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II PARTE  
PART

PORTUGAL E CHINA:  
DUAS REVOLUÇÕES,  
DOIS CENTENÁRIOS

PORTUGAL AND CHINA:  
TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES





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**RC** é uma revista de Cultura e, domínio do Espírito, é Livre. Avassalada ao encontro universal das culturas, servente da identidade cultural de Macau, agente de mais íntima relação entre o Oriente e o Ocidente, particularmente entre a China e Portugal. RC propõe-se publicar todos os textos interessantes aos objectivos confessados, pelo puro critério da qualidade. Assim, as opiniões e as doutrinas, expressas ou professas nos textos assinados, ou implícitas nas imagens de autoria, são da responsabilidade dos seus autores, e nem na parte, nem no todo, podem confundir-se com a orientação da RC. A Direcção da revista reserva-se o direito de não publicar, nem devolver, textos não solicitados.

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A NOSSA CAPA

Neste segundo número de *RC* dedicado à temática das revoluções republicanas em Portugal e na China analisamos as “questões pendentes” no relacionamento entre as duas nações à época e aprofundamos aspectos do pensamento e das relações políticas e pessoais de Sun Yat Sen, ao mesmo tempo que, por outro lado, olhamos para figuras relevantes da Primeira República Portuguesa, como Teófilo Braga e o ‘macanese’ João Tamagnini. Da mesma forma, apresentamos em paralelo o rol das pesadas heranças que os regimes dinásticos deixavam aos governos emergentes: miséria, atraso económico e tecnológico e guerras intestinas. Este tema e esta linha de investigação não se esgota nestes dois volumes. *Revista de Cultura* irá publicar em futuras edições artigos que analisam outros aspectos da fundação dos regimes republicanos na China e em Portugal.

Ainda nesta edição revisitamos, demoradamente, os “bordéis flutuantes” que fizeram furor na zona costeira de Cantão nos séculos XVIII e XIX tendo – sinal dos tempos – entrado em declínio nas primeiras décadas do século XX.

OUR COVER

This, the second of two issues of *RC* devoted to the Republican revolutions in Portugal and China, looks at pending issues in the relations between the two nations at the time. There is also a closer examination of Sun Yat Sen’s thinking and his political and personal relationships, as well as some of the main figures in the first Portuguese Republic, such as Teófilo Braga and the ‘Macanese’ João Tamagnini. Similarly the heavy legacies which the old dynastic regimes left to the new governments: poverty, economic and technological backwardness, and civil strife. Future issues of *Review of Culture* will continue this research theme with articles on other aspects of the Republican regimes in China and Portugal. This issue also looks in depth at the flower boats (floating brothels) along the Guangdong coastline which were exceedingly popular in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, although they fell into decline in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, in line with the social mores of the period.



# SUMÁRIO

## Index



ATRIUM



### PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II \* PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

6 AS QUESTÕES ACTUALMENTE PENDENTES ENTRE PORTUGAL E A CHINA (1911)

中国与葡萄牙之间目前悬而未决的问题 (1911)

Alfredo Gomes Dias



16 SUN YAT SEN AND THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

孙中山与第二国际

Paul B. Spooner



27 SONG AILING AND THE CHINA'S REVOLUTIONARY ELITE

宋蔼龄和中国革命精英

Paul B. Spooner

46 EVOCANDO TEÓFILO BRAGA, LITERATO DA REPÚBLICA

回忆共和国文学家特奥费洛·布拉加

Amadeu Carvalho Homem



68 JOÃO TAMAGNINI DE SOUSA BARBOSA E A PRIMEIRA REPÚBLICA PORTUGUESA

葡萄牙第一共和国与若奥·塔玛尼尼·苏萨·巴波萨

Fernando Mendonça Fava



83 A REPÚBLICA E A HERANÇA ECONÓMICA DA MONARQUIA CONSTITUCIONAL

共和国与君主立宪制的经济遗产

António Valério Maduro

92 WHO OR WHAT'S BEHIND IT: THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS LEADING TO THE FALL OF THE QING EMPIRE

谁主沉浮：王朝覆灭的内外因素

Guo Weidong



### HISTORIOGRAFIA / HISTORIOGRAPHY

112 FLOATING BROTHELS AND THE CANTON FLOWER BOATS 1750-1930

水上妓院和广东“花船”(1750-1930)

Paul A. Van Dyke



143 RESUMOS

145 ABSTRACTS

147 ÍNDICE DE AUTORES N.ºS 33-36

AUTHORS INDEX NOS. 33-36





COMISSÃO DE CARTOGRAPHIA

# MACAU

TERRITORIOS VISINHOS

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D I S T R I C T O

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# As Questões Actualmente Pendentes entre Portugal e a China (1911)

ALFREDO GOMES DIAS\*

A 3 de Abril de 2011 completam-se cem anos sobre a criação da “Comissão Nomeada para Estudar as Questões Actualmente Pendentes entre Portugal e a China”. Cem anos decorreram sobre um período particularmente singular na história das relações entre os dois países, a viverem simultaneamente o fim dos seus regimes monárquico e imperial e o nascimento das suas Repúblicas, mas ambos obrigados a dar continuidade às suas posições no quadro evolutivo das relações político-diplomáticas luso-chinesas, especialmente a partir do tratado de Nanquim de 1842.

Com este artigo pretendemos analisar dois aspectos que consideramos fundamentais para compreender a formação e as conclusões daquela comissão: em primeiro lugar, identificar as opções da Primeira República portuguesa no que diz respeito à política ultramarina; em segundo lugar, reconhecer em que medida o ópio e a definição dos limites de Macau emergiram como as questões centrais do diálogo Portugal-China.

## REPÚBLICA E ULTRAMAR: A CONTINUIDADE

Não estaremos longe da verdade se considerarmos que o ideal republicano português, à semelhança, aliás, do que aconteceu no seio do movimento republicano

chinês, teve como núcleo central uma forte componente nacionalista. Mas, no caso português, esta componente foi sendo associada à prioridade de recuperar o lugar e o prestígio entre as nações europeias que tinham um espaço ultramarino a defender.

No período de ascensão do movimento republicano, no seio das forças sociais e políticas que o suportaram em Portugal, resulta clara a importância do *Ultimatum* inglês de 1890 que provocou uma extensa onda de choque na sociedade portuguesa. Os republicanos levantaram, então, as suas bandeiras de oposição à monarquia, acusando-a de tomar uma opção humilhante quando se confrontou com a necessidade de defender os espaços ultramarinos africanos e despertando novamente o interesse da sociedade e da classe política portuguesa para as questões coloniais.<sup>1</sup>

No entanto, apesar da mudança de regime, por força do contexto internacional ainda no rescaldo das Conferências de Berlim de 1885-1886 manteve-se a preocupação de delimitação das fronteiras dos diferentes espaços ultramarinos, não só em África (onde assumiu particular relevo), como também na Ásia. No que diz respeito a Timor, relembremos que a definição da sua fronteira se manteve sempre em aberto, gerando um longo processo negocial nas relações entre Portugal e a Holanda que nunca se concluiu em definitivo.

Também no que diz respeito à “questão de Macau”, o Governo Provisório republicano viu-se confrontado com a existência de assuntos que se mantinham em aberto entre os dois países. E a necessidade de os estudar e de definir estratégias de actuação tornou-se urgente a partir do momento em que se aproximava mais um retomar das “negociações

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## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

diplomáticas com a China para a resolução da questão da delimitação de Macau e encontrando-se ainda pendentes outras questões importantes referentes aos interesses da mesma colónia”.<sup>2</sup> Por isso, o governo republicano decidiu criar a “Comissão Nomeada para Estudar as Questões Actualmente Pendentes entre Portugal e a China”,<sup>3</sup> através de uma portaria datada de 3 de Abril de 1911 e assinada por Bernardino Machado, ministro dos Estrangeiros (5-10-1910 a 3-9-1911).<sup>4</sup>

Esta iniciativa foi levada a cabo ainda antes de ser criado o novo Ministério das Colónias, em Setembro de 1911, adoptando um nome de influência francesa, mas continuando a utilizar de forma indistinta as designações de “colónia” e “província”, sempre com o mesmo sentido. E este grande sentido foi desde logo esclarecido pelo ministro Bernardino Machado ao assumir que “o novo governo considerava as possessões ultramarinas um património tão sagrado como o território da mãe-pátria”.<sup>5</sup>

Não obstante os republicanos incorporarem “no seu discurso cultural e político a defesa da salvaguarda, manutenção e desenvolvimento dos territórios ultramarinos como um dos vectores fundamentais da sua propaganda política”,<sup>6</sup> a criação desta comissão, a sua composição e as suas funções revelam, implicitamente, que Macau e as relações luso-chinesas eram uma matéria cujas especificidades não permitiam uma *praxis* política linearmente colada ao discurso ideológico ou propagandístico das elites republicanas.

## A COMISSÃO

Tendo o governo chinês manifestado o desejo de reatar as negociações sobre a delimitação do território de Macau, cinco meses depois da implantação da República em Portugal o novo regime tomou consciência da necessidade de se preparar para um eventual processo negocial que não se desenhava fácil. Para além da delimitação existiam outras matérias que se mantinham num impasse e que prejudicavam os interesses de Macau, ao mesmo tempo que dificultavam o relacionamento entre Portugal e a China, quer a nível internacional (Lisboa e Pequim), quer a nível regional (Macau e Cantão).

A comissão foi composta por personalidades conhecedoras da realidade de Macau e que tinham participado em momentos recentes de negociação entre Portugal e a China, para além de alguns oficiais do

Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros. Assim a comissão contava com a colaboração dos ex-governadores José Emílio de Santana Castelo Branco (1907), Pedro de Azevedo Coutinho (1907-1908), Eduardo Augusto Marques (1909-1910) e João Marques Vidal (1910). Aníbal Augusto Sanches de Miranda, depois de encerrados os trabalhos desta comissão, foi nomeado governador de Macau (1912-1914). A comissão integrava ainda o nome de Joaquim José Machado, representante português nas conferências luso-chinesas sobre a questão da definição dos limites de Macau, realizadas em Hong Kong (1909-1910), e o de Oscar George Potier, cônsul de Portugal em Xangai. Oscar Potier chefou a delegação de Portugal à Conferência do Ópio, realizada nesta cidade chinesa em 1909, e integrou a delegação de Portugal que participou nos trabalhos da segunda conferência sobre a questão do ópio realizada em Haia em 1912. Participavam também nesta comissão Alfredo Augusto Freire de Andrade (director-geral das Colónias) e José Bernardino Gonçalves Teixeira (director-geral dos Negócios Estrangeiros), para além de Augusto Frederico Rodrigues de Lima, Ernesto Júlio de Carvalho Vasconcelos, Joaquim do Espírito Santo Lima e José de Moraes Carvalho Guimarães.<sup>7</sup>

A presença dos homens que assumiram a governação de Macau, entre 1907 e 1910, resultou numa tentativa de reunir um conjunto de pessoas conhecedoras das especificidades do território por terem lidado com os problemas concretos da sua governação nos últimos anos da monarquia portuguesa.

Em 28 de Fevereiro de 1907, o general de brigada José Emílio Santana da Cunha Castelo Branco foi nomeado governador interino de Macau, enquanto se aguardava pela chegada do novo governador, o que aconteceu a 6 de Abril de 1907. Castelo Branco chegou ao território no dia 4 de Outubro de 1906. De 30 de Novembro a 23 de Janeiro de 1907 deslocou-se a Timor a fim de indagar sobre algumas acusações que pendiam sobre o governador daquela colónia. Em Macau, o *giuyeneral* e engenheiro Castelo Branco realizou ainda estudos com António Pinto de Miranda Guedes para um projecto de melhoramento do porto de Macau.

O capitão-tenente Pedro de Azevedo Coutinho sucedeu a Castelo Branco na governação de Macau. Seguiu a sua carreira na armada portuguesa, o que o levou a Moçambique, Congo e Guiné. Como



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

comandante da canhoneira *Bengo*, Azevedo Coutinho prestou importante auxílio a Macau durante a epidemia da peste bubónica e colaborou no desembarque de Batugadé (Timor) em 8 de Novembro de 1895. Mantendo-se à frente do governo de Macau durante o curto período de cerca de um ano, Pedro de Azevedo Coutinho foi confrontado com diferentes tentativas chinesas de ocupar militarmente as zonas em litígio em torno de Macau, a fim de marcar posições no terreno e fragilizar as possíveis argumentações que Portugal pudesse utilizar. Logo no mês seguinte à sua tomada de posse, o novo governador foi confrontado com o requerimento a pedir a concessão para a construção do caminho-de-ferro Macau–Cantão. Ainda durante a sua governação foi obrigado a gerir o incidente sino-japonês em torno do apresamento do vapor *Datsu Maru*.

Numa primeira passagem por Macau, Eduardo Augusto Marques integrou, como adido, as missões diplomáticas às cortes do Japão (1897) e do Sião (1898). Entre outras funções, desempenhou o cargo de secretário-geral do governo, em 1899. Depois de passar por África, pela Índia e por Timor (onde desempenhou as funções de governador do distrito), o capitão Augusto Marques tomou posse como governador de Macau no dia 22 de Setembro de 1909, dando seguimento às principais questões que herdou dos seus antecessores: incidentes em torno dos territórios “em litígio”, nomeadamente nas ilhas da Lapa, D. João e Montanha; agitação social no sul da China, misturada com manifestações hostis à presença portuguesa em Macau; hipótese de construção da via férrea Macau–Cantão.

Quanto a João Marques Vidal, foi o governador de Macau que viveu os primeiros dias do período republicano português no território. Bacharel em Direito, Marques Vidal já havia ocupado o cargo de juiz de direito da comarca de Macau em 1907. No entanto, no dia 29 de Novembro de 1910, dois telegramas do governo de Lisboa vão conduzi-lo à governação de Macau: um dirigido ao ainda governador Eduardo Augusto Marques, dando-lhe instruções para entregar o governo do Território, interinamente, ao Dr. Marques Vidal; outro, dirigido ao próprio Vidal, com apelos patrióticos, pedindo-lhe que aceitasse o cargo. As comemorações da implantação da República Portuguesa em Macau não o afastaram da necessidade de gerir os incidentes que se repetiam nas Portas do Cerco.<sup>8</sup>

Em síntese, reuniu-se um conjunto de ex-governadores na Comissão com a missão de reflectir e propor uma estratégia que desse continuidade ao diálogo entre Portugal e a China. Nesse sentido, explica-se também a nomeação de Sanches de Miranda para o cargo de governador de Macau (tomou posse em 14 de Julho de 1912), alguém que estava por dentro de todo o debate que ocorreu durante alguns meses naquela Comissão. Mas não só: de 25 de Novembro de 1911 a 2 de Fevereiro de 1912, Sanches de Miranda participou numa missão especial do Ministério da Justiça, tendo sido enviado, como delegado do Ministério das Colónias, à Conferência Internacional do Ópio que se reuniu em Haia.

## OS ANTECEDENTES: ÓPIO E LIMITES

A questão do ópio em Macau foi um assunto que percorreu toda a história de Macau oitocentista, prolongando-se até 1946. Contudo, ganhou novos contornos no início do século xx, particularmente a partir da conferência internacional que se realizou em Xangai, entre os dias 1 e 26 de Fevereiro de 1909. Presidida pelo bispo Brent, contou com a participação da Alemanha, Áustria, China, EUA, França, Grã-Bretanha, Hungria, Itália, Japão, Países Baixos, Pérsia, Rússia, Sião e Portugal. A participação portuguesa justificava-se pelo envolvimento de Macau no circuito comercial desta droga no sul da China. Os trabalhos da conferência revelaram a existência de duas linhas que se mantiveram em oposição naquela e nas conferências que se seguiram. Por um lado, encontramos uma linha proibicionista representada pelos EUA e pela China, os países que mais se empenharam na convocação da conferência (em particular, o primeiro). Do outro lado reuniram-se os restantes países que, de maneiras diferenciadas, tinham interesses a defender no âmbito da produção, do comércio e do consumo do ópio e de outras drogas, e que dificilmente se juntariam às vozes que reclamavam por uma política proibicionista de características mais radicais. Conhecendo hoje o modo como evoluiu a questão do ópio nas conferências internacionais que se seguiram a Xangai,<sup>9</sup> podemos reconhecer que, em 1909, ficaram identificados os principais problemas que marcaram a agenda internacional sobre esta matéria, quer no que diz respeito à definição de “consumo ilícito”, quer quanto à necessidade de ir dando passos que,



## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

progressivamente, garantissem a redução do tráfico internacional do ópio. Por outro lado, ficou também clara uma outra divisão entre os países envolvidos e que nos torna mais evidente a complexidade desta problemática, a saber, entre as nações produtoras (agrícolas) e as nações industrializadas, cujos interesses se centravam mais no comércio e na transformação das substâncias.<sup>10</sup>

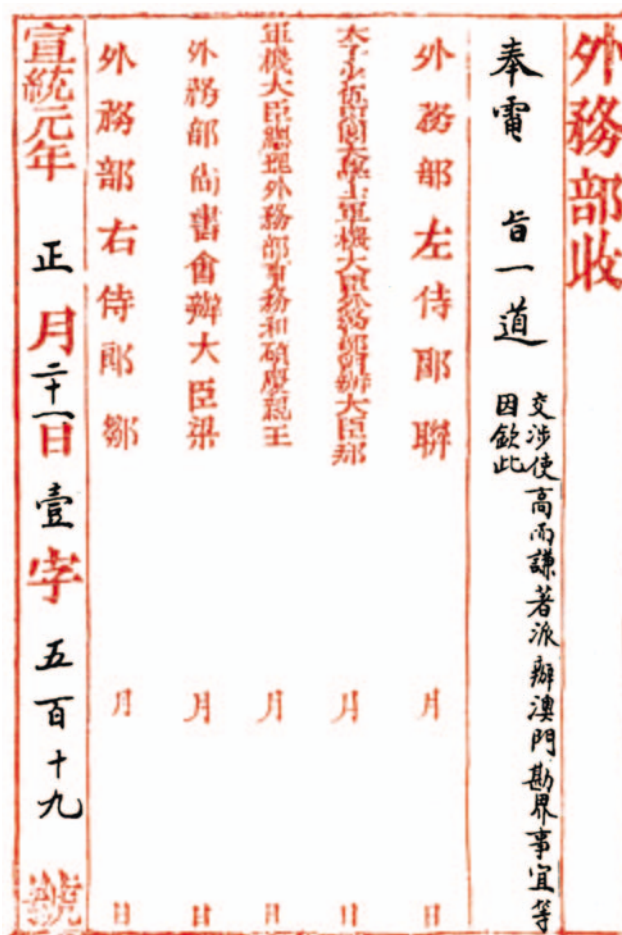
Da leitura das resoluções adoptadas podemos concluir que se ficou muito aquém das pretensões proibicionistas mais radicais que estiveram na base da convocação do encontro. Politicamente, a China surgiu como a grande vencedora ao ver dedicados quatro dos nove pontos da resolução à questão do ópio no seu país mas, principalmente, ao ver reconhecidos, num ‘forum’ internacional, os seus esforços no sentido de terminar com o consumo e a produção interna do ópio. Destes quatro pontos, três (pontos 7, 8 e 9) referem-se directamente aos Estabelecimentos e às Concessões existentes na China, questionando-se assim a política das potências coloniais. Apesar de se tratarem de simples recomendações, o possível numa Conferência cujos delegados apenas tinham poderes consultivos, estava aberto um caminho que continuou a ser trilhado pela comunidade internacional ao longo do século xx.<sup>11</sup>

A questão dos limites de Macau foi apresentada como sendo a principal razão que deu origem à nomeação da Comissão criada em 3 de Abril de 1911. Sete anos antes, a possibilidade de resolução deste diferendo entre Portugal e a China em torno da “questão de Macau” sofreu um sério revés, quando as autoridades de Lisboa se recusaram a ratificar o acordo negociado por José de Azevedo de Castelo Branco em 1904. Esta opção manteve em aberto o problema no seio das relações luso-chinesas, o qual foi retomado em 1909 com a realização das conferências que tiveram lugar em Hong Kong, protagonizadas pelo comissário régio Joaquim de José Machado e pelo comissário imperial Gao Erqian 高而謙. Estas conferências arrastaram-se por quatro meses e meio, de 1 de Julho a 13 de Novembro, ao longo dos quais as duas partes se mantiveram irredutíveis nas posições assumidas, o que conduziu à manutenção do *statu quo* em vigor, isto é, Portugal mantinha apenas a ocupação da península de Macau e das ilhas Verde, Taipa e Coloane.

AS CONCLUSÕES DA COMISSÃO<sup>12</sup>

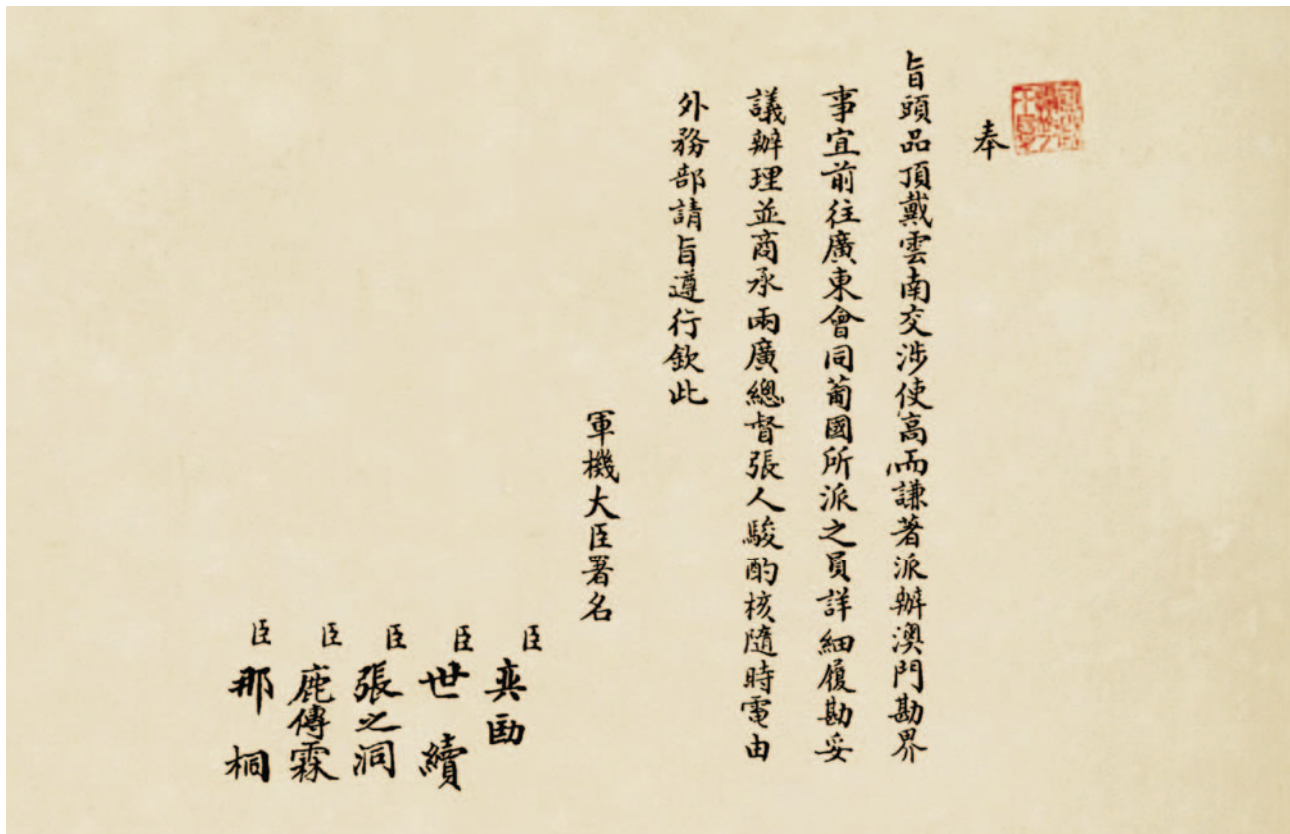
Dos trabalhos desta Comissão são conhecidas as actas das sessões que decorreram entre 7 de Abril de 1911 e 19 de Janeiro de 1912 e ainda o relatório final onde se encontram sintetizados os resultados das reflexões em torno de cada um dos problemas que se encontravam pendentes entre Portugal e a China. Como tivemos ocasião de analisar anteriormente, os trabalhos decorreram num momento político particularmente sensível: tanto Portugal como a China viviam um período de transição política que se traduzia na implantação dos regimes republicanos (Portugal em 1910 e a China em 1911). A Comissão debruçou-se sobre um conjunto de cinco questões que estiveram no centro das suas atenções: delimitação, caminho-de-ferro Macau–Cantão, tratado de comércio, extradição e nacionalidade, e, finalmente, o ópio.

Nesta página e na seguinte, telegrama do imperador Xuantong a nomear Gao Erqian como Comissário Imperial para as Delimitações de Macau (Fevereiro de 1909).





## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II



## DELIMITAÇÃO

Este era o problema prioritário para Portugal, herdado do tratado de 1887. Assim, indo ao encontro do desejo “manifestado pelo Governo Chinês de reatar as negociações para a delimitação, entendeu a comissão, se bem que não alimentando uma grande esperança de êxito, que não deve o Governo Português recusar-se a mais uma vez negociar.”<sup>13</sup> Posta de parte a solução de uma arbitragem sempre recusada pela China, os contactos directos também não se adivinhavam fáceis, quer porque Portugal não tinha “uma moeda de valia comparável com a que levou às negociações de 1887”, quer ainda devido à situação política interna chinesa onde se afirmava, cada vez com mais determinação, a intenção de “recuperação de direitos” usurpados por força dos tratados assinados pela China a partir da I Guerra do Ópio.<sup>14</sup> Não obstante as dificuldades previstas, a Comissão desenvolveu os seus trabalhos sobre este assunto, começando por definir as pretensões defendidas pelo governo português. O ponto de partida das negociações deveria ser a proposta que Joaquim José

Machado havia defendido nas Conferências de Hong Kong em 1909-1910,<sup>15</sup> definindo o território de Macau do seguinte modo: (i) península de Macau, desde a Ponta da Barra até às Portas do Cerco; (ii) manutenção de um território neutro entre as Portas do Cerco e Passaleão; (iii) o porto interior; (iv) as ilhas Verde, Taipa, Coloane, D. João, Vong-Cam e Lapa, com os ilhéus adjacentes; (v) as águas litorais da península e do território insular descrito.<sup>16</sup> Uma vez definida a base da proposta, a Comissão entendeu apresentar ainda algumas sugestões sobre os limites possíveis da flexibilidade que os negociadores poderiam utilizar sem com elas pôr em causa os direitos portugueses naquela região, tendo em conta o exercício de soberania já praticado por Portugal e centrando-se no objectivo de garantir a viabilidade económica e política de Macau. Finalmente, a Comissão propunha que, caso se registasse um novo fracasso, se mantivesse a solução já preconizada no artigo 2.º do tratado de 1887 e que era a manutenção do *statu quo*: “mas enquanto os limites se não fixarem, conservar-se-ha tudo o que lhes diz respeito como actualmente, sem

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

augmento, diminuição ou alteração por nenhuma das partes.”<sup>17</sup> Contudo, a fim de reduzir os constantes incidentes que se registavam nos arredores de Macau e que dificultavam as relações da governação de Macau com as autoridades de Cantão, a Comissão sugeria que Portugal descrevesse num memorando, “com rigor e minuciosidade”, o *statu quo* a ser respeitado pelas duas nações.<sup>18</sup>

## CAMINHO-DE-FERRO MACAU–CANTÃO

Por Convenção assinada em 11 de Novembro de 1904, integrada no processo negocial liderado por José de Azevedo Castelo Branco, a China autorizou uma companhia luso-chinesa a construir um caminho-de-ferro entre Macau e Cantão sob determinadas condições. A Comissão, considerando pouco exequível a concretização do que havia sido estipulado naquela Convenção, mas sublinhando a sua importância para “o desenvolvimento e prosperidade da colónia”, defendia no seu relatório que seria vantajoso para Portugal retomar este projecto. Para tal, as negociações deveriam ser conduzidas de modo a substituir a Convenção de 1904 por uma nova que, “atendendo aos interesses das duas nações, desse garantias de realização prática”. No âmbito do seu trabalho, a Comissão avançava com um conjunto de propostas que serviriam de base à definição da nova convenção luso-chinesa sobre este assunto, propondo que a concretização do projecto se iniciasse em troços onde era tecnicamente mais fácil a sua construção, nomeadamente até Zhongshan.<sup>19</sup>

## TRATADO DE COMÉRCIO

O tratado negociado na China pelo ministro José de Azevedo Castelo Branco em 1902/1903, e a sua segunda versão em 1904, nunca chegaram a ser ratificados por Portugal. A possibilidade, prevista no tratado, de alfândegas chinesas regressarem a Macau foi o principal ponto que levou o parlamento português a recusar a ratificação em Abril de 1903. A Comissão debruçou-se sobre a versão do texto do tratado de 1904, apresentando um parecer exaustivo sobre o conteúdo das suas cláusulas e apontando os aspectos favoráveis e desfavoráveis que apresentava para os interesses portugueses radicados em Macau. Para além das sugestões sobre o conteúdo de um novo tratado de comércio a ser negociado com a China, a Comissão definiu também a estratégia

a adoptar para essa negociação. Sobre o assunto, propunha fundamentalmente que fossem introduzidas modificações nas cláusulas que permitiam a ingerência das autoridades chinesas na administração da Província, nomeadamente a fixação anual da quantidade de ópio necessária ao consumo de Macau e o direito de o comissário da alfândega chinesa assistir ao balanço mensal do ópio em depósito. Relativamente aos procedimentos a seguir, a Comissão defendia que a iniciativa de propor alterações ao texto do tratado de 1904 nunca deveria pertencer a Portugal. Mas, se elas não fossem possíveis, seria preferível que o tratado fosse ratificado pois a “continuação do actual estado das nossas relações comerciais com a China não garante suficientemente os interesses portugueses em Macau.”<sup>20</sup>

## EXTRADIÇÃO E NACIONALIDADE

A fim de regular o processo de extradição de criminosos para a China, Portugal publicou um regulamento – 31 de Dezembro de 1908 – do qual não deu conhecimento às autoridades imperiais. Por este facto e por o regulamento ter introduzido alterações significativas na prática que antes se vivia, facilitando a permanência de criminosos chineses em Macau, a China reclamou junto do governo português. Até à publicação deste regulamento, a extradição fazia-se à luz da cláusula XLV do tratado de 1887 onde se previa que o governador continuaria os procedimentos em vigor e procederia à extradição dos criminosos que se refugiassem em Macau quando recebesse a requisição do vice-rei de Cantão. A Comissão considerava fundadas as reclamações chinesas, sugerindo que o regulamento de 1908 fosse cancelado, retomando-se a prática anterior. Deste modo, Portugal ficaria com o caminho aberto “para negociar um tratado de extradição mais perfeito.”<sup>21</sup> A Comissão avançava ainda a ideia de serem dadas instruções reservadas aos governadores de Macau sobre as práticas a seguir nos processos de extradição. Entre estas salientam-se as seguintes: a extradição deverá ser um acto puramente administrativo; deverá ser confirmado que o extraditado é súbdito chinês e não é culpado de qualquer crime em território português; caso se suspeite que o pedido de extradição é motivado por questões políticas ou religiosas, o processo deverá ser retardado e dificultado; se o extraditado for acusado de culpa incorrendo na pena capital, o governador de



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

具呈原辦廣澳鐵路職商梁雲達謝詩屏唐曜初唐宗偉等  
 為路股有著久候情急乞 恩咨覆郵部准予給札開辦以恤下情而維路政事竊  
 廣澳鐵路光緒三十年十月原准職等與葡商合辦嗣以前商集股未成經職  
 等力爭由澳督據情轉達葡政府自願注銷原訂合同准華界內歸職等  
 承辦葡商伯多祿亦立有退辦炳據光緒三十三年十月職等到京稟明  
 郵部轉咨 大部照會葡使廢約迭催催速至三十四年八月始接葡使覆稱  
 允將原訂合同注銷職等遂稟懇郵部批准集股承辦宣統元年二月初六  
 日蒙郵部堂憲傳詢面諭將股本呈報是年十二月二十日經將各股東收集  
 小股銀一百六十萬圓呈驗宣統二年二月十六日奉郵部批稟暨單據均  
 悉現廣澳路事外部正與葡使磋商一俟商妥即行札飭開辦一面迅速回籍  
 招集商股等因各在案職等恪遵批示即於去年四月親往天津漢口上海香港  
 廣州各商埠聯合創辦同人實力招股認股者極形踴躍職等見此情形自  
 信必不負 大部維持路政之至意遂於八月返京候領部札守候至今未蒙  
 札飭焦急萬分恐事稽延葡人另生枝節且股友懷疑成渙散分同商議  
 先由廣州省城築至香山縣城計約一百七十餘華里俟 大部與葡使商妥再  
 照原案展築至澳門外之關閘似此通融并無窒礙伏乞 俯恤下情咨覆郵  
 部札飭職等開辦為 恩便寔甚陰稟明郵部外理合切赴

Liang Yunda 梁云達 e outros comerciantes e empreiteiros solicitam autorização para a construção do lance do caminho-de-ferro entre Guangzhou e Xiangshan a sua extensão até às Portas do Cerco, após acordo com Portugal (Fevereiro de 1911).

Macau deverá interpor os seus bons ofícios junto do vice-rei de Cantão.<sup>22</sup>

O problema da nacionalidade levantado pela China junto do governo português tinha, como pano de fundo, uma questão mais vasta que dizia respeito ao direito de extraterritorialidade que os estrangeiros gozavam na China. Era evidente a preocupação do governo de Pequim no modo como, em Macau, era concedida a nacionalidade portuguesa aos chineses, uma vez que tal prática poderia ajudar a encobrir responsabilidades cometidas em território chinês. Perante a imperfeição do quadro legal que regulava a atribuição da nacionalidade portuguesa, a Comissão decidiu recomendar “que o Governo Português proceda de harmonia com a atitude das outras nações interessadas e com a legislação especial que por elas fôr promulgada.”<sup>23</sup>

## ÓPIO

O último problema das relações luso-chinesas, também debatido nas sessões da Comissão de 1911, dizia directamente respeito à questão do ópio.

A complexidade do problema e as mudanças que se registavam a nível internacional, obrigaram a Comissão a dedicar duas sessões – a 13.<sup>a</sup> e a 14.<sup>a</sup>, realizadas a 2 e 14 de Junho de 1911 – à questão do ópio, sendo visível a divergência de opinião entre os membros da Comissão sobre a estratégia mais correcta a adoptar. A preparação da Conferência da Haia que se encontrava em andamento e, principalmente, a assinatura em Pequim do acordo entre a Grã-Bretanha e a China sobre o comércio do ópio, no dia 8 de Maio de 1911, levaram a Comissão a reflectir e a debater o posicionamento que Portugal deveria ter face a este problema. A maioria inclinou-se para a exigência de

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

contrapartidas, mas alguns elementos chamaram a atenção para o facto desta substância já não ter o mesmo peso negocial que tinha tido em 1887. Por outro lado, Portugal não se poderia afastar do que fosse concertado internacionalmente na conferência que estava em preparação e Macau deveria adoptar as soluções que fossem encontradas para Hong Kong.

No entanto, prevaleceu a tese das contrapartidas, tendo por base a necessidade de garantir alternativas económicas ao ópio que o caminho de ferro Macau–Cantão podia proporcionar e a convicção de que as cedências da Grã-Bretanha à China só se poderiam explicar mediante a obtenção de contrapartidas para Hong Kong. Por outro lado, apesar dos elementos da Comissão conhecerem os passos que estavam a ser dados para a preparação da Conferência da Haia, alguns duvidavam que ela viesse a realizar-se ou que chegasse a ter resultados que pusessem em causa o negócio do ópio em Macau. Estava nesta linha Sanches de Miranda, que, ao considerar “duvidosa a reunião da Conferência”, entendia que Portugal deveria ficar em condições de “apresentar livre e directamente a questão do ópio à China, como concessão.”<sup>24</sup> Na sessão de dia 14, Sanches de Miranda reforçou estas ideias considerando que a Comissão “está partindo do princípio de que a Conferência nos obrigue a acabar com o ópio, quando nada nos garante que não tenha o mesmo fim que a de Xangai.”<sup>25</sup> Posteriormente, Sanches de Miranda foi escolhido pelo Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros para integrar a delegação portuguesa à Conferência da Haia, o que pode ser entendido como um sinal de que era necessário garantir que os resultados do novo *forum* internacional não fossem mais longe do que haviam ido em Xangai.

No relatório final da Comissão, o início do capítulo referente ao ópio sublinhava os grandes interesses económicos que o ópio, bruto e preparado, representava para Macau: o primeiro ainda constituía uma importante parcela do movimento comercial do porto de Macau e o segundo, apesar de terem desaparecido os grandes mercados externos, “representa ainda hoje uma das mais avultadas verbas da receita da colónia”. Sendo de parecer que Portugal não poderia ficar à margem do processo negocial iniciado em Xangai, nem ir contra o que as outras nações decidissem sobre o assunto, a Comissão defendia a tese de Portugal exigir contrapartidas à sua adesão ao propósito de suprimir o ópio na China, como forma de ser “reparada a grave

perturbação económica que à colónia portuguesa há-de causar o desaparecimento daquele importante comércio”.<sup>26</sup> Por maioria, a Comissão sugeria que a questão do ópio fosse directamente relacionada com a construção do caminho-de-ferro Macau–Cantão e com a ratificação do tratado de comércio, pois eram as formas de garantir o desenvolvimento económico da Província após o fim da comercialização desta substância.

As propostas da Comissão sobre a atitude a adoptar por Portugal na Conferência da Haia que se avizinhava enquadraram-se nesta base negocial, devendo o governo português definir previamente as compensações a serem negociadas. A fim de levar esta proposta a bom porto, Portugal deveria pedir a colaboração da Grã-Bretanha – “a nação aliada, que tem também ligados à questão do ópio grandes interesses da colónia de Hong Kong, e que mais duma vez tem velado pelos direitos portugueses no Extremo Oriente”<sup>27</sup> –, sugerindo-se que houvesse um entendimento concertado entre as duas nações naquela Conferência.

## NOTAS FINAIS

A constituição da Comissão de 3 de Abril de 1911, com a missão de estudar as “questões pendentes” entre Portugal e a China, e os textos das suas resoluções têm um significado singular no longo processo negocial entre aquelas duas nações.

Em primeiro lugar, importa sublinhar o contexto histórico em que aquela Comissão foi criada, num período de grande instabilidade política, quer na China, quer em Portugal. No que a Portugal diz respeito, este contexto revela, por um lado, o desejo do novo regime dar seguimento aos seus ideais nacionalistas associados à recuperação do prestígio do império ultramarino mas, também, à compreensão de que Macau era um estabelecimento com especificidades que não eram compatíveis com um discurso ideológico muito influenciado pela componente africana do império colonial português.

Em segundo lugar, a análise dos trabalhos desta Comissão revela-nos que as relações entre Portugal e a China se encontravam balizadas por duas questões essenciais: uma, o problema da definição dos limites de Macau; outra, a questão do ópio. As restantes três questões que o documento nos apresenta, do total das cinco trabalhadas pela Comissão de 3 de Abril de 1911,



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

isto é, caminho-de-ferro Macau–Cantão, tratado de comércio e extradição/nacionalidade, eram questões que, de algum modo, estavam relacionadas, senão mesmo subordinadas às outras duas.

Uma última palavra para reconhecer que aquelas duas questões (limites e ópio) percorreram quase todo o período da História Contemporânea de Macau, oferecendo às relações luso-chinesas uma continuidade

que as mudanças de regime operadas nas duas nações não puseram em causa. Deste modo se manteve o mesmo rumo na história das relações políticas e institucionais, sociais e culturais, entre Portugal e a China em torno do território de Macau, privilegiando o diálogo entre as duas partes o que, em última análise, contribuiu para a permanência da presença portuguesa até aos últimos dias do século xx. **RC**

## NOTAS

- 1 Cf. A. Oliveira Marques, *História de Portugal*. Lisboa: Presença, 1998, vol. 3, p. 285.
- 2 Portaria de 3 de Abril de 1911, in *Relatório e Actas da Comissão Nomeada para Estudar as Questões Actualmente Pendentes entre Portugal e a China*. Lisboa: Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros/Imprensa Nacional, 1912, p. 4.
- 3 *Ibidem*.
- 4 Alberto Laplaine Guimarães *et al.*, *Os Presidentes e os Governos da República no Século XX*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 2000.
- 5 Joel Serrão e A. Oliveira Marques, *Nova História da Expansão Portuguesa*. Lisboa: Editorial Estampa, 2001, p. 21.
- 6 M. Proença, “A Questão Colonial”, in Fernando Rosas e Maria Fernanda Rolo (coord.), *História da Primeira República Portuguesa*. Lisboa: Tinta da China, 2009, p. 205.
- 7 *Relatório e Actas da Comissão Nomeada para Estudar as Questões Actualmente Pendentes entre Portugal e a China*, p. 4.
- 8 Cf. Entrada de Correspondência de Macau e Timor: AHU-ACL-SEMUDGU-1R-002, Cx. 0013; Telegramas de Macau e Timor: AHU-ACL-SEMUGM-001, Livros 1 a 5.
- 9 Cf. Alfredo Gomes Dias, *Portugal, Macau e a Questão da Internacionalização do Ópio (1909-1925)*. Macau: Livros do Oriente, 2004.
- 10 *Ibidem*.
- 11 *Ibidem*, pp. 62-63.
- 12 O estudo deste tópico encontra-se contextualizado no processo diplomático que conduziu à proibição do comércio internacional do ópio: cf. *ibidem*.
- 13 *Relatório e Actas da Comissão Nomeada para Estudar as Questões Actualmente Pendentes entre Portugal e a China*, p. 5.
- 14 *Ibidem*.
- 15 Sobre as Conferências de Hong Kong recomenda-se a leitura de Antonio Vasconcelos de Saldanha, *Estudos sobre as Relações Luso-Chinesas*, Lisboa, ISCSP/ICM, 1996, pp. 589-612 e, do mesmo autor, *Missão na China. 1909-1910. Diário do Comissário Régio Joaquim José Machado*. Macau: Fundação Macau/Centro de Estudos das Relações Luso-Chinesas, 1999.
- 16 *Relatório e Actas da Comissão Nomeada para Estudar as Questões Actualmente Pendentes entre Portugal e a China*, p. 5.
- 17 Tratado de Amizade e Comércio entre Portugal e a China, assinado em 2 de Dezembro de 1887. *Documentos Apresentados às Cortes na Sessão Legislativa de 1888 pelo Ministro e Secretário d’Estado dos Negócios estrangeiros. Negociações com a China*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1888, vol. 2, p. 109.
- 18 Cf. *Relatório e Actas da Comissão Nomeada para Estudar as Questões Actualmente Pendentes entre Portugal e a China*, p. 8.
- 19 Cf. *Ibidem*. Sobre as negociações desenvolvidas na China pelo Ministro José de Azevedo Castelo Branco é aconselhável a consulta de *Documentos Apresentados às Cortes na Sessão Legislativa de 1903 pelo Ministro e Secretário de Estado dos Negócios Estrangeiros. Negociações com a China*. Lisboa: Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros/Imprensa Nacional, 1903; *Ta-Ssi-Yang-Kuo*, revista dirigida por João Feliciano Marques Pereira entre 1889 e 1903: *Ta-Ssi-Yang-Kuo*, Arquivos e Anais do Extremo Oriente Português (1889-1903). Macau: Direcção dos Serviços de Educação e Juventude de Macau/Fundação Macau, 1995 e A. Dias, “Marques Pereira e as Negociações de 1902”, in *Macau*, 2.ª Série, n.º 85 (Maio 1999), pp. 72-75.
- 20 *Relatório e Actas da Comissão Nomeada para Estudar as Questões Actualmente Pendentes entre Portugal e a China*, pp. 11.
- 21 *Ibidem*, p. 12.
- 22 *Ibidem*.
- 23 *Ibidem*, p. 13.
- 24 Acta da 13.ª Sessão de 2 de Junho de 1911. Cf. *Relatório e Actas da Comissão Nomeada para Estudar as Questões Actualmente Pendentes entre Portugal e a China*, p. 35.
- 25 Acta da 14.ª Sessão de 14 de Junho de 1911. Cf. *ibidem*, p. 36.
- 26 *Ibidem*, p. 13.
- 27 *Ibidem*.





# Sun Yat Sen and the Second International

PAUL B. SPOONER\*

There is no question that the Third International, the Comintern, played a fundamental role in social change in China in the 1920s: it organised the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 1921, created the Whampoa Military Academy in 1924 and supported the Northern Expedition in 1926. After failure of the Socialist revolution to ignite in Europe following initial Bolshevik success in Russia in 1917, Lenin had quickly turned his attention to Asia, and China in particular. Many of the Comintern leaders, including Lenin himself, had emerged from that organisation's predecessor organisation, the Second International. It is therefore surprising that the Second International and its strategy for China have not received more attention from analysts. It would be extremely difficult to make the case that the Second International was not in communication with Chinese revolutionaries before Lenin's founding of the Third International in March 1919, given the strategic battle that was taking place for control of Manchuria from 1895 and 1910 between the Qing Dynasty, Tsarist Russia and Imperial Japan. The first Russian Revolution of 1905, in which Second International Socialists were profoundly involved, was directly related to the Russian-Japanese battle, while Sun Yat Sen 孙逸仙 arranged for the founding in Tokyo of China's main republican movement, the Tong Meng

Hui (TMH 同盟会), as fighting raged in Manchuria. The war was eventually brought to a close in the same month that Sun Yat Sen established the TMH through the Theodore Roosevelt-arranged Treaty of Portsmouth in August of 1905.

Marxist theory asserted that bourgeois revolutions should precede socialist revolution. Centered upon the political and class relations of industrial societies, under a young Marx and Engels, it envisioned that the industrial working class would supplant bourgeois capitalists in an armed insurrection and thereby usher in Socialist transformation. However, after the First International's armed uprising failed in the Paris Commune of 1871, the reorganised Socialist movement of the Second International modified strategy to seek advancement of Marxism under rule of law and opposition to militarism. Seemingly left unresolved as the Second International gained influence was the nature of the bourgeois revolution that must precede the development of an industrial society. History reflected that all Bourgeois revolutions had been armed struggles, including the English Civil War of the 1650s, the American War for Independence of the 1770's and the French Revolution of the 1790's.

What then was the Second International's position with respect to the armed struggle of the Bourgeois that must precede the theorised path to Socialism in countries such as Russia, Portugal, Mexico, Turkey and China, all of which could be described as autocratic, pre-Bourgeois societies and all of which experienced republican revolts between 1905 and 1911 during the height of the Second International's pre-war influence? The lack of discussion of the Second International's strategy for China as the 1905 revolt in Russia exploded and Sun Yat Sen's revolutionary efforts for China were

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## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

organised in the same year is a perplexing lacuna in much of the secondary literature focused on the Xinhai Revolution (辛亥革命 Xinhai Geming) and Sun Yat Sen's intriguing revolutionary career.

Sun's political philosophy following his 1904-1905 fundraising trip to America and Europe, which immediately preceded his formation of the critical Tong Meng Hui, was closely correlated with key elements of the Socialist world at a time when that world was dominated by the Second International. Early writings on Sun Yat Sen immediately after the Xinhai revolt contain meaningful references to his affiliation. The *China Year Book 1914*, edited by H.G.W. Woodhead of the *Peking Gazette* and H.T. Montague Bell of the *North-China Daily News*, states that Sun Yat Sen 'resigned from the Presidency on the abdication of the Manchus [in February 1912]...and proceeded on a tour to Wuchang and South China, where he advocated a socialistic policy'. Sun returned to Beijing on August 1912, proposed a program of national railway construction and was appointed by Yuan Shikai 袁世凯 on 10 September 1912 to draft plans for the system and to 'submit and discuss the same with international bankers'.<sup>1</sup> Edward Pease, the secretary for the British Fabian Society in 1913 included a short section on Sun Yat Sen for the fifth edition of the *History of Socialism* which stated that 'Dr. Sun Yatsen, the inspirer of the revolution...predicted in March 1912 that "the Chinese Government would become the most Socialistic government of the century."' When the Chinese Socialist Party was organised in 1912 at a Congress in Nanking, it established a Socialist daily entitled *the Chinese Republican*, which was edited by Sun Yat Sen's private secretary.<sup>2</sup>

More specific assertion of Sun's relationship to the international Socialist community was provided by Martin Bernal (1968) when he cited Scalapino and Schiffrin's article in the *Journal of Asian Studies* (1959, 334) to state that 'Sun had no hesitation in identifying the Revolutionary Alliance with the world socialist movement'. He reported that 'during 1905 and 1906 the unity of the two was so obvious to Sun that he and the other party spokesmen used the two words *min-sheng chu-i* (*minsheng zhuyi* 民生主义, mass welfare) and *she-hui chu-i* (*shehui zhuyi* 社会主义, socialism) interchangeably'.<sup>3</sup> Scalapino and Schiffrin's original 1959 article had specifically demonstrated the notion that Sun's use of the term *minsheng zhuyi*

in the early 1905 and 1906 publications of the TMH party organ *Min Bao* 民报 was a direct reference to Socialism. In May of 1959 they had written, 'In every *Min pao* article that deals with the general subject, *min-sheng* is consistently used as a synonym for Western socialism... There can be no question as to the reference intended.' They called attention to Sun's 'famous Tokyo speech of October 17, 1906, commemorating the first anniversary of *Min Bao* in which Sun stated that in Europe '*min-sheng chu-i* was widely advocated only in the later half of the nineteenth century'. Sun explained that because of the widening gap between rich and poor '...the Socialist Party introduced *min-sheng chu-i*'.<sup>4</sup>

Scalapino further cited an article in late 1905 by Feng Ziyou 冯自由 in the Hong Kong-based TMH mouth piece, *Chung-kuo jih-pao* (*Zhongguo Ribao* 中国日报), which was being run by Chen Shaobai 陈少白, one of Sun's earliest associates and supporters. Following the bankruptcy of Sun's brother in Hawaii, Chen would ensure that Sun's brother, mother, wife and children could move to a secure base in Hong Kong in 1907 through the purchase of a small farm in Kowloon. One month after the first issue of *Min Bao* appeared on 17 November 1905, Chen's *Zhongguo Ribao* published Feng's article, 'She-hui chu-i yu Chung-kuo cheng-chih ch'ien-t'u' (Shehui zhuyi yu Zhongguo zhengzhi qiantu 社会主义与中国政治前途, The Min-sheng Principle and the Future of the Chinese Political Revolution), in which Feng stated 'the new concept of *min-sheng chu-i*, which emerged in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Europe as a result of the industrial revolution, was what the Japanese called *she-hui chu-i*'.<sup>5</sup> 'She-hui chu-i' is the modern term that is used for Socialism. Scalapino explained that following the introduction of the term *minsheng zhuyi*, Feng Ziyou was reported to 'discuss the progress of socialism in Europe and America', claiming that the Russian Revolution of 1905 affected the entire globe 'like a clap of thunder', that the 'great prison in the Russian capital is like the Bastille prior to the French Revolution' and that 'the whole world knows the strength of the Russian Socialist Party'. He regarded the Russian nation as able to 'serve as an aid in giving direction to our [the Chinese] revolution'.<sup>6</sup>

Not insignificantly, Feng deployed the term 'national socialism' after claiming that the state policies of Germany were based upon *minsheng zhuyi* and that Berlin had 'made magnificent progress in public housing and other civic improvements; it



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

had become a Mecca for students of economics and politics'. Scalapino reported Feng 'also praised the national socialist policies of the Japanese government' with 'many utilities and monopolies like tobacco and the railroads [being] nationalised'. Feng asserted that 'state socialism' should be employed during the period of military tutelage that had been proposed by Sun and used the term *kuo-chia min-sheng chu-i* (*guojia minsheng zhuyi* 国家民生主义).<sup>7</sup> Germany and Japan were reported to be deploying the policies 'with great effectiveness', with Feng explaining that 'in state socialism, it was essential that the state control affairs so that a few individuals did not monopolise the rights and privileges that belonged to all'.<sup>8</sup>

It was not only Feng Ziyou writing in Chen Shaobai's Hong Kong newspaper who touted the merits of Socialism. Zhu Zhixin 朱执信, Wang Jingwei's 汪精卫 talented relative, was writing in the main TMH publication *Min Bao* on the distinction between Social and Political Revolution. In *Min Bao's* fifth issue distributed on 26 June 1906, Zhu in his article 'Lun She-hui ko-ming dang yu cheng-chih ko-ming ping hsing' 论社会革命当与政治革命并行 (Shehui geming dang yu zhengzhi geming bing xing; That the Social and Political Revolutions Be Carried Out Together), wrote 'Since the time of Marx...socialist theories had gradually changed and scholars generally felt now that scientific socialism could be achieved. He added, '...and what we people advocate is state socialism'.<sup>9</sup> In arguing against Liang Qichao 梁启超, who was opposed to social revolution, Scalapino reports that 'in Chu's mind, China like all other societies required a simultaneous social and political revolution'. Zhu asserted that it could be conducted easily in China because of its historic emphasis on the peasant economy and antagonism to the merchant class. The essence of the revolution was to be land nationalisation.<sup>10</sup> Bernal, writing ten years after Scalapino and Schiffrin, reviewed Zhu's five articles in the first five issues of *Min Bao*, summarised them and concluded that Zhu believed 'violent social revolution was not inevitable in the West and that Socialism would triumph there through parliamentary means'. Bernal asserted Zhu 'paid lip service to the importance of land nationalisation, his chief interest was in the public ownership of industry' and he judged that Zhu 'was in fact as near as a Chinese could ever be to being an orthodox Socialist of the Second International'.<sup>11</sup> Not only was Zhu Wang

Jingwei's close relative, but he was his revolutionary comrade throughout the TMH and early Republican period.

