

## Jules Itier (1802-1877) A French Daguerreotypist in Macao

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### THE INVENTION OF THE DAGUERREOTYPE

In 1838, Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre (1787-1851) (Fig. 1) published a leaflet in Paris to advertise his invention: the daguerreotype. This was a photographic process that produced a single positive picture (image) on a highly polished silvered copper plate surface exposed in a *camera obscura* (dark chamber).

Thanks to the daguerreotype, everyone will be able to show a view of his castle or country home; we will collect all kinds of pictures which will be valued all the more since art cannot match them for precision or perfection of detail and they cannot be altered by light. It will even be possible to make portraits .... (Gunthert, p. 84)

Daguerre was a painter, lithographer and set designer. He was an assistant to the artist Pierre Prévost, and it was through the latter's panoramas that Daguerre was initiated into the art of *camera obscura* between 1807 and 1815. The canvases he produced were very fashionable at the time and served as a backdrop to a variety of theatrical performances.

As chief set designer for the *Théâtre de l'Ambigu Comique* and the *Opéra de Paris* from 1816 to 1822, Daguerre made a name for himself among critics for his

set designs and especially his innovative lighting effects. His success in this field rapidly brought him fame.

In 1822, he went on to create the world's most important pre-photographic invention. Working with the painter Charles-Marie Bouton, also very well-known at the time, he devised the Diorama theatrical process (Fig. 2). The Diorama, meaning 'two

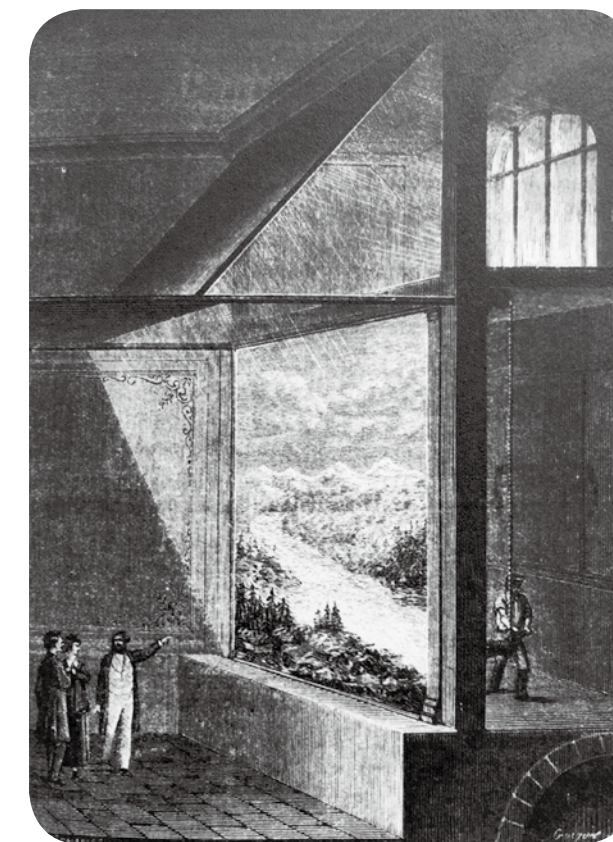


Fig. 2. Diorama of Louis Daguerre, wood-engraving from Louis Figuer, *Les merveilles de la science ou description populaire des inventions modernes*, Paris, 1869.

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views' in Greek, consisted of vast canvases painted on both sides, which could be transformed by means of clever lighting. For instance, the set could be in daylight when lit from in front, and transformed into a night view when lit from behind. Spectators were enthusiastic about the *trompe-l'œil* effect and the Diorama was so successful that Daguerre's fame rapidly spread abroad. King Charles X awarded him a Legion of Honour in 1824. Other Dioramas based on the same principle were created in Great Britain and in the United States.

## AND PHOTOGRAPHY?

Daguerre used *camera obscura* for his sets and from the mid-1820s endeavoured to find a way to fix the projected image onto ground glass in his darkroom in a lasting manner, for the image itself was merely a reverse and ephemeral projection of a scene located outside the dark room.

At the same time, Nicéphore Niépce (1765-1833), a prolific and stubborn inventor, was pursuing the photographic experiments he had started in 1816 with heliogravure. He knew about lithography and used that process for printing. In 1827, Niépce succeeded in obtaining a *camera obscura* image on a polished pewter plate coated in bitumen of Judea, a compound that hardens when exposed to light—however, this required eight to ten hours of exposure to sunlight. Niépce called his invention heliography.

Daguerre heard about Niépce's work from the Parisian optician, Charles Chevalier, whose shop he frequented and who advised Daguerre to meet him. Their first meeting in 1826 was facilitated by the success of the Diorama, and the two men immediately established a correspondence. Later, despite some reticence on both sides, they then formed a partnership to create a permanent image by studying light and chemistry. According to the clauses in their contract, Daguerre undertook to improve the

heliographic process invented by Niépce in 1827, and indeed he did so until Niépce's death in 1833. In fact, Niépce's photographic technique, which required an excessively long exposure period, was not sensitive enough for any practical application or to be successful in anyway. However, his research enabled Daguerre to perfect his own invention, the daguerreotype.

The invention of the daguerreotype was officially announced by François Arago, physicist and politician, on 7 January 1839 at a session of the Academy of Sciences in Paris. That date is usually deemed to be the official birth of photography, but the revolutionary process behind the invention was only divulged on 19

August 1839, again by Arago, to the leading lights of both the Academy of Sciences and the Academy of Arts. That joint session was to become famous. The auditorium was also filled with an enthusiastic public, eager to discover the secret of the new invention.

Arago waxed lyrical: 'previously it would have taken some twenty years and legions of draughtsmen to copy thousands of hieroglyphs that cover the monuments in Thebes, Memphis, and Karnak. With the daguerreotype, a single man can carry out this vast task'.

