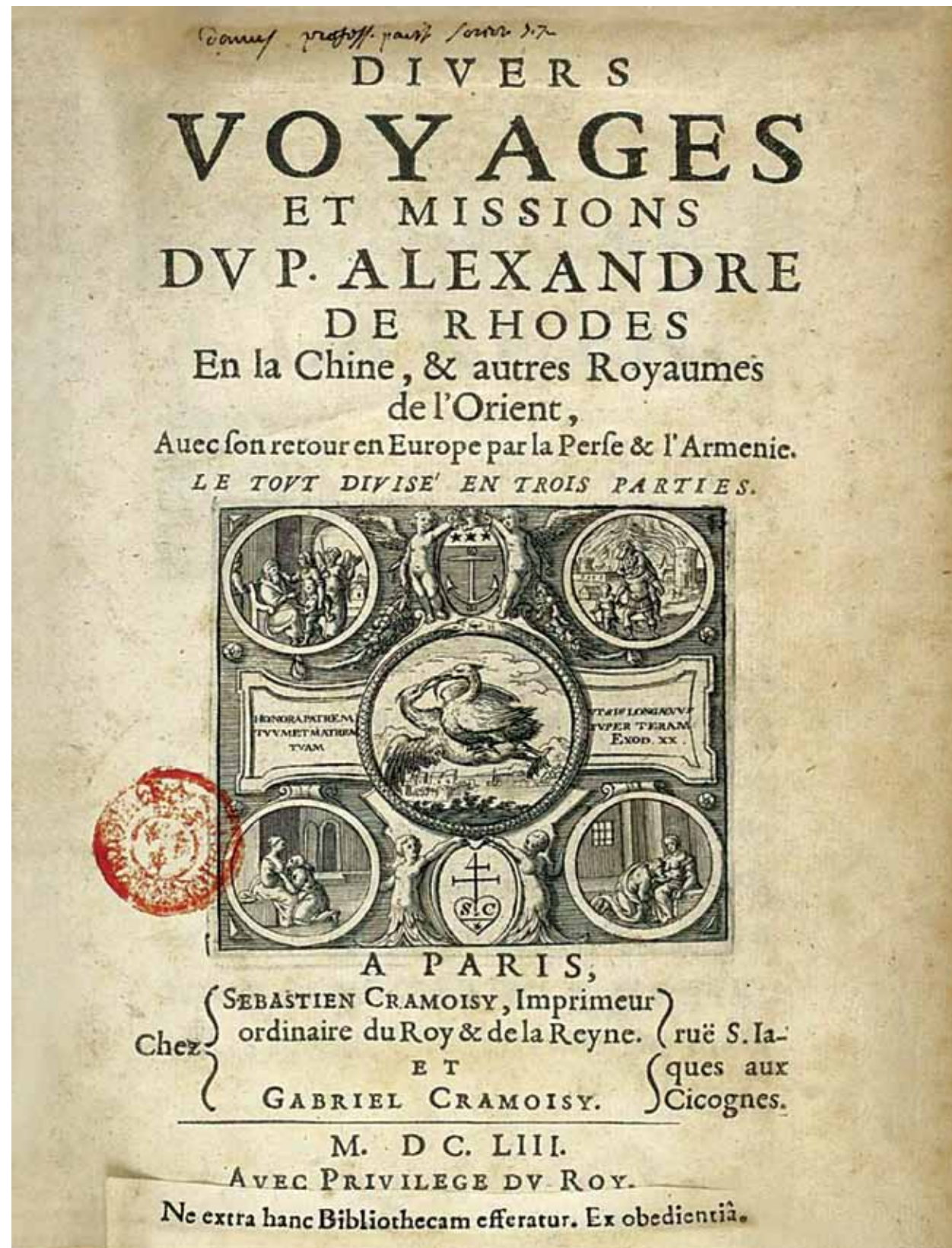
In 1651, sponsored by the Propaganda Fide, Alexandre de Rhodes published again in Rome a bilingual catechism in Latin and Vietnamese, divided into eight days, entitled *Catechismus pro iis qui volunt suscipere Baptismum, in octo dies divisus. Phép. giảng tám ngày cho kẻ muốn chiu rica toi, ma Aeào dao thanh đuc chùa blài*. The next year, in 1652, the Propaganda Fide press edited De Rhodes' hagiography of several Jesuit martyrs in Japan: *Breve relatione dellia gloriosa morte, che il P. Antonio Rubino della Comp. di Giesu, Visitatore della provincia del Giappone, e Cina, sofferse nella Gittà di Nangasacchi dello stesso Regno del Giappone, con quatro altri Padri dellia medesima Compagnia, Cioè. Il P. Antonio Pacece, il P. Alberto Micischi, il P. Diego Morales, et il P. Francesco Marquez. Con tre Secolari*. On this subject, in 1655, De Rhodes translated into French and printed in Paris the account by Father Balthazar Citadelli on the Jesuit martyrdoms in Japan: *Relation de ce qui s'est passé en l'année 1649, dans les royaumes où les Pères de la Compagnie de Jésus de la province du Japon publient le saint Évangile*. Also belonging in this hagiographic and devotional genre is the volume that De Rhodes published earlier in French, in 1653, through a Parisian printing house, extolling *La glorieuse mort d'André, catéchiste de la Cochinchine, qui a Le premier versé son sang pour la chorale de Jésus-Christ en cette nouvelle église. Par le P. A. de Rhodes, qui a toujours été présent à cette histoire*.¹⁰

Despite the historical importance of these titles, the most referential work by Alexandre de Rhodes was published in Rome, in 1651: a trilingual Vietnamese-Portuguese-Latin dictionary under the title *Dictionarium Annamiticum Lusitanum et Latinum*. Compiling almost 8.000 Vietnamese words, this lexicon acknowledged an important debt to former manuscript works by Portuguese Jesuit missionaries active in



Frontispiece of Alexandre de Rhodes' *Dictionarium Annamiticum Lusitanum et Latinum*, Rome, 1651.

Vietnam. In fact, the dictionary contains a highlighting introduction on 'Linguae annamiticae seu Tunchinensi brevis declaratio', recalling the work that Francisco de Pina organised prior to 1625 entitled *Manuductio ad linguam tunckinensem* (Roland 2002).¹¹ This prologue also refers to the fact that two Portuguese Jesuits, Gaspar do Amaral (1594-1646)¹² and António Barbosa (1594-1647),¹³ left a dictionary of Vietnamese and Portuguese unfinished when they died.¹⁴ De Rhodes built up his famous *Dictionary* on these previous sources, but his printed publication became the leading reference for scholars, missionaries and later colonial administrators to create a new Vietnamese writing system, based on the Latin script, which is still used today in the national language, the Quoc Ngu. In this perspective, Alexandre de Rhodes' *Dictionary* belongs to the larger Jesuit production of important linguistic achievements in Asia, which included Matteo Ricci's romanisation of Chinese and the key grammar of Japanese by the Portuguese missionary João Rodriguez (1561-1634), but nowhere was their social and political impact as



deep and long-lasting as in Vietnam. (Zwartjes 2011, pp. 290-291).

However, the trilingual Dictionary was not an editorial success, but rather a rare linguistic intellectual reference. The most printed book published by De Rhodes was the French account of his voyages and missions in Vietnam. A first edition came to light in Paris, in 1653, entitled *Divers voyages et missions du P. Alexandre de Rhodes en la Chine et autres royaumes de l'Orient, avec son retour en Europe par la Perse et l'Arménie*. The book circulated among the literate religious, aristocratic and mercantile French elites to be reprinted in 1656, 1666, 1681, 1682, 1688 and 1703. In 1854, the Jesuit August Carayon (1813-1874), an important bibliographer and historian, published in Paris a definitive critical edition, comparing and correcting all the previous 17th century issues. Four years later, this edition was translated in German and published in Freiburg, in 1858.¹⁵ Finally, in 1884, the Jesuit Henri Gourdin republished Carayon's critical edition, adding a precious chart of all voyages of Alexandre de Rhodes.¹⁶

This paper researches the *Voyages* through the critical edition of Father August Carayon, aiming mainly to understand his autonomous description of Macao, the first by a French author, presented in Chapter 15 under the title '*Mon séjour d'un an dans Macao, ville de la Chine, tenue par Les Portugais*.' (My one-year stay in Macao, Town of China, held by the Portuguese). However, to fully research this original text, it is necessary to summarise the Jesuit travels' discourse and his general representation of China.