Scalapino reports that throughout this early period 'Sun kept contact with the Socialist International and continued to consider himself a socialist'.<sup>12</sup> Sun's promotion of a Socialist agenda demonstrates an early affiliation that was well prior to the First World War of 1914, his strong support of the Chinese Socialist Party in October of 1915, and the creation of the Third International in March of 1919. As early as 1905-1906 his followers and publicists were making little difference between socialism of the international or national varieties, such differences not having made much ideological appearance in Europe itself. They viewed socialism as having two groups: communism and national socialism, with communism being seen as the socialism espoused by Anarchists, Nihilists and Anarcho-Syndicalists. Sun's group considered 'themselves as belonging to national or state socialism'. This included advocating that the government have comprehensive responsibility for social and economic justice, with some state ownership, covering at least monopolies and utilities, but also a sector for private enterprise.<sup>13</sup> Summarising the variety of views expressed by Sun's supporters and their views of their own movement, Scalapino and Schiffrin unequivocally state 'One thing is certain. Sun and his young supporters wanted to be considered socialists in the general sense, and they thought of themselves as part of the world socialist movement'.<sup>14</sup>

## FOUNDATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SECOND INTERNATIONAL

The Second International spanned the gap between the First International, which was led by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels from 1864 to 1876 and the Third International, which is better known by the name 'the Comintern' that operated from 1919 to 1943. The First International's formal name was the International Working Man's Association ('IWMA') and its General Council, whose documents were almost all drafted by Karl Marx, operated from London until an internal controversy with the anarchist Mikhail Bakunin in 1872 resulted in the organisation expelling Bakunin and opting to move the General Council to New York City. It operated there for the next four years under

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

Friedrich Adolf Sorge, a German émigré, dogmatic Marxist and great-uncle of the infamous Japan-based, Soviet-spy of the Second World War Richard Sorge. Continuing internal controversy caused the dissolution of the First International at a conference in Philadelphia in 1876.<sup>15</sup> H.M. Hyndman, the founder of the British Socialist movement, who befriended Marx in Britain after the collapse of the First International, reported in his reminiscences that the fiasco of the Paris Commune of 1871 and the inflexible personalities of Marx and Engels led directly to the end of the First International.<sup>16</sup> He stated that

Marx was practically unknown to the English public, except as a dangerous and even desperate advocate of revolution, whose organisation of the ‘International’ had been one of the causes of the horrible Commune of Paris, which all decent people shuddered at and thought of with horror.<sup>17</sup>

The follow-on Second International was not insignificant. Founded at a Marxist-organised Congress of European Labour parties in Paris in 1889, it was larger and significantly more influential than the First. Although characterised by Thomas Bottomore in his *Dictionary of Marxist Thought* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983, 1991) as ‘largely dominated by German Social Democracy’,<sup>18</sup> its key functionaries were French-speaking Belgians operating from Brussels. Further, the founding location was in Paris on the anniversary of the storming of the Bastille during the French Revolution and there were almost three times as many French delegates attending as German. Describing the organisation as being ‘dominated by German Social Democracy’ derives from the movement’s founding Germany theoreticians (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels), and their theoretical heir, Karl Kautsky. At the first Congress, two joint presidents were elected. One president was French: Edouard Vaillant, who had been a ‘Paris communard’ in 1871; the other was German: Wilhelm Liebknecht who was regarded as the ‘moving spirit of the Congress’ due to his linguistic abilities, his eloquence and his experience with the First International.<sup>19</sup>

The leading historian of the organisation, George Haupt, relates that in the years leading up to the First World War ‘...the Socialist International was considered the most important anti-militarist political force in the world: the International... believed itself capable of mobilising an army of five million organised workers in the active struggle for peace.’ He stated that, ‘in an

age of pacifist organisations, none could compare in either size of audience or scope of activity.’ Rajani Dutt a London based radical, reported that at the outbreak of the First World War the organisation had twelve million members in 27 different countries, although he deemed it a ‘loose federation of political parties with no strong central organisation’.<sup>20</sup> Emblematic of its influence, however, ‘the International was put forward for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1913, and its candidature was favourably held over until 1914.’<sup>21</sup>

At its founding in Paris in July 1889, nearly 391 delegates came from 20 countries including ‘nearly all the most important Socialist leaders of Europe’, along with three members of the Marx family. By far the largest delegation was from France, which sent 221 delegates, followed by Germany with 81. Smaller delegations of various sizes also came from countries with parties that were ‘just starting’, including Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, and Sweden. Britain, the Netherlands and America sent groups that had ‘not coalesced into a unified party’. Others came from countries that were not yet independent, such as Poland and Bohemia. Congresses were held at intervals of approximately once every three years.<sup>22</sup>

At the Fifth Congress in Paris in September of 1900 the organisation established a permanent secretariat with the name International Socialist Bureau (ISB) and appointed staff to operate it. The ISB consisted of three delegates from each National section and directed to carry out the decisions and arrange for the International’s Congresses, meeting at least once a year. Its Executive consisted of a Chairman (Emile Vandervelde), General Secretary (Victor Serwy) and two other members of the Belgian section.<sup>23</sup> It operated from the organisation’s headquarters in Brussels at the *Maison du Peuple*. The ISB’s objective was to coordinate between the member Socialist parties while Congress was not in session. The ISB actually met every few months, while in every country there was a ‘local organisation connected to the bureau’. During the Sixth Congress at Amsterdam in August 1904, the ISB was strengthened by the appointment of an aggressive new General Secretary, Camille Huysmans. Both Vandervelde as Chairman and Huysmans as Secretary would play prominent roles in the international Socialist movement’s key organisations for the next four decades.

With respect to the ISB’s role in supporting Socialist political actions, Kirkup and Pease reported



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

that ‘appeals for funds to assist any strike of international import, or any labour movement in out-of-the-way countries where labour [was] ill-organised, and authority oppressive, [were] dispatched *almost weekly*...’ These authors specifically pointed to appeals that came *from Portugal and Russia*, ‘where wars or revolutions [were] in progress’. Such appeals went out ‘to the workmen of the world... issued through the agency of the Bureau.’<sup>24</sup>

At the Seventh Congress in Stuttgart Germany in August 1907 the organisation was further strengthened by concentrating voting rights into the largest national delegations. Previously each delegation had two votes, but after 1907 20 votes were allocated to each of the national organisations of Germany, Austria, Britain, France and Russia, with 15 to Italy. The smaller nations had two to four votes each. In Britain, the National Committee of the Second International maintained its headquarters at the offices of the British Labour Party, with the national secretary being Arthur Henderson, the secretary of the Labour Party. Britain’s 20 votes were allocated: ten for the Labour Party, under Arthur Henderson; four to the Independent Labour Party under Keir Hardie; four to the British Socialist Party under H.M. Hyndman; and two to the Fabian Society.<sup>25</sup>

The ISB in Brussels gradually created a more ‘complex organisation’ while publishing *Bulletin Periodique* in three languages: French, English and German, which ‘were the three languages recognised for international purposes.’ By 1912 it contained ‘a chronicle of Socialist doings and happenings in all lands,’ a Parliamentary Report in connection with the Inter-Parliamentary Commission, a directory of the ‘delegates to the Bureau, of the secretaries of affiliated parties, and parties not affiliated’ and a ‘long classified list of books and documents sent to the Bureau during the year.’<sup>26</sup>

The influence of the Second International and its president, Emile Vandervelde, and secretary, Camille Huysmans, might best be gauged by their July 1913 trip to Britain in which they attempted to create unity from the disparate British parties which held membership in the Second International. After successfully uniting the Socialist parties of France, in London they met with the Independent Labour Party, the British Socialist Party, and the Fabian Society ‘for the purposes of promoting Socialist unity’. The ISB ‘approved of the resolutions

unanimously adopted... proposing the formation of a United Socialist Council, subject to the condition that the British Socialist Party [under H.M. Hyndman] join the Labour Party’.<sup>27</sup>

The world’s leading Socialist operatives and revolutionaries were active in the organisation. This included the German Marxist icons Karl Kautsky, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, along with the Russian Marxist theoreticians Vladimir Lenin, Georgi Plekhanov, and Pavel Axelrod. The later two were known as ‘the founders of Russian Marxism’. The significance of each in revolutionary European-socialism of the 1905-1917 period is easily ascertainable.<sup>28</sup> Kautsky’s theoretical Marxist journal *Die Neue Zeit* was the leading socialist journal. He was often referred to as both one of the main theoreticians of the German Socialist Party (SPD) and the ‘pope of socialism’.<sup>29</sup> Lenin frequently cited Kautsky’s *The Road to Power* (1909) stating that it was ‘a most complete exposition of the tasks of our time’ and ‘the most profound elaboration on “a revolution in connexion [sic] with war” which expressed “the indisputable opinion held by all revolutionary Social Democrats.”’<sup>30</sup> Max Shachtman in his foreword to Leon Trotsky’s publication *Terrorism and Communism* (1961, 1986) asserted with respect to the theoretical magazine that Karl Kautsky ‘virtually founded’ and edited for 35 years, *Die Neue Zeit*, and that ‘it was no exaggeration to say that no other periodical had so profound an influence upon the whole generation of Marxists before World War I, not in Germany alone but throughout the world.’<sup>31</sup>

By the summer of 1905 Lenin had seized the position of Russian delegate to the ISB after a battle beginning on 2 June in which he had written (under his own name Vladimir Ulyanov,) to the ISB for the ‘Central Committee of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party’ (RSDLP) declaring that the mandate of the veteran Marxist Plekhanov in the organisation was ‘null and void’.<sup>32</sup> Surprisingly, Lenin’s assault on Plekhanov came less than one year after Plekhanov, with Katayama Sen 片山潛, had been named Vice Presidents of the International’s Sixth Congress in Amsterdam in August of 1904. Haupt quotes Lenin’s Collected Works (Vol. 151, p. 93) to report that subsequently Lenin regularly attended the Second International’s meetings and Congresses between 1907 and 1911.<sup>33</sup> Lenin’s own work published from Moscow in 1952 (*Collapse of the Second International*), asserted that,

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

‘From 1905 onwards, Lenin was a member of the I.S.B. as a representative of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.’<sup>34</sup>

The Second International took an active position in political issues which were relevant to China. At its Congress of 1900 delegates unanimously denounced colonialism, while stronger language was added seven years later at its Stuttgart Conference in August of 1907. The Stuttgart resolution condemned ‘capitalist colonialist policies [which] must, by their nature, give rise to servitude, forced labour, and the extermination of native peoples’.<sup>35</sup> An amendment submitted by Lenin (who by then was a member of the Bureau of the International) along with Rosa Luxemburg and Julius Martov,<sup>36</sup> denounced war. It was approved unanimously, and then approved again by two succeeding congresses. It demanded

every effort to prevent the outbreak of war’ and required that ‘In case war should break out anyway, it is [the Labour movement’s] duty to intervene in favour of its speedy termination and with all their powers to utilize economic and political crises created by the war to rouse the masses and thereby to hasten the downfall of the capitalist class rule.’<sup>37</sup>

By 1904, Japan also had membership in the Second International through a small organisation of which Katayama Sen was a member. This was likely the Socialist Association (Shakaishugi Kyokai 社會主義協會).<sup>38</sup> The first Socialist Party in Japan, the Social Democratic Party (Nihon Shakai Minshuto 日本社會民主黨), which had been founded substantially by Japanese Christians, had been dissolved by the Japanese police in April 1901 after only one day of operation. Since its successor, the Japanese Socialist Party (Nihon Shakai-to 日本社會黨) was not formed until February 1906,<sup>39</sup> it is likely that the study group known as Socialist Association (Shakaishugi Kyokai) was the organisation to which Katayama Sen was affiliated.

The Sixth International Congress of the Second International that met in August of 1904 in Amsterdam during the midst of the Russo-Japanese War was the first congress where two of the Second International’s member countries were at war.<sup>40</sup> There is no better symbol of the potential relationship between socialist revolutionary organisations of Europe and Asia than the famous handshake between the Japanese Socialist Katayama Sen and the Russian Marxist Georgi

Plekhanov. The selection of these individuals to lead the Conference confirms that the Second International was indeed focused on the conflict between Japan, which was an industrialising bourgeois society, and Russia, which remained the center of ‘autocratic reaction.’ Bernal reports that there also was an exchange of letters between the Japanese Socialist organ *Heimin Shimbun* 平民新聞 and Lenin-Plekhanov’s revolutionary journal edited in London, *Iskra*, which ‘brought the Japanese Socialists into direct contact with the Russian Social Democrats’. The *Heimin Shimbun* touted the constitutionalism of Japan and the ability therefore to ‘fight by peaceful means; by reason and speech’ while *Iskra* responded, in a letter possibly drafted by Trotsky, that ‘the ruling classes have never submitted to the forces of reason, and we have not the slightest ground for believing that they ever will’.<sup>41</sup>

Katayama’s presence was significant, but the extent of his influence at this time is difficult to gauge.

Though unsuccessful in Japan, his election as Vice President of the Sixth Congress directly preceded his trip in the spring of 1904 to the American Socialist conference in Chicago. Although his organisation was the first to be recognised in Japan by the International, he was the only Asian in attendance at the Sixth Congress. The organisation he represented was a small ‘Socialist Association’ whose predecessor organisation, the Social Democratic Party, had been banned from operating as a political party.<sup>42</sup> Katayama was clearly of no positive influence within the Japanese government. Nevertheless, he was elected first vice president and Georgi Plekhanov second vice president of the Congress, with Henri Van Kol of Holland being president.<sup>43</sup>

Assisting the Japanese government more effectively was French Socialist Leader Jean Jaurès who demanded in the Chamber of Deputies in 1905 that France maintain strict neutrality in the War and ‘render no assistance’ to the naval vessels of her ally after the Russian Baltic Fleet had set sail for the Far East.<sup>44</sup> British Socialist H.M. Hyndman was even more direct in his denunciations when he asserted that ‘the crushing of Russia is a service done to mankind’. Writing in 1928, just 25 years after the war, Frederick Gould, Hyndman’s long-term associate in the SDF, stated ‘the outbreak of the Russian-Japanese War (1904) let loose an ample Socialist hatred of Czarism’.<sup>45</sup> The influence of the European Socialist position on the denial of French government support to its Russian ally during



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

the war is confirmed by Leon Trotsky in his noted 1906 text entitled *Results and Prospects*. Approximately one year after the war had ended, he reported, 'During the Russo-Japanese War the Socialist Party of France declared that if the French Government intervened in favour of the [Russian] autocracy, it would call on the proletariat to take the most resolute measures, even to the extent of revolt'.<sup>46</sup>

## MODIFICATION OF SOCIALIST STRATEGY

The Second International had been founded in 1889 in opposition to the radical line of the First International that asserted the need of a revolutionary armed insurrection of the working class. Importantly, it replaced the strategy of armed insurrection of the proletariat with progress of the working class under the rule of law. Haupt in 'War and Revolution in Lenin'<sup>47</sup> claimed that following the Second International's foundation, Engels, 'from 1891 onwards... radically modified the postulate according to which the proletariat could come to power only through recourse to violence in a struggle against the bourgeois State.'<sup>48</sup> Haupt states that armed military force came to be viewed as a 'force for repression or diversion subordinated to the middle classes... which could be neutralised only by respect for legality'. 'From being a catalyst [for revolution], armed conflict between nations [became] a formidable obstacle [to revolution] with the result that peace [became] the decisive factor for the success of the working-class movement.'<sup>49</sup>

The impact on the socialist strategy was profound. In a reversal of the First International, the 'vast majority' of the Second International in its first congress 'declared peace to be the first and indispensable condition for any emancipation of the working class'. The Second International adopted the position that...

the task of social democracy was to prevent reactionary forces from finding a way out by setting in motion the mechanism of counter-revolution through recourse to violence, whether it be external (war), or internal (armed repression, civil war), which might fill the conflictual gap between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat...<sup>50</sup>

The motivation of the Second International at its Paris Congress in September of 1900 to establish the International Socialist Bureau went beyond having it become a coordination unit. Some hoped for it to

become 'a real general staff of the revolution'. The Bureau was appointed to consist of representatives of the leading Socialist parties and provided with a secretariat and offices in Brussels. Though the first secretary, Victor Serwy, focused primarily on organising the international congress in Amsterdam in August of 1904, James Joll explains that his successor, Camille Huysmans,

...rapidly became an influential figure in the international Socialist movement.... Under his direction, the secretariat...assumed increasing importance in providing a link between the member parties... Some people hoped that the International Socialist Bureau, the permanent executive committee whose periodical meetings were attended by the leading Socialist politicians of Europe, would become a real general staff of the revolution.<sup>51</sup>

By early 1906 the Second International was taking an aggressive position in international affairs, coordinating actions among its affiliated Socialist Parties. No less an authority on Socialist revolution than Leon Trotsky asserted the ISB's role as a central organising unit for the Socialist movement. He related that:

In March 1906 when the Franco-German conflict over Morocco was coming to a head, the International Socialist Bureau resolved, in the event of a danger of war, to 'lay down the most advantageous actions for all international socialist parties and for the whole organised working class in order to prevent war or bring it to an end'.<sup>52</sup>

To those who would insist that the Second International remained a 'coordinating body' without direct involvement in revolutionary or financial support to socialist parties globally, Eric Hobsbawm asserts the contrary:

Camille Huysmans, secretary of the International Bureau, in 1906 accepted the deposit by Litvinov [*future Soviet Ambassador to London, Soviet Foreign Minister from 1933 to 1939, and Ambassador to USA in WWII*] of sums of money acquired by the (the highly controversial) Bolshevik 'expropriations'—i.e. robberies—and, on his instructions, arranged for arms purchases and transfers of money to illegal revolutionaries in Russia, including the young Stalin .... This in itself is not surprising. In those days one did not have to be even a moderate socialist to do

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

such services for any enemy of Tsarism. More striking ...is Huysmans' *total discretion about the affair*, even later, when he came under attack from Bolsheviks.<sup>53</sup>

Joll additionally asserts that it was not only Huysmans who was obtaining funds to support Russian revolutionaries, but that also during the war, that Robert Grimm, one of the two Swiss members of the Second International Bureau<sup>54</sup> had been working with German officials to finance Lenin's activities in Russia. He stated,

...evidence which was published some forty years later [-1957] has shown—that Robert Grimm, the Swiss secretary of the Zimmerwald Committee had been in touch with German officials, not just in order to make possible the journey of Lenin back to Russia in April 1917, but also in order to provide a channel through which German secret service funds had reached the Bolsheviks and other Russian opposition groups.<sup>55</sup>

## SECOND INTERNATIONAL AND SUN YAT SEN'S BIOGRAPHIES:

For unexplained reasons, the most powerful Socialist body in the world during the period in which Sun was organising the TMH is seldom mentioned in the main biographies of Sun Yat Sen. Without a direct discussion of the impact of the Second International on Yat Sen's career, serious deficiencies become apparent in the analysis of the clash between socialist revolutionaries and Tsarist Russia, tactical developments in revolutionary socialism, and the potential linkage between the TMH and the Brussels-based Second International. In addition, the transition of Socialist strategy from revolutionary objectives of the First International, to parliamentary tactics of the Second International, and back to revolutionary strategies for the Comintern cannot be observed. The Second International favoured parliamentary action in developed industrial states to acquire political power for the organisers of the 'working class', while the Third International advocated armed struggle and coup d'état. Importantly, there may have been little differences between the Second and Third with respect to the overthrow of autocratic regimes in non-industrialised countries, including Russia (1905), Portugal (first in 1908), Turkey (1908), Portugal (finally in 1910), Mexico (1910), and China (1911). That is to

say, the Second and Third International policies with respect to the overthrow of autocratic pre-bourgeois regimes may have been identical.

The Second International had succeeded between 1889 and 1900 in ousting the violent revolutionary tactics of Socialists and Anarchists from the organisation, but the Russo-Japanese War and the ensuing 1905 Russian revolt resurrected the entire problem of the role of violent working class revolution in socialist theory. After the 1905 revolution, Lenin 'reaffirmed the relevance of revolution and the role of armed violence. His language was the same as that of Marx and Engels in 1848...' He quickly offered 'a reinterpretation of the Paris Commune to support the lessons learned from 1905: in order to take power, the mass political strike must be combined with armed insurrection'.<sup>56</sup> The Russian Revolution of 1905 became a crucial event for the Second International, the ISB, and for revolutionary doctrine. It is worthwhile to review George Haupt analysis of its impact:

The Russian revolution of 1905 marked the turning point. The fresh surge of radicalism and the wave of enthusiasm caused by the Russian revolution in socialist circles throughout the world turned the ISB into a body with a truly international audience and authority. It played a highly important part in developing the vast movement of solidarity with the Russian Revolution, a part which is not yet clearly understood and is still neglected by historians. The International was to help revolutionary Russia on both the material and moral level.<sup>57</sup>

Sun's biographers consistently omit the context of Sun's trip to Brussels in early 1905, his meeting with the key executives of the Second International (Emile Vandervelde and Camille Huysmans) and his presence in London during Lenin's Third Bolshevik Congress in April-May 1905. Important linkages between the TMH, European socialist revolutionaries, and parties in the Japanese national security establishment are therefore lost. Clearly, European socialists and international financiers in New York and London had supported Japanese efforts in Manchuria against Tsarist Russia in the 1904 to 1905 Russo Japanese War, while at the same time Sun Yat Sen and his Tokyo-based TMH were being bankrolled and established. Sun Yat Sen was in communication with both the Second International and with Japanese nationalists during this period.



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

## DISINTEGRATION OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

The importance of the disintegration of the Second International under the impact of the Great War lies in the breadth of the political spectrum in which the alumni of the Second International ultimately operated. Assuming Sun Yat Sen's operations beginning in at least 1905 were associated with Socialist elements including the ISB in Brussels implies that his network had a portfolio of personal, organisational and ideological contacts that extended through a political range from Lenin to Mussolini. With respect to Germany, the dominant role the German SPD played in both the Second International and in post-war German governments up to January of 1933 would have facilitated TMH and KMT relationships with the complete spectrum of the German socialist community. For the inheritors of Sun Yat Sen's international political network, this permitted relatively free movement between the Socialist factions in Europe. From 1925 to 1944 the dominant Chinese personality that succeeded to Sun's international network was Wang Jingwei. While he was Premier of China in 1932 and 1933, he not only was travelling in France and Germany as China re-established relations with the Soviet Union in December 1932, but he also was in Germany immediately prior to the General Hans von Seeckt's 1933 trip to China that established the German military mission to the Central Government in Nanjing. The German mission would train the Central Chinese army that confronted the Japan military in the fall of 1937. Indicative of the significance of this relationship, on Wang Jingwei's return to China in mid-March 1933 he was named Minister of Foreign Affairs while Chiang Kai-shek militarily and politically controlled the central government.

The political factions that dominated Europe during this period were essentially the descendants of the Second International. These included, at a minimum, the British Labour Party, the Fabian Society, the French Socialist parties, the Italian Fascist Party, the Soviet Communist Party, the German Social Democratic Party (SPD), the German Communist Party (KPD) and the Austrian Social Democrats. Given this spread of parties, it would be reasonable to assume that the range also included conservative German NSDAP socialists that were influential up

until the assassination of Gregor Strasser and Kurt von Schleicher on 3 June 1934.

## SUN'S LEGACY AND THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

The significant role that the Second International played in the development of the international Socialist movement between its founding in July 1889 (with the full support of Friedrich Engels) and the emergence of Lenin's Third International in March 1919 suggests that a complete history of the Chinese republican revolution of October 1911 must address the strategy and role of the Second International in the Asian region. With Sun Yat Sen and his followers directly expressing their affiliation with the Socialist movement since at least 1905, this need is further heightened. Even further, when it is recalled that Vladimir Lenin's Third International founded the Chinese Communist Party in July 1921 and that Lenin had been propelled to the front of the world Socialist stage by the Russian Revolution of 1905 and his participation in the Second International's International Socialist Bureau (ISB) from 1905, addressing Second International's role in China's history from 1905 to 1917 should be a fundamental requirement of any modern history of China or biography of Sun Yat Sen. Unfortunately, for inexplicable reasons, this has rarely been the case.

The historical record, however, is very clear. Sun Yat Sen and his movement had long sought to be affiliated with the global Socialist movement during the period of the Second International's greatest influence; Sun's organisation was founded in Tokyo in August 1905 as the Socialist world relished in the Japanese defeat of the autocratic Tsarist Empire while Russia was convulsed in its first Socialist revolution; and, Sun's revolutionary activities were openly bankrolled and supported between 1922 and 1927 by the key international revolutionary organisation Vladimir Lenin had established as the successor to the International Socialist Bureau, the organisation Lenin himself had helped to run from Belgium between 1905 and 1914. The ultimate question, then, is not 'was Sun Yat Sen in contact with the Second International as he created the TMH in the summer of 1905 in Tokyo,' but it is: 'how could Sun Yat Sen not have been in contact with the organisation?' That is a perplexing question left unanswered by far too many studies of the period. **RC**

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

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- 9 Martin Bernal, 'The Triumph of Anarchism over Marxism', pp. 111-112; also see Robert A. Scalapino and H. Schiffrin, 'Early Socialistic Currents in the Chinese Revolutionary Movement', p. 329.
- 10 Robert A. Scalapino and H. Schiffrin, 'Early Socialistic Currents in the Chinese Revolutionary Movement', p. 331.
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- 42 Hyman Kublin, *Asian Revolutionary: The Life of Katayama Sen.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964, pp. 146, 147-149.
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- 53 Georges Haupt and E.J. Hobsbawm, *Aspects of International Socialism, 1871-1914*, xi. (The italics are authors.)
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# Song Ailing and China's Revolutionary Elite

PAUL B. SPOONER



The importance of the Song clan's eldest sibling, Song Ailing 宋藹齡, for the modern history of China lies with her crucial role as confidential secretary for the Tong Meng Hui 同盟會 and Sun Yat Sen between 1909-1914, a critical period in Sun's revolutionary career. In subsequent decades she held a position at the heart of the KMT Chongqing government as matriarch of the Song Clan and wife of H.H. Kung (Kong Xiangxi 孔祥熙). Her husband's positions as Vice-Premier and Premier of the Executive Yuan, Minister of Finance and the Chairman of the Central Bank of China required confronting both an expansionist Japan and a collapsing world economy. But, her historic role in China's revolutionary networks has been obscured by many historians and journalists, while her specific history is often inaccurately merged with that of her next sibling, Song Qingling 宋庆龄. The confusion in secondary literature is deeply implanted and severely distorts the historical record. Correcting the errors requires a thorough review of the secondary literature and identification of the explicit distortions within it.

Sun Yat Sen's 孙逸仙 deep relationship to the Song family is exemplified by the two Song sisters who were his English secretaries: Song Ailing for the five years from 1909 to 1914 and Song Qingling for the nine years from 1914 to 1925. Song Qingling's status as his second wife from 1915 to 1925, and his subsequent

widow from 1925 to 1981, has significantly overshadowed the relationship of her older sister to Sun. Sun's transition from employing Song Ailing to Song Qingling became critical for the future history of the KMT and for the CCP.

However, not only is the date for Song Ailing's marriage to H.H. Kung, which opens the door to her sister's marriage to Sun Yat Sen, not specified in any of the major sources on the history of Republican China, as importantly the date for the marriage of her young sister (Song Qingling) to Sun Yat Sen is also a source of controversy. The lack of specificity over the marriage dates of two of the most influential women of 20<sup>th</sup>-century China, both of which should have been mundanely recorded as a matter of course, is unusual and assuredly reflects the political sensitivity of the dates.

The sequence of the marriage dates is uniquely important for the political structure of the Republic of China: Song Ailing's marriage to H.H. Kung in the fall of 1914 opens the door for Song Qingling's marriage to Sun Yat Sen in the fall of 1915. With Song Ailing remaining as Sun Yat Sen's private secretary though the summer of 1914, she becomes a founding personality in the Revolutionary Party (Gemingdang 革命党), the

Start from the left: Song Ailing, Song Qingling and Song Meiling.