The details of the process announced that day seemed close to magical. The procedure for preparing the daguerreotype was meticulous, and polishing the silver-covered copper plate was crucial to it. The plate was then sensitised by exposing the silver side to iodine vapours to form light-sensitive silver iodide. It then had to be used within an hour of the preparation. It was placed in the *camera obscura* for taking the picture and the exposure could take ten minutes or more (Fig. 3). When removed from the apparatus, the latent (invisible) image was developed (or made visible) away from any source of light by means of mercury vapour, and then stabilised with salt water or sodium thiosulfate. Finally,

the definitive picture was gilded with gold chloride to enhance the image. The daguerreotype image was a one-off; to obtain another the whole process had to be repeated. Moreover, it was a reverse mirror image with the left appearing on the right-hand side and vice-versa.

On 19 August 1839, the same day that the process was described and at Arago's instigation, the French King Louis-Philippe acquired the patent for it and offered it as a gift to the world—with the exception of England! The French public took to this new invention with enthusiasm. Opticians' shops were immediately besieged and 'within a few days there were not enough camera obscura to satisfy the zeal of so many eager amateurs' (Lavédrine, p. 35). The craze spread across Europe and America with astonishing speed, and the first daguerreotype in the New World was taken on 16 September 1839, just 28 days after Arago presented the process in Paris. The very first person to describe this remarkable invention in the American press was Robert Walsh Jr, an American correspondent in Paris who related his visit to Daguerre's workshop in a letter to the *New-York American* dated 5 March 1839:

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> instant, by special favour, I was admitted to M. Daguerre's laboratory, and passed an hour in contemplating his drawings. It would be impossible for me to express the admiration which they produced. I can convey to you no idea of the exquisite perfection of the copies of objects and scenes, effected in ten minutes by the action of simple solar light upon his *papiers*

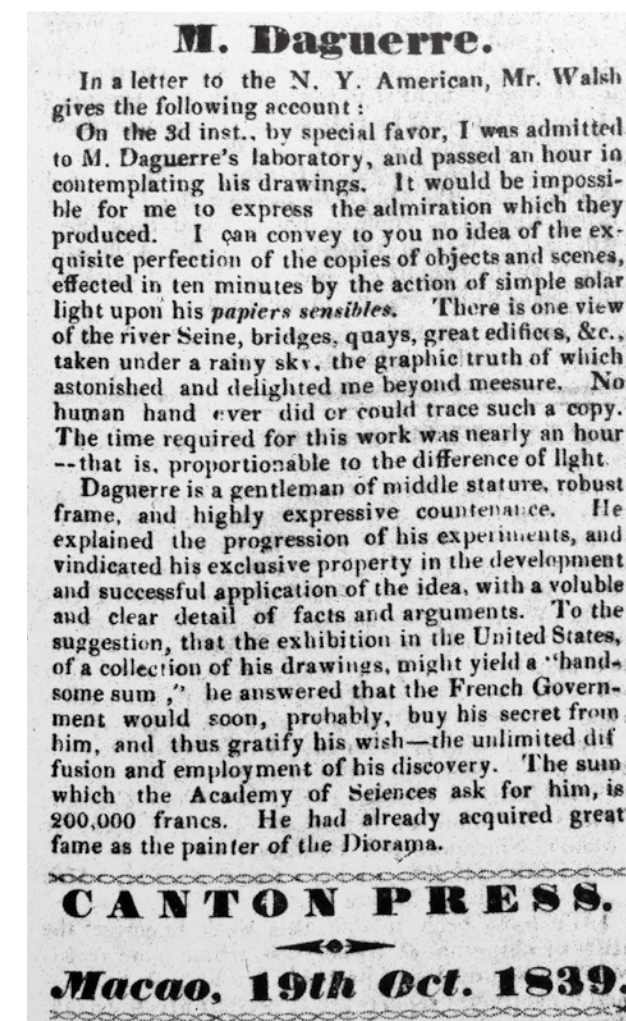


Fig. 4. Robert Walsh's letter in *The Canton Press*, Macao 19 October 1839. Private collection.

*sensibles*. There is one view of the river Seine, bridges, quays, great edifices, etc., taken under a *rainy sky*, the graphic truth of which astonished and delighted me beyond measure. No human hand ever did or could trace such a copy. This time required for this work was nearly an hour—that is, proportional to the difference of light.

Daguerre is a gentleman of middle stature, robust frame, and highly expressive countenance. He explained the progression of his experiments, and vindicated his exclusive property in the development and successful application of the idea, with a voluble and clear detail of facts and arguments. To the suggestion, that the exhibition in the United States, of a collection of his drawings, might yield a 'handsome sum', he answered that the French Government would soon, probably, buy his secret from him, and thus gratify his wish—the unlimited diffusion and employment of his discovery. The sum which the Academy of Sciences ask for him, is 200,000 francs. He had already acquired great fame as the painter of the Diorama.

gratify his wish—the unlimited diffusion and employment of his discovery. The sum which the Academy of Sciences asks for him, is 200,000 francs. He had already acquired great fame as the painter of the Diorama. (Lai, p. 21, Fig. 1)

Samuel Morse, the inventor of the telegraph, was greatly taken with the invention and, thanks to Robert Walsh, obtained a private interview with Daguerre during a journey to Paris. On 9 March 1839, he sent an article to the *New-York Observer* in which he marvelled at the 'incredible delicate minutiae of the black and white drawing, which ... is even able to pick out the slender legs of a spider'.

China in turn, was soon to discover this French invention and on 19 October 1839, only two months

Fig. 3. The 'daguerreotype' chair. The headrest was necessary to ensure the immobility of the subject having to pose for a long time. Musée français de la photographie, Bièvres.



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after Arago revealed the revolutionary process, an English language newspaper in Macao, the *Canton Press* (Fig. 4), reprinted Robert Walsh's letter to the *New-York American* of 5 March 1839 in full.

## HOW THE DAGUERRETYPE AFFECTED ARTISTS, WRITERS, SCIENTISTS AND TRAVELLERS

Arago's public event of 19 August 1839, disclosing Daguerre's mysterious process, not to mention the publicity that preceded it, triggered a variety of reactions in artistic circles. Supporters and critics of photography confronted each other, with some artists considering that the ability of this process to fix images of nature made it a vulgar competitor. The painter Paul Delaroche (1797-1856) even exclaimed, 'Painting died today!'



