

DIÁSPORA MACAENSE. MACAU, HONG KONG, XANGHAI (1850–1952). By ALFREDO GOMES DIAS. pp. 480. Lisbon, Centro Científico e Cultural de Macau, Macao, Fundação Macau, 2014.
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This voluminous monograph is about the so-called Macanese, one of the ethnic groups in Macao. Views on the origins and early history of this group differ, but most scholars are of the opinion that it gradually emerged in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century. The general assumption is that there was an initial stage characterised by mixed marriages between Portuguese men (including mestizo men with partly Portuguese roots) and women of Malay, Indian, Japanese and other background, while in a second stage, possibly already beginning at around 1600, Chinese women became the preferred partners of Portuguese/mestizo males. But precise data for the composition of early Macao's population are rare, which often makes it difficult to draw a sharp dividing line between individual groups, as for example between 'ordinary' Portuguese from Europe and persons of Euro-Asian descent. Numerical problems also pertain to the issue of migration to and from Macao. This phenomenon already shows up in Ming and early Qing times. Not infrequently written sources of that period only permit us to vaguely state that migrants came to Macao or left that port for economic or other reasons, without telling us how many people were involved in such processes. By and large that also applies to the early Macanese.

Regarding the latter, we are much better informed about their fate from about the late eighteenth century onward. The huge compendium by Jorge Forjaz, *Famílias macaenses* (Macao, 1966) and consular sources with essential details on Macanese/Portuguese migrants and settlers in Hong Kong and Shanghai from the middle/late nineteenth century through to the mid-twentieth century provide an excellent data basis for biographical, sociological, cultural and other studies. Alfredo Gomes Dias, known for his books and articles on nineteenth-century Macao, has made extensive use of these materials for the present monograph, which is a modified version of his doctoral dissertation, presented to the Universidade de Lisboa some years ago.

Specialists familiar with the above mentioned records will certainly admire Dias for the enormous efforts which he invested into trying to disentangle and structure the information that lies hidden in the documentary evidence of that period. Comparable investigations related to the history of other 'small' groups active in the Far East and Southeast Asia, for example the "Kong Koan" Chinese of old Batavia, usually stem from the initiatives of larger research teams, and not from a single individual. Furthermore, the case of the Macanese is also special in the sense that we can outline their moves and overall performance in more than one location. It is mainly for this reason that Dias has opted to embed much of his study into larger political and economic contexts. This includes migrational patterns of the Portuguese on a global level, as well as general demographic changes in the Far East. But besides relating the fate of the Macanese to complex international dimensions, Dias also screens a large set of micro-issues. These parts consider both diachronic views and comparative static perspectives. In this way the author is able to provide a thorough panorama of the Macanese as a group between circa 1850 and 1952.

The discussion combines a number of concepts and terms (for example the idea of "cultural capital", "social capital", variations of the "diaspora" model etc.) with a vast collection of statistical findings for the period in question. Readers will be particularly grateful for the many detailed tables, maps and diagrams that support Dias' text. At present there is no monograph on the Macanese which offers a comparable arrangement. The starting point is, of course, the history of early Macao, i.e., the pre-Opium War period. While the Macanese community was then mostly concentrated in Macao itself, many of its members began moving to Hong Kong from the 1840s onward, mainly because this newly-

founded British colony offered fresh employment opportunities and a growing net of international connections. Indeed, there was a time when most Europeans residing in early Hong Kong were of Portuguese/Macanese background (p. 249). The contribution of these emigrants to the administration, well-being and growth of that city is rarely acknowledged in scholarly works; in that sense Dias' study is of significance to all those interested in Hong Kong's demographic, ethnic and social composition during the last decades of the nineteenth century.

Although many Macanese/Portuguese families staying in Hong Kong adjusted themselves to the busy rhythm of their new home, they usually maintained a distinct cultural identity. Catholicism, extraordinary linguistic abilities and professional skills contributed to this state of affairs. Marriage patterns were important as well. Furthermore, it seems that the Hong Kong-Macanese or Hong Kong-Portuguese, as a group, were able to absorb some new faces into their own community. However, at the same time, or a little later, one can observe a growing tendency among its members to look for further destinations. This forecasts the beginning of a fresh episode in the development of the Macanese diaspora.

On a general level, and for a variety of reasons, the geographical dispersion of the Macanese continues until today. Starting with the final years of the twentieth century, many families have left Macao for the west coast of North America and other distant locations. Seen from a *longue durée* point of view, the Hong Kong "chapter" may thus appear like an extended interlude between two distinct stages in time: an early period characterized by expansion and a later period marked by increased fragmentation and acculturation to a set of host societies around the globe. Needless to add, the second stage forms a very different theme, which is not really in the focus of Dias' study.