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

members of which through pledging personal loyalty to Sun become the core of the KMT-Nanjing-Chongqing government. The sisters' relationships with Sun Yat Sen also allowed their younger brother, T.V. Song (Song Ziwen 宋子文), to play a leading financial role in the Canton government by August 1924. In this month he would set up the Central Bank of China with a US\$10 million Soviet loan and become the key financial broker in Canton. Both of the Song sister's marriages then make possible the 1 December 1927 marriage of Song Meiling 宋美齡 to Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi 蔣介石), who accedes to the international support and network provided to the Song Clan and to Sun Yat Sen. By 1927, it will be the husband of Song Meiling, Chiang Kai-shek, who commands the armies that will provide the opportunity for the Song family's financial and political relationships in the Republic of China for the next 40 years.

Although Song Qingling's husband Sun Yat Sen is dead by 1925, while she moves radically left and out from influence in the KMT following Chiang Kai-shek's overthrow of leftist KMT elements in April of 1927, from 1926 to 1949 Song Ailing's position is immeasurably strengthened. Her husband acts as Premier, Vice-Premier, Minister of Finance and head of the Central Bank of China in the government of her younger sister's husband, Chiang Kai-shek, while her former colleagues in the Revolutionary Party occupy key positions in the government of the Republic of China and in the KMT. In the same period, her younger brother, the family's oldest son, T.V. Song, becomes Minister of Finance, Foreign Minister, and eventually Premier. This political positions evolution is made possible by Song Ailing's marriage to H.H. Kung in the fall of 1914.

What was the origin of Song Ailing's unusual capability, influence or luck? Being the oldest daughter of a talented clan and sitting at the nexus of the secret communication network for her father and Sun Yat Sen in the Tong Meng Hui and Revolutionary Party may well have been the origin of her influence. This article will seek to identify the inaccuracies in leading publications concerning Song Ailing's role as confidential secretary to the Tong Meng Hui, to her father and to Sun Yat Sen, and thereby bring into

clarity her role as arguably the leading woman of China's republican era.

## THE BIOGRAPHIES

The more noted biographers that directly discuss the Song sisters and Sun Yat Sen include: (a) Grace Sydenstriker, using the pen name of Cornelia Spencer, in *The Three Sisters* in 1940,<sup>1</sup> (b) Emily Hahn in *The Soong Sisters* of 1942,<sup>2</sup> (c) James Burke in *My Father in China*, of 1945,<sup>3</sup> (d) Sterling Seagrave in *The Soong Dynasty* of 1985,<sup>4</sup> (e) Jung Chang in *Mme Sun Yat-sen, the Extraordinary Life of Soong Ching-ling* of 1986,<sup>5</sup> (f) Israel Epstein in *Life and Times of Soong Ching Ling* of 1991,<sup>6</sup> (g) Lloyd Eastman's *Chiang Kai-shek's Secret Past* of 1993,<sup>7</sup> and (h) Laura Tyson Li's *Madame Chiang Kai-shek* of 2006.<sup>8</sup> While Boorman's *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China* contains a separate entry for Song Qingling, there is none for Song Ailing. Data from an earlier biographical series, originally published from 1918 to 1950 in Shanghai and entitled *Who's Who in China 1918-1950*,<sup>9</sup> has extensive reporting on Song Qingling beginning in the fourth edition in 1931 and continuing to the sixth in 1950. Two entries for Song Ailing exist, one each in the fourth edition of 1931 and the fifth edition of 1936.

Although not a biography of any of the Songs, a publication that cannot be ignored due to its impact on modern American perceptions of the Republic of China is Barbara Tuchman's 1971 Pulitzer Prize winning text, *Stilwell and the American Experience in China*. Tuchman's narrative of Stilwell is strangely configured. She takes Stilwell's unsuccessful experience as Commanding Officer of the China-Burma-India Command (CBI) for the two years from 1942 to 1944 and suggests that this was an omen for the difficulties the United States experienced in the Chinese Civil War from 1947 to 1949. But she both ignores the fundamentally successful experience of the American general Claire Chennault in commanding the Chinese Air Force for the eight years from 1937 to 1945, while omitting details on the relationships and activities of Song Ailing and H.H. Kung. One of her most perplexing insinuations apropos H.H. Kung is her observation that he had 'the mentality of a child of twelve'.<sup>10</sup> Clearly an individual who was equally fluent in Mandarin and English, had two degrees from leading American institutions and was

Sun Yat Sen and Song Qingling. Taken about the time their marriage in Japan on 25 October 1915.



## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

responsible for the conversion of China from silver to a fiat currency subsequent to the Great Depression and before the Japanese attack on China, among other accomplishments, differed greatly from Tuchman's dubious assertion. W. Cameron Forbes, US Ambassador to Japan during the Manchurian Crisis and head of the US economic mission to China at the time of the Leith-Ross Mission in June of 1935 detailed the difficulties China faced due to the imposition of the American Silver Purchase Act of 14 October 1934, and the severe economic problems with which H.H. Kung dealt.<sup>11</sup> With Tuchman having ignored this critical economic issue and having inserted an unreferenced innuendo with respect to H.H. Kung's intellectual capabilities, her characterisations of Song Ailing and H.H. Kung are certainly unreliable. The purpose of Tuchman's distortion is a subject for contemplation.

There are many modern publications in Chinese on Sun Yat Sen, Song Qingling, Song Ailing and Wang Jingwei 汪精卫, but most seem to suffer from the same maladies. They rarely are indexed, almost never identify their sources and seldom utilise footnoting. Despite being extremely detailed, it is often impossible to verify the reliability of the information presented. A good example is a fact-filled tract on Sun's family published in 2004 by the Party History Publishing House of the Chinese Communist Party entitled *Sun Zhongshan Yi Jia Ren, Yige Zai Zhongguo you Juda Yingxiang de Jiazu* 孙中山一家人，一个在中国有巨大影响的家族 (The People of Sun Yatsen's Family, a Clan in China with Extraordinary Influence).<sup>12</sup> Readers only have the prestige of the publisher to support the assertions made.

An example of the necessity of reviewing Song Ailing's background for a study of Macao in the decades from 1900 to 1940 is the well researched and presented Portuguese language publication *Macao e a Implantação da República na China, Uma Carta de Sun Yat-sen para o Governador José Carlos da Maia*.<sup>13</sup> The analysis was the first to report in detail the relationship of a key Portuguese Republican (Carlos da Maia) with the leading Chinese Republican (Sun Yat Sen). Unfortunately, the text confuses the sisters Song Ailing and Song Qingling. It claims that Sun Yat Sen married Song Ailing in July 1914, and subsequently described her as a leading leftwing political activist under the communist regime in China. The author is clearly speaking of Song Qingling, and has undoubtedly

fused the data of the two sisters, likely due to Song Ailing's prior and significantly under-reported role as the secretary of Sun from 1912 to 1914. The unusual feature of the error is the prestige of the publisher and the detailed reporting on the neglected and little-known figure of Carlos da Maia, Governor of Macao from 1914 to 1916. A letter from Sun Yat Sen to him in June 1916 testifies to the intriguing relationship he maintained with Chinese Republicans.

Merging the story of Song Ailing with Song Qingling obscures Song Ailing's role during this critical period of Republican revolution in both China and Portugal. Her likely role with respect to Macao in both the period of the Portuguese and Chinese early republics as well as in the Sino-Japanese War is not insignificant. In May 1904 as a young girl she had travelled to the United States using a Portuguese passport which her father had arranged for her in Shanghai. After May 1940, Japan and Chongqing were conducting negotiations through Macao via her younger brother (T.V. Song); and in June of 1944, while the Japanese Ichigo campaign threatened to topple the Chongqing Regime, she had travelled to Brazil where the husband (Dai Encai 戴恩赛) of Sun's only surviving daughter (Sun Wan 孙婉) had been Ambassador for the eight years from 1929 to 1938. With her was her youngest sister and Chiang Kai-shek's wife, Song Meiling, while Dai and Sun Yat Sen's wife maintained a significant home in Macao.

The strange phenomenon of merging the records of the two sisters is also in evidence earlier in the century. The Fourth Edition (1931), Fifth Edition (1936), and Fifth Edition Supplement (1940) of the China Weekly Review's *Who's Who in China* all inaccurately reported that Song Qingling, 'when the Republic was formed at Nanking, ...served in the Nanking Provisional Government under Dr. Sun Yat-sen,<sup>14</sup> and that she then fled with him to Japan. Since Song Qingling did not graduate from Wesleyan until June 1913, and did not return to China until September 1913, the 1931, 1936 and 1940 editions of *Who's Who in China* are clearly referring to Song Ailing. Importantly this report should have placed Soong Ailing at the core of Sun's entourage when he was heading the newly-founded Chinese Republic and when he was undertaking revolutionary actions against Yuan Shikai 袁世凯.

Equally significant, this reporting occurs from 1931 to 1940 in Shanghai during the time that H.H.

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

Kung and Song Ailing were reaching the height of their political power. To re-focus this thought: at the very time that H.H. Kung and Song Ailing were most influential, the leading English language publication of Chinese biographies in their hometown of Shanghai, the financial center of the KMT regime, was obscuring the fact that Song Ailing had been Sun Yat Sen's personal secretary during the most critical years of Sun's career. The entries of 1931, 1936 and 1940 purportedly refer to Song Qingling, when in fact much of the entry describes Soong Ailing. The editions state:

Madame Sun Yat-sen ...entered the Wesleyan College for Women at Macon, Georgia and was graduated with a B. A. degree; after graduation she returned to China and in 1912, when the Republic was formed at Nanking, she served in the Nanking Provisional Government under Dr. Sun Yat-sen; when Yuan Shi-kai took action against Dr. Sun as a revolutionist, she in company with other members of Dr. Sun's personal staff fled to Japan where they remained for sometime as political refugees; in Oct. 1915, she was married to Dr. Sun in Japan...<sup>15</sup>

By the Sixth Edition in 1950, published following the Communist takeover and control of Shanghai (by an American who would eventually be tried for sedition for pro-China publications during the Korean War),<sup>16</sup> the inaccuracies of the previous decades were corrected. The Sixth Edition of 1950 reads, 'Madame Sun Yat-sen...was graduated with a B.A. degree in 1913; in October, 1915, she was married to Dr. Sun in Japan...'<sup>17</sup>

One of the most intriguing issues of Song Ailing's background is the failure of any source to accurately provide the date for her marriage to H.H. Kung. The importance of Ailing's marriage to H.H. Kung and its date is not trivial. First, it determines the date of Song Qingling's marriage to Sun Yat Sen, because it is only after Ailing leaves as Sun's secretary that Song Qingling takes on the position. Second, it establishes the fact that Song Ailing was Sun's secretary when he formally established the Revolutionary Party in the summer of 1914. The members of this party would go on to become the core of the KMT regime over the next 40 years. With respect to Song Qingling's marriage to Sun, Song Qingling needed to be in the secretarial position long enough to establish the emotional relationship

with Sun that would allow for their marriage. The marriage of Sun and Song Qingling could not have taken place in the fall of 1914 as many conservative sources assert.

Song Qingling's marriage to Sun Yat Sen will become one of the most important dates in the Republican Period. It is the date that anchors the Song Family to the political leadership of China, allowing for the entry of T.V. Song into the KMT's financial management in the 1920s, Meiling's marriage to Chiang Kai-shek in December 1927, and H.H. Kung's leading financial and political positions between 1932 and 1944. Song Qingling's life-long role in international forums as the representative of the Chinese left wing as well as her positions in the government of the People's Republic is established by her marriage to Sun. She was Vice-Chairman of the Central People's Government between 1949 and 1954, and was elected as one of two Vice-Presidents of the People's Republic of China in 1959.<sup>18</sup> A curious reader might query why the marriage dates for two such prominent sisters have been a source of mystery or controversy.

For the elder sister, Song Ailing, it seems highly unusual that date and place of her marriage to H.H. Kung has not been precisely determined. Both Kung and Song were confirmed, self-professing Christians. Kung had survived the massacre of his teachers and friends at the Oberlin College mission in Shanxi during the Boxer Rebellion of the summer of 1900; he went on to attend Oberlin (1902-1906) and Yale (1907), then to re-establish the Oberlin Mission School by 1908. He and Ailing were married while he was director of the Chinese YMCA in Tokyo, a position that was deemed by John R. Mott and Sherwood Eddy to be of primary significance for the development of Christianity in China due to the number of young Chinese who had flocked to Japan following its victory of Russia in the summer of 1905. Kung also claimed to be a direct descendant of Confucius. The determination of the ancestral line was of pre-eminent importance to maintaining his line's integrity under a recording system that apparently extended back over 2,000 years. Would not Christian faiths and Confucian lineage have required the recording of the Kung-Song marriage by family and church? At the wedding of such an important couple, and their undoubted wedding banquet, were no photos to record the event ever taken?

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

## SONG AILING'S MARRIAGE

Although the marriage date for Song Qingling varies between 1914 and 1915, the marriage of Song Ailing to H.H. Kung is even more obscure. Popular biographies of the Songs, as is evidenced by the war-time edition of Elmer Clark's *The Chiangs of China*, carry neither the date nor the church name.<sup>19</sup> Even W.H. Donald, the Australian newspaperman who specialised in being 'in the know' on the public and private lives of his politically-elite Chinese clients over his half-century long career in China did not disclose in his glibly written biography by E.A. Selle the date or the location of Ailing's marriage. He merely drolled, 'Ailing found her love in another refugee, a chubby, round-faced man, Dr. H.H. Kung, the seventy-fifth direct descendant of Confucius. They too were married in Japan.'<sup>20</sup> Emily Hahn, with direct access to Ailing and her sisters in the early 1940s under a timely contract arranged for her by John Gunther,<sup>21</sup> produced a book entitled *The Soong Sisters* but did not identify the year, month or name of the Church of the wedding for this couple who so many writers have reputed to have such great powers of economic and political manipulation. She provided only a paragraph of fluff on the topic, relating that,

At the end of this term, the young people were married in Yokohama by Christian ceremony, in a little church on a hill. Eling's wedding dress was of pale pink satin (a Chinese bride always wears pink or red); ... It was a small wedding, with only the Soongs, Dr Kung's cousins and a few intimate friends as guests.<sup>22</sup>

Gordon Seagrave does no better in his poorly-referenced *The Soong Dynasty* (New York: Harper & Row, 1985) that purports to be a 'tell-all' on the Soong Family and its networks. Without referencing Hahn's description of the marriage, other than the colour of Ailing's dresses, he appears to have used only Hahn's assertions as to the event, but he added that the wedding occurred in the spring, although he provided no source for this enhancement of Hahn's text.<sup>23</sup> Without mentioning the year, month, date, day or church, Seagraves pronounced that,

They were married in the spring. ... Like the cherry trees, Ailing wore pink. ... The ceremony was conducted in a little church on a hill, the immediate members of Charlie's family present,

along with Kung's cousins and a few friends. Afterward, Ailing changed into an apple-green satin dress decorated with golden birds...<sup>24</sup>

The Chinese language reference text published in 2004 by the Chinese Communist Party History Publishing Company that is entitled *The People of Sun Yatsen's Family, a Clan in China with Extraordinary Influence*, translates virtually word-for-word the Seagrave rendition of Ailing's wedding in Yokohama, including using the inaccurate and undocumented 'spring 1914' date for the event, and without referencing Seagrave as a source.<sup>25</sup> The only additional item that is added is that Kung's first wife, whom he married in 1910, is stated to have died in August 1913 of lung disease. It is, then, somewhat surprising that the History Publishing Company of the Chinese Communist Party reports Kung's marriage to Ailing as coming within six to eight months of the death of Kung's first wife, Mable Han Yumei, as well as the funeral of both Kung's wife and his father. These funerals occurred in mid-October of 1913 following her death on 3 August.<sup>26</sup> The event is recorded by the photograph in the 1914 Annual Report of the Shanxi District of the American Board.<sup>27</sup>

The Beijing published *Kongshi Jiazhu Quanzhuan* 孔氏家族全传 (Kong Family Biography) of 2001 does no better when it provides an unreferenced assertion in the chronology in its appendix that H.H. Kong and Soong Ailing were married in the spring of 1914.<sup>28</sup>

The appropriate mourning period for the death of both a father and a spouse may likely have been longer than six to eight months. Jennie Chen Jieru 陈洁如, when discussing her marriage to Chiang Kai-shek on 5 December 1921, advises that 'in the imperial days, the death of either parent required a mourning period of three years,' although in her case she advised that 'since the establishment of the republic, ... one hundred days of mourning was considered adequate.'<sup>29</sup> It may be that Kung was able to reduce the mourning period for his first wife and father, despite the lavish traditional funeral he held for both. But the assertion that the marriage took place in the spring of 1914 contradicts the publicly available records of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions that are held at the Houghton library at Harvard. Reverend Mark Williams of the Oberlin Shanxi Mission in Taiku Hsien reported only once regarding Kung's marriage in his regular and consistent monthly letters to his family in America. On 9 October



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

1914 he wrote that 'we hear that Mr. Kung was married at Tokio to Miss Regina Sung.'<sup>30</sup>

Even Martin Bernard in his 1944 biography curiously entitled *Strange Vigour; a Biography of Sun Yat-sen*, initially put the Kung-Song marriage into an undefined *mélange*. While he noted that H.H. Kung was coincidentally in Tokyo while 'Sun and the Soongs and other revolutionists' were organising their revolt against Yuan Shikai, Bernard provided no year, month, date or place, while also providing no dates that could offer an anchor reference. He merely related that when Ailing left as Sun's secretary, Qingling took her place

In Tokyo, where Sun and the Soongs and other revolutionists were beginning to reorganize their broken political work, there was a certain Chinese of a branch of the family of Kung, temporarily managing a Chinese Y.M.C.A. in that city. He was in general sympathy with Sun Yat-sen and took an active part in the revolution. Kung knew Eling Soong, having met her a few years earlier in New York. In Tokyo he renewed his friendship with the Soongs and within a year married Eling. When Eling gave up her secretarial work to marry Kung she suggested that her younger sister, Chingling, might take her place.<sup>31</sup>

Howard Boorman in his well-regarded *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China* seems to have equal difficulty defining the marriage date of what could arguably be called the first or second most important couple in Republican China. In his biography for H.H. Kung he merely states, 'K'ung, whose first wife, North China Women's College graduate Han Shu-mei, had died of tuberculosis, ...married Soong Ai-ling in 1914.'<sup>32</sup> Boorman did not provide Ailing with a separate biographical entry for his exhaustive encyclopedia of the leading figures of Republican China. In the entry for the Song Family, he merely stated, 'When Ai-ling left Sun's entourage to marry H.H. Kung (q.v.), she was replaced by her sister Ch'ing-ling.'<sup>33</sup>

The closest approximation to the date of Ailing's marriage from a reliable secondary source that has been surveyed is the date that appears by default in Israel Epstein's 1995 biography of Song Qingling entitled *Life and Times of Soong Ching Ling (Mme. Sun Yatsen)* (Beijing: New World Press, 1995), which states, 'From September 1914, Ching Ling worked with Sun daily as English secretary. She replaced her sister Ai-ling who left to marry Kong Xiang-xi (H.H. Kung).'<sup>34</sup> Placing

this in the context of the letter from Reverend Mark Williams dated 9 October 1914 would locate the date for Ailing's marriage in late September or early October rather than the spring of 1914, as Seagrave asserted without citation. This date would also fit with Emily Hahn's biography of the Song Sisters undertaken in conjunction with Ailing Song, which stated that their marriage occurred near the end of H.H. Kung's term as secretary of the Chinese YMCA in Tokyo.<sup>35</sup> The term had begun after Kung's arrival in Tokyo in December of 1913. This would have allowed for his marriage sometime in the fall of 1914. Epstein's authority stems from his multi-decade friendship with Song Qingling who authorised him to write her biography; Mark Williams from his close association with H.H. Kung in Taiku as is evident from their photo in the *Missionary Herald* of October 1913<sup>36</sup>, and Emily Hahn's from her direct access to the sisters.

The confusion unfortunately has never been properly resolved. In 2006 Laura Tyson Li asserted that 'when Eling left Sun's service in September 1913, Ching Ling stepped into her shoes...by November 1913 the idealistic young lady was clearly smitten.'<sup>37</sup> Without providing her own references for the date, Li contradicts all other sources with respect to the date Song Qingling became Sun's secretary. She uses the date September 1913 when more reliable sources state that she became secretary in the fall of 1914, including arguably the most authoritative source, Israel Epstein's 1993 biography of Song Qingling, which is quoted above. Despite her extensive research on the Song sisters, Li provides no date for Ailing's marriage to H.H. Kung, she does not indicate that Ailing left Sun's employ to marry Kung, and she does not tie the Soong Ailing marriage date into Kung's one-year contract to manage the Chinese YMCA in Tokyo. Tyson Li's representation takes Song Ailing completely out of the fundamentally important creation of the Revolutionary Party in the summer of 1914, and provides no explanation for Ailing's activities for the year from September 1913 to September 1914.

Ailing cannot be tied to H.H. Kung in the fall of 1913, because he remained in Taiku Hsien, Shanxi, burying his first wife Han Yumei. On 25 October 1913, the Taiku Mission had passed a resolution which read, '...we express to Mr. Kung our heartfelt sympathy in his bereavement, and our hope that as he goes to his new work in his loneliness, that Other Presence, which is

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

more precious than any of earth, may be with him and keep him.<sup>38</sup> Kung did not get to Japan until December 1913. More importantly, the Shanxi Mission report written after its 14-19 May 1914 meeting in Fenchow, just to the west of Taiku, disclosed nothing regarding Kung's second marriage to Ailing. It merely stated, 'Our Greatvale church and community has suffered a great loss at the death of Mrs. H.H. Kung... she passed away on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1913 after two months of suffering.'<sup>39</sup> Clearly, if H.H. Kung had taken Ailing Song for his second wife by the spring of 1914, the Taiku Mission where he had spent the last five years of his life as the founder and principal of its main school would have mentioned the marriage in its report for 1913-1914. But, despite the report being written after the Shanxi Mission's meeting in May 1914, there is no mention of such a marriage.

A limited review of Chinese language sources demonstrates that two of them, one published in Taiwan, the other in Qingdao, are of little assistance. Neither has bibliographies, footnotes or indexes. Both use interesting but unsubstantiated assertions with respect to the motivations of all the respective parties. The biography from Taiwan published in 1984 entitled, *Jin Quan Furen Song Ailing, Jangkong Minguo Quanzhan Zhengzhi Diyi Ren* 金权夫人宋蔼龄, 掌控民国权钱政治第一人 (Madame Money, Song Ailing, the Person that Controlled the Republic's Money and Politics), is similar to English language publications in that it merely states that Ailing's marriage took place in a Church in Yokohama in 1914 in a ceremony that was entirely Christian. It adds a short statement that of the weddings of the three sisters, the least information was for that of Ailing. Given that the first wedding of any of the Song sisters was the one that Charlie Song 宋嘉树 and Ni Kwei Tseng (Ni Guizhen 倪桂珍), regarded as most appropriately structured, that it was conducted in a Christian church, and that the Songs held the wedding banquet,<sup>40</sup> the absence of basic data on the wedding seems highly unusual. The mainland publication, *Song Ailing Quanzhuan* 宋蔼龄全传 published by Qingdao Publishing Ltd in 1998 is a fictionalised account of Ailing's life that presents vivid and detailed dialogue, from conversations that must have been sourced from the author's imagination. No presentation could be so utterly detailed and so utterly lacking in references. In any event, it neither provides a date or a place, other than the standard information

that Ailing's marriage took place in Yokohama in a Christian Church.<sup>41</sup>

To add to the confusion from mainland Chinese sources on the marriage date, a 1992 Beijing publication by Li Maosheng 李茂盛 entitled *Kong Xiangxi Zhuan* 孔祥熙传 states in its chronology that Kung assisted in the organisation of the Sun's new Revolutionary Party after 23 June 1914, and that not long afterward H.H. Kung left to marry Song Ailing: 'June 23: The Chinese Revolutionary Party is established, Kung helps Sun Yat-sen arrange party matters and facilitate the handling of documentation. Not long thereafter, he marries Miss Song Ailing in Tokyo.'<sup>42</sup> Again, there is consistently no date provided for the Kung-Song marriage.

## THE MEANING OF NO DATE

The failure to adequately address the marriage of Song Ailing by date, place and those in attendance obscures the role and period Ailing played for Sun Yat Sen as his key confidential secretary, and by implication, her relationship with his major political operator, Wang Jingwei. By moving her marriage from the fall of 1914 to early 1914, Song Ailing is removed from two critical events: (i) the creation of the Revolutionary Party, which forged a core of disciples that pledged personal loyalty to Sun, which he formalised in June of 1914 for the purposes of overthrowing Yuan Shikai; and (ii) the potential communication links from Sun to Wang Jingwei in Europe during the critical, crisis-filled atmosphere in Europe on the eve of the First World War. This would have, of course, included any meetings of the International Socialist Bureau (ISB) of the Second International, while Sun's chief organiser and propagandist, Wang Jingwei was in France. The world's leading revolutionaries, who included Lenin, Trotsky, Plekhanov, Martov and Axelrod were in close proximity to Wang in French speaking Belgium and Switzerland during the same period.

With Europe at war, Japan as a treaty ally of Britain was sure to take advantage of the isolated German holdings in Shandong and the Pacific. The Second International had pledged to prevent the outbreak of war, while Sun had taken aggressive steps to work with the Chinese Socialist Party following the Xinhai Revolution (Xinhai Geming 辛亥革命) of 1911. Had the International Socialist movement prevented an outbreak of war in Europe in 1914, China's

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

modern history may have been quite different. Shortly after war was declared, Japan, in conjunction with a small contingent of British Empire troops, attacked and eliminated the German concession at Qingdao in the fall of 1914, then Japan and British Empire naval units occupied the German-owned Pacific Ocean islands that dominated the American communication links between Hawaii and the Philippines. By January 1915 the Japanese position in the Far East with respect to China and the Western Powers had been vastly enhanced. The infamous Twenty-One Demands were soon promulgated by a victorious Japanese government on Yuan Shikai's increasingly isolated domestic regime. In the spring of 1919, the failure of the Versailles Peace Conference to return the German Concession to China led to the May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement. Thus, the First World War had resulted in Japanese power being firmly established in North China, American logistical links to China being jeopardised by Japanese occupation of the intersecting Pacific islands, and a growing Communist movement being implanted in China. In hindsight, preventing the outbreak of war in Europe was critical to China's security and to its modern history.

The extent to which Sun Yat Sen in Shanghai and Wang Jingwei in France attempted to influence the outbreak of war or modify its conduct in a manner non-detrimental to China would have likely been known by Ailing Song. A spring 1914 marriage of Ailing to H.H. Kung would take her out of this communications flow, while also permitting the assertion that Song Qingling had married Sun in the fall of 1914. More importantly, it would remove Ailing and H.H. Kung from the creation of Sun Yat Sen's Revolutionary Party in June of 1914. As previously emphasised, this created a core of revolutionaries that became the nexus of the right-wing of the KMT in the ensuing decades.