Fig. 5. Léon Riesner, portrait of Eugène Delacroix, 1842. Daguerreotype. Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

In fact, throughout the 1840s, it was the portrait that became the driving force of the daguerreotype and the privilege of the bourgeoisie, which considered it more objective, less expensive and more modern than its painted counterpart. The painter Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863) was against this new invention at first, but became intrigued and finally had his own photographic portrait taken, first by his cousin, the painter Léon Riesner (Fig. 5), and then by Félix Nadar, the famous Parisian photographer. The artist Charles Daubigny (1817-1878) was captivated by the daguerreotype and quickly understood that it would change artistic concepts forever and that its intrinsic qualities of faithful representation and clarity would transform art by its ability to render objective representations of nature. He believed that from now on it would no longer be possible to stick to the rules taught in the art studios, and we might consider that his fragmented

Barbizon landscapes were, in a way, the first pictorial expressions of the photographic experience. After that, impressionists such as Edgar Degas (1834-1917) and Gustave Caillebotte (1848-1894) used photographic techniques to achieve even bolder artistic results.

The new invention also made it possible to reproduce works of art, and many painters began to photograph their works. Ingres was one of the first to do so, while Gustave Courbet used the daguerreotype as a 'mirror with a memory', to use the words of Robert de Montesquieu, and it became one of his main working tools. He not only photographed his own works but collected photographs of the nude models he used for his paintings.

The commercial uses of photography followed immediately. Magazines disseminated a rich harvest of pictures by daguerreotypists 'reporting' from Europe and beyond by means of engraving or lithography. The *Excursions Daguerriennes*, a collection of 110 prints taken from daguerreotypes, was published from 1841 to 1843, and was the first publication to use daguerreotypes for its illustrations.

Writers, too, were intrigued by the invention and quick to comment on it, including those who vilified it. In 1859 the poet Charles Baudelaire criticised the craze for photographic portraits, saying, 'Society has rushed as a single Narcissus, to contemplate its trivial image on metal'. Baudelaire stated that photography was merely a 'refuge for all the failed artists'. Nevertheless, the invention succeeded in captivating the intellectual elite. The poet, Lamartine, changed his mind when he saw Adam Salomon's pictures, and even conferred a poetic dimension on them: 'Since I have admired those marvellous portraits, captured by a burst of sunlight, I can no longer say that it is just a job; it is an art—better than art, it is a solar phenomenon in which the artist collaborates with the sun'.

Fig. 6. Louis-Auguste Bisson, portrait of Honoré de Balzac, May, 1842. Daguerreotype. Maison de Balzac, Paris.



According to Nadar, the writer Honoré de Balzac believed in a theory of spectres and feared that a photograph would steal away some of his own substance. When he finally agreed to be taken, he took on a somewhat romantic pose by turning his head away from the camera to protect himself, with his shirt open and his hand placed on his chest at heart level (Fig. 6).

Victor Hugo, on the other hand, was convinced that the daguerreotype was an excellent medium to disseminate and promote his works.

In contrast to the mixed reception given to the Daguerreotype by the 19<sup>th</sup> century artists and writers, the scientists of the period were enthusiastic, finding it a marvellous tool for their work. As Susan Barger sums it up in her essay 'Delicate and Complicated Operations: The Scientific Examination of the Daguerreotype': 'Daguerreotypes were used by scientists to record events and to document discoveries' (Barger, p. 97). The scientific applications were extended to anthropology, archaeology and medicine.

## JULES ITIER: A TRAVELLER-DAGUERREOTYPIST

Most of the photographers who brought plates back from their travels were amateurs. Ernest Lacan, a critic for *La Lumière*, the first French review to specialise in photography, defined the amateur photographer thus:

For me, the amateur photographer is that man who, for love of art, has acquired a passion for photography, as he might have acquired a passion for painting, sculpture or music, and consequently having made a detailed, reasoned and intelligent study of it, determined not to sacrifice any of his time and fortune needlessly, has succeeded in matching, if not superseding, his masters. (Lacan, p. 36)

Among these amateur photographers was Jules Itier (1802-1877) (Fig. 7), a naturalist and agronomist by training and customs inspector by profession. Itier boarded the sailing frigate *Sirène* in Brest on 12 December 1843, accompanied by his secretary Charles Lavollée. He was part of a group of diplomats accompanying Théodore de Lagrené, Minister Plenipotentiary, to China. As head of a commercial mission accompanying de Lagrené's embassy, Itier

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Fig. 7. Self-portrait of Jules Itier as a mandarin made in Marseille in 1847. Daguerreotype. Private collection.

was to study tariffs and navigation. The French king's goal was to obtain the same trading privileges as Great Britain had obtained in the Treaty of Nanking of 29 August 1842, following China's defeat by Britain in the first Opium War.

The daguerreotypes that Itier made in southern China, of Canton (now Guangzhou), Whampoa (now Huangpu), and Macao, between 1844 and 1845, are considered to be the earliest photographic images identified in China. Little was known about those pictures until his descendants decided to sell them to André Fage, the first director of the French Museum of Photography in Bièvres, who acquired them in 1971. The 37 daguerreotypes comprise the largest number of such photographic plates in public collections, but the acquisition was not accompanied by a publication. Things changed seven years later when the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris held an exhibition on photography in China which displayed several of Itier's pictures. Following that, an ardent collector, Gilbert Gimon published two pioneering articles on Itier's