In the last segment of his book Dias takes us to Shanghai. The gradual rise of that city to an international port dominated by British and American interests also attracted some Macanese/Portuguese migrants. But the situation in the foreign concessions was quite different from the general situation in nineteenth-century Hong Kong. In Hong Kong the Macanese/Portuguese usually occupied respected positions, in Shanghai they rarely felt comfortable. Colonial records indicate that other Europeans often looked down upon them. Evidently, there was an invisible wall between the rich Anglophones on the one side and the less well-off Portuguese on the other side (for example, pp. 375–376). To some measure this gap can be attributed to varying regional conditions along the China coast: Early Hong Kong was a stable platform characterised by swift growth; it needed reliable clerks and a cultivated middle class to manage its daily affairs; when the Portuguese moved in, they came right in time. This was not necessarily the case in Shanghai. The political environment was less stable; status problems, administrative obstacles and the arrival of different migrant groups, including poor refugees from Europe, who competed for jobs and local influence, made it more difficult for the Portuguese to establish themselves.

This being so, Dias tries to find out why Macanese families began moving to Shanghai at all, how long they stayed there, and how they managed to survive economically. There can be no doubt, Shanghai became a magnet for many men and women in Macao, especially in the late 1910s and in the 1920s, when parts of southern China experienced political turmoil and when the Portuguese had to bear unusual financial and other pressures. Political threats exerted by local warlords such as Sun Yatsen and his Guomindang party probably constituted a further "push factor" within that chaos — besides certain global developments which did not work out in favour of Portugal's overseas possessions.

When the Communist party took control over China, the Macanese, like so many others, left Shanghai. Some Macanese families were flexible enough to find new homes elsewhere. This kind of flexibility, which involved an unusual ability to accept new social conditions, while trying to preserve one's own identity as best as possible, seems typical for many Luso-Asian communities. Historians have addressed that point in the context of studies related to earlier periods and other urban settings, but a major comparative monograph highlighting the behaviour of *all* Luso-Asian groups through an

extended period of time remains a topic for the future. Such a project could profit from Dias' excellent findings.

Migration from Macao to other destinations also had its dark sides: Those moving to Hong Kong and Shanghai were mostly men and women in their twenties, thirties and forties; children and older persons often stayed behind (for example, pp. 370–371). Macao thus experienced a shortage in qualified administrators and professionals; this in turn impacted on the city's economic potentials. To what extent funds channelled back to Macao by emigrées to British rule, offset these negative trends at home, is difficult to tell. However, there can be no doubt that without migration Macao's urban setting would have developed quite differently.

Another point concerns the Chinese population in Macao, Hong Kong and Shanghai. While the relations between non-Han groups and the Macanese/Portuguese are quite clear, we know very little about the nature of contacts between the latter and the different Chinese communities. The composition of the Han population in all three cities changed dramatically over time, especially from the late nineteenth through to the early twentieth century; this should have something to do with the shifts and changes also affecting the Macanese. Again using Dias' analysis as a convenient starting point, and a basis for further research, one may eventually find out more about these issues, particularly by also consulting Chinese material.

Dias' book, I may state in conclusion, is a carefully arranged and clearly structured treasure-box full of valuable demographic and sociological data. The conclusions offered in regard to the growth and decline of the Macanese "micro-matrix" in three urban areas, each with distinct traits, are well-balanced and something of an eye-opener. In short, *Diáspora macanese* is a major work that will render excellent services to historians, anthropologists, sociologists and others interested in the role of the Portuguese in the Far East, the general performance of Luso-Asian communities, and the development of Hong Kong and Shanghai. <ptak@lrz.uni-muenchen.de>

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RECRUIT TO REVOLUTION: ADVENTURE AND POLITICS DURING THE INDONESIAN STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE. By JOHN COAST. pp. 132. Honolulu, Hawai'i University Press, 2015.

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Books in English on the Indonesian Revolution are all too rare, so the re-appearance of John Coast's memoir is to be welcomed. John Coast (1916–1989), who spent most of his career as a theatrical agent, first came into contact with Indonesian culture as a prisoner of war, working on the infamous Burma railway. He was drawn to the music and dance performed by Indonesian prisoners as a form of camp entertainment. He also formed an extremely unfavourable impression of his fellow Dutch internees. As a result of this, he resolved that he would somehow make himself useful to the cause of Indonesian freedom once the war was over. On returning to the United Kingdom after the war's end, he based himself in London and made contact with any Indonesians he could. At this time, he produced a memoir of his experiences as a prisoner of war of the Japanese. He then managed to contrive his return to South East Asia, working for the British Embassy in Bangkok. He soon threw over his official role in favour of serving the beleaguered Indonesian Republic, organising flights into Republican-held territory and broadcasting on behalf of the Republic.