Interestingly, the desire to move forward by one year the date of Song Qingling's marriage to Sun Yat Sen is more in evidence in material that relies on KMT sources, than in sources that track the CCP. This possibly has to do with either (i) an attempt to demonstrate that Qingling's marriage to Sun was invalid as it preceded the divorce granted to him by his first wife, or (ii) the observations made by Donald and others that Sun Yat Sen's first affections had been extended to Ailing rather than Qingling. Implicating Sun Yat Sen in unwarranted advances towards Ailing would likely have tarnished the image of Sun that the

KMT wished to project in their ideological struggle against the CCP. By moving Song Qingling's marriage forward, it might have been possible to gain the benefits of disputing the legitimacy of Song Qingling's marriage, maximising the Sun Yat Sen image, and minimising the Wang Jingwei story. In this regard it is worthwhile to review the glib innuendo on Sun Yat Sen's view of Song Ailing that Selle slid into his 1948 biography of W.H. Donald. Selle reportedly derived the following remarks on Sun from Donald:

While the champagne of railway dreams bubbled in his head, the high blood pressure of romance also pounded within the quiet, dignified little doctor. In Shanghai one day, he glazed intently across the desk at Donald after the sweetly timid Ai-ling had passed through his office and whispered that he wanted to marry her. Donald advised him to sublimate his desire, since he was already married, but Sun said that he proposed to divorce his present wife.

'Ai-ling's Charlie Soong's daughter,' Donald pointed out. 'Charlie has been your best friend. Without him, you'd have been in the soup many a time. And as for Ai-ling and the rest of the children, you've been their uncle. They've been almost like your children.'

'I know it,' Dr. Sun said. 'I know it. But I want to marry her just the same.'<sup>43</sup>

In summary, obscuring the marriage dates of Song Ailing and Song Qingling serves to obfuscate Song Ailing's professional role as the TMH's confidential communication secretary between 1909 and 1914, and the role that she and H.H. Kung may have played as a result. Secondary literature for the period consistently ignores or disparages the role that H.H. Kung played between 1932 and 1939 in the financial and defense arrangements of the Republic of China

## SOONG AILING AS CONFIDENTIAL SECRETARY TO SUN YAT SEN

From historical records and photos it is evident that Ailing was acting as Sun's secretary from early 1912 through to the time of her marriage in 1914, or for approximately three years. However, her role in the Tong Meng Hui extends back further to at least 1909. After Ailing's return from Georgia in the late summer of 1909 she worked with her father in Shanghai helping



## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

to coordinate support for Sun's activities. The Chinese translation of Seagrave's book *Soong Dynasty* 宋家皇朝 (*Song Jia Huang Chao*) that was published in 2002 in Taipei asserts that upon her return to China in 1909 she began to act as English secretary for Sun via telegraph cable.<sup>44</sup> A granddaughter of Sun, Lily Sun Suifang 孙穗芳, has sourced a series of photos with the earliest dated 6 April 1912<sup>45</sup> that portray Ailing in a close secretarial, if not familial role, to the Sun household. W.H. Donald related that when he arrived in Shanghai in early spring 1911, Ailing '...the year before, at twenty...had returned from school in America. ...besides teaching English, she was assisting her father in revolutionary activities,' while 'Mei-ling, about twelve, and eighteen-year-old Ching-ling were still in schools in America.'<sup>46</sup> Bernard Martin (1944) provided further testimony that Ailing was working closely with Charlie Song on his revolutionary activities in Shanghai. He asserted in a passage, for which he unfortunately does not provide a reference, that:

...Eiling, afterwards Madame Kung, returned to Shanghai in the year 1909 having graduated at the early age of nineteen. At once she became her father's active partner in the work of organizing the local branch of Sun Yat-sen's party, keeping the secret register of members and collecting subscriptions. Chingling Soong and youngest sister, Mayling, were still at College in America.<sup>47</sup>

While Ailing was helping her father in Shanghai, between 1909 and 1911 Sun Yat Sen was traveling extensively in Europe and the United States. Based upon Lily Sun's itinerary, between the fall of 1909 and January of 1912, Song Ailing could only have been assisting Sun through her father at a distance. Lily Sun's sketch of Sun's itinerary between the critical dates of May 1909 and December 1911 shows him leaving Singapore for Europe on 19 May 1909, spending four months in Europe before leaving Britain for the United States on 30 October. Following another four months on the American mainland, Sun leaves for Honolulu on 28 March 1910 where he stays two months. Returning to the Far East in the early summer, he briefly touches base in Japan in June 1910, and then heads out for Singapore and Penang. However, by early 1912, Song Ailing is accompanying Sun Yat Sen on his survey of the Chinese railroad system and on his trip to Macao and Guangdong from April through May 1912. With her were the Sun children, Sun Fo, 'Annie' Sun Yan and 'Grace' Sun Wan.

In early 1913, between February and March, Ailing also accompanied Sun and his first wife, Lu Muzhen, on an important trip to Japan. This trip laid the basis for Sun's operations against Yuan which commenced in the summer of that year. Marius Jansen in 1954 emphasised the importance of that trip, stating, 'One of the central events in the "Second Revolution" of July 1913 was Sun Yat Sen's visit to Japan in the spring of that same year.'<sup>48</sup> From first-hand witnesses, by July 1913 Ailing was acting as his main confidential secretary during a treacherous period during which the 'Second Revolution' against Yuan Shikai had been launched and failed. James Burke relates the following recollections of his father:

...Shanghai was in turmoil that July. The port was the headquarters of Sun Yat-sen's counter-revolution against Yuan Shi-kai. And the most feverish spot in the city was the building on Kiukang Road where Sun had his private office. Charlie Soon was in charge there. Burke wanted to call by to see him and tell him about having seen his daughter [Qingling] graduate, but Cline the missionary friend, advised against it....

'I went over there last spring, long before the fighting started, to try and get Dr. Sun to speak to the school,' recalled Cline, who then was president of the mission's Soochow University. 'First I met Soon's private rickshaw coolie at the street door. He was the outer bodyguard. If he hadn't recognized me, I would have got no further. After him came another bodyguard, posted at the stairway. On the second floor, a secretary stopped me outside a private office, then he went in and came out with Eling. Eling was as far as I got. Soon and Sun were having an important conference with party leaders inside. But Eling was nice as she could be and after learning what I wanted, she said she would arrange it, and she did. A mighty smart and efficient young lady, that Eling.'<sup>49</sup>

The periods from 1909 to 1914 when Ailing is in support of Sun are some of the most critical of Sun Yat Sen's career. In 1909, his insurrections along the Indochina border had been unsuccessful and he had been forced from both Indochina and Singapore. The TMH had split. Attacks came from influential intellectuals led by Zhang Binglin 章炳麟 who had kept the TMH's revolutionary magazine *Min Bao* 民

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II



Lu Muzhen, Sun Yat Sen's first wife.

报 functioning following Sun's expulsion from Japan in March of 1907. After unsuccessfully operating in Indochina in 1907 and part of 1908, Sun rebuilt a base in Hong Kong and Penang, while launching two more uprisings in Guangdong in early 1910 and early 1911. The successful Xinhai uprising occurred in Wuhan in October of 1911, with which Sun may not have been directly involved; but by year-end he had been elected as the first President in China's 5,000-year history. As part of a deal to end a potential civil war, the Qing abdicated in February 1912 in return for Sun's resignation of the presidency in favor of the General of the Beiyang Army, Yuan Shikai. Sun became Minister of Railways in Yuan's administration. He then was pulled into a 'Second Revolution' against Yuan Shikai in the summer

of 1913. When that failed, he and the Soong family fled to Japan in the early fall.

The well-known Song Qingling was not involved in any of these activities. She did not return to Asia until the fall of 1913, and she did not commence her career as Sun's secretary until the fall of 1914. This was after the formal launching of the Revolutionary Party, subsequent to the outbreak of the First World War, and near the time of the joint Japanese-British Empire attack on German jurisdictions in China and the Pacific Ocean. Throughout this period Sun's secretary was Song Ailing.

## THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

In September of 1913, while Sun was in flight and exile in Japan, he began to recruit the core of followers that became his new political party. By April of 1914 they totaled 400-500 followers in Japan. Finally, on 22 June 1914, Sun formally launched the new political movement, under the name the Revolutionary Party (Zhongguo Gemingdang 中国革命党).<sup>50</sup> With the formation of Sun's new party, the 'Third Revolution' against Yuan commenced. With Song Ailing supporting Sun's efforts, she clearly, as with the other members of the Revolutionary Party, had taken the oath of personal loyalty to Sun. The members of the Revolutionary Party read like a 'who's who' of the core of the KMT in later decades. They included 'Ch'en ch'i-mei, Chu Cheng, Feng Tzu-yu, Wu T'ieh-cheng, Liao Chung-k'ai, Hu Han-min, and Tai chi-t'ao'<sup>51</sup> (Chen Qimei 陈其美; Ju Zheng 居正; Feng Ziyou 冯自由; Wu Tiecheng 吴铁城; Liao Zhongkai 廖仲恺; Hu Hamin 胡汉民; Dai Jitao 戴季陶). Through Chen Qimei, Chiang Kai-shek was involved, as well as Lin Sen 林森, the future Chinese President who went to America to run Sun's operations there, and Zou Lu 邹鲁, a key Hakka organiser in Guangdong. As a component of the Revolutionary Party operations a political training center, a military school and the party propaganda organ *Min-Kuo* (*Min Guo* 民国) were established. These would continue at least until Yuan's death two years later in June 1916.

It is worthwhile to review the nature of the confidential secretarial duties Ailing and Qingling preformed, by referring to Qingling's recollections when she subsequently held the position. She related the following of the work that was required of her,

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

and hence of Ailing, as she took over primary duties as confidential English secretary from Ailing in the fall of 1914:

Increasingly, [Sun] initiated Ching Ling into the techniques and cautions of the political underground. She learned to decode secret letters and write in invisible ink, the importance of punctuality and precision, and the need to promptly destroy all superfluous paper. He taught her alertness against spies, careerists, and thrill-seekers insinuating themselves into the revolutionary ranks. It became her lifelong habit to keep different contacts and spheres of work warily apart, not out of over-distrust but because a split could endanger a whole endeavor, or many lives.<sup>52</sup>

## STRANGE CONFIGURATIONS

Despite the critical nature of Song Ailing's work with Sun Yat Sen and her father, her contribution has been minimised by historians, while that of Qingling has been emphasised. An example comes from Emily Hahn's 1942 publication, *the Soong Sisters*.<sup>53</sup> Containing neither index nor bibliography the book is not reader-friendly for those wishing to use it as a research source. The work includes a misleading photo of Song Qingling and Sun Yat Sen together before a group of soldiers on the Northern Expedition.<sup>54</sup>

There is nothing specifically inaccurate concerning the photo, as it is properly labeled 'Dr Sun Yat-sen and wife, with officers of the President's Army on their Northern Campaign.' The distortion is to include the photo in the Chapter entitled 'China in 1910,' while not providing a date for the photo itself. This gives the misleading impression that Qingling had become Sun's wife as early as 1910, and for a reader who is careless, that the Northern Expedition came in this time frame. This period was the most important of Sun's career. Sun emerged from being a well-known but unsuccessful revolutionary with an ineffective and under-funded movement of scattered students and secret societies, to being the President of the newly formed Chinese Republic. A 4,000-year-old system of monarchy, the longest on earth, was overturned, and Sun Yat Sen was named President of the government that followed. This occurred while Song Ailing, not Song Qingling, was the TMH confidential secretary. Despite these

momentous events later publications present Song Qingling as dominating the Sun story, as his secretary, wife, and widow.

A previously cited popular author who has without adequate references asserted a central and sinister role for Song Ailing is Sterling Seagrave (1985). He described her as being one of the world's more 'predatory inhabitants,' claiming that she was a 'women of enormous financial accomplishment...perhaps the wealthiest woman ever to put it all together with her own cunning ...the principal contriver of the Soong legend, and the true architect of the dynasty's rise to power.'<sup>55</sup> Nowhere does he describe how she came to be such person.

Though the description seems a clear exaggeration, there may be an element of truth. When her father, Charlie Song died on 3 May 1918 at the young age of 52 from 'stomach cancer,' she would have been the logical heir to the communications network that her father had run which had



T.V. Song.

bankrolled and politically supported Sun Yat Sen. Song Qingling was then working with Sun, and was estranged from her father. The next in line, T.V. Song, had just returned from New York to China, and would have been new to the communications network, though as the first son he would have been the logical successor to Charlie Song's political relationships. Fittingly by the fall of 1923, T.V. Song was coordinating Sun's financial arrangements at his Canton base.<sup>56</sup> Apart from Song Qingling, the limited number of people that had run the TMH confidential communications, its code books and the bank accounts would have included Soong Ailing. In addition to Song Ailing's role as TMH secretary, she had another characteristic which gave her authority: she was the eldest sibling and eldest sister of a Hakka family. H.H. Kung and T.V. Song would be added to her nexus of operational authority as a result of her marriage to Kung and T.V. Song's position as Charlie Soong's eldest son.

Given this potential influence, it is therefore perplexing why through carelessness or manipulation



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

the substitution of Song Qingling for Song Ailing continues into the modern era. A glaring example is Eugene Ansel's otherwise well-researched book on the American supporter of Sun Yat Sen, Homer Lea, who during this time may have been one of Sun's most important military and financial American backers. Lea's 1909-published *Valour of Ignorance* was a blistering attack on the vulnerability of America's West Coast to Japanese invasion and would have been required reading for any military officer concerned about the Pacific.<sup>57</sup>

At Lea's early death in California on 27 October 1912, Sun wrote to Lea's widow to express his condolences, stating, 'In losing General Li [sic] I have lost a great and true friend. Miss Soong wishes to tender to you her heart-felt sympathy in your bereavement.'<sup>58</sup> Unfortunately, Ansel identifies the 'Miss Soong' Sun speaks of as Song Qingling, in his sole reference to a Song in his index.<sup>59</sup> But Song Qingling will not graduate from Wesleyan College in Macon Georgia until June of 1913. She will not return to China until the early fall of 1913, and the date is October 1912. The 'Miss Soong' to whom Sun refers in his letter is Song Ailing. She is extending her regards to the widow of the leading American strategist for Asia who had bankrolled and trained Chinese American troops for Sun's revolutionary efforts.

It is worthwhile noting Ansel's background, as he, due to his birth, education, work and interests should have been focused on the nature of Sun's relationships to European Socialist revolutionaries. Ansel was born in Germany in the 1910s, graduated with a degree in law, political science and history in 1933 and was forced to emigrate in the same year. He then spent three years in Spain 1933-1936, and then emigrated to the United States in 1937 where he was employed at the left-of-centre Institute for Social Research, then Columbia University. He was the author of two books on Russian history that cover the period when the Socialist revolutionaries of the Second and Third International were most active: (i) *The American Image of Russia, 1775-1917* (1974), and (ii) *American Appraisals of Soviet Russia, 1917-1977* (1978).

Why, then, did Ansel mis-identify the person who would have been most knowledgeable concerning Sun Yat Sen's international support network, and particularly the international Socialist movement? Would this not have been one of Ansel's main

interests as he moved his research focus from studying revolutionary Russia to studying Homer Lea, an American supporter of revolution in China in 1910-1911? At a minimum, this misleading statement obscures the contact that Homer Lea maintained with the TMH subsequent to its period of extensive Japanese support, and by implication, the support of International Socialists for Sun who were using Japan as a lever against Tsarist Russia. It also obscures the contacts Song Ailing would have had back into the American defense community through Homer Lea. Though one would have thought these relationships would have been those that held greatest interest for Eugene Ansel, he leaves in place a glaring error that cuts his readers off from some of the TMH's most intriguing contacts..

In addition to Gordon Seagrave,<sup>60</sup> writers such as Chang Jung<sup>61</sup> ignore Ailing's role in the TMH and the extent of H.H. Kung's network to characterise her as being a rapacious behind-the-scenes manipulator of China's economy and 'one of the world's richest women.' They provide little but hearsay to support these assertions. They are also out of step with earlier descriptions of Ailing that stated she was both shy and highly apprehensive of publicity. The lack of evidence and corroboration to support their assertions concerning Ailing is a negligence that would normally be found in purely propaganda tracts. Despite Boorman's failure to include a separate entry from Song in his exhaustive *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China* of 1968-1971, somehow by 1984 Sterling Seagrave determined that 'Ai-ling Soong was notorious for her financial cunning, but most people were unaware that she was also the chief manipulator of the family destiny.' In another of his unreferenced and unspecified quotes, Seagrave asserted that 'if she had been born a man, it was said, she would have been running China.'<sup>62</sup> Seagrave apparently partially obtained this insight, in the seventeen years since Boorman produced his encyclopedia, by referencing John Gunther's 1939 wartime book, *Inside Asia*, a book for which Gunther provides a modest bibliography but no citations.

Following Gunther's quick journalist's tour of Asia in 1937-1938 for the *Chicago Daily News*,<sup>63</sup> he unveiled for his audience the notion that Song Ailing 'is the most formidable of the Songs; she is, in fact, one of the most formidable women anywhere. A hard-willed

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

creature, possessed of demonic energy and great will-to-power, violently able, cunning, and ambitious, she is as powerful a personality as any in China.<sup>64</sup> What were Ailing's credentials for becoming such a dominant personality? Gunther relates that she: (i) was educated at Wesleyan College in Macon, Georgia; (ii) became Sun's secretary after she returned to China; (iii) was courted first by Dr. Sun Yat Sen; (iv) married H.H. Kung, who was secretary of the Tokyo YMCA; (v) had Chiang Kai-shek as a friend; and (vi) gave birth to four children.<sup>65</sup> Being educated at a Christian girl's school in the back-country districts of the American South in 1904-1909, marrying the manager of a YMCA, and giving birth to four children, are not the prerequisites for a person possessing 'demonic energy and great will-to-power.' Gunther makes neither the case for his assertions, nor does he provide the references for the claims that he obviously has obtained from other sources. His political connections, however, were impressive. It was through Gunther that Emily Hahn obtained the contract and the contacts that allowed her to author her 1942 work, *The Soong Sisters*.

It is strange that Gunther was able to make his pronouncements concerning Ailing, after a short trip to Asia in pursuit of a sequel to his best-selling *Inside Europe*, while W.H. Donald, another journalist, after decades of association with the Sun-Song family, described her in early 1912 as being Sun's 'shy, pretty secretary.'<sup>66</sup> Donald had first met Ailing a year after her return from the United States in 1909, and recalled that she was 'a pretty, shy girl with intense black eyes,' and that 'the year before, at twenty, she had returned from school in America. Now, besides teaching English, she was assisting her father in revolutionary activities.'<sup>67</sup> While accompanying Sun in 1912 on a survey of China's railroads, Donald again judged her as 'the sweetly timid Ai-ling.'<sup>68</sup> Emily Hahn confirmed Donald's judgment of her by stating that both Ailing and Qingling had 'always been shy and sensitive, more like the Chinese ladies of past dynasties than the Americanised Mayling.'<sup>69</sup>

Other reports from Elmer Clark in his *The Chiangs of China* from 1943 also provide a different perspective on Ailing that is significantly at variance with those that would like to project her as manipulative and obsessed with power and money. He states that following her marriage in Yokohama, she moved with H.H. Kung to the family home in Taiku, Shanxi, and

that there, 'Madame Kung overcame her shyness to the extent of becoming a teacher in the school which finally got under way.' He states that,

The birth of Rosamond in 1916 was so nearly fatal to both mother and child that it drove Madame Kung more deeply into her mother's faith. ...She had a feeling that the hand of God had intervened to save her life and that of her Child, for which she gave Him fervent and grateful praise.<sup>70</sup>

The spiritual impact of the difficult child-birth of her first child, which Ailing named Rosamond in honor of her head-strong sister Qingling, whose marriage had so upset their parents, is also described by Emily Hahn. Both had been named for Rosamonde Ricaud, the daughter of the minister of Fifth Street Methodist Episcopal Church in Wilmington, North Carolina who had baptised Charlie Soong on 7 November 1880, and who arranged for him to attend Trinity College in Durham.<sup>71</sup> Hahn relates that,

For the first time, after Rosamonde's birth, Madame Kung discovered within herself a desire to thank God in person, as it were, for her recovery and her baby. She thinks that she became a genuine Christian at that time, and not before. Even today she is not much inclined to profess her feelings on this subject, nor does she in her rare public speeches use God's name overmuch or appeal to Him with many demands.<sup>72</sup>

Ailing's shyness and dislike of publicity seem also to be in evidence in the February 1941 article from the *Wesleyan Alumnae Magazine* that described her return to the campus in 1932:

...that brief visit in 1932 was overshadowed by an almost morbid fear of publicity. It was about the time of the Manchurian trouble. 'I long to tread once more the familiar grounds and to see the faces of those I have loved. I shall make desperate effort to come back,' she wrote. She was afraid that even at the last minute she might find it too much to face the possible notoriety. But we promised her that no trumpets would be sounded and were able, with the co-operation of friends who could understand her need for a little peace and privacy, to keep that promise. Her classmates were notified and came from far and wide to join her at Wesleyan. For two whole days she saw none except familiar faces and was

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

able to lay down for a few hours her country's burdens.<sup>73</sup>

Clark again reports in *The Chiangs of China* that Ailing's reaction to her return to Wesleyan and her college friends showed a different character than the sinister picture that has been subsequently painted of her. He states that, 'She was gloriously happy in their companionship, but she cried until aromatic spirits of ammonia had to be brought when admiring newspapers published comments she considered extravagant.'<sup>74</sup>

James Burke in his 1945 biography of his father, who was Charlie Song's classmate at Vanderbilt and subsequent missionary colleague in China, describes two anecdotes from Ailing's first trip to the United States. One suggests the shock of leaving China for America as a young girl in which, '...the sudden shock of the ship's whistle seemed to go deeper, upsetting the trained balance of her emotions. Burke looked down to see her sobbing softly. It was the only time he ever saw her betray her feelings.'<sup>75</sup> Another anecdote also reflects a naïveté and her strong religious upbringing when asked by a ship officer to dance at a deck-party after dinner: 'No, thank you, I cannot,' Eiling answered, shaking her head. 'Well, there's no better time to learn. Come, I'll teach you,' the officer persisted. 'No, it is not right for me to dance,' she replied firmly. 'Why?' 'Because I am a Christian, and Christians do not dance.'<sup>76</sup>

Despite the testimony from Donald, Clark, Hahn, Burke and Wesleyan College, Jonathan Fenby in his recent publication, *Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and the China he Lost* reasserted the past hearsay that 'Ailing Soong was the most ruthless and cunning of the three daughters of the powerful Shanghai family.' He wrote that 'Ailing was an expert at pulling financial and political strings...' and that an unspecified American had reported that, 'There was something about her... something so authoritative, so personally powerful, so penetratingly keen that one would have been struck with her anywhere.'<sup>77</sup> To substantiate his views Fenby again cited the interview of an unidentified F.B.I. source of January 1943 that had been used by Seagrave and the 1993 purported expose of Chiang's second wife Chen Jieru which deemed Ailing to have been central

to Chiang's decision to marry Meiling, his third. But what additional facts were Fenby able to uncover that would lead to his conclusions? First, that she was 'the first Chinese girl to ride a bicycle, on which she made a scandal-raising trip in the International Settlement,' second, that 'She had been sent by her Methodist father, Charles Soong, to college in the United States,' thirdly, that 'she married a rich banker from Shanxi,... who claimed to be a lineal descendant of Confucius,' and finally that she 'settled in a house in Shanghai's French Concession where their four children were brought up.'<sup>78</sup>

For the 1930s, Fenby, like Seagrave, sprinkles damning hearsay amidst serious misquotes in less-than-complete descriptions of H.H. Kung and Song Ailing. This was a period when the Chinese economy was being stabilised, the national army built, and China was alone fighting Japan. Notable is the unreferenced assertion that Ailing passed 'insider information' to Du Yueheng 杜月笙, which turned out to be wrong, leading to a major loss for Du. Fenby asserted that:

The Kung connection was a godsend for the minister's acquisitive wife, Ailing Soong, who would pick up tips when her husband discussed policy at home, and make a killing through her various investment vehicles, including one in which Du was a partner. ... Ailing gave the gang boss insider information which he used for a big speculative punt on the province's dollar. Unfortunately there had been a misunderstanding, which left him with a heavy loss.<sup>79</sup>

Fenby's distortion converts a rumour which Leith-Ross had heard, but could not verify, into a definitive statement of fact. Fenby inaccurately wrote that Sir Frederick Leith-Ross, the British international financial expert, 'recalled that a No. 1 style coffin was deposited on Dr. Kung's doorstep by half a dozen funeral attendants' as a warning for Kung to make good Du's losses. Actually, Leith-Ross wrote that this was a 'story' about Mme H.H. Kung and that he could not vouch for its truth.<sup>80</sup> Further, rather than condemning Du unilaterally as a gangster, Leith-Ross stated that after he had protested the inclusion of Du on the board of the Central Bank of China, Leith-Ross's assistant Cyril Rogers of the Bank of England '...reported... that Dr. Du was one of the most sensible and helpful members of the Central Bank Board.'<sup>81</sup>



## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

With respect to Song Ailing and H.H. Kung, Fenby's evidence, like that of Seagrave and Gunther, is grossly insufficient to support the conclusions that he, or those he quotes, present to his readers. Rather than historical analysis, the works of these three authors give the appearance of pre-emptive negative public relations campaigns. Donald G. Gillin, Professor of History at Princeton University, believes that to have been the objective with respect to Seagrave. In an article written under the aegis of the Hoover Institution and University in 1986, Gillin stated with respect to the 'best-seller' *The Soong Dynasty* which Seagrave had produced two years before, that

...Seagrave cannot prove that Madame Chiang's family ever enjoyed anything approaching such power and, in fact, his real aim is far more ambitious than any exposé of the Soongs and K'ungs – namely, to damningly indict Chiang Kai-shek himself: as a man, a soldier, and a political leader. In this respect, the book is so biased, so unreliable, so riddled with errors, and so utterly lacking in historical perspective that much of it could be classified as fiction rather than as a work of history.<sup>82</sup>

## THE THREAT

What was the threat that Song Ailing posed that required such a pre-emptive public relations strike? In 1939 John Gunther launched what may have been the first significant negative statement in America against her. Being secretary to the first President of the Republic of China, reported to have been the object of Dr. Sun's affections prior to Song Qingling,<sup>83</sup> and being a friend to Chiang Kai-shek suggests that Ailing was privy to confidential information and aware of political networks that could be embarrassing to many influential parties. Parties of concern would have included: (i) those on the Left that would have wished to use Song Qingling as a wartime lynchpin to tie the Allied efforts in China to the Communist parties of the Soviet Union and China, (ii) those on the Right that might have wished to disassociate Sun Yat Sen, as a symbol of Nationalist China, from any affiliation with the Marxists of the Second International, and more importantly in 1939 (iii) those focused on keeping China in the war against Japan who would have wished to discredit any moves that her political

network might have considered with respect to their former compatriot, Wang Jingwei, who had begun to affiliate himself with the Japanese by that April.

Recalling back to the TMH period from 1909 to 1914 one finds that it was in this era that Wang Jingwei established his close psychological and operating relationship with Sun. Following the failures of the six revolutionary attempts under the TMH in 1907 and 1908, Sun had been banned from Japan, Hong Kong, Indochina and Singapore. The TMH had split between the followers of Sun in Southeast Asia and those of Zhang Binglin and Tao Chengzhang in Tokyo. Zhang and Tao were charging Sun with both financial malfeasance and strategic misdirection, and had launched into a bitter struggle with him for followers in Southeast Asia. During this difficult period, siding with Sun were Hu Hanmin, Wang Jingwei and, undoubtedly, Charlie Soong.