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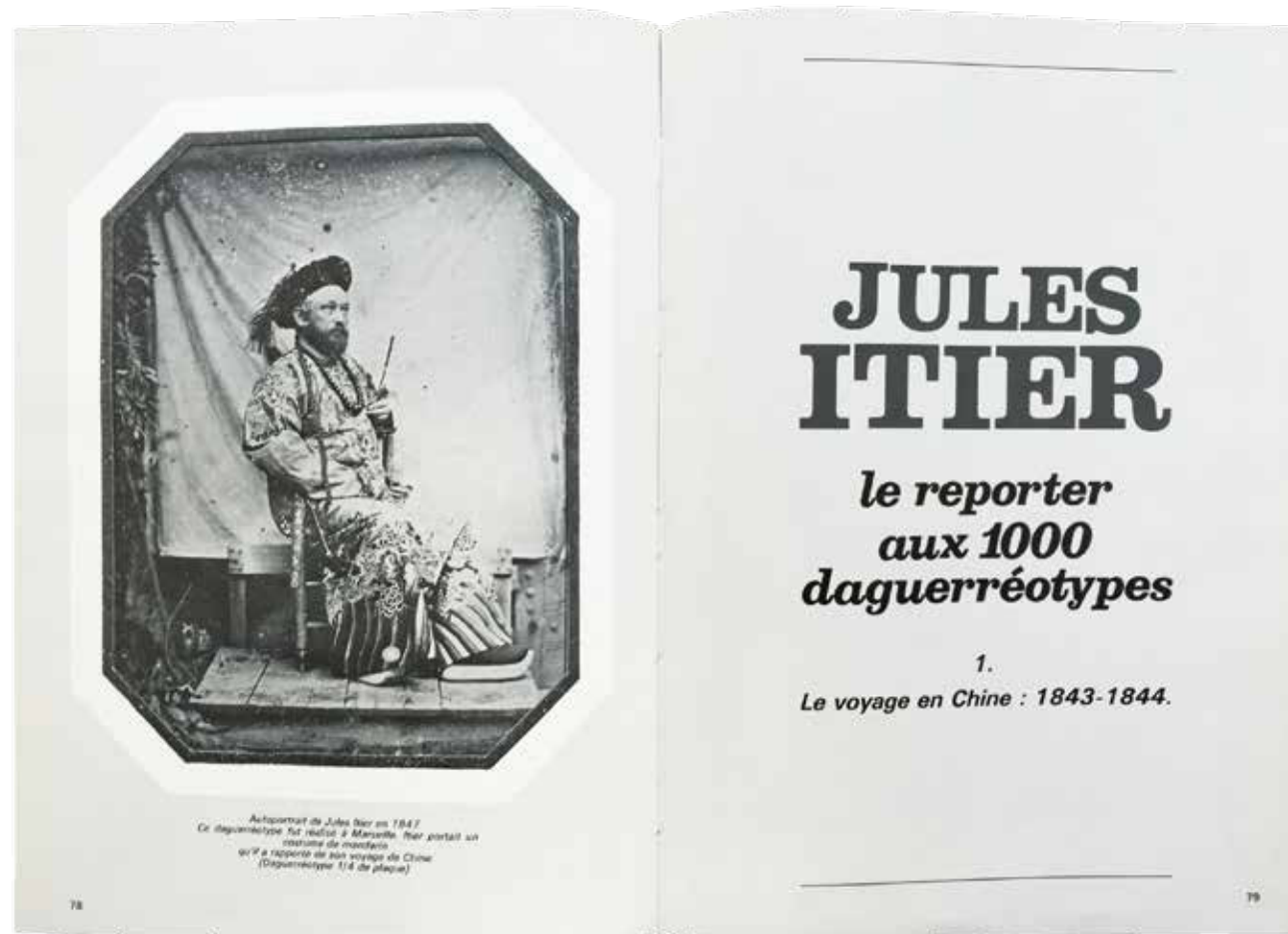


Fig. 8. Gilbert Gimon, 'Le Reporter aux 1000 daguerreotypes: le voyage en Chine, 1843-1844', *Prestige de la photographie* no. 8, 1979.

daguerreotypes in *Prestige de la Photographie* magazine in 1979 and 1980 (Fig. 8).

Jules Itier was born in Paris on 8 April 1802, to a family established for more than two centuries in Serres in the Hautes Alpes department in south-eastern France. His family could be considered as belonging to a 'customs dynasty' since so many members were high-ranking civil servants in the customs service. In 1809 Jules Itier enrolled at the Lycée Napoléon in Paris and finished his studies in Marseille at the age of seventeen. His passion for science dates to this period, apparently triggered by his uncle, Dubois-Aymé, a graduate of the prestigious Ecole Polytechnique. However, Itier was faithful to family tradition and began his career in the customs administration of Marseille in 1819 (where Dubois-Aymé was the director), and rose to become the chief inspector in 1857. According to the *Mémoires de l'Académie des Sciences, Belles-Lettres et Arts de Marseille* (Memoranda of the Marseille Academy of

Sciences, Literature and Art), Itier became interested in science again in about 1836. 'Soon his precocious instinct for science was awakened, and with the geologist's hammer in hand he roamed the mountains, juggling his professional duties with his scientific investigations' (Boyé, p. 6). Gilbert Gimon describes him in his article: 'He was, and would always will be, a self-taught man, especially in the field of science, with a rare capacity for assimilation and certainly an exceptional memory ...' (Gimon, 1981, p. 225)

From 1837 on, Itier joined, and became an active member of, several learned societies, including the *Société des Sciences et Arts de Paris* (1837), *Société de Statistiques de l'Isère* (1837), *Société Géologique de France* (1840), *Société Royale Académique de Savoie* (1841), and the *Congrès Scientifique de Lyon* (1841). A note found in Itier's private archives mentions several lasting friendships formed during this period in the scientific circles of Perpignan, which François Arago, the physicist

and politician who launched the daguerreotype in 1839, also frequented. Through his family connections, Itier probably met Prosper Mérimée, the inspector general of historical monuments, who considered that daguerreotypes were an essential tool for recording architectural sites. That friendship would certainly have made Itier familiar with the new process, and during Itier's journey to Senegal in November 1842, 'It was "architecture" that had tempted Itier to begin his photographic work' (Gimon, 1981, p. 227). This journey, along with others to French Guyana and Guadeloupe in 1843, provided Itier with an opportunity to practice the technique before his Chinese voyage.