CATHOLIC MISSIONARY TRAVELS BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE EAST IN THE 17TH CENTURY: AUSPICIOUS ARRIVALS AND CHANGING RETURNS

Organised into three main subjects—'The Voyage from Rome to China' (15 chapters), 'Missions in Tonkin and Cochinchina' (51 chapters), and 'Return from China to Rome' (19 chapters)—De Rhodes' *Voyages* is a composite text, visiting different literary genres. The text merges the religious chronicle with hagiographic accounts, while permanent devotional lessons pervade

Frontispiece of *Divers voyages et missions du P. Alexandre de Rhodes en la Chine et autres royaumes de l'Orient*, Paris, 1653.

a travel literature record that is not assumed, albeit omnipresent. Actually, despite the increasing epochal diffusion of travel accounts among European readers, the French Jesuit avoids this genre affiliation, explaining in the introduction of his book that

I praise the intention of so many great characters, who, after traveling in various parts of the world, wrote beautiful books where they say all the things they have noticed, and give way to those who do not have the strength nor the inclination to leave their homes, where they are at ease, to cross the seas safe, and be in all the most beautiful cities in the world without losing their rest. [2]

The Jesuit *Voyages* is also indeed a travel account, firmly anchored in the baroque investments in this literary genre, but the introductory remarks to the readers emphasise a devotional rhetoric through which traveling becomes a challenge to Catholic faith through the threats of exotic and demoniac spaces only overcome with devotion, spiritual exercises and miracles: a true manifestation of the religious global militancy of the 'Christus miles' that the Society of Jesus was spreading worldwide. Thus, the introduction concludes faithfully that,

For me, I confess that I don't have the spirit, and I have never had the intention of making these beautiful books, or get rich from these remarks: my entire claim in my travels has been the glory of Christ, who is my good captain, and the gain of souls which is his conquest. I have not traveled to be rich, to be learned, or to entertain myself. [3]

Alexandre de Rhodes' *Voyages* turn traveling systematically on a pilgrimage and constant fight in defense of Catholic doctrine and its universal expansion, and this discourse strategy is available to readers from the beginning of the travels' account. In consequence, prior to his departure from Rome, in 1618, the Jesuit visited the church of Our Lady of Loreto and entrusted his mission to the protection of the Virgin. He then decided to spend several days in Milan to take part in the religious festivities in honor of St. Charles Borromeo (1538-1584), beatified in 1602 and recently canonised in 1610. Mobilising the militant lessons of this leading figure of the Catholic Counter-Reformation widely influential in the Society of Jesus, the Jesuit thanked the new Italian saint for his later safe crossing of the Alps, 'full of snow and ice' [8].

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Next, the true journey leads De Rhodes to Avignon, where he met and bade farewell to his parents, in a prelude to a continuous set of dangerous challenges and perils up to the arrival in Macao more than four years after the Roman departure. Thus, descending the Rhône from Lyon, the Jesuit faces the first of the myriad threats addressed by faith and prayers during his long voyage:

I found myself in danger of finishing my travels: ... some very insolent Calvinists who began forthwith to read aloud a heretical book, which contained a thousand blasphemies against the sacred mysteries of the Catholic religion' [8]

Recalling the firm anti-protestant action of the former archbishop of Milan, St Charles Borromeo, De Rhodes refuted the 'heretics' and was threatened to be thrown into the water, but escaped with the engaged support of the other Catholic passengers. The pilgrimage continued throughout Spain: the Jesuit visited the grotto of St. Ignatius of Loyola conversion, in Manrèse, and the great sanctuary of Our Lady of Montserrat, in Barcelona. Avoiding Madrid, due to the ongoing Thirty Years War, opposing the Spanish-Austrian House of Habsburg to France and later the newly created United Provinces of Holand, De Rhodes traveled towards the old Castilian medieval shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, in Extremadura, depositing again his mission under Marian intercession, a recurrent topic emotionally portrayed in *Voyages*.

Arriving in Portugal, the text returns to a clear travel format acknowledgeable in the panoramic description of Lisbon:

Lisbon is a city so well known throughout Europe that it is not necessary for me to say nothing of its greatness or beauty. Its size seems to be a little lower than that of Milan but I was told that there were four hundred thousand souls. The port is wonderfully beautiful, but the entrance is difficult. There are always many vessels, and what it is magnificent is the wharf, which is very long and convenient for trade and for entertainment. We have in this beautiful city four houses where our fathers work usefully in all things that are unique to our company, which usually embraces everything that can be used for the salvation of souls. I sojourned about two months, during which I attended as much as I could all the French. [12]

Leaving Lisbon on 4 April 1619 aboard the vessel of the fleet captain, Francisco de Lima,¹⁷ the Jesuit embraced a true evangelic daily mission engaging the crew of 400 men (as usual, there was not a single woman on this vessel). Alexandre de Rhodes summarises his religious duties explaining the liturgy routine:

Every day at least one of us was saying mass, provided that there was not a storm that might prevent us. After dinner, we were always reading a long catechism which all attended, and even the ship's captain, Francis Lirea [Lima], character of great condition, and very powerful in Portugal, who was the first, and took great care that nobody missed it if was not busy elsewhere. We tried to make us loved by all that great crew of four hundred people, each serving amicably. Our ship looked like a floating monastery, and God gave us the grace that everything was in order: we did not listen any swearing, quarrel or dissolute word; many confessed often, and in the journey of six months we organized five general communions for all those who were with us during the main religious dates. [15]

This idealised environment, however, was recurrently challenged by the diverse perils of the epochal oceanic navigation: the threats were challenges always vanquished by a strong Catholic faith and deep devotion to the Virgin and the Saints. Amid several episodes, after crossing safely the Cape of Good Hope, the fleet faced a huge storm:

Our hope was soon changed into fear, and almost in despair of ever seeing Goa, for in the twenty-fifth of July, a storm arose so violent and so long that we thought in nothing more than Paradise. The waves beat us with such impetuosity, that we remain almost buried in the water. We do not, however, lose our trust in God and the glorious Virgin, but we always redouble our prayers, which, by the goodness of God were answered after eighteen full days of the storm, and, on the day of St. Clare, the clouds which were still very large, on the morning were dissipated, the air became clear, the sea calmed: the favorable wind obliged us all to recognize that God, to whom the storms obey, had put his hand. [17]

After arrival in Goa, and despite several other dramatic maritime threats always overcome by faith and prayer, the text follows up the travel literature normative genre

describing the newly observed town conveniently compared for the readers' good understanding to some grand French historic cities:

Goa is a very beautiful city that the Portuguese held on the Indian Ocean and lays in the torrid zone, fifteen degrees of the line, but it does not cease to be very convenient for health, and full of all the major delights of Europe, and several other of its own. It is surrounded partly by the sea, partly by a river that closes it as an island in a field of three leagues in circumference, which is wonderfully strong and agreeable. It can be compared to our most beautiful cities, and its magnitude is about the same as Lyon and Rouen, the walls are strong as well as the regular fortifications, and has a well-stocked citadel. The buildings are beautiful, especially the churches that are large and well decorated. [20]

This very short summary is nothing more than a prelude to a couple of pages dedicated devoutly to the referential founding-father of the Jesuit missions in the East, St. Francis Xavier (1505-1552). Not without obvious and considerable exaggeration, frequently found in Christian narratives, Goa is mainly presented in De Rhodes account as the singular place

where the great apostle of the Indies, St. Francis Xaxier began his conquests, filing all these kingdoms of Christians and the Paradise of saints. It is reported that there he baptized by his own hands at least three to four hundred thousand people. In one of his epistles, we learn that in one year he baptized one hundred thousand. In ten years, he ran and preached Jesus Christ in three hundred kingdoms. [21]

After two-and-a-half years in Goa, Alexandre de Rhodes departed to Malacca through Cochin and Ceylon, facing another dramatic maritime threat, overcome not only with prayer but through a sublime miracle. Crossing the cape labeled by the Portuguese sailors 'Rachado', the vessel stranded on a sandbar and remained motionless:

We had no hope to get out by human efforts and the pilot was in despair, and cried full head that he was lost. I gave him courage and to all the sailors, telling them that God would help us through the prayers of his holy Mother, and I ask them all to pray, which they did very devoutly. I luckily had in my reliquary a hair of the Holy

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Virgin. I took it, tied it with a long rope, and I plunged it into the sea. It happened an evident marvel: no sooner had we said a Pater and Ave Maria, our ship, without anyone working for it, after long remaining long time motionless, left the sand with extreme vehemence, and was pushed into the sea. Everyone cried with joy and astonishment; we kissed each other, and thrilled with the grace that we had just received, we changed our prayer in a cordial thanksgiving that we sent it to the great Queen of the Sea, our honorable liberating. [43-44]

Arriving safely in Malacca, where he spent nine months, the Jesuit describes the town briefly, although he knew, in 1653, when the first edition of the *Voyages* was printed, that the Portuguese enclave was under Dutch control since 1641:

Malacca is a city on the mainland, facing the island of Sumatra, and has one of the finest ports of the Indies, which can be addressed at all times of the year, something that can not be found either in Goa, Surat or Cochin, nor do I know any other port in eastern India: nobody can enter these harbors since the beginning of June until the end of September, because the winds that last for four months make it impossible, moreover, the waves carry sand against the ports so that they close completely until the winds start blowing in October on the other side, pushing all the sand into the sea, and opening again the ports. These inconveniences are not to be found in the port of Malacca, since it is always convenient for ships to come and the traffic is very large. We once called the town *Aurea-Chersoneslis* [Aurea Chersonesus or 'Golden Peninsula'], and here arrive silks and fabrics of China, all kinds of groceries and other riches of the Orient. The Portuguese conquest the town a hundred years ago or so to the king of the Achenese, then often defeated by sea and land, and held it peacefully until the time that the Dutch have expelled them miserably. [45]

Despite the political and military alliance in this period between France and Holland against the Spanish King, a ruler also of Portugal up to 1640, Alexandre de Rhodes does not disguise his deep hostility towards the Dutch 'heretics' and recalls his great joy in Malacca when he received the report of their defeat in Macao,

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in 1622: 'this good news filled with joy all Indies; we did bonfires of rejoicing and funeral processions of thanksgiving for this great benefit.' [52] Still under Dutch threat De Rhodes traveled from Malacca to Macao, in 1623, escaping their ships' menace thanks to the intercession of St. Anthony:

Finally, after waiting nine months to take the proper route to China, Father António Cardim and I entered a good ship that sailed to Macao. The journey only lasted a month, but we escaped a great danger of being taken by the Dutch. We met four of their vessels on the coast of Ciampia that strongly pursued us. We could not escape, but the night fortunately occurred, which gave us time to step back and put us to cover in the port of a small island we had already passed. This succeeded very well, because the Dutch, believing that we were going to China, followed us on this road where they could not meet us. I attributed this success to the good intercession of St. Anthony of Padua, who we used in the danger that put us in desperation to escape.' [53-54]

The auspicious arrival in Macao, on 20 May 1623, and more than two decades of religious mission in South China and Vietnam, accounted through a vivid constellation of miraculous intercessions favoring the Catholic faith, contrasts with the long return journey to Rome from 1645 to 1649 through territories where Catholicism was besieged, attacked or ignored. The contrasting return witnesses the modern political and commercial transformations of the world: the strong expansion of the Dutch presence in Southeast Asia (as well as in Brazil during some decades) and the Portuguese decline; the irruption of the British trade offensive in Asia, namely in India where the East India Company was firmly established in Surat since 1615; the powerful revival of the Ottoman Empire that, through the conquests of Yerevan (1635), Baghdad (1639), the enlargement of its influence in North Africa and strategic alliances with Venice, increased the trade presence in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Black Sea, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, becoming an important international commercial competitor. At the same time, De Rhodes left a Chinese empire almost completely controlled by the Qing, despite some Southern Ming resistance, and a unified Japan. These were changes that the Portuguese maritime empire in the East was unable to match, losing forever the most

important strongholds that contributed to the maritime control of trade between South China, Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean. The Jesuit witnesses this Portuguese 'decadence'—a topic of several academic controversies—at the beginning of his returning voyage to the strategic Malacca:

After twenty-five days on the sea, we arrived safely at Malacca on 14 January in the year 1646. I must admit that when I entered the city, tears came to my eyes: it was the day on which the Dutch were in great celebrations for the anniversary of the capture of the city, there were just six years [in fact, five]. Someone told us that when the Dutch came to attack, there was within only twenty-five Portuguese, who long resisted, but as they saw that they did not send them any help from Goa, being half dead of hunger, they were forced to abandon this beautiful place to the assailants, who attacked strongly, and made great slaughter among many good Catholics, who died gloriously there defending their homeland. This celebration was very lugubrious for us, and when I went throughout those streets, I saw all the symbols of true religion entirely abolished. I confess that I had the heart significantly afflicted witnessing the extreme change from what I saw twenty-three years ago in this beautiful city where I lived for nine months in our college, which was built on a very pleasant hill. Alas! Our church here dedicated to the glorious Mother of God, where the great Xavier had preached so often, and where he had made such great miracles, then served for the preaching of heretics, and throw a thousand blasphemies against the Blessed Virgin and the Saints. [341-342]

Next, after moving to Batavia, Banten, Makassar and returning again to Banten, Alexandre de Rhodes discovered the busy Eastern trade of the new British East India Company, reaching aboard its ships in Surat to find warming shelter during four months in the company's factory. It was also a British trade vessel that led the Jesuit to the Persian Gulf where the British company tried during this period to build up new commercial alliances. Travelling 'one year less one day' by land, De Rhodes met firstly the grandeur of the Persian Safavid dynasty at its peak, when it was able to control most of modern Iran and Iraq, large

portions of Azerbaijan, Armenia, and parts of Georgia, Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. The Jesuit was surprised by the growing trade British presence in the Gulf main ports and the religious tolerance of the Persian Empire which he thought could become an important field of Catholic missions. The surprise was even greater when De Rhodes crossed the Ottoman empire in 40 days: 'we went for forty days through the land of the Turks, who yet never gave me no contempt: they often asked me to pray to God for their sick children, what I did happily; and once I saw a little girl who was going to die, and using the pretext of washing her with a lukewarm water, I baptized her, pronouncing the sacramental words secretly, and she died a little child: I had the consolation of having opened the door of heaven by the sacrament.' [431] Finally arriving at Smyrna, the Jesuit met several astonished French priests who had a residence in the Ottoman harbor and celebrated the Easter festivities with them. Despite the religious tolerance of the Safavid and Ottoman empires, he returned to Rome and to the church of Our Lady of Loretto. The Jesuit closes his final remarks with this orthodox sentence:

After three and a half years' journey through so many dangers by land and sea, as storms, so many shipwrecks, prisons, desert places, barbarians, pagans, heretics and so many Turks, always borne on the wings of Providence, who defended and preserved me with such special kindness, I found myself stronger and prepared again for all work as when I left Rome, thirty-one years before, to go to India [434-435].

THE DESCRIPTION OF CHINA

Alexandre de Rhodes' description of China is an important part of his *Voyages*, covering four consecutive chapters: 'some specific remarks of the kingdom of China' (chapter XI, pp. 55-57); 'wealth of China' (chapter XII, pp. 58-60); 'the use of tea, which is very common in China' (chapter XIII, pp. 61-65); 'religion and mores of China' (chapter XIV, pp. 66-70). These chapters are unified through a simple argument of authority: the Jesuit claims a real knowledge of the country based on 'twelve years in China.' [55] The textual narrative, however, is quite general and follows up the 17th century habitual Jesuit positive appreciation of the Middle Empire. The 'specific remarks' about

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China begin with panoramic considerations, albeit displaying some 'psychological' criticism, on the greatness of China:

She is divided into five provinces, which, to tell the truth, are each a very great kingdom; at the same time, the great extent of their country and the abundance of goods has made them so arrogant that they are convinced that China is all that is most beautiful in all the earth, and they are surprised when they see our maps of the world, where their kingdom seems so small compared to the rest of the world. They represent it very differently, because in their charts they depict a square world, putting China in the middle (called Chon-Coc, which means middle kingdom), painting the sea below in which they draw some small islands: one is Europe, one is Africa, and the other is Japan. What we have done was to show them that they were far less knowledgeable than us. [55-56]

These introductory notes are followed, as usual in Jesuit 17th century memoirs, by an expansive surprising appreciation, much more qualitative than really quantitative, of China's demographic power:

The people of this kingdom are so many, I do not think I am mistaken if I say that there is only in China twice the people of the whole of Europe; those who went to the end of this empire say things that seem incredibly on the major cities which are Beijing, Nanjing and Hancheau [Hangzhou], where they say that there are four million people in each. I cannot say anything because I didn't go so far into the country, but I saw the city of Canton, which is the fourth in China, where I found countless people and is very large; the town is very wide and always with so crowded streets that I had trouble to pass. And what surprised me most is that the rivers are all as inhabited as the land. There is one in the city of Canton that is two major leagues wide; I saw the town covered with vessels whose masts seemed a thick forest, and I thought there were as many as at least twenty thousand with divided streets, through which boats carry everything needed for those who live in these houseboats. [56-57]

Alexandre de Rhodes concludes this chapter estimating the Chinese population to be 250 million inhabitants and suggesting that every year at least five million souls

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‘descended into hell, and we cross our arms which is a great shame that Christ suffers.’ [57]

The following chapter on the wealth of China opens up again with more panoramic generalisations: ‘The riches of this country are numerous: there are several gold mines, large amount of very fine silk, with which we made these beautiful fabrics from China, there is musk in great abundance, the soil is wonderfully fertile in all things that serve the needs and delights’. [58] Much more interesting are the Jesuit’s next remarks on Chinese feeding, namely stressing the dominant presence of rice representing for the author the role of bread in the European diet. Thus, De Rhodes explains in some detail the different Chinese way of cooking and eating rice, although not referring as usual in European accounts to the ‘exotic’ chopsticks:

Do not believe that they eat rice in the soup like us, or that they do it in dough as we do with bread; they eat it boiled, but in a very moderate water, and when it is cooked, it remains dry and the beans are still entire, but soft, and they say that one piece corresponds to several fresh breads. It seems to me that their rice is much better than ours; it does not swell and weigh so much. The word, among them, which means lunch or dinner means eating rice, and do not believe that they really ate if they did not have rice as we have bred. [59]

The text continues by presenting the Chinese drinks about which, in this chapter, the Jesuit refers only to water: ‘their common drink is completely pure water, but hot, and cooked in the same pots where they cook rice; they laugh with us when we told them that we drink fresh water, which they say causes many diseases that they do not even learned the name. I do not know if they are wrong, but I acknowledge that in every country where I was from China to Tonkin and Cochinchina, for thirty years, I never heard of drops, stone or gravel. Plague, or popular disease, there is no point in talking about, and, what is more wonderful, during that time I never heard of any sudden death, but I attribute this rather to the goodness of the air and the quality of meat they eat, which is very healthful.’ [59-60]

The next chapter, the largest in this China section, is entirely dedicated to tea. De Rhodes expands the reflections on Chinese superior health, adding to rice, water and meat the singular welfare of tea:

One of the things that contribute, in my opinion, to the health of this people who often arrive at the last age, is tea, whose use is very common in the East, and we begin to know in France, through the Dutch, who bring it from China and sell it in Paris for thirty francs a pound, which they purchased in that country under eight to ten, and yet I see ordinarily that it is very old and spoiled: this is how our brave French allow the foreigners to enrich with the trade in the East Indies, where they could get all the finest riches of the world, if they had the courage to undertake it as well as their neighbors, who are less able to succeed than us. [61]

After explaining briefly the production, collection and the Chinese manner of preparing tea, De Rhodes returns to his health sequence stressing the main virtues of the beverage. The first is a combination of remedies against headaches and the prevention of sleeping which frequently helped our Jesuit during his most exhausting and boring religious routines:

The benefits of tea are three main ones: the first is to cure and prevent headaches; for me when I had a migraine, taking tea I felt so much relieved, it seemed as one hand pulling out of my head all my headaches. Because the main strength of tea is to kill the coarse vapors that rise to the head and disturb us. If taken after dinner, usually it prevents sleeping, although there are some persons, to whom tea allows to sleep, since it only dissipates the more dross vapors, leaving those that are specific to sleep. In my case, I experienced often enough that, when I was obliged to hear all night the confessions of my good Christians, which happened very often, I only had to take tea at the time I fell asleep and I was able to stay overnight careless of sleeping and the next day I was as fresh as if I had slept my usual. I could do this once a week without problems. I tried once to continue for six consecutive nights, but at the sixth I was completely exhausted. [63-64]

These health (and confessional) virtues were further reinforced through a second convenient redress: ‘tea is not just good for the head, it has a wonderful strength to relieve the stomach and help digestion; therefore, most of these people take it commonly after dinner, although we don’t do it usually if we want to sleep.’

[64] The third tea benefit is even more prophylactic since, according to De Rhodes, the beverage ‘serves to purge the kidneys against gout and gravel, and this is perhaps the real reason why these kinds of diseases are not found in these countries.’ [64-65]

Interestingly enough, this original chapter on Chinese tea is also the only section in which the Jesuit addresses his French readers directly, clearly targeting elite, aristocratic and mercantile segments, which he was able to systematically meet and impress with his stories of 30 years in the East:

I got a little stretched out on the speech about the tea because, since I am in France, I had the honor to see some people of great condition and a great merit, whose life and health are extremely necessary for France, and use tea with profit, and were kind enough to invite me to account my experience of thirty years and what I had learned from this great remedy.’ [65]

The last chapter on China departs from these positive reflections to indulge a critical tone that, driven by Catholic strict orthodoxy, summarises with hostility the Chinese religious practices. De Rhodes does not accept the alterity of the religions of China, which, reduced to the indignity of superstitions, are divided into three manifestations: ‘the first is that of the king and the nobles, who worship the material heaven with stars. [...] The second superstition is the idolaters who worship particular gods who were once their kings. [...] The third is the sect of sorcerers, who are numerous and very wicked, and they are those who have done us a cruel war in all these realms.’ [66-67] Despite this tripartition, the Jesuit spends several lines on the ‘fake God’ that was a ‘certain Confucius’, placed in the section of ‘idolaters’, responsible for giving the Chinese ‘their laws and to invent their letters’:

It is incredible how much they respect him; we can hardly persuade Christians who convert to not bend the knee before his statues, which almost all have in their homes; and those who spread the rumor that the Jesuits allow this idolatry to their neophytes, allow me to tell them that they are very misinformed. [67]

Aside this reference to the famous Chinese rites controversy that De Rhodes experienced contradictorily in Macao, the text reveals an exaggerated optimism in the rapid diffusion of the Catholic faith in China—‘the Christian religion begins to gain a foothold, and I hope

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that soon it will drive all false religions’ [67]—namely through the support of Southern Ming resistance to the Qing ineluctable dynastic change. The Jesuit recounts in detail that, from 1643,

The Tartars, after expelling a tyrant, become themselves tyrants, and finding that China was far better than their country they turn into the masters occupying fourteen out of fifteen provinces. The Chinese who had more courage appointed a king of the same family of the last deceased, and by the assistance of a brave army general, but very good Christian, named Achille, recovered seven or eight provinces. The king became affectionate of the Christian religion, and advised by the good Achille, allowed his mother, his wife and eldest son to be baptized. Recently, I got news that the king himself has asked for baptism, which is what gives me hope that soon all of China will worship Jesus Christ, and cast out all the demons that were honored up till now. [69]

Although this chapter presents the title of ‘religion and mores of China’, the rich cultures and traditions built up by the millennial Chinese civilisation are briefly resumed in two subjects assessed through an undisguisable eurocentrism. The first theme summarises the famed imperial examination system:

Everyone knows the grand ceremony they keep in their examinations for doctors, but, to tell the truth, I find that their science is confused, in comparison with that which is shared among our European scholars; they employ almost all their lives learning to read, and yet are not able to know everything they need to know, because they have eighty thousand characters, that is to say so much words that nobody fully knows them. Our fathers to learn enough, indulge in it four years with the same care we put to learn the whole course of Theology. I wonder if this is agreeable to those who have the mind full of all the beautiful sciences of Europe, but the desire to convert souls finds this very soft [69-70]

Finally, the second subject, closing the chapter, records between folklore topics and travel souvenirs the Chinese hairstyle and the infamous practice of female footbinding:

All Chinese wear their hair long, and they comb it as well as women, keeping their hair so carefully

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that they prefer to cut the head other than the hairs. It is true that women never come out, and they have their feet so small that they could not walk without being supported. When I return to Europe, I brought some of their shoes that are so small that I would bother to put only two fingers. [70]

However, some of these cultural habits had an important impact on the missionary's strategies. Remembering his visits to Canton, Alexandre de Rhodes suggests a religious missionary strategy privileging faith rather than the combat against common cultural (and corporal) behaviors as in the case of the peculiar Chinese hairstyle. Criticising directly some harsh missionary approaches, the Jesuit explains:

Moreover, when they came back, they forced Catholics to put off their homeland costumes. It was out of my imagination that those ordinary people got incredibly discontent. I don't know why they were asking them to do what our God doesn't want to. That made them deny the baptism and the Heaven. In my mind, I know that, in China, I was strongly against those who forced new Catholics to have their hair cut short. They had a habit of wearing long hair like women, if not they could not travel freely in their homeland, or visit monasteries. I had told them that the gospel requires them to get rid of sin in mind, not the hair on the head. [117]

It is important to verify from these four chapters on China the composite dimension of Alexandre de Rhodes' *Voyages* at the intersection of several literary discourses, including the travel literature genre and its normative topics. In fact, these chapters are much closer to the exciting images of those that the European elites enjoyed, as a contrastive mirror in travel literature, from advice about tea to exotic hair styles and small feminine feet.