In the midst of this disaster, Charlie Song's oldest daughter, Ailing, returned to Shanghai from Wesleyan College in the summer of 1909 at age nineteen after five years of education in the United States. By the following summer, she had become the efficient and competent confidential secretary for the treasury of the Tong Meng Hui, while publicly acting as a Sunday school teacher at her church.<sup>84</sup> Bernard Martin in 1944 reported that: 'Eiling, afterwards Madame Kung, returned to Shanghai in the year 1909 after having graduated at the early age of nineteen. At once she became her father's active partner in the work of organising the local branch of Sun Yat Sen's party, keeping the secret register of members and collecting subscriptions.'<sup>85</sup>

Nearly 30 years later during the Sino-Japanese War, Song Ailing was the wife of H.H. Kung whose positions included Minister of Finance, the Chairman of the Central Bank of China, and the Premier of the Executive Yuan.<sup>86</sup> As the oldest sister of both the wife of China's military chieftain (Chiang Kai-shek) and the wife of Sun Yat Sen (who facilitated the coordination of war time relations with the Soviet and Chinese communists), Ailing also was the liaison between sisters who were the public symbols of the Chinese political Left and Right. In early 1940, as China was forced to rely on Hong Kong as its major logistics centre for the war against Japan, it was at her home on Sassoon Road in Hong Kong that Song Qingling and Song Meiling resided.<sup>87</sup> Soon after Wang Jingwei had launched his

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

new government on 30 March 1940 in Nanjing, the sisters symbolically dined together for the benefit of the world press at the Hong Kong Hotel.<sup>88</sup> The media message was clear: there would be no doubt about the views of the sisters from Georgia's Wesleyan College. Assuredly after Wang Jingwei left Chongqing in late December 1938 on his unsanctioned peace mission to end the Sino-Japanese War, there could not have been overt political collusion with Song Ailing.

But, in Nanjing Wang Jingwei had three significant supporters with feet on many sides of the political spectrum: Chen Gongbo 陈公博 and Zhou Fohai 周佛海 had both been founders of the Chinese Communist Party in July of 1921,<sup>89</sup> while later playing leading roles in the KMT Nanjing Government; and Jiang Kanghu 江亢虎 had been the founder of the Chinese Socialist Party in 1911 with whom Sun Yat Sen had attempted to establish a political alliance in the fall of 1912. Jiang had also taught Chinese at Berkeley, worked at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. from 1913 to 1920, and had represented Chinese Socialists at the Third Congress of the Comintern from 22 June to 12 July 1921 in Moscow.<sup>90</sup>

Wang Jingwei's self-confidence certainly would have led to his recalling the thirty-year professional relationship he had had with both H.H. Kung and Soong Ailing, which had begun as all were marginalised revolutionaries of a secret organisation assisting a leader who had failed so many times in the past. Then, too, he would have recalled H.H. Kung's work with him while he had headed the Executive Yuan and Foreign Ministry from 1932 to 1935, and the critical trips they had made to Germany from the fall of 1932 to the early 1933 that had resulted in the Military Mission which had built the Chinese Central Government Army that defended Nanjing from Japan in 1937.

As for the prospects of an early end to the Sino-Japanese War in 1939-1940, while Song Ailing's husband, H.H. Kung, was playing a leading role in the Central Government in Chongqing, the companions from the railroad tour of April 1912 resided in cities made distinct by the Japanese troops that divided them. Wang Jingwei was President of the National government in Nanjing; Song Ailing was the influential wife of the Premier of China in Chongqing, and Sun Fo's surviving sister Sun Wan, with his mother, Lu Muzhen, were resident in Macao.



Song Meiling, Song Ailing, and Song Qingling in Chongqing, China, 1942.

## SUMMARY

The Song Sisters have played a leading role in China's political life for nearly 100 years over which time they represented a varying mixture of modernisation, internationalisation, nationalism, Americanisation, violently-opposed political factions, Christianity, economic development and the rise of female political power. Despite many biographies, however, the underlying nature of Song Ailing's political power remains obscure. Basic data concerning the marriages of the oldest two sisters, Song Ailing and Song Qingling, have not been properly specified with the result that even leading historians have presented data that distorts proper analysis.

What can be stated conclusively, however, is that the oldest daughter Song Ailing retired from her position as Secretary to Sun Yat Sen in the fall of 1914 after having served as confidential Secretary to the Tong Meng Hui following her return from the United States in the late summer of 1909. This allowed her to be privy to some of the most important actions of Sun Yat Sen's career, including the two insurrections he launched before the Xinhai Revolt of October 1911, his appointment and resignation as China's President in 1912, his launching of the Second Revolution in the summer of 1913 and his creation of the Revolutionary Party in the summer of 1914 in opposition to Yuan Shikai. As with all members of the Revolutionary Party, her personal pledge of loyalty to Sun would have provided her access to the closely-knit cadre who served him from June 1914 and to October 1919. From this group Sun created the initial core of the KMT.

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

Song Ailing, therefore, also would have been aware of whatever communications had been undertaken between Sun Yat Sen and Wang Jingwei from 1911 to 1914 as Wang stepped into the international network from which Sun had retired in 1912.

The critical function of communications administrator on top of her position as the elder daughter of a Hakka clan that had gained access to the top rungs of the American political world would have been strengthened by her marriage to H.H. Kung, an individual who maintained a separate and significant network which extended into American Christian society, its turn-of-the-century industrial elite, the Chinese banking system, and the military power of Shanxi province. The combination of their skills and networks placed them into the top echelon of the Nanjing government between 1926 and 1944, giving them direct access to the president of the Republic of China, the leaders of the Chinese Communist movement, and political network of Wang Jingwei. A cursory review of their accomplishments in consolidating China's banking system under the

Nanjing government in 1934, converting China's currency from silver to fiat currency in 1935, and acquiring military support from Germany and Italy in 1933 belies the defamatory and unsubstantiated accusations that many critics have made.

In the fall of 1926, as part of the Song-Sun clan they were instrumental in facilitating the pivot of American and by default, British, diplomatic recognition to the Chiang Kai-shek led KMT government as Chiang successfully completed the first phase of the Northern Campaign. By the spring of 1927, Chiang had closed off the Bolshevik opportunity to turn China towards the Soviet Union. The Song-Sun group, with Song Ailing at its core, was not only part of this process in 1926-1927, but played an additional critical role from 1937 to 1941 in keeping China allied to the Anglo-Americans while Wang Jingwei courted peace with Japan. Relationships that contributed to these extraordinary accomplishments included their American education, Protestant Christian religious faith, strong family cohesion, and pivotal relationship to Sun Yat Sen and his extended political network. **RC**

## NOTES

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- 12 Huang Ying 黄滢 and Mao Sheng 毛胜, *Sun Zhongshan yi jia ren: yi ge zai Zhongguo you ju da ying xiang de jia zu* (孙中山一家人, 一个在中国有巨大影响的家族) (The People of Sun Yatsen's Family, a Clan in China with Extraordinary Influence). Beijing: Zhonggong Dangshi Chubanshe, 2004).
- 13 Carlos Gomes Bessa, *Macau e a Implantação da República na China, Uma Carta de Sun Yat-sen para o Governador José Carlos da Maia*. Macao: Fundação Macau, 1999, p. 28.
- 14 John B. Powell, *Who's Who in China, Fourth Edition, 1931*. Shanghai: The China Weekly Review, 1931, p. 360.
- 15 Jerome Cavanaugh, *Who's Who in China 1918-1950*, vol. 4, p. 360; vol. 5, p. 213; vol. 5 supplement, p. 63.
- 16 'Obituaries, John W. Powell', *International Herald Tribune*, 18 December 2008.
- 17 Jerome Cavanaugh, *Who's Who in China 1918-1950*, vol. 6, p. 183.
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- 19 Elmer Clark, *The Chiangs of China*. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1943) pp. 54-55.
- 20 Earl Albert Selle, *Donald of China*. New York: Harper, p. 143.
- 21 Emily Hahn, *China to Me: A Partial Autobiography*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1944, p. 81.
- 22 Emily Hahn, *The Soong Sisters*, p. 78.
- 23 Hahn's use of the wording 'at the end of this term' suggests that the marriage came at the end of Kung's one year assignment with the YMCA in Tokyo, which Seagrave suggests began after he left China for Japan following Yuan Shikai's seizure of dictatorial powers in August 1913.
- 24 Sterling Seagrave, *The Soong Dynasty*, p. 135. The error of stating spring as the marriage date is made apparent by the extensive reporting



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

- of Epstein (1995: p. 34) and others that Qingling did not begin working daily as Sun's secretary until September 1914 as a result of Ailing's withdrawal from the position in order to marry H.H. Kung. For Seagrave to definitively state the marriage was in the spring, he needed to provide a source, which he does not do.
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- 27 *Shansi District of the American Board, Annual Report, 1914*. Shanghai, 1914, pp. 61-63.
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- 43 Earl Albert Selle, *Donald of China*, p. 139.
- 44 Sterling Seagrave, *Song Jia Huang Chao 宋家皇朝 (The Soong Dynasty)*. Taipei, 2002, p. 169
- 45 Nora Sun, *An Album in Memory of Dr. Sun Yat-sen: A Great Man and Epoch-Maker*. Nanjing: Nanjing University Press, 2011, pp. 83-85.
- 46 Earl Albert Selle, *Donald of China*, p. 68.
- 47 Bernard Martin, *Strange Vigour: A Biography of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 127.
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- 49 James Cobb Burke, *My Father in China*, p. 179.
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- 52 Israel Epstein, *Woman in World History: Life and Times of Soong Ching Ling (Mme. Sun Yatsen)*, p. 36.
- 53 Emily Hahn, *The Soong Sisters*, p. 65.
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- 69 Emily Hahn, *The Soong Sisters*, p. 105.
- 70 Elmer Clark, *The Chiangs of China*, 55.
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- 79 *Ibid.*, p. 238.
- 80 Leith-Ross, *Money Talks, Fifty Years of International Finance*. London: Hutchinson, 1968, p. 208.
- 81 *Ibid.*
- 82 Donald G. Gillin, *Falsifying China's history: The Case of Sterling Seagrave's The Soong Dynasty*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1986, p. 102.
- 83 In addition to the reference from Selle previously cited with respect to Sun Yat Sen's interest in marrying Ailing, he makes other references to Sun's interest in Ailing. Possibly this is why Selle's book is not widely cited since its publication in 1948 and W.H. Donald is a relative unknown figure in modern times. Selle reports that Donald gives the following description of a meeting they had in 1912 while Sun reviewed China's railway system: 'Often Ai-ling would take a chair near them, make notes as Donald talked and smiled encouragingly. Sun would transfer his quiet, expressionless gaze from Donald to her, and there he would keep it, not an eyelash flickering. Donald would go on talking...' (Earl Albert Selle, *Donald of China*, p. 134).
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- 85 Bernard Martin, *Strange Vigour: A Biography of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 127.
- 86 Ailing's husband, H.H. Kung, was Premier of China, acceding to the position from Chiang Kai-shek on 1 January 1938, and continuing to be Premier for the next twenty months until November 1939.
- 87 Hahn, *China to Me: A Partial Autobiography*, p. 150.
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- 89 Howard L. Boorman; Richard C. Howard, *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China* vol. 1, pp. 196-201; 405-409.
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# Evocando Teófilo Braga, Literato da República

AMADEU CARVALHO HOMEM\*

O tenente de artilharia Joaquim Manuel Fernandes Braga foi despachado pelo governo miguelista para a ilha açoriana de S. Miguel no auge da confrontação entre os defensores das instituições absolutistas e os seus opositores liberais. Aí se encontrava no verão de 1831, quando o conde de Vila Flor, vindo da Terceira, submeteu o território e aprisionou contingentes militares miguelistas. O tenente Fernandes Braga partilhou a sorte dos vencidos e, depois de várias peripécias, acabou por ser deportado para a ilha de Santa Maria. Foi aí que se apaixonou pela filha mais velha do capitão de ordenança Inácio Manuel de Câmara. A eleita do seu coração dava pelo nome de Maria José da Câmara Albuquerque e o capitão Inácio, viúvo e a braços com o sustento de uma filharada numerosa, não teve dúvidas em favorecer as pretensões de casamento que lhe foram comunicadas pelo sentenciado teneinte. Corria o início do ano de 1833 quando o matrimónio se realizou.<sup>1</sup> Os filhos foram nascendo e Joaquim Manuel Fernandes Braga reconheceu que o futuro poderia ser agreste naquela ilha de minguados recursos e de reduzidas oportunidades. O mais importante centro da sociabilidade açoriana era indiscutivelmente Ponta Delgada, na ilha de S. Miguel. Mudou para lá o seu domicílio em 1839 e passou a dedicar-se ao ensino, começando por abrir uma escola de instrução primária. A família foi crescendo e no sétimo parto de Maria José da Câmara Albuquerque, ocorrido em 24 de Fevereiro de 1843, nasceu um rapaz. Era mais um Joaquim, mas

o próprio se encarregaria, mais tarde, de o converter em Joaquim Teófilo, por gostos religiosos e afinidades de crença que a idade madura não confirmaria.

Ao tempo, a ilha de S. Miguel vivia tempos de grande brilho intelectual, revendo-se em figuras altamente representativas nos domínios das artes, das letras e da benemerência. José do Canto tivera o mérito de reunir uma excepcional biblioteca camoniana e era uma referência pelos contributos dados ao urbanismo e à economia da região. Ernesto do Canto distinguira-se na historiografia, sendo ainda audível e operante toda uma tradição poética micaelense ligada aos nomes de Guilherme Read Cabral, Henrique de Andrade Albuquerque, José Maria Severim e José Bensaúde.<sup>2</sup> O mecenato cultural era em larga medida interpretado por Duarte Borges da Câmara Medeiros, potentado económico que fora feito visconde da Praia pelos relevantes serviços prestados ao liberalismo combatente. A própria música, na sua expressão sacral, se derramava a partir dos templos onde oficiava o Pe. Joaquim Silvestre Serrão, setubalense de origem e intérprete de memoráveis matinas em louvor do Espírito Santo. Foi este o estimulante clima que cercou Teófilo Braga na sua mais tenra meninice. Esta, porém, irá ficar ensombrada com o falecimento da sua mãe. Depauperada por sucessivas gestações, finar-se-á em Novembro de 1846. O pequeno Joaquim Teófilo contava menos de quatro anos de idade. A perda da mãe trouxe à família mudanças drásticas: a filha mais velha, Maria José, foi protegida pela viscondessa da Praia, acabando, mais tarde, por abraçar a vida religiosa no Convento da Esperança; Teófilo, por seu turno, viu-se confrontado, cerca de dois anos depois, com o trato pouco afectivo de Ricarda Joaquina Marfim Pereira, a nova mulher do seu pai. Ao longo da sua vida, com uma insistência

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*Professor in the Arts Faculty of Coimbra University, focusing on the history of Republicanism in Portugal and the history of the concept of democracy in Europe.*

talvez exagerada, Teófilo Braga irá referir o desprezo a que foi votado pela madrasta e os efeitos nocivos dessa atitude no seu desenvolvimento.<sup>3</sup>

O ex-tenente Braga, já depois do segundo casamento, irá candidatar-se ao magistério oficial, acabando por ingressar no novo liceu de Ponta Delgada como secretário e professor. Foi nesse liceu que Teófilo fez toda a sua formação secundária. Também nele decorreu um episódio insólito, revelador da sua frontalidade insubmissa. Um professor lembrou-se de perguntar aos discípulos sobre a profissão que desejariam abraçar após a conclusão do curso. O aluno

Teófilo Braga replicou, sem pestanejar, que queria ser doutor. O professor opinou que não via moita de onde saísse tal coelho. E este mesmo aluno obtemperou, sem vacilar: “O sr. professor não tem faro”.<sup>4</sup> A verdade é que a sua vida intelectual não se restringia à rotina das aulas. Ajudado por Francisco Maria Supico, farmacêutico da Misericórdia de Ponta Delgada e nome já relevante no jornalismo micaelense, Teófilo publicou na folha *Estrela Oriental*, da Ribeira Grande, o poema “A canção do guerreiro”, dedicado ao seu irmão João Fernandes Braga. Corria o princípio do ano de 1858 e outras poesias da sua lavra foram aparecendo.<sup>5</sup> As condições



## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

de produção em prosa e verso não podiam ser piores. Não dispunha de pena, tinta ou papel. Supria estas dificuldades como podia, escrevendo na parte não impressa dos requerimentos de matrícula do liceu. Com o apoio de Supico, chegou a criar jornais de efêmera duração, como *O Meteoro* (1858) e *O Santelmo* (1859). Foi com base numa parte desta produção poética que surgiu, por esta altura, o seu livro *Folhas Verdes* (1859), em homenagem antitética às *Folhas Caídas*, de Almeida Garrett. O original da obra foi apresentado ao visconde da Praia, almejando alcançar para o autor um mecenato que lhe abrisse as portas de uma academia no continente. Mas o benfeitor ou não entendeu o que se pretendia ou se fez desentendido. O máximo que se alcançou foi o custeio da impressão da obra.

Quando os estudos secundários foram concluídos, Teófilo Braga sentiu a urgência de dar um rumo à vida.

Manuel de Arriaga, primeiro Presidente eleito da República.



Chegou a ponderar a ideia de procurar no Brasil ou na América inglesa os meios de subsistência necessários à sua independência.<sup>6</sup> Francisco Maria Supico, seu amigo e confidente, desaprovou o plano. O seu pai também dele discordou, sugerindo-lhe a hipótese de continuar os estudos em Coimbra, desde que lá pudesse aguentar-se com um apoio financeiro que não poderia ser senão diminuto, devido ao volume das despesas familiares. O conhecimento da sua força interior e a audácia dos seus dezoito anos levaram-no a aceitar o repto. Saiu da ilha, rumo a Coimbra, em Fevereiro de 1861. Tomara a decisão, que iria ser cumprida, de não mais regressar à sua terra natal para não ter que cumprir a lei do recrutamento militar e talvez também para se furtar às responsabilidades de uma paternidade ilegítima e obviamente indesejada.<sup>7</sup>

O jovem Teófilo Braga arribou a Coimbra em meados de Abril de 1861, sem ter ainda uma ideia clara sobre o curso que deveria frequentar. É que se depreende do teor de uma carta para Francisco Maria Supico, datada de 18 desse mês: “Estou amando agora a vida eremítica e seguirei o seu conselho formando-me em Teologia”.<sup>8</sup> Na hora da decisão, porém, a preferência recaiu sobre o Direito. Talvez para isso tenha contribuído o facto de ter estreitado relações com vários estudantes desse curso, alguns dos quais seus conterrâneos, como Antero de Quental. É que Teófilo começou por residir na casa de hóspedes de Filipe de Quental, tio de Antero, onde também este se abrigava. Mas foi uma breve passagem por esse lugar. A preocupação de encontrar alojamentos mais baratos foi uma constante na vida académica de Teófilo, atendendo à exiguidade dos seus recursos.

A cidade de Coimbra não agradou àquele estudante recém-vindo. Era, ao tempo, uma urbe dobrada sobre si, onde se chegava de carroça ou diligência, por não ser ainda servida pelo caminho-de-ferro. O corpo estudantil não contaria com mais do que dois mil estudantes. As ruas pareceram-lhe demasiadamente estreitas e infectas e o meio afigurou-se-lhe pouco amigável:

“Para vencer o meu combate da vida, adquiri aqui um conhecimento nítido do meio *coimbrão*, dos seus tipos heteróclitos, o lente sempre hostil, no seu isolamento cardinalesco e pedante, o estudante sempre díscolo, e desvairando na troça desenfreada, e no meio disto o *futrica* ou o *filhote* da terra, exercendo um antipático parasitismo”<sup>9</sup>.



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

A penúria material de Teófilo forçou-o a adoptar um estilo de vida parcimonioso, nada boémio e apartado das normais efusões da idade moça. Mas o seu orgulho impediu-o de se inferiorizar perante os demais colegas. Passou a cultivar a distância, defendendo com intransigência o seu reduto privado.<sup>10</sup> Eis um dos seus depoimentos sobre outros estudantes com quem partilhava o alojamento:

“Os companheiros de casa parecem-me inofensivos; apesar de tudo conservo sempre esta distância conveniente a que a boa sociedade chama delicadeza, que a ninguém ofende, e com a que me dou perfeitamente, porque ma não embaraçam”.<sup>11</sup>

Mas o meio cultural de Coimbra contribuiu poderosamente para a continuidade da aventura mental teofiliana. Foi na cidade do Mondego que o nosso jovem iria prosseguir a sua caminhada poética. Foi também nela que lhe foi permitido contactar com a melhor produção cultural europeia que marcava indelevelmente o espírito do tempo. Deu conta então que a ciência histórica se renovara com Michelet e Quinet, que o idealismo ganhara expressão dialéctica com Hegel, que o cristianismo se naturalizara através dos livros de Strauss e Renan, que a exigência da ética social se aprofundara com Proudhon e com as diatribes de Victor Hugo, que a simbologia pagã se decantara com Creutzer, que a burguesia oriunda da revolução industrial encontrara em Balzac o seu mais rigoroso cronista, que o fixismo bíblico era agora interpelado pelo evolucionismo de Darwin e que, numa palavra, se propagava em Coimbra um “grande tumulto mental”.<sup>12</sup> Mas o estímulo não provinha apenas do torvelinho das ideias. Resultava igualmente do facto aleatório de se ter reunido na cidade universitária uma brilhantíssima aristocracia intelectual de discentes, contando-se entre estes os nomes de Eça de Queirós, Manuel de Arriaga, José Falcão, Antero de Quental, Germano Meireles, António de Azevedo Castelo Branco, Lobo de Moura, Alberto Sampaio e tantos outros.<sup>13</sup> O próprio cenário da política internacional, na sua dimensão polémica, convidava a academia à tomada de posições firmes. A resistência anti-saxónica da Irlanda e a luta dos patriotas italianos pela unidade do seu país, contra a teocracia pontifícia, eram bandeiras obrigatórias da juventude universitária. Mas não era aqui que se centravam as controvérsias mais acesas. A maior contestação visava o reitor

Basílio Alberto de Sousa Pinto, que se tornara antipático ao espírito de emancipação estudantil por pretender impor a mais estrita aplicação dos códigos e regulamentos académicos. Numa altura em que os estudantes procuravam libertar-se dos vestígios ancestrais que os fazia adoptar um traje em tudo similar ao dos eclesiásticos, o autoritário reitor impunha a batina apertada nas costas e o cabeção, o sapato de fivela e o calção cingido acima do joelho, a meia preta e a interdição do uso de gravatas ou das calças pendentes sobre o calçado. O grupo de Antero de Quental iria chefiar a rebelião, criando a “Sociedade do Raio” e congeminando formas eficazes de confrontação com o insustentável poder reitoral.<sup>14</sup> Foi no seio desta agremiação secreta que se preparou uma pública manifestação de repúdio, a qual veio a concretizar, no dia 8 de Dezembro de 1862, uma célebre evacuação da Sala Grande dos Actos ou Sala dos Capelos. Os estudantes aproveitaram a cerimónia de distribuição dos prémios académicos para desertaram em massa dessa simbólica sala, deixando o reitor a falar para um espaço esvaziado. Este gesto de desprezo teve tal repercussão que Antero sentiu a necessidade de redigir um documento justificativo, o “Manifesto dos Estudantes da Universidade de Coimbra à opinião ilustrada do País”, que juntou 316 assinaturas. Não subsistem dúvidas de que Teófilo Braga nutriu por Basílio Pinto uma animosidade em tudo idêntica à de muitos dos seus colegas. Por isso, foi um dos signatários do “Manifesto”. Mas não pertenceu à “Sociedade do Raio”, que mais tarde haveria de caracterizar como “uma pura imitação teatral das Carbonárias italianas, na luta contra o despotismo austríaco”.<sup>15</sup> Ao que se sabe, também não tomou parte activa na trama conspiratória que culminou na memorável debandada.

Por finais de 1863 e inícios de 1864, suscitaram-se novos atritos, mas agora com o poder governamental. Os estudantes, a pretexto do próximo nascimento do príncipe herdeiro de D. Luís e de Dona Maria Pia, solicitaram que lhes fosse concedido um “perdão de acto”, ou seja, que lhes fosse autorizada uma passagem administrativa de ano escolar. O governo não se prestou a oferecer tal benesse e os estudantes queimaram à Porta Férrea um boneco de palha que pretendia personalizar o duque de Loulé, chefe do Executivo. Este acto ficou conhecido sob a designação de *Rolinada*. O acréscimo de tensões levou

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

a que o governo reforçasse o dispositivo militar da cidade. Os estudantes sentiram-se injuriados por esta manifestação de força e, uma vez mais sob a chefia de Antero de Quental, decidiram abandonar Coimbra e retirar para o Porto. Este êxodo, porém, não contou agora com a concordância de Teófilo Braga, o qual foi submetido a uma especial vigilância por parte dos amigos de Antero para que não pudesse tecer alargadas considerações na assembleia geral académica que tomou tal deliberação.<sup>16</sup>

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Os hábitos quotidianos de Teófilo não difeririam substancialmente daqueles que eram observados em Coimbra por estudantes aplicados e pobres. Passava muito tempo no seu quarto, dando-se ao estudo das lições dos lentes, compulsando obras habitualmente referidas nos círculos da “rapaziada literária”<sup>17</sup> conimbricense e burilando as suas próprias composições poéticas. A aridez deste severo regime era apenas quebrada quando se permitia fazer alguns passeios a pé, tendo como alvos lugares próximos de romagem, como Santo António dos Olivais, ou até aprazíveis e mais distantes paragens, como as da mata do Buçaco. O nosso estudante referiu ter vivido em Coimbra, sobretudo nos primeiros tempos da sua permanência, um peculiar “estado de poesia”, tal como Novalis o havia caracterizado, falando numa “sinergia que tendia a converter-se em força criadora”.<sup>18</sup> O seu interesse pela produção cultural exterior ao âmbito estritamente académico não oferece dúvidas. Atesta-o a sua colaboração na reputada revista *O Instituto*, onde escreviam diversos professores universitários, e o carinho por ele dispensado a jornais administrados e colaborados por estudantes, como *O Fósforo*, *O Tira-Teimas*, *O Pírilampo*, *O Átila* e tantos outros. O esparso

e garrettiano esforço das *Folhas Verdes*, simples primícias literárias sem grande profundidade, irá agora ganhar a força disciplinadora de uma sistematização. Muitos dos autores da sua especial predilecção – de Michelet a Vico, de Creutzer a Victor Hugo, de Quinet a Hegel, de Herder a Goethe – centravam o seu esforço de síntese sobre a aventura da espécie humana na asa da evolução temporal. Teófilo, em concordância com este quadro de inspirações, iria abrir a sua poesia ao simbolismo da historicidade.<sup>19</sup> Aplicou-se, portanto, a redigir um volume de versos cuja proximidade intencional com a *Légende des Siècles*, de Victor Hugo, ressalta do próprio título. A obra de Teófilo Braga intitulou-se *Visão dos Tempos*, pretendendo tracejar, à semelhança de Hugo, um fresco compreensivo da sucessão das civilizações, glosando poeticamente as suas referências simbólicas mais evidentes.<sup>20</sup> O pendor filosófico do projectado livro quebrava a tradição sentimental e puramente subjectiva do ultra-romantismo, tal como este fora interpretado pelas penas de Soares de Passos, João de Lemos ou Luís Augusto Palmeirim.