Itier landed in Macao on 15 August 1844. He recorded in his *Journal*:

It is eleven o'clock, the flotilla of boats rocks on the water; at last we are going to step onto the land of China! The crowd surges onto the quay of Praja Grande, where the French embassy was to land. The ambassador might well have stepped onto Chinese soil with his left foot first, but the gods of China did not permit this calamity to happen, and so he disembarked right foot first. Several Chinese specially charged to record this omen have verified the fact; the success of our enterprise is thus assured in their eyes. On what threads hang the greatest ventures! (Itier, Vol. I, pp. 245-246)

The painter Auguste Borget (1808-1877), who arrived in Macao six years before Itier, was charged with reconstructing this scene. An engraving of his painting was published

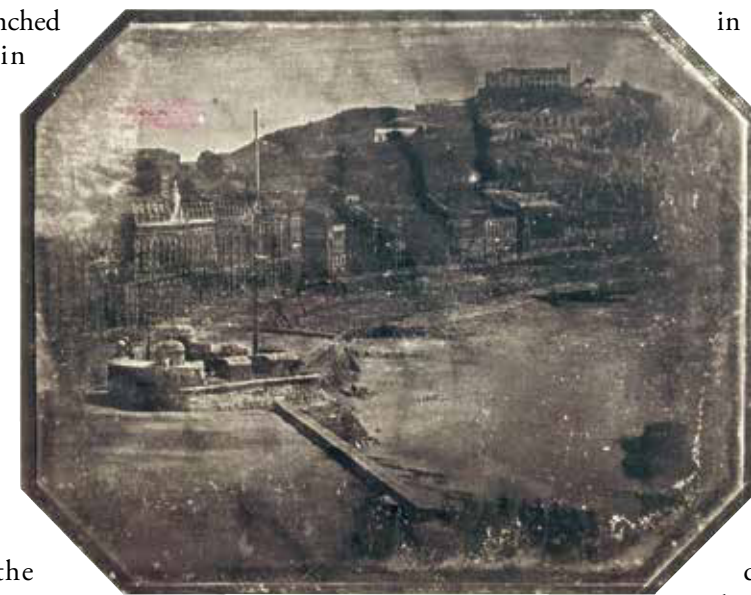


Fig. 9. Jules Itier, hand-written inscription 'Vue renversée, Vue de la praja grande à Macao (hôtel du Gouverneur à gauche)' [View of Praja Grande, reversed image]. Daguerreotype. Macao Museum of Art.

in *L'Illustration* magazine on 30 November 1844. (Staniszewska-Giordana, 2011b, p. 56, n. 39)

Itier was one of those French daguerreotypist travellers for whom foreign postings provided many opportunities to practice these new skills for pleasure. Itier brought back more than 100 daguerreotypes from his three-year travels across the Far East, covering a broad range of subjects and views of architectural interest.

His works became known in Macao when, in 1990, André Fage curated an exhibition there drawn from the French Museum of Photography collection, accompanied by a catalogue. On 12 April 2006, Ung Vai Meng, the first director of the Macao Museum of Art, acquired the first known photographic view of the Praya Grande for his museum at a public sale in Paris, fully aware of its historical interest.



Fig. 10. Jules Itier, hand-written inscription: 'Vue redressée de la praya à Macao' [View of Praja Grande, redressed image]. Daguerreotype. Musée français de la photographie, Bièvres.



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Most daguerreotype plates bear a hand-written caption by Itier on the mounting card, providing the place names and a description of the persons represented. For instance, the daguerreotype in the Macao Museum of Art collection, bears the hand-written inscription 'Reversed image, view of the Praja Grande in Macau (Governor's House on the left)' (Fig. 9). Two similar views can be found in the collection of the French Museum of Photography in Bièvres, one with the reversed image and the other with a corrected one (Fig. 10). Since the daguerreotype image was a one-off and could not be reproduced on paper, the only way to disseminate it was to engrave it. As a result, Itier usually took two pictures in order to keep one, '...I decided to photograph them together in a group and take two prints in order to keep one afterwards' (Itier, Vol. II, p. 115). Itier very rarely used a mirror, placed between the ground glass and the lens, to correct the reverse image on the daguerreotype. Curiously, the French daguerreotypists appeared to have preferred the reversed image.

In his three-volume *Journal d'un voyage* (travel journal) (Fig. 11), Itier describes the pictures and places them in context. On 28 October 1844 he wrote,

I spent my day making daguerreotypes of various sites in Macau and its surroundings: the banks of Praya-Grande, the Great Pagoda, the inner Harbour and the Streets of the Bazaar provided interesting subjects. (Itier, Vol. I, p. 331)

Itier had to place himself on a high point to achieve his sweeping view of the Praya Grande (in the Bièvres museum mentioned above), whereas he used a closer view in the version in the Macao Museum of Art (Fig. 9). In this one he altered the composition by focusing more on the group of people (probably fishermen) in the foreground, arranged horizontally as in a frieze, as well as on the neoclassical architecture of the buildings, including the Governor's House facing St Peter's Fort to the left of the plate. Those buildings were generally rented out to English traders from the British East India Company. The fishermen blend naturally into the landscape and breathe life into the picture. However, in the non-reversed version of the picture in the Bièvres Museum collection, the people are arranged in a circle and appear to be having a discussion.



Fig. 11. Jules Itier, *Journal d'un voyage en Chine en 1843, 1844, 1845, 1846* (Paris: Dauvin et Fontaine, 1848-1853, 3 volumes).

From 1860, other photographers such as Felice Beato, John Thompson and Milton Miller also immortalised the Praya Grande. This vogue may be explained by the arrival in Macao of photography on albumen paper. For the Chinese artists who painted this fashionable view for foreign customers, photography was merely a means of duplication, whether of architectural details on the Praya Grande houses, or of portraits. Portraits taken from daguerreotypes were already being painted in 1844, either from photographs brought over by members of the Commercial Mission accompanying de Lagrené or taken during their stay. (Staniszewska-Giordana, 2011a, p. 124, n. 38).

Another site in Macao that was popular with painters and photographers was the A-Ma (Ma-Kok) Temple, which Itier called 'the Great Pagoda'. Itier explored the entire temple premises and took a daguerreotype with the main entrance as its subject. The vertical composition highlights the temple architecture, the clumps of trees around it as well as the people near the temple steps. 'View of the door of the Great Pagoda in the Chinese city of Macau' (Bièvres collection) (Fig. 12) is a reversed image. The same entrance view was drawn on 6 November 1838 by Borget, who used it as a model for the drawings and

paintings in his 'View of a Great Chinese Temple in Macau'. In the same vein Itier took a daguerreotype of another section of A-Ma Temple (Bièvres collection) (Fig. 13), a close-up that highlighted the architectural details and ornamentation against the dark background.