THE REPRESENTATION OF MACAO

Although Alexandre de Rhodes lived more than twelve years in Macao—ten continuously and more than two between his five Vietnamese religious missions—the Portuguese enclave in the Pearl River Delta mobilises a single chapter on 'My one-year stay in Macao, Town of China, held by the Portuguese'. It is, therefore, the first Jesuit arrival in Macao, in 1623,

that seems the main subject of the chapter, albeit the text reflects several episodes of his much longer stay. At the same time, De Rhodes presents his previous four chapters on China as the cultural context of the other Chinese visage of Macao (as well as Tonkin and, although to a lesser extent, Cochinchina), highlighting a large set of similar social and cultural practices, from tea consumption to feminine behavior or deities and ancestor common worship, creating a huge civilisation barrier to Catholic conversion. As expected, the singular chapter commences with a panoramic general summary of Macao, explaining that

Macao is a city and a port in China, and the Portuguese built and fortified it with the permission of the king of China, to whom they pay every year twenty-two thousands *écus* of tribute. This permission was given one hundred years ago or so. One of the main founders was the brave Pedro Velho, which won for his charity that St. Francis Xavier should promise him that he would be present on the day of his death. Macao is a strip of land near the sea, where some pirates were removed and made several runs in the Guangdong province, which is the closest to the sea. [71]

If we pause here to reflect on this textual extract, two ideas are important. First, in the 1620s when Rhodes arrived in Macao, there was still a vivid memory of the initial traders who originally settled in Macao, between 1553-1557; most of them, such as Pedro Velho (Carmo 2002, pp. 45-55), were witnesses of St. Francis Xavier's death in Sangchuang, in 1552, albeit having neither helped him nor assisted at his funeral on an island fuelled with hundreds of active private Portuguese traders. Secondly, De Rhodes acknowledges a persistent thesis explaining that the Portuguese access to Macao was a Chinese reward for their key help in fighting against the recurrent piracy of countless maritime coveys from South China, Southeast Asia or Japan. This thesis is explained in these exact terms:

The Chinese, to get rid of these pirates, called the Portuguese to help them, and allowed them to take that position if they could hunt these bad neighbors. The Portuguese, who desired nothing better than to put a foot in China, went armed against this band of thieves, drove them easily, and began to build Macao as the

Chinese had permitted, but without fortifying themselves, because in the treaty they had done it was expressly forbidden. But afterwards, the Dutch attacked Macao to drive the Portuguese, and would have done it easily if God had not fought for the Portuguese sending some panic to the Dutch who, hearing shots of artillery sent randomly and almost in despair of saving the place, instead retreated hastily. The Portuguese pursued them, cut them into pieces, and they used this opportunity to fortify the place that was given to them, saying that they could no longer stay there if they were not allowed to be in condition to not fear their enemies. They were allowed, and they made a stronghold where they put two hundred pieces of cannon, and ever since they lived safely. [72]

The Chinese gift, Macao, became a singular town of transcontinental trade that the Jesuit seemed to enjoy, albeit witnessing at the end of his stay, from 1641 to 1645, the commercial decadence of the enclave:

The city is not large, but is beautiful and built in the European way, much better than China, where all the houses have only a single floor. The trade in Macao was huge, and the Portuguese became rich in a short time, but since the persecution of Japan, and the break with the Spaniards who hold the Philippines, they have remained dry, because it was the trade with these two islands that gave them everything they had better. [72-73]

These fugitive lines are all that De Rhodes decided to give to his readers—mainly French aristocrats, high clergy and trade bourgeoisie—on the vivid 17th century society of Macao, its economy or unique urbanism. Next, the text prefers to extol the Jesuit St. Paul's College and to admire its astonishing church dedicated to the Mother of God, fully built and operational when Alexandre de Rhodes arrived in Macao in 1623:

Our company has a very great College, which can be compared to the finest in Europe, at least the church is the most beautiful I have ever seen, even in Italy, with the exception of St. Peter in Rome. One learns all the sciences that we teach in all our major academies. This is where are prepared those great workers who fulfill all the East with the lights of the Gospel; from there came many martyrs crowning our province; I call it blessed

because our province has this glory that in Japan alone it has nineteen seven glorious confessors of the holy name of Jesus Christ, who sealed with their blood the loyalty they had promised to their beloved master. [73]

This is the autonomous chapter that the Jesuit wrote on Macao, presenting quite briefly the Portuguese enclave and emphasising the key role of the Society of Jesus' College of St. Paul in the Catholic missions in China, Japan and Southeast Asia. The *Voyages* returns to Macao once again but through a much more autobiographical record in chapter XII; 'My return to China, and stay that I did for ten years' text recalling the Jesuit regression to the enclave, in 1630, after two years and two months of religious mission in Tonkin. Engaged during the following decade in several religious duties in Macao, De Rhodes retraces the difficulties in the conversion of Chinese both in the town and during some missions in the region of Canton, a lack of success attributed to two main causes:

I began to devote myself with all my strength to the Chinese's conversion, but to tell the truth, I found not ease to experience the same blessings that I received from the kingdom where I came from. The cause lies, I think, first on me, because although being able to understand well Chinese, I do not know the language enough to speak it in a continuous speech, so I was forced to preach with an interpreter, which is not usually strong enough to carry a soul to the resolution to change religion and life. The other reason could well be the pride of the Chinese, who believe to be the first people on earth. I saw them coming to the sermons when they have something to oppose, but when they were convinced, we do not see them anymore. [137-138]

In spite of these dysfunctions, the Jesuit heads in Macao entrusted De Rhodes with the important position of 'Father of the Christians'; the priest responsible of assisting the neophytes. This was at the time a position largely criticised not only by other local religious orders, but mainly by the trade bourgeoisie that, controlling the powerful town hall, the Leal Senate, regarded the post as a dangerous interference and ongoing embarrassment to the accommodation system of the Portuguese enclave built up through permanent negotiations, gifts, bribes and shares of trade profits with the local and regional Chinese mandarins.

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I received a particularly great consolation from an incumbency that was given to me in Macao, which I served with all my care. It is called the Father of Christians the one who cares to assist the newly converted Chinese, instructing, governing, and teaching all that is necessary for them to live as a Christian. It gave me a busy work during the day, that if I wanted to do some research to prepare sermons and lessons of Theology, which I taught in our College, it had to be done at night; there was not a single day in which I was busy with my Chinese Christians or pagans that we prepared to baptism. [138-139]

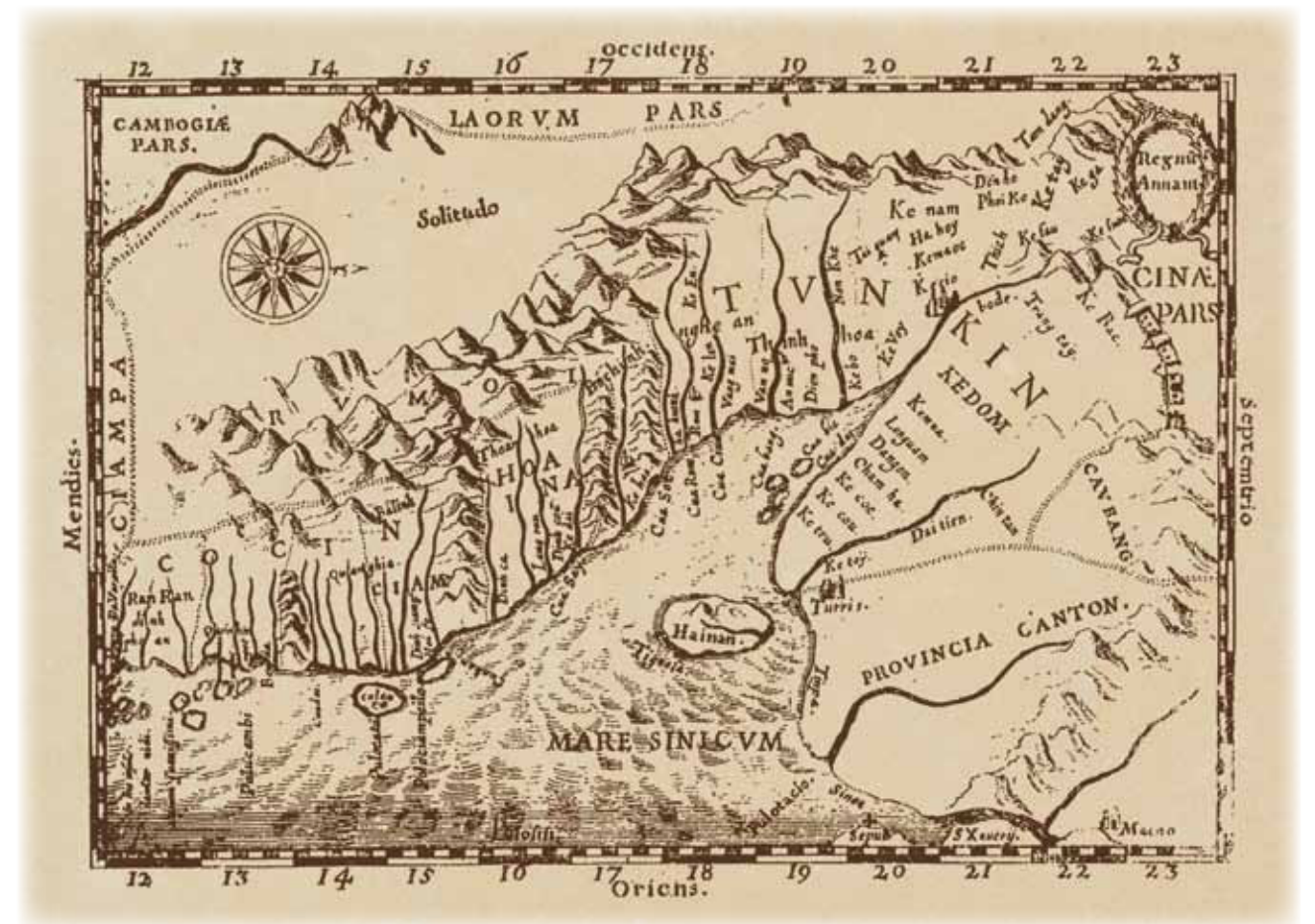
De Rhodes emotionally recalls these pastoral duties and offers to the attention of the readers an extreme paradigm of conversion that, posing serious problems of chronology and thus of veracity, is presented as an inspirational source of the Jesuit missions' foundation in the East:

I had a great comfort to meet an aged man, a hundred and fifty years old, who had once been baptized by the hands of the great apostle of India, St. Francis Xavier, when he was in Japan; I had to confess the good and long talks with him. I was pleased to learn from its speech, and from the solid virtues which appeared in his life, the admirable instructions that St. Francis Xavier gave to those he converted to the faith, and the method he used to strengthen their first resolution. [139]

Although this chapter concludes guardedly with a simple declaration—'I left several other things that happened to me during these ten years' (139-140)—some of the unwritten episodes concerning De Rhodes' permanence in Macao must be recalled. In fact, during his long stay between 1630 and 1640, the French priest witnessed a deep split within the Jesuits, namely among the St. Paul College professors, which, having earlier roots, became evident in 1639 against Manuel Dias (1560-1639), the Visitor of China and Japan. Dias had an impressive record of quarrels; he was the second rector of the St. Paul College, between 1597 and 1601, to be accused of being too rigid and unable to consult his brothers. Next, he was the most strict superior of the Jesuit residences in Southern China (Shaozhou, Nanchang and Nanjing), from 1603 to 1609, raising serious doubts on the emerging 'accommodation' (in fact, political, ideological and social submission) missionary strategy in formation

around Matteo Ricci, prefiguring the later Chinese Rites debate. In 1611, Father Manuel Dias Senior, as he was then acknowledged, became again rector of the Macao College to be involved in a clash with the Italian visitor Francesco Pasio (1554-1612)—dividing the Jesuits into rival factions, Portuguese and Italian,—who was accused by Dias of plotting against him, aiming to control the mission in Japan where they were accused of an unethical involvement in huge profitable businesses. Sent to visit the Chinese missions between 1622 and 1629, Dias returned to Macao old and deaf, but was still appointed in 1632, to general surprise, to the high position of Visitor of China and Japan. Although refusing, Dias was destined in 1635 to end his days in dramatic disaster. In October 1639, a faction led by the Provincial Gaspar Luís (1586-c.1650), Alexandre de Rhodes, Giovanni Antonio Rubbino (1578-1643) and the brother Manuel Figueiredo (1622-c.1655) decided to depose Dias from his position as Visitor, closing his cubicle, destroying his office furniture and inspecting his personal papers under the excuse that the old Jesuit had stolen letters (Pina 2007, pp. 93-94). Attacked, accused and slandered, Manuel Dias Senior died a month and half later, triggering a general commotion amid the Jesuits and the Christian town. The faction supported by De Rhodes was directly accused of the death of the old and orthodox Jesuit, and six years later Álvaro Semedo presented the episode as a 'serious, public and scandalous case' that was still 'very fresh and very much regretted by both outsiders and those within the residence.' (Pina 2007, p. 94) The rest of this story from Alexandre de Rhodes' side is well known: the French Jesuit was immediately sent again to the Vietnamese missions; during his several returns to Macao he did not receive any other religious or teaching duties and in 1645 was advised to return to Europe where he started campaigning against the Portuguese Patronage rights in the East. Normally, these kinds of controversial episodes are avoided by the apologetic Jesuit historiography that, still receiving considerable academic validation, recounts the 17th century missions of the Society in Japan and, mainly, in China as large consensual endeavors headed by uncontroversial heroes such as the grand Matteo Ricci. This discourse is built a far cry from the historical evidence despite that all the diverse actors—as De Rhodes in that text fragment on the fantastic 150 years old proselyte—swear that they were always using the same St. Francis Xavier original missionary strategy

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'Map of Annam with the kingdoms of Tonkin and Cochinchina', included in Alexandre de Rhodes' *Relazione de' felici successi della santa fede predicata da' padri della Compagnia di Gesù del Regno di Turchino*, Roma, 1650.

for the East as the source and justification for their differences and their controversial actions.

THE MAP OF 'ANNAM' WITH MACAO

The printed works of Alexandre de Rhodes are also an interesting, albeit marginal and modest, contribution to the 17th rare historical cartography of Macao through the Jesuit singular maps of Vietnam. Newly arrived in Rome, the Jesuit printed, in 1650, his *Relazione* on the Jesuit mission in Tonkin, offering the readers an original chart entitled 'Map of Annam with the kingdoms of Tonkin and Cochinchina'. Normally used to refer to the central region of Vietnam, meaning 'Pacified South', and deriving from the Chinese An Nan who applied the term mainly to Tonkin, the general title of the map, Annam, is an earlier prefiguration of the colonial French Vietnam

merging south, center and north, Cochinchina, Annam and Tonkin as part of Indochina.

Although this map is presented as an entirely original work by Alexandre De Rhodes, close research immediately identifies its Portuguese and Chinese sources. The chart is oriented West-East, which was common in the Chinese epochal cartography, and most of the information on South China, the Cao Bang kingdom, north of Tonkin, under the control of the Mac Lords, and the large wall (much exaggerated) dividing Tonkin from Yunann and Guangxi—at the time still largely under Southern Ming mastery—are based on Chinese administrative maps¹⁸ normally known in Macao through its continental details, in contrast to the habitually neglected maritime information. The rest of the cartographic information comes largely from Portuguese co-eval maps, including

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those countless merchant and sailors' charts that did not survive since they were widely used and substituted by new maritime and trade information.¹⁹

In a general reading, De Rhodes' map sketches Tonkin as a much larger realm than Cochinchina ('four times and as large as France' [99]), carefully drawing its imagined frontiers in straight lines: Tonkin centered in Kécio (Hanoi) borders, Laos in the west, and China and Cao Bang in the North, while the enclave controlled by the Bau Lords, between Tuyen Quang and Vai Bai, does not appear in the map. Cochinchina with its capital in Hue is presented mainly as a coastal kingdom extended between Cua Thay, in the north, and Ponta Varela, in the south, bordered west by Laos and Cambodia, and in the south by Champa. The map draws the Tonkin gulf, the position of Hainan and the South of Guangdong very imprecisely, but is quite accurate in the determination of the principal harbors and islands of commerce in both Tonkin and Cochinchina. In fact, Tonkin is presented with two main ports, Cua Bang (Cura Bang) and Vang Mai (Hoang Mai), while Cochinchina offers in this chart a large set of trade islands and ports: the islands of Pulo Ciampello (Cu Lao Dai Chiem), Pulocata Color (Cu Lao Re) and Pulo Cambi (Cu Lao Xanh); and the ports from north to south of Cua Sam (Cua Thay), Dinh Cou (Dinh Cu), Turan (DA Nang), Hai Fo (Hoai Pho), Cura Pai, Da and Voc Nam (Voc Ngot). The difference in the detailed toponomy of the two kingdoms confirms precisely the differences in the Jesuit missions and volume of Portuguese trade, mainly from Macao. Other than this coastal toponomy, the interior of these territories is widely unsketched, mobilising those habitual hidden cartographic strategies: an immense desert, labeled Solitudo, along with a wind-rose, occupy most of the west of Cochinchina, and a huge chain of mountains, called Rumoi, the source of many rivers running in parallel lines to the sea, is extended from south Cochinchina to north Tonkin, being the most visible geographical accident on De Rhodes' map of 'Annam'.

The Jesuit did not forget to highlight the position of Macao in his chart, appearing on its lower right, near the Canton province, although he preferred to emphasise in Latin close to the Portuguese enclave the burial place of St. Francis Xavier in Sangchuang

¹⁹Royaume d'Annam Comprenant Les Royaumes de Tumkin et de la Cocinchine. Designé par les Pères de la Compagnie de Jesus'. Paris, 1650.