Findo o trabalho, o maior problema residia em encontrar um editor que por ele se pudesse interessar. No início das férias grandes de 1863, Teófilo deslocou-se ao Porto com esse fim. A Casa Moré, gerida por José Gomes Monteiro, apresentava os mais sólidos créditos de instituição editorial. Nela haviam aparecido romances históricos de Rebelo da Silva e Andrade Corvo e algumas ficções de Camilo Castelo Branco. O nosso candidato a autor entregou timidamente o original a Gomes Monteiro e aguardou o veredicto, o qual viria a ser rasgadamente favorável. A Casa Moré preparou uma edição cuidada, a qual incluiu uma estampa do autor, gravada em cobre.<sup>21</sup> Teófilo conseguiu da mesma editora a publicação do poemeto *Stella Matutina*, numa reduzidíssima tiragem de cinquenta exemplares. Em Dezembro deste mesmo ano de 1863 recebeu de Gomes Monteiro, por conta de direitos de autor, uma ordem de pagamento de dez libras. Exultante, iria desabafar assim, meses depois, para o inevitável Supico: “nos momentos de uma grande vontade, tenho o poder de transformar em dinheiro aquilo para que olho”.<sup>22</sup> O jornalismo coevo acolheu a *Visão dos Tempos* com o maior entusiasmo. O exemplo foi dado por Antero de Quental, que numa notícia anónima para o jornal de Penafiel, *O Século XIX*, gerido pelo seu amigo Germano Meireles, declarou enfaticamente que o pior que o livro tinha

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

era a grosseria de entendimento e a impreparação cultural do público.<sup>23</sup> Um crítico de créditos firmados, Manuel Pinheiro Chagas, afinou pelo mesmo diapasão de encômios no *Arquivo Pitoresco*. Como se isto já não fosse bastante para o deslumbramento, a conhecida atriz Manuela Rey recitou-lhe o poemeto *Stella Matutina* nos principais palcos de Lisboa e do Porto. A *Revista Contemporânea* imprimiu nas suas páginas o poemeto *A Última Gargalhada de Mefistófeles*, referido com críticas elogiosas pela *Gazeta de Portugal*. Por seu turno, o *Jornal do Comércio* propôs-lhe a colaboração remunerada de quatro artigos mensais. Até do Brasil choviam louvores, através das apreciações de Belfort Duarte no *Correio Paulistano*.<sup>24</sup> A Fama chegava de mãos dadas com a Pecúnia! Parecia tratar-se de um irreversível e sonoro triunfo.

Em certas naturezas reservadas e feridas pela inclemência do viver, a surpresa do êxito momentâneo pode exacerbar formas de egotismo megalómano e de desprezo genérico por terceiros. Cremos que foi um pouco isto que aconteceu a Teófilo Braga, conforme parece deduzir-se de várias passagens da sua correspondência:

“Aqueles que nunca me quiseram reconhecer superioridade vêm agora cercar-me com suaslouvaminhas estúpidas. Eu rio-me de todos eles, interiormente, porque os músculos faciais têm pouca contractibilidade”.<sup>25</sup>

“Os elogios banais de grande parte da imprensa afligem-me, porque não vejo consciência do que dizem. Há entre nós uma falta absoluta de senso estético.<sup>26</sup> [...] Gente de importância tem querido ser-me apresentada e eu recuso-me a isso”.<sup>27</sup>

Antes de 1864 terminar, o nosso vitoriado autor publicará uma outra obra poética, as *Tempestades Sonoras*, dentro do molde filosófico historicista e simbolista que tinha já garantido o aplauso da crítica à *Visão dos Tempos*. Aquela obra era antecedida por um preâmbulo intrincado e pouco perceptível. Isso explica que o juízo de Pinheiro Chagas, embora positivo, tenha sido agora mais contido, sobretudo nos reparos feitos às tais considerações obscuras. Mas a apoteose irá perdurar. Nas férias do Natal, Teófilo Braga foi homenageado em Lisboa com uma refeição à qual compareceram individualidades literárias muito prestigiadas, contando-se, entre elas, António Feliciano de Castilho, Latino Coelho, Mendes Leal, Luís Augusto

Palmeirim, Júlio César Machado, Silva Túlio e o Conde de Ficalho. Tratar-se-ia do definitivo reconhecimento público? Talvez não. Nos primeiros dois terços do ano de 1865, as reticências para com os seus trabalhos literários irão acumular-se. No *Diário Oficial do Império do Brasil*, António Feliciano de Castilho fez publicar uma carta de apreciação às *Tempestades* que não se saldava por um aplauso sem restrições; pouco depois, no *Jornal do Comércio*, Camilo Castelo Branco e Manuel Pinheiro Chagas secundá-lo-ão, declarando Chagas, com azeda ironia, que Teófilo tomava todos os dias “tisanas filosóficas”.<sup>28</sup>

Entretanto, Coimbra ia mudando. Em Abril de 1864, o esforço de abertura de uma via férrea entre Lisboa e o Porto contemplou Coimbra, finalmente servida pelo meio de transporte que melhor lhe poderia quebrar o isolamento. A partir de então, a cidade universitária converteu-se num objecto de curiosidade por parte de numerosos forasteiros. Deste modo, chegou à cidade, de visita, a família Barros Leite, vinda do Porto. O grupo, composto pela velha mãe acompanhada por dois filhos estudantes – um condiscípulo de Teófilo em Direito e outro cursando Medicina – e por uma filha, “menina gentil e fresca, que teria os seus 18 a 20 anos”, passou junto à janela do nosso açoriano. O condiscípulo de Teófilo chamou-o para o saudar e a família continuou a sua deambulação. O efeito foi instantâneo:

“Cumprimentei e sem demora seguiram o seu caminho. Eu é que fiquei abalado diante daquela perspectiva da irmã do meu condiscípulo, e para definir a minha situação fala aqui por mim Camões: *E logo presa / A vontade senti de tal maneira, / Que nada sinto ainda que mais queira*”.<sup>29</sup>

Através do irmão, Teófilo Braga encontrou maneira de se imiscuir no seio da família e de iniciar um namoro que, anos depois, o haveria de conduzir ao casamento.

Por este tempo, já não era um anónimo, um vulgar estudante como os demais. Os professores anotavam o seu bom desempenho académico, conhecendo igualmente o seu talento literário. Conquistara também o respeito dos colegas, que o encaravam como uma comprovada inteligência e como um laboriosa vontade, antevendo-lhe largos voos. Aliás, Teófilo tudo fazia para manter bem alta a sua reputação. Escrevera uma peça de teatro para ser representada no Teatro Académico. O entrecho versava sobre a perseguição movida pelo

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

marquês de Pombal a Ferreira Garção, fundador da Arcádia, sublinhando a infâmia da decisão de libertação tomada por Pombal depois de tomar conhecimento que Garção expirara no Limoeiro.<sup>30</sup> A peça, em dois actos, intitulava-se *Sede de Justiça*, mas mudou para *Resignação* por vontade da direcção do teatro. A estreia aconteceu na noite de 29 de Abril de 1865, data de aniversário da Carta Constitucional. Eça de Queirós desempenhou o papel do protagonista mas a peça não agradou, talvez devido ao prosaísmo “agreste e didáctico”<sup>31</sup> com que Teófilo a cerziu e à utilização de vocábulos empolados e sem a menor naturalidade. Na sua apresentação foram distribuídas pela assistência umas quadras da lavra de Guerra Junqueiro, por ele expressamente dedicadas ao autor da obra teatral.

O ano de 1865 não chegaria ao seu termo sem que Teófilo se envolvesse numa contenda literária de grandes dimensões. O ponto de partida centrou-se numa apreciação que António Feliciano de Castilho incluiu na obra de Manuel Pinheiro Chagas *Poema da Mocidade*, objectando à forma e substância das obras publicadas no passado mais próximo por Antero de Quental e Teófilo Braga.<sup>32</sup> Antero acabara de escrever as *Odes Modernas*, cujo conteúdo revolucionário desagradara a corrilhos lisboenses afectos a Castilho. Assim, veio à liça com o folheto *Bom Senso e Bom Gosto. Carta ao Excelentíssimo Senhor António Feliciano de Castilho*<sup>33</sup> e Teófilo foi-lhe na pegada, escrevendo *As Teocracias Literárias. Relance sobre o Estado Actual da Literatura Portuguesa*.<sup>34</sup> Em ambos os casos nos encontramos perante a reivindicação da actualização temática e filosófica das letras portuguesas, tarefa para a qual os dois açorianos consideravam inapto o patriarca Castilho. A refrega tornou-se geral e constituiu, sem dúvida, “uma forte machadada no modelo romântico, verboso e repetitivo, artificial e conservador”.<sup>35</sup> Antero e Teófilo apontavam claramente para um novo modelo, ainda romântico, mas “mais social e abstractivo, mais simbólico e filosofante, com uma seiva fornecida pelo historicismo teórico do idealismo alemão, pela historiografia romântica francesa e pelas imprecizações de autores socialistas ou socializantes”.<sup>36</sup> Seria desadequado detalhar aqui todas as minudências desta polémica, que passou à história sob o nome de “Questão Coimbrã”. Nela se comprometeram alguns dos nomes mais sonantes da cultura portuguesa oitocentista, com relevo para os de Ramalho Ortigão, Camilo Castelo Branco, Teixeira de Vasconcelos, Alberto Osório de Vasconcelos, Urbano

Loureiro e Luciano Cordeiro. Teófilo dera liberdade nesta contenda à sua ira, cometendo a imperdoável deselegância de considerar, nas suas *Teocracias*, que a reputação de que gozava Feliciano de Castilho se devia ao facto de ser cego.<sup>37</sup> Num repente, viu sumir-se a torrente de elogios que sobre ele fora anteriormente espargida e também minimizados os proventos que ia auferindo. Assim, o *Jornal do Comércio* retirou-lhe a avença anteriormente estipulada. Mas, ao contrário da lenda que Teófilo pôs a correr, não é verdade que o seu equilíbrio económico tivesse ficado irremediavelmente comprometido. Os *Contos Fantásticos*, que José Fontana lhe fez imprimir através da livraria Bertrand, tiveram bom acolhimento e a *Ondina do Lago* viria a proporcionar-lhe a correspondente remuneração. Porém, o temporal literário em que se envolvera iria cavar ainda mais os alicerces de uma cidadela psicológica sumamente individualista, de iniludíveis contrafortes narcísicos, associados à agressividade implacável com que passou a encarar quase todas as relações de coexistência social. Existem excertos na sua correspondência amorosa que falam por si:

“vejo em volta de mim a degradação e a vileza, a estupidez que iguala tudo, o cinismo que tudo deturpa”.<sup>38</sup>

“O amor subiu-me à cabeça [...] Os outros não têm isto na vida; eu sei-o perfeitamente, porque os vejo baixar, infames, torpes, frívolos, inúteis”.<sup>39</sup>

“A vida de foragido que tenho levado desde os primeiros anos, acostumara-me a ver em cada pessoa um inimigo; fugia para mim mesmo, para a fortaleza interior. O que tinha a esperar deles? Nada. O que podiam exigir de mim? Apenas as acções de justiça que são frias, impassíveis. Fiquei com esta severidade e aspereza que me ia tornando intratável, incapaz de me dar com os outros, com um carácter duro que o seu amor tem adoçado”.<sup>40</sup>

A “vida de foragido” referida por Teófilo não passava, nesta fase da vida, de uma construção subjectiva. Bastará referir dois ou três factos para que a ficção se esfume. Longe de ser perseguido, ele era em Coimbra muito considerado intelectualmente. Luís Jardim, estudante do 6.º ano de Direito e candidato à carreira docente universitária, instou-o a redigir uma parte da sua dissertação inaugural, tarefa que foi aceite contra a ocupação por Teófilo de uma sobreloja independente do proponente, o que lhe



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

poupou encargos de alojamento. Também satisfez o pedido do professor Pais Novo, da Faculdade de Direito, de catalogar as livrarias das ordens religiosas de Coimbra, ficando expectante quanto à hipótese, também nessa altura mencionada, de poder vir a desempenhar as funções de conservador ou de sub-bibliotecário da Biblioteca da Universidade.<sup>41</sup> A comprovação definitiva da sua notoriedade académica está no convite que a Faculdade de Direito lhe dirigiu, após a conclusão do seu 5.º ano, para cursar mais um ano e defender a tese de doutoramento que o poderia habilitar ao ingresso no magistério superior. O convite seria aceite.

Na primavera de 1868, Teófilo Braga contraiu casamento, no Porto, com Maria do Carmo Barros Leite, ficando a viver provisoriamente na casa dos sogros. Tornava-se agora mais necessária do que nunca a estabilização que lhe poderia ser trazida por um estatuto profissional. Antes do doutoramento, candidatou-se à cadeira de Direito Comercial da Academia Politécnica do Porto, mas ficou excluído por unanimidade.<sup>42</sup> Depois dele, aguardou longamente que fossem abertas vagas de lentes substitutos na Faculdade de Direito em Coimbra para poder disputar uma delas. Neste interim, ribombará sobre Teófilo o juízo desapiedado de Alexandre Herculano, um dos árbitros mais respeitados do horizonte cultural de então. Contém-se esse juízo numa carta, de 1869, que o famoso autor da *História de Portugal* dirigiu a Oliveira Martins, agradecendo-lhe um opúsculo onde este se pronunciava acerca do *Romanceiro* e do *Cancioneiro* teofilianos. Herculano deplorou nessa missiva o gongorismo da filosofia teofiliana da história, acrescentando as seguintes considerações, arrasadoras para Teófilo, por se reportarem a traços tidos por ele como intocáveis:

“Teófilo Braga é uma inteligência completa e uma grande vocação literária, mas uma fraca vontade; *gosta* de fazer ruído; *deseja* adquirir reputação; não possui porém o *querer* robusto que vai até ao sacrifício, que vai até ao martírio e que é preciso para se tornar um homem superior”.<sup>43</sup>

Herculano passou imediatamente à galeria negra dos ódios de Teófilo, indo ser, doravante, um dos alvos proverbiais dos seus múltiplos ressentimentos. A este dissabor iria suceder-se um outro: em Fevereiro de 1871 viu-se preterido por outros candidatos, que considerava inferiores a si, no concurso que finalmente abriu para o provimento de lentes substitutos



Maria do Carmo Braga, esposa falecida em 1911.

da Faculdade de Direito. Um dos admitidos foi Luís Jardim, a quem escrevera, em 1866, parte da dissertação inaugural! Uma vez mais, Teófilo Braga não iria descartar a ocasião de acertar contas com o júri da instituição e com a sua própria *alma mater* na *História da Universidade de Coimbra*, que haveria de redigir, muito mais tarde, dentro do mais implacável e severo estilo condenatório.<sup>44</sup>

Numa índole sistemática como a de Teófilo tinham necessariamente de preponderar imperativos de unidade criativa. O historicismo era a matéria-prima na qual se deveria plasmear a regra de um encadeamento necessário. As suas conversas com Joaquim Duarte Moreira de Sousa, professor de Matemática do liceu de Castelo Branco e convicto positivista,<sup>45</sup> produziram nele um efeito tamanho que se lhe impôs a necessidade de remodelar a epopeia da humanidade que exaltara avulsamente na *Visão dos Tempos*, nas *Tempestades Sonoras* ou na *Ondina do Lago*.<sup>46</sup> Por sua vez, a diversidade de leituras de autores mais alinhados pelo

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

“espírito de positividade” – como Herbert Spencer, Stuart Mill, Renan, Vacherot, Darwin ou Haeckel – do que pela obediência estrita e literal a Augusto Comte e a Emílio Littré, encaminharam-no para uma síntese de teor epistemológico cientificista e de conteúdo político republicano.<sup>47</sup>

Esta inflexão mental estava a iniciar-se quando Teófilo Braga se apresentou, em Maio de 1872, ao concurso oficial para provimento da terceira cadeira (Literatura Moderna da Europa, especialmente a portuguesa) do Curso Superior de Letras. Teve como opositores Manuel Pinheiro Chagas, o dilecto de António Feliciano de Castilho, e Luciano Cordeiro, cuja ideologia o tornava simpático ao poder vigente. Sentindo que jogava o seu futuro neste lance, Teófilo esmerou-se na redacção de uma tese de bom nível, intitulada *Teoria da História da Literatura Portuguesa*. O que neste embate se tornou muito singular e dificilmente explicável foi o patrocínio dado por Antero de Quental, no folheto *Considerações sobre a Filosofia da História Literária Portuguesa (A Propósito de Alguns Livros Recentes)*, à candidatura de Pinheiro Chagas, exaltando-lhe calorosamente a tese.<sup>48</sup> Pois não era Chagas o mesmo que movera guerra sem quartel aos dois açorianos no decurso da “Questão Coimbrã”? Não era ainda ele o favorito de Feliciano de Castilho, contra o qual Antero escrevera folhetos indignados? Não fora a pena de Teófilo a defender a mesma barricada literária na guerrilha de 1865-1866? E não se mantivera ele mudo perante o abuso perpetrado no ano anterior pelo conterrâneo, ao incluir-lhe o nome, sem sequer o consultar, no panfleto anunciador das Conferências Democráticas do Casino Lisbonense? O triunfo indiscutível que Teófilo Braga alcançou neste concurso não foi suficiente para lhe aplacar a animosidade em relação à figura moral e literária de Antero, postura que iria manter até ao fim da vida.

A partir deste momento iniciar-se-á uma nova fase da vida de Teófilo Braga. Já com uma filha nascida, mudou-se para Lisboa, acabando por se fixar na Travessa de Santa Gertrudes, à Estrela, num “prediozinho azulejado e estreito”,<sup>49</sup> e trilhando um longuíssimo magistério no Curso Superior de Letras. Que imagem deixou ele aos seus alunos como professor? Não podemos dizer que os tenha deslumbrado. Os depoimentos que chegaram até nós sublinham a sua “voz baixinha, em ritmo invariável, fluindo numa exposição improvisada, sem atractivo

que não fosse um ou outro imprevisto encontro do termo pitoresco da linguagem do povo com o termo solene da tecnologia científica”.<sup>50</sup> Ninguém lhe poderia contestar a erudição, mas muitos se queixaram da “monótona frieza”<sup>51</sup> do seu discurso pedagógico. Talvez por isso, as suas aulas foram invariavelmente pouco frequentadas, uma vez que as prelecções se tornavam enfadonhas e difíceis de acompanhar. Foi também um professor dotado de uma indulgência quase sem limites: segundo consta, só uma vez reprovou um aluno, na presidência de um júri onde lhe coube o voto de desempate.<sup>52</sup> É muito provável que no seu cérebro ecoasse o raciocínio que alguns discípulos imaginaram vislumbrar-lhe: “Reprovar? Não. Reprovado fui eu três vezes consecutivas, comentava ele, e eu era Teófilo Braga. Nada, nada, não quero tirar o pão a ninguém. Aquele primeiro comentário não o aduzia ele mas admitíamo-lo nós”.<sup>53</sup>

Era previsível a sua entrada na militância republicana. Assim, foi alistar-se na ala esquerda do republicanismo do tempo, escrevendo alguns dos mais vigorosos artigos de fundo no semanário *O Rebate*, de tendência federalista. Apesar da sua função docente, não hesitou em filiar-se no Centro Republicano Democrático, quando este se organizou em 1875. As intrigas entre facções levaram-no a manter-se passivo até 1878. Os federalistas que se haviam excluído daquele Centro fizeram-no aceitar nesse ano uma candidatura a deputado pelo círculo 94. Foi através dele que nesse acto eleitoral vingou a nova forma do “mandato imperativo”, o qual divergia das outras formas de representação porque supunha a existência de um vínculo contratual escrito entre os eleitores apoiantes e o mandatário.<sup>54</sup> Obteve nesse acto eleitoral mais de quatro centenas de votos – resultado muito lisonjeiro, dadas as prevenções anti-republicanas que a monarquia instilava na opinião pública – mas não logrou entrar na correspondente câmara legislativa. Foi ainda durante esse ano de 1878 que surgiu em Portugal o primeiro número da revista *O Positivismo*, como resultado da cooperação mantida entre Teófilo Braga e Júlio de Matos. Arrostando ambos com as maiores contrariedades para conferirem ao projecto a necessária viabilidade, tendo sido capazes de erguer uma publicação que representou, sem a menor

Mulher e filha de Teófilo Braga, in Gaspar Diogo e Elsa Alípio (eds.), *As Primeiras Damas da República Portuguesa, 1910-2005*. Lisboa: Museu da Presidência da República, 2006

PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II





## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

dúvida, o momento mais alto da difusão sistemática do positivismo em Portugal.<sup>55</sup> Significa isto que os primórdios da Sociologia entre nós se acham cronologicamente balizados pelos anos de publicação da revista, a qual só irá desaparecer em 1883. *O Positivismo* “ratificou entre nós aquela orientação teórica de vanguarda que fundia a parte propriamente científica do pensamento de Augusto Comte com o evolucionismo biológico de Darwin, Wallace, Haeckel e Baer e até com vincadas influências do materialismo de Büchner”.<sup>56</sup> A solidariedade intelectual entre Teófilo e Júlio de Matos é tanto mais surpreendente, pela sua tenacidade e militância, quanto é certo que entre ambos se interpunha a distância que separava as cidades de Lisboa e Porto, onde ambos, respectivamente, viviam.

O que continuava a crescer era a sua obra. No remanso doméstico da Travessa de Santa Gertrudes, à Estrela, a vida era repartida entre as alegrias familiares, agora complementadas pelas travessuras de dois filhos pequenos, e uma incessante labuta de pesquisa e de síntese, num esforço vertido em páginas incontáveis. Foi esse titânico esforço que fez um dia Ramalho Ortigão sublinhar que Teófilo “não publica um volume por semana pela razão única de que não há prelos em Portugal que acompanhem a velocidade vertiginosa da sua pena”.<sup>57</sup> O seu gabinete de trabalho era a sala onde instalara a sua biblioteca. Aí se acumulavam os papéis e documentos que lhe serviam de suporte à redacção. Escrevia “em largas folhas de papel, de um lado e outro”, numa caligrafia “rápida, fina e irregular”, que servia uma forma “espontânea, regular e natural”. Albino Forjaz de Sampaio, que bem o conheceu, acrescenta:

“Quando tenciona fazer algum trabalho leva para junto da sua mesa todos os livros e todos os materiais que com ele se relacionam. Então começa escrevendo, isoladamente, sem convivências mais que a dos seus livros e a dos seus alunos e em curto espaço de tempo dá-nos um volume cheio de erudição”.<sup>58</sup>

Pai desvelado e atento, era o seu canivete que moldava a cortiça ou a madeira para, nos intervalos do estudo, produzir os mais ingénuos e imaginosos brinquedos com que os filhos se recreavam. Professor de saber erudito, reconhecido pelos seus colegas e contemporâneos cultos, repudiava com clareza toda a sorte de ostentações de elite. Neste último aspecto, muitos lhe censuravam a exagerada modéstia do

vestuário, que alguns qualificavam de desleixo, e nem todos aplaudiam os hábitos plebeus de recorrer por sistema aos transportes públicos, ombro a ombro com o mais comum dos lisboetas. A sua figura franzina movia-se através do recurso a passadas curtas, quase sempre apressadas, como se em cada momento o acicatasse o agulhão de uma ideia fixa, absorvente, ou a pressão de uma tarefa urgente. A silhueta de Teófilo tornava-se ainda inconfundível pelo pitoresco que lhe era adicionado pelo seu inseparável guarda-chuva. Essa *malva* – como então lhe chamaram – tornou-se lendária e gerou frequentes zombarias. Muito poucos a souberam filiar na originária precaução do ilhéu açoriano em relação à instabilidade meteorológica do torrão natal, servindo-lhe de arrimo em todas as estações do ano. O tempo consagrado ao ócio não abundava. Apesar de tudo, Teófilo conservou o hábito de dar passeios a pé, agora dentro de Lisboa, à semelhança do que praticara em Coimbra nos seus tempos de estudante. E uma outra reminiscência do passado irrompia também agora: o gosto pela música. Do mesmo modo que na sua ilha se deslumbrara com as Matinas do Espírito Santo, em que então se esmerava o Pe. Silvestre Serrão, comprazia-se agora com as interpretações dos grandes clássicos, ouvidas no Teatro de S. Carlos, “enroupado na sua velha casaca” como “assinante fiel duma frisa”.<sup>59</sup> Embora não fosse executante de qualquer instrumento musical, aprofundou conhecimentos teóricos suficientes para se poder pronunciar com segurança sobre peças, autores e orquestrações. O resto do tempo, descontadas as horas de aulas e de reuniões no Curso Superior de Letras, ia para os seus livros e para a placidez da vida de família.

Apesar de primordialmente devotado à construção da sua imponente obra de investigação, Teófilo Braga seguia atentamente a evolução política do seu tempo. As contínuas pressões dirigidas pela chancelaria britânica ao governo português no âmbito da gestão colonial convenceram-no de que a Grã-Bretanha não era mais do que uma potência cúpida, sem outros valores que não fossem os da defesa dos interesses próprios, ainda que estes carecessem de toda a legitimidade. A sua anglofobia levou-o a qualificá-la como “a Cartago do mundo moderno, que um dia terá de ser destruída pela necessidade da solidariedade dos povos para a civilização humana”.<sup>60</sup> Por isso, quando foram conhecidas as leoninas cláusulas do tratado de Lourenço Marques, que colocavam Portugal numa



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

posição manifesta de inferioridade, Teófilo Braga publicou no jornal republicano *A Vanguarda* um conjunto de artigos de protesto. Neles, o professor do Curso Superior de Letras não se limitou a sublinhar que o procedimento diplomático britânico colocava Portugal na situação deplorável “de uma desgraçada feitoria inglesa”.<sup>61</sup> Acrescentou ainda que a dinastia de Bragança inaugurara uma tradição de subserviências, de favores pautais, de alienações de soberania colonial, de abdicação de brios patrióticos perante aquela que, por irrisão, se apresentava como nossa aliada. O tratado de Lourenço Marques era considerado “a página mais afrontosa da nossa história no século XIX”.<sup>62</sup> Assim, a sua crítica não vergastava apenas a ilegítima ambição inglesa, mas também levava ao pelourinho a própria instituição monárquica, através da galeria dos monarcas que mais notoriamente se lhe haviam rendido. Era uma galeria que se iniciara com D. João IV mas que abrangia igualmente a maior parte dos seus sucessores, incluindo D. Maria II e D. Luís. Foi ao calor dos protestos gerados pelo tratado que alguns dos mais distintos vultos do tempo decidiram, na peugada de Teófilo, atribuir ao tricentenário da morte de Camões, que iria ocorrer em 10 de Junho de 1880, um significado transcendente. Tratava-se de apelar para o mais profundo das forças anímicas da Grei, convertendo as comemorações tricentenárias no momento simbólico de uma revivescência colectiva. Importava, mais do que tudo, retirar o país do atoleiro da descrença que o paralisava e converter a festa camoniana no ponto de viragem para novos e mais altos objectivos patrióticos. O rei e os seus áulicos mantiveram perante o evento atitudes de distância e de alheamento, contribuindo poderosamente para a mobilização de todas as forças do Partido Republicano, que acabou por ser o principal beneficiário de toda esta movimentação, arrecadando as correspondentes vantagens de afirmação e de dinamização. Em termos individuais, contudo, os louros da iniciativa foram colhidos por Teófilo Braga e por Ramalho Ortigão, dado o facto de terem sido os rostos mais visíveis e empenhados desta notável jornada. Durante o ano de 1880, Teófilo desdobrou-se em alocuções e conferências de temática camoniana, apresentando-as em instituições académicas (Curso Superior de Letras), em sítios públicos de diversão (salão do Teatro da Trindade) ou até em agremiações populares (sala da Associação “Pelicano”). Saíram também da sua pena, para marcar a efeméride, um conjunto de

estudos específicos sobre a vida e obra de Luís de Camões, sendo de destacar a *Bibliografia Camoniana*, o *Retrato e Biografia de Camões*, o *Poema de Camões* e o *Centenário de Camões*.