The Chinese gave Itier a warm welcome, and willingly took up natural poses for him in their own environments.

I spent these two days capturing the most interesting features of Macau on daguerreotype; the people on the streets respond with the greatest kindness to all my demands and many Chinese allowed photographs to be taken of them ... (Itier, vol. I, p. 321)

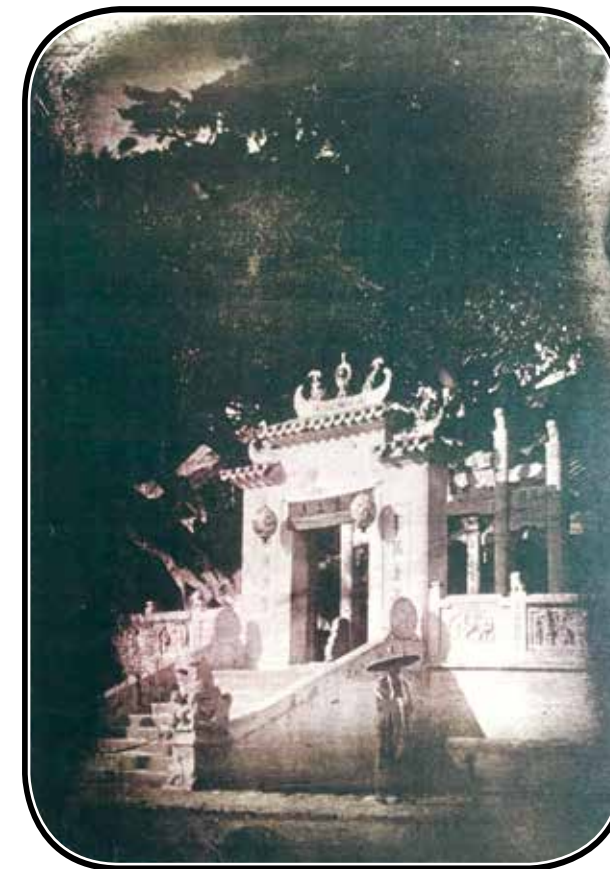


Fig. 13. Jules Itier, hand-written inscription: 'Temple porte ronde, mur de briques'. [Partial view of Ma Kok Temple in Macao]. Daguerreotype. Musée français de la photographie, Bièvres.

And again,

In the third temple, I saw a beautiful, magnificently carved white marble mausoleum surmounted by a statue of the Kuan-yin virgin breast-feeding a child. I was preparing to make a daguerreotype proof when the two bonzes who had just finished worshipping approached to examine my instrument and ask me how it works; they made gestures approving my project and one of them even agreed to stand motionless in the field of my daguerreotype'. (Itier, Vol. II, p. 57)

Later the nature of such Chinese scenes that included the local people, changed. Photography developed fast following the 1842 treaty of Nanking and the presence of Westerners in the five ports open to trade (Canton, Amoy (Xiamen), Fuzhou, Ningbo and Shanghai), but they were more avid for views of buildings, landscapes and exotic sights—in other words the forerunners of postcards. Pictures in which Chinese subjects were deliberately inserted within a stereotyped framework were carried out for use in stereoscopic devices between 1858 and 1865.

Fig. 12. Jules Itier, hand-written inscription: 'Vue de la porte de la Grande Pagode de la ville chinoise à Macao' [View of entrance to Ma Kok Temple in Macao]. Daguerreotype. Musée français de la photographie, Bièvres.



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In the inventory of Itier's daguerreotypes there are no views of markets or the inside of temples, even though he mentions such scenes in his Journal. Perhaps the narrow streets of what he calls Macao's 'Bazaar' were not suitable for such photographs. The constraints of taking daguerreotypes indoors or out, especially the light levels required and the subject having to pose for a long time, may have prevented him from taking such pictures.

Very few of Itier's daguerreotype portraits, whether of individuals or groups, can be found in the collections, for while he succeeded in keeping copies of landscapes or architectural views, it was difficult for him to do the same with portraits, which the individuals concerned wanted to keep. At the time a portrait was considered something personal, for family members only.

Thanks to a certain boldness in his arrangement, some of Itier's images lie more in the field of art than documentary record. Thus, in *Les plénipotentiaires réunis sur le vapeur l'Archimède au moment de la signature du traité entre la France et la Chine, le 24 octobre 1844* (The plenipotentiaries gathered on the steamboat *Archimède* for the signature of the treaty between France and China, 24 October 1844) (Bièvres collection) (Fig. 14), the hand-written caption on the back details the clothing and position of each person. Thanks to Itier's Journal, we know how this portrait was made. The scene was photographed during a pause following 'a sumptuous meal served in the officer's quarters of the *Archimède*, which provided its share of the day's pleasures, and during which our guests as usual, did justice to the fortified wines and champagne, which the Chinese decidedly would be fond of were it not so expensive' (Itier, Vol. I, pp. 324-325). This