('sepulchrum S. Xauerij'), truly the most original Jesuit contribution to this cartography. Although Xavier's remains, as everybody knows, travelled from the South China island to Malacca in 1553 and then to the Jesuit church of Jesus in Goa, where his corpse is still worshipped and shown every ten years to great multitudes of faithful, Alexandre de Rhodes' map highlights the original grave as a place of pilgrimage for the Jesuit missionaries departing from Macao to different evangelisation fields, therefore stressing naturally again St. Francis Xavier as the key inspirational source for the evangelic efforts of the Society of Jesus. Nevertheless, despite his long stay in Macao, the position of the enclave is not accurate in the map, and the Portuguese settlement does not appear as the well-known peninsula that it was and still is.

Fortunately, after returning to Europe, during his journeys in France aiming to mobilise sponsorship for a new mission in Vietnam, from 1653 onwards, De Rhodes decided to prepare a new map in Western style that was printed in this period in two versions: black-and-white and a beautiful apparatus edition in colors. The map was made by Jean Pruthenus Somer, an important engraver and cartographer author of several world maps and various charts of diverse countries and regions, including China, and printed by the editors of De Rhodes' *Voyages*, Jean and Gabriel Cramoisy. It was then disseminated as an autonomous engraving, probably offered as a rare gift by the Jesuit during his different French meetings.

This new chart, entitled 'Kingdom of Annam comprising the kingdoms of Tonkin and Cochinchina sketched by the Fathers of the Society of Jesus', is a directly revised version of the previous De Rhodes map. Oriented North-South, presenting the same toponomy but dividing Cochinchina more clearly into several provinces differentiated by the cascade of parallel rivers, the chart still shows poorly the Tunkin Gulf (labelled Gulf of Hainan) and adds a legend in the mountainous border between Tonkin and Laos signalling: 'it was in this desert that Father Jean Baptiste Bonel of the Society of Jesus died when he departed to preach in Laos'. Since this other French Jesuit died between 1649-1650, De Rhodes received the news probably two or three years later, a detail that suggests the date of this engraved map to be around 1653-1654.

Nevertheless, the most important revision in this new chart is precisely the position and representation

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of Macao. The map displays accurately the peninsular situation of Macao, represents a set of fictional buildings insinuating the walled Christian town where De Rhodes lived and worked, and shifts correctly the geographical relationship between the Portuguese enclave and the constellation of southern Pearl River Delta's islands, including in its place the insular burial place of St. Francis Xavier, which receives a more appropriate legend: 'Island of Sangchuang grave of St. Francis Xavier' (Isle de Sanchoan tombeau de St. François Xavier).

NOTES

1 Much of the contemporary scholarship and the internal critical research of the Jesuit writings suggest that Rhodes may have been born in 1593 (Claude Larre, *Alexandre de Rhodes (1593-1660)*; Eduardo Torralba, 'La date de naissance du Père de Rhodes: 15

This new map of 'Annam', rather than the previous De Rhodes chart of 1650, gathers enough historical information to enable contemporary research to rebuild the political geography of Vietnam in the mid-17th century (Héduy 1998; Hung 2011). A quite complex political cartography, a territorial mosaic suggesting the limits of Tonkin and Cochinchina imposed by other historical and local polities to stress, despite a dominant agricultural economy, the maritime and trade vocation of these two riverine realms much more connected to the South China Sea and the commercial corridors toward Malacca than to continental Southeast Asia hinterlands. In this period, still divided into several kingdoms of ethnic foundation, along with the major polities of Siam, Khmer and Burma engaged in recurrent processes of territorial disputes, while the southeast seafaring kingdom of Champa was emerged in a long-term continuous territorial contraction up to its later annexation by the Vietnamese emperor Minh Mang, in 1832. It was, therefore, in the 17th century a divided economic-ethnico-political environment that Alexandre de Rhodes preached and traveled in; fragmentary parts of what is today Vietnam.

If the Jesuit-published writings are still one of the most important historical sources to research pre-colonial Vietnam and the first 17th century Catholic missions in the region, for our much more concrete research project on 'French Travels and Travelers in Macao (1623-1900)', Alexandre de Rhodes' *Voyages* and maps as well as his life, religious work, teaching duties and controversies in the Pearl River Delta enclave are a valuable starting point from which to expand a historiography of Macao still too dependent on (and in certain cases faithful believer of) official Portuguese sources and representations. **RC**

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mars 1591, est-elle exacte?', in *Bulletin de la Société des Etudes Indochinoises*, 35 (1960), pp. 683-689); Joseph Dehergne, *Répertoire de Jésuites de Chine de 1552 à 1800*, pp. 215f.; Peter Phan, *Mission and Catechesis: Alexandre de Rhodes and Inculturation in Seventeenth-*

Century Vietnam). In contrast, the general encyclopedias nowadays available online, such as the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, still maintain the birth date in 1591 (N. Weber, 'Alexandre de Rhodes', in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912).

- 2 Alexandre de Rhodes, *Voyages et Missions du P. Alexandre de Rhodes*, p. 17. Since we use this edition for the biographical and textual research of De Rhodes life, voyages and representation of China and Macao, in order to avoid a large set of footnotes and references, we only indicate hereinafter in square brackets [] the quoted page(s).
- 3 Also spelled Tun Kim, Tonquim, Tongkin or Tongking, this realm corresponds panoramically to the northernmost part of Vietnam, south of China's Yunnan and Guangxi Provinces, east of northern Laos, and west of the Gulf of Tonkin. Locally, it is still known as Bac Ky, meaning 'Northern Region'.
- 4 In Alexandre de Rhodes missions, Cochinchina is more or less close to the southern region of Vietnam during the French colonial period, known in pre-colonial times as Nam Ky. Cochinchina was bounded on the northeast by the part of central Vietnam that the Jesuits and later the French called Annam, on the south was bordered by Champa, on the southeast by the South China Sea and on the northwest by Cambodia.
- 5 Francisco de Pina was born between 1585 and 1586 in Guarda, entering the Society of Jesus with 19 years old to be sent to Macao where he studied and graduate in Theology in the St. Paul's College. He joined the Cochinchina mission around 1618, but died drowned in 1625 in Da Nang.
- 6 The Portuguese trade presence in Huai Pho dates back to 1535, when a Portuguese envoy, António de Faria, entered the southern Vietnam. He quickly recognised that 'Faifo is another suitable port for Portuguese trading and shipping' (Joseph Buttinger, *The Smaller Dragon: A Political History of Vietnam*, p. 199).
- 7 Giuliano Baldinotti was born in Pistoia, in 1591, and died in Macao, in 1631. He entered the Society of Jesus in 1609, and in 1621 he left for the missions in the East. From Goa Baldinotti went to Macao, where he was commissioned to explore the possibility of a mission in Tonkin. In the wake of Macanese traders, along with brother Giulio Piani, he sailed from Macao on 2 December 1625, and after a long journey, reached the capital Hanoi on 7 March 1626, being the first Catholic missionary in the region. Baldinotti was well received by the regent Trinh Tráng, who wanted to establish relations with the Portuguese traders. The Jesuit gathered a lot of information on the country reported in a letter written in Macao, dating November 12, 1626. The report was printed in 1629, in Rome, in a volume entitled *Lettere dall'Ethiopia dell'anno 1626 fino al marzo del 1627 e dalla Cina dell'anno 1625 fino al febbraio 1626. Con una breve Relazione del viaggio al Regno di Tunquin, nuovamente scoperto. Mandate al molto Rev. Padre Mutio Vitelleschi, Generale della Compagnia di Gesù*.
- 8 Alexandre de Rhodes mobilization of mathematic knowledge and scientific theoretical and practical skills in the Vietnamese missions is researched by Barbara Widenor Maggs, 'Science, Mathematics, and Reason: The Missionary Methods of the Jesuit Alexandre de Rhodes in Seventeenth-Century Vietnam', in *Catholic Historical Review*, vol. 86 (2000), pp. 439-458.
- 9 Rhodes explains his expulsion by two main reasons: the Catholic doctrine hostility to polygamy and idolatry: 'Women who saw themselves rejected by the new Christians that were already many, started making so much noise that the kingdom was moved. The king, who until then had testified extreme kindness to us, began to alienate some of the doctrine that we preach him. He was often warned that our doctrine could harm the whole kingdom, since denying men to have many women prevented the country from

people, depriving the king of new subjects'. [126-127] Furthermore, 'the new Christians were accused of having broken some idols, then someone told the king that I was a wizard and my breath was a spell that reversed the head of the people'. [128]