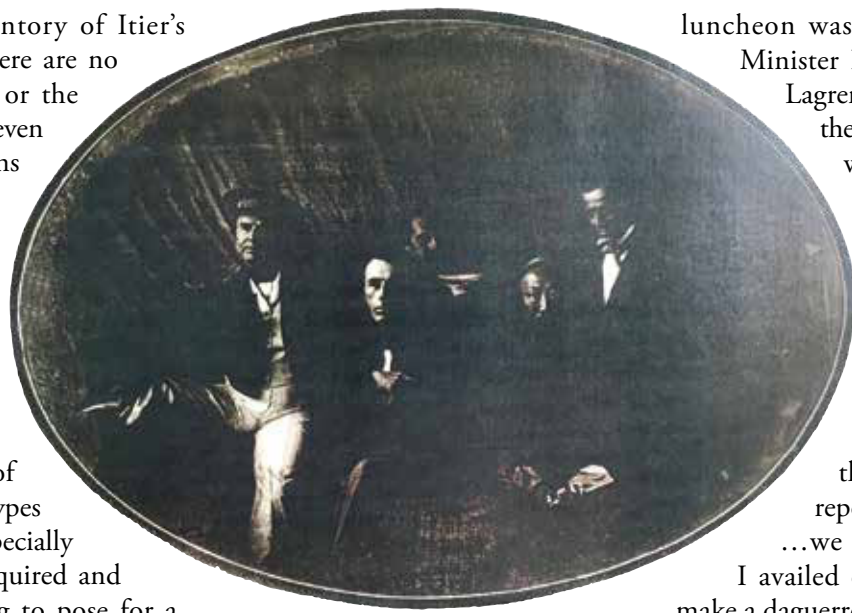


Fig. 14. Jules Itier, hand-written inscription: 'Les plénipotentiaires réunis sur le vapeur l'Archimède au moment de la signature du traité entre la France et la Chine', 'M. Callery, interprète, Ky-ing, vice roi de Canton, M. De Ferrière, secrétaire de la légation, M. De Lagrené, ambassadeur, M. Cécille, contre amiral' [The plenipotentiaries gathered on the steamboat *Archimède* for the signature of the treaty between France and China at Whampoa on 24 October 1844]. Daguerreotype. Musée français de la photographie, Bièvres.

luncheon was taken before the Minister Plenipotentiary, de Lagrené, (Fig. 15), signed the Treaty of Whampoa with his Chinese counterpart, the Viceroy Qiying Imperial Commissioner and Governor of Guangdong and Guanxi Provinces, on board the *Archimède*. Itier reports that:

...we met again..., and

I availed of the situation to make a daguerreotype of the group formed by Ky-ing, the ambassador (Lagrené), the admiral (Cécile), the first secretary of the embassy (the Marquis de Ferrière le Vayer), and the interpreter (Callery). Then I took two separate portraits of Ky-ing and Houan (Qiying's advisor), which I planned to keep, but I absentmindedly showed it to them and from that moment, it was impossible for me to resist their entreaties. The viceroy pleasantly smiled at his image, looked at me shaking his hands and shouted *to-sie, to-sie* (thank you, thank you). (Itier, Vol. I, p. 325)

The people were arranged in a variety of poses, according to diplomatic protocol depending on their rank and importance. Itier succeeded in creating a very balanced composition. The two plenipotentiaries are seated and flanked by Cécile to their right and de Callery standing to their left and thus closing the scene. The First Secretary's three-quarters pose, placed as he is behind de Lagrené, reflects the conventions of the painted portrait. Cécile's relaxed pose, one leg on a bench, is at variance with the serious nature of the scene. Cécile and Callery's white clothes and the light on de Lagrené's face, contrast with the darkness of the rear part of the ship in which the scene is set. The chiaroscuro gives depth to the people and confers a sense of mystery on the scene.

Both Itier's groups and his landscapes reveal his artistic vision and his technical skills. Among the best images in this vein are the beautiful views from the heights of the Bay of Praya Grande with the people below, and the remarkable high-angle panoramic views of Canton rooftops (Fig. 16).

The success of the daguerreotype as a 'travellers' instrument' was short-lived. The equipment was heavy and cumbersome to carry around and not suited to outside use. It became intrinsically linked to that first generation of explorer-daguerreotypists of the 1840s and was abandoned after 1850 when the paper-based photographic processes were able to prepare reproducible images.

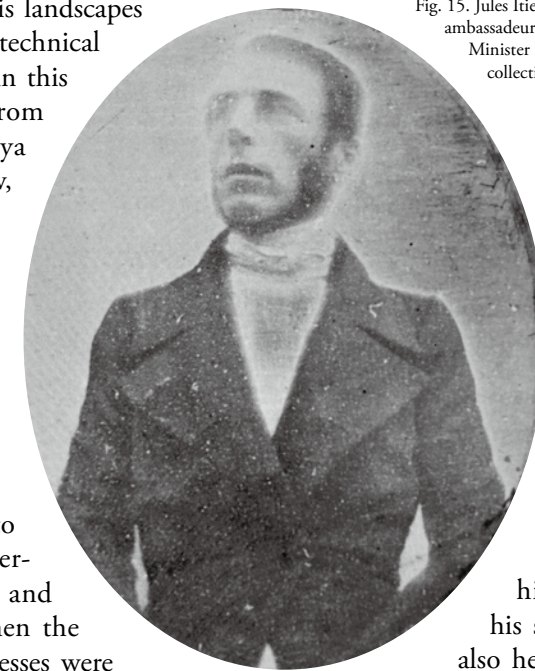
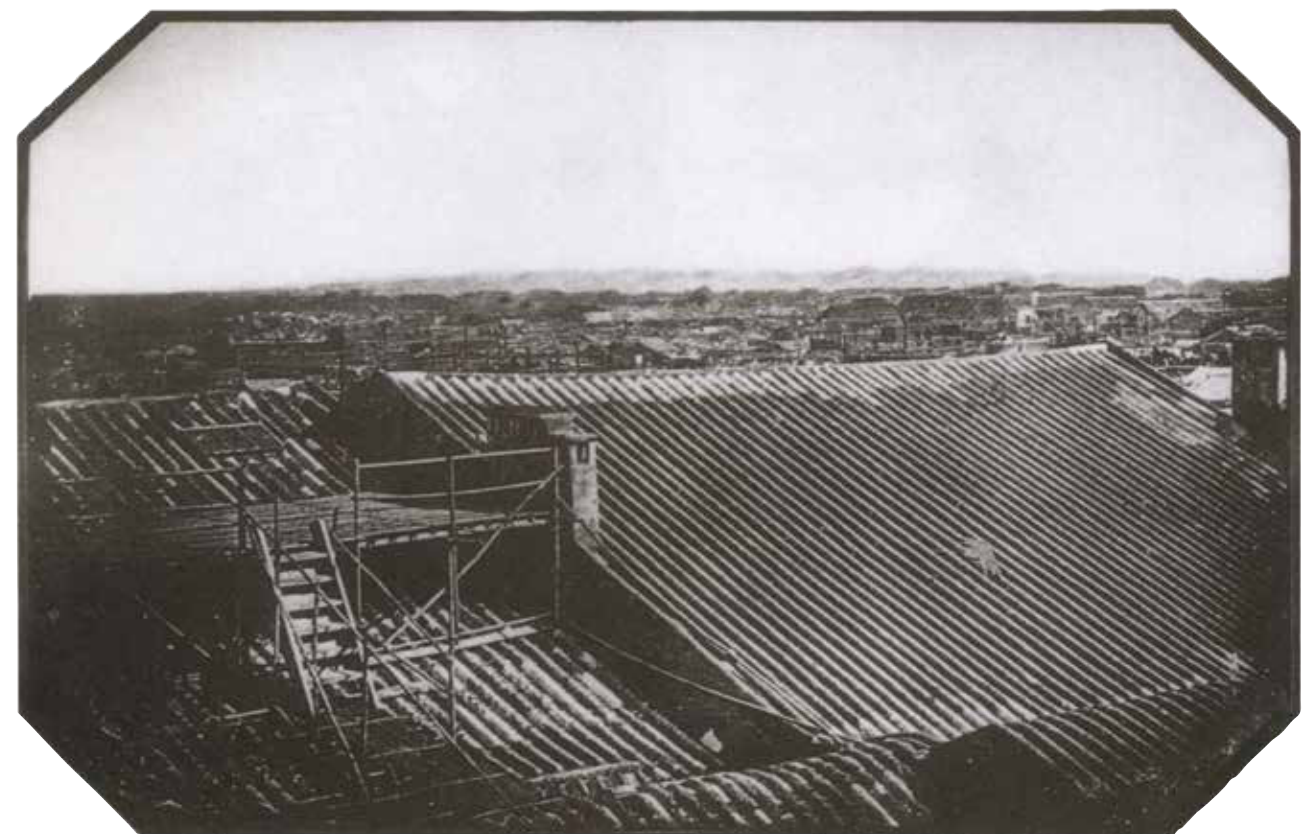


Fig. 15. Jules Itier, hand-written inscription: 'M. Delagrené ambassadeur en Chine' [Portrait of Theodore de Lagrené the Minister Plenipotentiary in China]. Daguerreotype. Private collection.


Itier devoted his leisure time to the daguerreotype, but because of his knowledge of customs affairs, he participated in the negotiations of the Commercial Treaty between France and China. In addition, he carried out surveys of the Chinese market and local industry, notably on viticulture and various plant fibres for textiles. He reported his observations in his travel journal and published his studies in specialised reviews. He also held conferences at various learned societies on his return from China.


Fig. 16. Jules Itier, 'Panorama de Canton,' novembre 1844 [View of Canton, November, 1844]. Daguerreotype. Musée français de la photographie, Bièvres.





Because he fell ill, he did not follow the embassy when it left to visit the other ports open to Western trade following the Treaty of Nanking (notably Amoy (Xiamen), Fuzhou, Ningbo and Shanghai) but decided

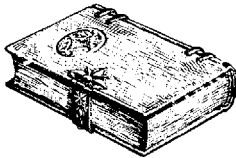
to return to France. He arrived in February 1846 after a journey that took him from Hong Kong to Singapore, Malacca and Georgetown, Sri Lanka and Egypt. 



# Macao Women in History and in Fiction

MARIA ANTÓNIA ESPADINHA\*

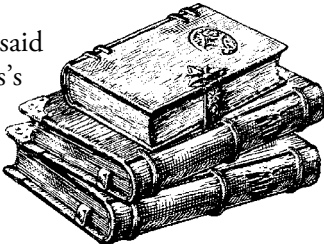
The focus of this article is a genre focus; we want to write about Macao women who have become public or semi-public personalities and have set a different model profile compared to the leading characters of Henrique de Senna Fernandes, Maria Ondina Braga or Rodrigo Leal de Carvalho, for example. Their female characters are fictional women, almost real, who are believed to have lived in Macao at a given historical time. History as well as sociology, geography, or anthropology is always present when a story, novel or short story is written, unless the scenario is a fantasy world. Characters, both men and women, are historically plausible and live in a society that is or will become history. They have names, but they are only character’s names, even though they may be common citizens’ names.



In the first paragraph of this text we have mentioned some authors. They are native authors of African Portuguese-speaking countries. Their historical novels can be included in a *corpus* of post-colonial

literature, because they reflect their search for a pre-colonial identity that the author would like to recover. If we consider the Macao literature, however, the Portuguese-speaking native writers have not, so far, shown an interest in historical characters or facts as a theme for a novel, nor have they produced any post-colonial fiction. This does not mean, of course, that they have no relation to history. The native writers that we might take into consideration are Deolinda da Conceição, who unfortunately was no longer alive in the post-colonial period, and Henrique de Senna Fernandes. Deolinda da Conceição has left us a considerable number of short stories, but not a novel. Her extremely interesting gallery of female characters depicts various precise portraits of the different situations lived and suffered by Macao Chinese women. They are significant contributions to the study of the Macao Chinese community in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The sociological approach is important for history.

The same might be said about Senna Fernandes’s works, both novels and short stories. The novels, of course, give us a richer, more elaborate picture



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Several historical novels have been published in Portuguese-speaking countries in recent decades. In ‘A literatura dos PALOP e a teoria pós-colonial’, a paper delivered in the opening session of the 4<sup>th</sup> encounter of Comparative Studies of the Portuguese Language Literature, 1999, Russel G. Hamilton mentions writers from several Lusophone countries who have published post-colonial historical novels: Henrique Abranches, José Eduardo Agualusa and Pepetela from Angola, Mia Couto and Umgulani Ba Ka Khosa among others. Macao, however, has not been very productive in this area, at least regarding Portuguese historical novels.

Considering the rich history of Macao and the long gallery of interesting historical characters who have lived there and were, or are, possible protagonists of novels, we might question why there is no evidence of previous interest for this kind of novel.

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