- 10 A complete bibliographical survey of Alexandre de Rhodes writings, including some letters, but not isempted of several chronological and titles mistakes can be consulted in Augustin de Backer & Alois de Backer, *Bibliothèque des écrivains de la Compagnie de Jésus*. Liège: Imprimerie de L. Grandmont-Donders, 1853, I, pp. 622-623. The brief biography of Alexandre de Rhodes in this well known bibliographical collectanea dates his birth from 1591.
- 11 Jacques Roland, *Pionniers Portugais de la linguistique Vietnamienne*.
- 12 Gaspar do Amaral was born in the dioceses of Viseu, joined the Jesuits as novice in 1608, later teaching in the Colleges of Braga, Évora and Coimbra. In 1623, he traveled with the Patriarch of Abyssinia, Afonso Mendes, to Goa, then to Macao where he was sent to Cochinchina. He was Jesuit provincial of Japan and China, rector of the Macao College, dying in 1645.
- 13 António Barbosa was born in Arrifana de Sousa, dioceses of Porto, and entered the Society of Jesus in Lisbon, in 1624, then traveling to Goa and Macao. He was personal assistant of Gaspar Amaral during his missions, rectorate and Jesuit offices.
- 14 'Aliorum etiam ejusdem Societatis Patrum laboribus sum usus praecipue P. Gasparis de Amaral, & P. Antonij Barbosae, qui ambo sum compuserunt Dictionarium ille lingua Annamitica incipiens, hic à Lusitana, sed inmaturo iterque morte nobis erectus: utriusque ergo laboribus sum usus' (Rhodes, *Dictionarium Annamiticum Lusitanum et Latinum*, II-III).
- 15 Alexandre de Rhodes, *Des Pater Alexander von Rhodes aus der Gesellschaft Jesu Missionsreisen in China, Tonkin, Cochinchina und anderen asiatischen Reichen*. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1858.
- 16 Alexandre de Rhodes, *Voyages et missions du Père A. de Rhodes, S.J., en la Chine et autres royaumes de l'Orient, avec son retour en Europe par la Perse et l'Arménie. Nouvelle édition, conforme à la première de 1653, annotée par le Père H. Gourdin, de la même Compagnie, et ornée d'une carte de tous les voyages de l'auteur*. Lille: Société de Saint-Augustin, Desclée, De Brouwer et Cie, 1884.
- 17 Francisco de Lima was the general-captain of the four vessels of the fleet, but he bought the voyage rights from Pero de Sá de Menezes with royal express permission. Returned to Portugal the next year, there is not any other documented participation of Lima in the Portuguese annual voyages to India (Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, *Reservados*, Caixa 26, no. 153). The practice of selling the voyage rights was common from Portugal to the different Asian enclaves, as well as the investments of some Portuguese noblemen trying basically to become immediately rich by beting in a singular very lucky profitable trip to the Orient.
- 18 Much more detailed researches on Chinese sources of pre-colonial cartography of Vietnam are studied in: Ralph B. Smith, 'Sino-Vietnamese Sources for the Nguyen Period: An Introduction', in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 30, no. 3 (1967), pp. 600-621; John K. Whitmore, 'Cartography in Vietnam', in *The History of Cartography*, vol. 2, Book 2 – *Cartography in the Traditional East and Southeast Asian Societies*, edited by J. B. Harley & David Woodward, pp. 479-508.
- 19 A competent study of the Portuguese 16th and 17th century cartography of Vietnam can be found in Isabel Augusta Tavares Mourão, *Portugueses em Terras do Dai-Viêt (Cochinchina e Tun Kim)*, pp. 35-56.

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RESUMOS

Mo Yan: Um Intelectual do Campo, da Terra Natal e do Mundo

Este artigo constitui uma incursão pelo percurso literário de Mo Yan, abordando a temática da sua obra, que normalmente tem como cenário o mundo rural da sua terra natal, e a sua escrita muito exuberante, enérgica e simultaneamente altamente metafórica. Socorrendo-se da tradução literária chinesa e das tradições orais populares, “com uma mescla de fantasia e realidade, de perspectiva histórica e social, Mo Yan criou um mundo que recorda na sua complexidade o dos escritos de William Faulkner e de Gabriel Garcia Marquez”, como reconheceu a Academia Sueca ao atribuir-lhe, em 2012, o Prémio Nobel da Literatura. [Autor: Qiu Huadong, pp. 12-20]

Peito Grande, Ancas Larga: Notas de Leitura

Segundo Mo Yan, um romance não copia a realidade, inventa uma linguagem própria. Recriando personagens através das mais alucinadas metamorfoses, Mo Yan é por vezes comparado aos autores latino-americanos do chamado “realismo mágico”, mas os grandes mitos e metáforas que percorrem a sua obra são recorrentes nas escritas de todos os tempos e culturas. Entretecendo as vivências da sua infância com uma poderosa torrente ficcional, o polémico livro *Peito Grande, Ancas Largas* tem como personagem central o filho único de uma mulher, que só engendrava filhas, e de um missionário estrangeiro. Tiranos e bandidos ensanguentam a terra, num saga que inverte o destino sagrado da terra, como mãe que nutre e acalenta. É a Mãe – o seio materno – que vai ao longo das 600 páginas do livro dar corpo à forte significação simbólica que o título já veicula. Cruzando tradições e crenças com o povo real, animais lendários e estranhas visões, o texto de Mo Yan vai relatando ora rituais de iniciação, ora ritos fúnebres. Actos de guerra maculam a natureza, ela também mãe comum, tudo nivelando, digerindo, regenerando e redistribuindo, num extenso e vivo

painel que me conduz a revisitar metáforas semelhantes na obra de outros autores e, finalmente, a uma reflexão de Saramago sobre as visões de Santo Antão de Hieronymus Bosch. [Autora: Fernanda Dias, pp. 21-33]

A Língua Secreta da Carta de Lu Si-Yuan em *Nocturno em Macau*

Categoria particular do silêncio, o “segredo” (segredo) pode aproximar-se do enigma, do mistério, do inacessível, do inexprimível. Se, por vezes, se lhe atribui o sentido de “ocultado da vista”, o segredo pode também aparecer como algo de ilegível ou de indecifrável. Na obra de Maria Ondina Braga, o objecto é o símbolo por excelência do silêncio expressivo que acompanha o seu trabalho labiríntico e incansável de “decifradora” dos seus próprios enigmas. Depurando ou descodificando de certo modo o sentido do não dito, o objecto reconforta e libera o personagem que o utiliza como símbolo, ao mesmo tempo que preserva o pudor necessário a esse desenlace. A carta, e em particular a carta de amor, desempenha, neste contexto, um papel particularmente relevante. Em *Nocturno em Macau*, este objecto, por intermédio do olhar do narrador ou do personagem, desprende-se da sua realidade própria, permitindo uma leitura alheia às palavras que nele figuram. Graças a um jogo de encaixes sucessivos de esconderijos e de segredos de que ela se torna alvo, a carta de Lu Si-Yuan constitui uma peça de extraordinária importância neste romance. À imagem da intriga nele tecida, só os signos suspensos de uma língua secreta parecem, nesta missiva, dignos de interesse. [Autora: Filomena Iooss, pp. 34-43]

Macau, Cidade Multicultural? Marcas de Multiculturalidade em *Os Dores* de Henrique de Senna Fernandes

Fruto da mobilidade e comunicação transnacional e transcultural, as relações pessoais estabelecem-se quer

presencialmente, quer pela comunicação digital, com benefícios de enriquecimento cultural mútuo. Contudo, as relações de proximidade e coexistência nem sempre são tão simples, o que tem criado problemas adicionais às sociedades com diversas culturas em presença, sem que as teorias e as políticas de multiculturalismo tenham conseguido apresentar soluções de consenso. Macau, cidade com uma diversidade cultural cada vez mais acentuada e rica, prima pela coexistência pacífica entre culturas, apresentando, contudo, problemas sociais e estruturais que, de acordo com alguns estudiosos e autores literários, são antigos, tendo vindo a agravar-se com o desenvolvimento económico a que se vem assistindo nas duas últimas décadas. A obra em análise, *Os Dores*, de Henrique de Senna Fernandes, mostra-nos uma Macau, de meados do século xx, como lugar de encontros e desencontros entre pessoas de diferentes culturas e uma teia de relações onde está presente o Outro visto como uma alteridade que nos obriga a questionar-nos sobre nós e os que conosco convivem num espaço pródigo de significados sociais. [Autor: Fernando Manuel Margarido João, pp. 44-57]

O Oriente e o Silêncio na Poesia de Rui Rocha

A poesia de Rui Rocha, no seu livro *A Oriente do Silêncio*, demarca-se de grande parte do discurso poético escrito em português nos últimos anos. O olhar que o autor lança sobre o Outro e a Natureza não se inscreve naquilo que é hoje a produção poética de portugueses, brasileiros e africanos de língua oficial portuguesa. Neste artigo clarifica-se esse solo matricial de que a poesia de Rui Rocha emana. Estabelecem-se igualmente alguns paralelismos desta obra com dados pensadores ocidentais nomeadamente Hildegarda de Bingen, S. João da Cruz e Eckhart. Distingue-se também esta escrita quer da de poetas portugueses de cariz orientalista, como Camilo Pessanha, quer de poetas que usando