Esta pertinaz actividade tornou Teófilo Braga uma figura popularíssima e forjou-lhe a fama de democrata exemplar no interior dos círculos republicanos. Não admira, portanto, que o tenham requisitado para uma infinidade de intervenções públicas e para o desempenho de numerosos lugares de representação honorífica. Entre 1881 e 1885, desdobrou-se em palestras, conferências e discursos, proferidos em comícios, centros e associações. Aceitaria a presidência do Centro Republicano Federal de Lisboa, mas iria recusar peremptoriamente, em carta inserta no jornal *A Vanguarda*, que fosse atribuído o seu nome à Associação Escolar e Eleitoral Pinto Ribeiro. Em 1882, operários de Lordelo do Ouro voltaram a querer baptizar de igual modo um clube eleitoral democrático de instrução, mas Teófilo manteve a mesma firmeza de rejeição. Neste ano, a Comissão Académica Executiva do Centenário do Marquês de Pombal requereu e obteve os seus bons ofícios, traduzidos em conferências abertas. Uma delas encontrava-se programada para o Teatro D. Maria II, mas o governo monárquico proibiu a utilização do espaço, forçando à utilização alternativa do Teatro do Rato. Teófilo descansava desta febricitante actividade recolhendo-se a Airão, no Minho, por altura das férias grandes.

Já atrás ficou dito que era harmonioso o ambiente do lar que o professor açoriano soubera construir. No refúgio de Santa Gertrudes compensava ele a solidão do estudo e da investigação, partilhando afectos com D.<sup>a</sup> Maria do Carmo Barros Leite, sua mulher, e com os dois filhos que esta lhe dera: Maria da Graça, a filha mais velha, e Teófilo, o mais novo. Subitamente, a desgraça atroz, quase inverosímil na sua sanha destruidora, abater-se-á sobre esta família. Em pouco mais de três meses, entre os finais de 1886 e os começos de 1887, a morte roubar-lhe-á ambos os filhos. O primeiro a finar-se foi o pequeno Teófilo, em 7 de Dezembro de 1886, no viço dos seus treze anos. O biógrafo nada mais tem a fazer, neste ponto, do que dar a palavra ao destroçado pai, revoltado:

“contra esta brutalidade da natureza que mata uma criança alegre, inteligente e cheia de esperança, que horas antes de expirar ainda pensava no prazer de viver. [...] A perda das minhas esperanças com a morte de um filho

PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

amado, com treze anos de idade, com uma comunhão moral tão completa comigo, a sua falta para sempre, o vazio que nos deixou nesta casa que ele enchia de risos, nada chega à pena que ele por si nos desperta por ter saído desta vida sem ter passado pela evolução que competia ao seu ser físico e moral. Eu aceito a dor como uma fatalidade; e tendo-o acompanhado noite e dia na sua doença, com as minhas mãos o amortalhei e com santa piedade o meti no caixão, para que mãos estranhas não profanassem os restos deste naufrágio da minha alma. [...] Minha mulher me acompanhou e velou sozinha comigo esta criança encantadora, metendo-lhe nas mãos um pedaço da sua grinalda de noiva,

Filha de Teófilo Braga, Maria da Graça, falecida aos 16 anos, vítima de tuberculose, in Gaspar Diogo e Elsa Alípio (eds.), *As Primeiras Damas da República Portuguesa, 1910-2005*. Lisboa: Museu da Presidência da República, 2006.



guardada há dezanove anos para se desmanchar quando menos esperávamos. [...] Parece que nunca o amámos tanto como agora, que nunca o contemplámos, que nunca nos unimos mais do que nestas horas que se sucedem, aumentando a nossa perda, tornando mais inconsolável a nossa dor”.<sup>63</sup>

Mas a cega e bruta fatalidade quis completar a sua obra, levando à cova pouco depois, em 18 de Março de 1887, a filha mais velha, Maria da Graça, na flor dos seus dezasseis anos. Escrevendo à sua irmã freira, Maria José, Teófilo Braga caracterizava assim a sua pungentíssima tragédia familiar:

“A minha Maria da Graça, aquela criança linda, inteligente e incomparável na soberania de carácter e de pureza de alma, morreu-nos no dia 18 de Março, depois de uma lancinante agonia de catorze horas! Era a única filha que nos restava e com ela perdemos tudo, tudo. Entre a morte dela e a do Teofilinho, que ainda chorávamos todas as horas, mediamos apenas três meses e onze dias. Que fatalidade desabou sobre a minha casa e fez de um presente tão risonho e cheio de esperanças, um vazio, uma solidão material e moral, trocando todos os momentos da vida em uma dor sem consolação. E o que mais é, vejo-me forçado a abafar o meu desespero, para não deixar cair na loucura a pobre alma de minha mulher, ferida mortalmente na sua santa maternidade. [...] Nenhum golpe me podia ferir mais fundo e deixar-me vivo para sofrer mais esta angústia que cresce com o tempo. Estamos agora sem filhos! Não fazes ideia do que esta frase significa. Ao fim de vinte anos de casados, eu e a minha mulher achamo-nos sós diante um do outro, com três filhos na cova<sup>64</sup>, e olhando desalentados para um passado que tanto nos mentiu. Tem compaixão de nós”.<sup>65</sup>

A alma sensível de João de Deus vibrou em unísono com a de Teófilo Braga, mobilizando poetas portugueses e brasileiros para que fosse elaborado um livro de homenagem às duas crianças falecidas. Anselmo de Moraes, o editor da *História da Literatura Portuguesa* de Teófilo, prontificou-se a imprimir essa obra. Esta surgiu em 1889, sob o título *A Maior Dor Humana*, comportando o subtítulo *Coroa de Saudades Oferecida a Teófilo Braga e Sua Esposa para a Sepultura de Seus Filhos*. A dimensão da terrível tragédia anulou os

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

ressentimentos polémicos que Camilo Castelo Branco nutria para com aquele pai devastado. Aliás, o título da obra colectiva reproduziu o do belíssimo soneto composto por Camilo:

Que imensas agonias se formaram  
sob os olhos de Deus! Sinistra hora  
em que o Homem surgiu! Que negra aurora,  
que amargas condições o escravizaram!

As mãos, que um filho amado amortalharam,  
erguidas buscam Deus. A Fé implora.  
E o céu que respondeu? As mãos baixaram  
Para abraçar a filha morta agora.

Depois, um pai que em trevas vai sonhando,  
e apalpa as sombras deles onde os viu  
nacer, florir, morrer!... Desastre infando!

Ao teu abismo, pai, não vão confortos.  
És coração que a dor empederniu,  
sepulcro vivo de dois filhos mortos.<sup>66</sup>

Como reagiu Teófilo a este naufrágio de vida? A sua afectividade concentrou-se, como seria de supor, na sua companheira de sempre, procurando fazê-la esquecer os escombros da alma. Redigiu um testamento em 15 de Maio de 1887 através do qual pretendeu defendê-la contra pretensões ao património, eventualmente apresentadas por terceiros. Supomos que a sua preocupação determinante se centrava em direitos invocáveis pelo filho ilegítimo que deixara nos Açores. É também possível inferir do testamento a demarcação radical em relação a quaisquer contaminações religiosas. A crueza do seu drama, pela injustiça que lhe era inerente, reforçou-lhe o dissídio relativo ao império das teologias. Por isso, a sua declaração de vontade testamentária é taxativa na reclamação de um enterro civil, quando chegasse a sua hora.<sup>67</sup> Mas irá também reagir com o pragmatismo da sua transbordante actividade revolucionária e intelectual.

Iremos encontrar Teófilo Braga a exercer as funções de secretário do Directório do Partido Republicano por alturas do 11 de Janeiro de 1890, data do Ultimato inglês. A esse Directório pertencia também José Elias Garcia, individualidade à qual eram imputadas, por sectores republicanos mais aguerridos, várias cedências ideológicas e transigências

comprometedoras com sectores monárquicos. O Ultimato trouxe à ribalta do republicanismo uma nova geração, que o próprio Teófilo viria a caracterizar como “absolutamente activa”, distinguindo-a da “geração doutrinária” a que pertencia.<sup>68</sup> Estas duas gerações não poderiam deixar de entrar em conflito. O que estava em causa era a diferença metodológica com que se abordava a implantação dos valores democráticos: enquanto os “doutrinários” entendiam recorrer à persuasão pedagógica e transigiam com o jogo eleitoral, os “activos” consideravam esgotada a via da propaganda pacífica e queriam encetar, tão rapidamente quanto possível, a via da luta armada.<sup>69</sup> Em Lisboa, porém, a questão fundamental não era metodológica: era a de uma simples luta de poder entre facções. Havia claramente uma facção *anti-garcias*, à qual se ligavam nomes como os de Francisco Manuel Homem Cristo, Manuel de Arriaga ou Alves Correia. Quando se realizou na capital o 4.º Congresso do Partido Republicano, nas instalações da Associação Fernandes Tomás, os apoiantes de Elias Garcia foram postos em minoria e o Directório passou a ser encabeçado por Homem Cristo. Como Teófilo Braga se mantivera distante de todas estas controvérsias, foi com a maior naturalidade que anuiu a transitar para este novo Directório. No Porto, porém, não houve disputas partidárias. Houve, isso sim, uma romântica decisão de recorrer a meios violentos para vingar o vexame do Ultimato e instalar o regime republicano. Nos bastidores da revolta frustrada do 31 de Janeiro de 1891 irão mover-se contraditoriamente as figuras do momento. Essa contradição seria de tal monta que os protagonistas pareceram ter os seus papéis trocados. Quando os revoltosos portuenses apelaram para o apoio das figuras lisboetas mais emblemáticas, assistir-se-á ao paradoxo de o terem recebido com maior generosidade do Directório encabeçado pelo “pusilânime” e “transigente” José Elias Garcia; pelo contrário, o director Homem Cristo, que centrara a sua campanha no Congresso no mote da falta de firmeza anti-monárquica dos *garcias*, arrastará o novo Directório para um explícito boicote ao pronunciamento dos republicanos do Porto, alegando – com bons motivos – que tudo se estava a fazer precipitadamente e à margem do curial envolvimento de altas patentes militares. Como Teófilo transitara de um Directório para o outro, é natural que a sua posição tivesse sido incómoda e pouco transparente.

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

Não se livrará das acerbadas acusações de Homem Cristo, num volume memorial e justificativo, publicado muito mais tarde.<sup>70</sup> Os homens do 31 de Janeiro sofreram as previsíveis condenações, exílios e deportações. Muitos deles jamais perdoariam ao Directório de Homem Cristo a falta de solidariedade, a indiferença e o abandono à sua sorte ingrata de vencidos. Teófilo Braga chegou mesmo a receber uma carta pessoal do conjurado Basílio Teles, na qual se exaravam as mais graves imputações de insensibilidade e de inércia desse mesmo Directório em relação às dificuldades de toda a ordem vividas no exílio pelos que tudo tinham arriscado no lance revolucionário.<sup>71</sup>

*Apesar de primordialmente  
devotado à construção da sua  
imponente obra de investigação,  
Teófilo Braga seguia  
atentamente a evolução política  
do seu tempo.*

Não andaremos longe da verdade se filiar-mos nestas causas a decisão, tomada por Teófilo a partir de 1892, de moderar o seu envolvimento no partido e nas associações republicanas. Aos seus olhos, crescerá ainda mais a prioridade e importância do seu ofício de investigador. Não é que se tenha recusado a corresponder doravante aos mais diversos convites de agremiações identificadas com o seu próprio ideário. Mas passou a fazê-lo mais como convidado do que como militante. Por isso, as causas que abraçou até ao momento da proclamação da República foram de natureza marcadamente literária ou intelectual, encontrando-se claramente subalternizado, embora não totalmente anulado, um trabalho de teor vincadamente político. Assim, profundamente reconhecido a João de Deus pela iniciativa da publicação de *A Maior Dor do Mundo*, deu-se ao trabalho de coligir toda a sua produção poética, dispersa por inúmeras publicações, apresentando-a, na sua unidade e beleza, no volume *Campo de Flores*; por outro lado, ainda em sua homenagem, integrou diversas iniciativas em 1895, quando foi feita a João de Deus uma verdadeira apoteose nacional, coincidente com os seus 65 anos

de idade. Colaborou também no centenário de Almeida Garrett, em 1899, e no de Bocage, em 1905. Teve ainda a íntima satisfação de ver condignamente saudados os seus cinquenta anos de vida literária. Conforme deixámos dito, esta iniciara-se em 1858, quando Francisco Maria Supico lhe publicou, no jornal *Estrela Oriental*, da Ribeira Grande, o ingénuo poema “Canção do Guerreiro”, dedicado ao seu irmão João, obrigado por castigo pelo austero progenitor a fazer a tropa no ramo de Infantaria. Em 1908 cumprir-se-ia, portanto, meio século de produção literária. A comissão executiva da efeméride, à qual pertenciam, entre outros, Sebastião de Magalhães Lima, Agostinho Fortes, Heliodoro Salgado, Botto Machado e Marques Braga, iniciou os seus trabalhos dois anos mais cedo e pôde assim fazer publicar, no momento próprio, o livro do *Quinquagenário*, no qual o labor teofiliano foi julgado pela crítica de três gerações literárias.<sup>72</sup> Foi também recordado pelos estudantes daquele mesmo Liceu de Ponta Delgada, onde assegurara a um professor céptico que um dia viria a ser doutor, com a publicação do folheto glorificador *A Homenagem*. A rememoração dos filhos levou o casal a recolher-se durante várias férias grandes à quinta do Airão, no Minho, em romagem saudosa por lá terem soado, num passado mais feliz, os ruidosos folguedos dos seus meninos mortos. Quando sobreveio a demencial experiência política de João Franco, Teófilo Braga considerou-a “uma Ditadura desvairada que tudo anarquiza e afronta”,<sup>73</sup> mas não apareceu, como outrora, na crista das contestações. Porém, no período de estertor da monarquia, após o regicídio, voltamos a vê-lo a disputar eleições, tanto em 5 de Abril de 1908 como em 28 de Agosto de 1910, tendo sido, nestas últimas, um dos catorze deputados eleitos para o último parlamento monárquico.

Teófilo parece não ter tomado parte activa na conspiração revolucionária que derrubou pelas armas as instituições monárquicas em 5 de Outubro de 1910. Também não reunia consensos absolutos para ocupar lugares de destaque no novo regime. Pelo seu modo de ser e até pelo seu modo de trajar, concitava animosidades implacáveis. Uma delas foi a de José Relvas, que nas suas *Memórias Políticas* o denegriu em função do que designou como “fraqueza de carácter”,<sup>74</sup> falando igualmente nas suas descompostas vestes de prestamista. O facto, contudo é que seria ele a ocupar a honrosa função de Presidente do Governo Provisório



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II



Teófilo Braga no seu gabinete de trabalho, 1910.

da República triunfante. Uma parte da explicação poderá talvez coincidir com um movimento espontâneo popular, reconhecendo-o como a primeira figura do regime acabado de implantar. Foi essa, de resto a versão que ele próprio transmitiu à posteridade:

“surge o 5 de Outubro, proclama-se a República e, inesperadamente, achei-me saudado nas ruas de Lisboa por uma multidão ansiosa, quase delirante, que me tratava pelo ‘senhor presidente’. A ilusão depressa se converteu, conflagrantemente, em realidade. Não tardou que algumas centenas de excelentes pessoas me entrassem pela porta dentro pedindo-me entrevistas, autógrafos, empregos, subsídios e, até, dinheiro emprestado. Não havia dúvida: eu era, para todos os efeitos, o presidente da República”.<sup>75</sup>

A outra parte dessa explicação deverá procurar-se nas simpatias inspiradas pelo radicalismo do seu passado em figuras cimeiras do republicanismo – como foi o caso de Afonso Costa – ou até em relações de estima mantidas com pessoas que não sendo propriamente jacobinas lhe apreciavam a inteireza cívica – e neste caso caberá certamente a individualidade de Bernardino Machado.

A passagem pelo poder cimeiro não lhe foi agradável, nem poderia sê-lo, atendendo à quase imediata luta travada entre os chefes potenciais das futuras formações partidárias que iriam nascer da quebra de unidade do histórico Partido Republicano. As grandes clivagens, prenunciadoras da emergência dos três partidos republicanos que marcaram a política portuguesa, sobretudo até ao sidonismo, manifestaram-se nas manobras que antecederam a eleição do primeiro presidente. Afonso Costa, que já dera mostras do mais vivo anticlericalismo no exercício do seu cargo de ministro da Justiça do Governo Provisório, patrocinava a candidatura de Bernardino Machado, colocando o jornal *O Mundo* ao serviço das suas estratégias. Porém, António José de Almeida constituiu com Brito Camacho um “bloco”, pretendendo através dele frustrar o intento de Costa e favorecer a eleição de Manuel de Arriaga. Daí que o conluio “bloquista” se tenha manifestado através da sintonia das opiniões de Almeida e de Camacho, expressas através dos jornais onde cada um deles pontificava, ou seja, através de *A República* e de *A Luta*, respectivamente. O “bloco” acabou por eleger Manuel de Arriaga e por evitar que Teófilo Braga viesse a presidir à Câmara dos Deputados, onde anichou

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

Forbes Bessa.<sup>76</sup> O terreno minado da política pura e dura, com os seus jogos maquiavélicos e as suas pérfidas inquinações, exigiu de Teófilo uma definição na luta em marcha. Ora, ele fora desde sempre um jacobino, um doutrinário federalista, guardando o seu reduto na ala esquerda do Partido Republicano. Acompanhou, portanto, a sorte dos adeptos de Afonso Costa, embora com a ressalva da sua completa independência de juízo. Este pano de fundo ajudar-nos-á a compreender a decepção que ressuma de certas passagens dos seus escritos:

“Esses longos meses na chefia do Governo Provisório foram a expiação de males que eu não praticara e que, ao contrário, sempre tentara evitar. Aqueles que, nas horas incertas, me procuraram, arrancando-me à paz dos meus livros, foram os primeiros a atirar-me a sua pedra. Quis fazer da República um jardim: as lagartas comiam as flores, ao plantá-las”.<sup>77</sup>

E não se coibiu de identificar estas lagartas do jardim republicano:

“Era o caldo substancial, feito para o povo, com a água que criava boas hortaliças e vinha numa rocha límpida. A couve já não presta. Tem duas lagartas: o Camacho e o Almeida”.<sup>78</sup>

Como se verifica, não foram pacíficas estas horas de triunfo político. Participou no Parlamento constituinte que daria origem à Constituição de 1911. Não deixou de aí apresentar o seu próprio projecto de texto constitucional, mas os seus pontos de vista não foram secundados pela maioria dos deputados.<sup>79</sup>

Por este tempo, Teófilo Braga vivia mais um drama familiar: a sua mulher resvalara para a insânia mental, traduzida numa apatia profunda, carecendo mais do que nunca da sua ajuda. Faleceu em 14 de Setembro de 1911. Singular destino, o deste homem, que desconfiando por princípio da inocência e boa-fé dos outros, concentrou todas as suas esperanças na família, decidindo recolher-se à intimidade do lar como se só aí pudesse encontrar aliados sinceros e repouso compensador. Singular e punitivo foi este decreto de uma existência que construiu uma cidadela supostamente inexpugnável para a ver desabar sem remissão, em golpes certos, ferozes, inexoráveis. Outros, menos resistentes, teriam abatido bandeiras, numa mais do que compreensível capitulação. Mas Teófilo foi sempre uma Vontade, um Orgulho, uma Afirmação, uma “Consciência” “que *não sabe*

*capitular*”.<sup>80</sup> Deste arcaboço moral inteiriço retirou ele, nos momentos mais angustiosos da sua vida, o impulso vital para perseverar na existência. Dias depois de falecer sua mulher, escreveu uma carta a Joaquim de Araújo que comprova esta jura de prosseguimento de caminhada, esta renitência a confessar uma derrota, esta irredutibilidade na recusa da rendição. Dizia:

“Aqui estou sozinho na mesma casa e na mesma forma de viver, mas cerca-me o vácuo. [...] **Volto a ser o antigo estudante solitário.**<sup>81</sup> Amei, fiz a minha família, trabalhei para ela, e, nesta trajectória da vida, perdi os filhos, agora a esposa – e acordo de um sonho, de um idílio, de uma tragédia, de um naufrágio, de quarenta e três anos. Valeu a pena? Antero diria que não; eu acho que foi uma revelação da vida equilibrada entre duras realidades e altos ideais. E já é uma grande coisa poder dizer: – *Vivi*”.<sup>82</sup>

Teófilo desejou para si, nesta última fase da sua vida, um isolamento doméstico completo. Não contratou serviços internos permanentes e era ele que abria a porta da sua Tebaida a quem o procurava. Fazia longas vigílias nocturnas, para fazer render o estudo e para escrever em concentração, na serenidade da noite que avançava. Como era habilidoso de mãos e dado à improvisação de engenhocas úteis, concebeu um suporte que, encaixado no candeeiro do gás de iluminação, lhe permitia aquecer o leite ou o chá que ia sorvendo durante o seu labor nocturno.<sup>83</sup>

O mandato presidencial de Manuel de Arriaga foi feito ao arripio do Partido de Afonso Costa, vulgarmente conhecido como Partido Democrático, e procurando satisfazer os anseios do Partido Evolucionista, de António José de Almeida, e do Partido da União Republicana, de Brito Camacho. O veredicto das urnas consagrara a hegemonia dos “democráticos”, mas tanto os “evolucionistas” como os “unionistas” procuraram retirar dividendos do facto de ter sido o “bloco” a eleger Arriaga. A animosidade de Teófilo contra este presidente era antiga e vivaz. Assim, escrevendo a Fran Paxêco em Abril de 1914, o estudioso de Santa Gertrudes generalizava a sua execração, metendo no mesmo saco de repulsa os eleitores e o eleito:

“De política, só lhe direi que, enquanto alguns fermentos pútridos intervierem na marcha da república, andarás tudo aéreo e apático. Improvisando-se um presidente, por manejos do execrando bloco, aquele amolda-se a vibrar golpes

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II



Teófilo Braga, chefe do Governo Provisório, e o ministro dos Negócios Estrangeiros, Bernardino Machado.

de estado, dissolvendo ministérios com maioria parlamentar, e exibindo programas pessoais de governo”.<sup>84</sup>

O diagnóstico traçado revelou-se exacto. Nos inícios de 1915 verificou-se uma demonstração militar inconsequente ou “movimento das espadas” contra o gabinete “democrático”, com apoio parlamentar maioritário, de Vítor Hugo de Azevedo Coutinho. O Presidente Arriaga, contra todas as praxes constitucionais, decidiu encarregar o general Pimenta de Castro de formar um governo extra-partidário, vindo este a revelar-se de uma notória pusilanimidade quanto às pretensões dos saudosos da monarquia. A revolução triunfante de 14 de Maio de 1915, organizada fundamentalmente por figuras afectas ao partido de Afonso Costa, obrigou Manuel de Arriaga a renunciar à função presidencial dois

dias depois. Teófilo Braga, eleito pelo Congresso, foi o presidente que o substituiu, em interinidade de funções. Não há que duvidar do regozijo com que o velho professor do Curso Superior de Letras desempenhou essas funções até às subsequentes eleições de 6 de Agosto, que levaram à cadeira presidencial Bernardino Machado, o eterno candidato dos “democráticos”. É que tal resultado consagraria, aos seus olhos, não apenas a reposição da legalidade democrática mas também a derrota das “lagartas” predadoras do seu idealizado jardim republicano. Foi o seu último desempenho de vulto ao serviço da sua República, que desejava racionalista, livre-pensadora e radicalmente laica.

Pode um homem muito gasto e velho, preocupado apenas com alfarrábios e papéis amarelados pelo tempo, frágil e cada vez mais dependente, inteiramente

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

devotado à leitura e à escrita, pode um homem destes continuar a ser visto como uma ameaça por opositores políticos? Pode. Mas essa possibilidade só existe para os que se converteram em símbolos e entraram, sem retorno, num imaginário colectivo onde se fundem afectos e ressoam esperanças de futuro. Faltava a Teófilo Braga coleccionar certa forma de homenagem que a Autoridade exorbitante presta à Liberdade natural sob a forma do ódio de estimação que só se tem por quem se teme. Quando, em Dezembro de 1917, Sidónio Pais interrompeu a experiência democrática do republicanismo e enveredou pela via ditatorial uma das suas decisões foi a de remover o retrato de Teófilo do Palácio de Belém.

A sua energia mental não sofreu diminuição quando entrou no período final da sua vida. Confiou aos mais chegados alguns dos seus sonhos, a realizar por amigos fiéis depois da sua morte. Queria que se instalasse na zona da Estrela uma “Casa de Teófilo” ou um “Instituto Teofiliano” que o perenizasse; também falou na possibilidade da fundação de um Colégio Maria da Graça, evocativo da sua defunta filha; tencionava doar a sua casa e livraria ao município de Lisboa.<sup>85</sup> O correr dos últimos anos foi-lhe prejudicando a visão, até à quase cegueira. Apelou então a antigos discípulos, para que pudesse dar continuidade à publicação dos seus volumes. É que, apesar da drástica redução da sua acuidade visual, Teófilo Braga teimava em corrigir a sua *História da Literatura Portuguesa* mediante uma *Recapitulação* que a libertasse dos erros e inexactidões, muitos dos quais provinham da precipitação com que realizava as suas sínteses, nessa febre de produzir mais e mais, que o consumia sem o saciar. Para além deste trabalho de revisão científica, congeminara um romance, que estava em marcha, sobre a vida e feitos filosóficos do livre-pensador Uriel da Costa. No dia 26 de Janeiro de 1924 ditava uma carta para os seus editores da Lello & Irmão que rezava assim:

“Eu estou numa situação deplorável, não vejo para ler, nem para escrever; preciso de um secretário inteligente que leia e que escreva ao meu ditado. Por dinheiro não há ninguém que me preste este auxílio; somente o favor de antigos discípulos meus que me cedem cada um duas horas na semana, às terças, quintas, sextas e sábados e assim consigo dar forma ao meu pensamento. Pedia agora que a remessa das provas fosse de acordo com a situação em que me acho,

que resulta do favor que me prestam os discípulos que me mostram tão boa vontade”.<sup>86</sup>

Neste mesmo dia confidenciou a um amigo que só tinha conseguido repousar sobre a madrugada.

“Na manhã de 28 [...] quando uma sobrinha que lhe ia levar todos os dias as parcas refeições entrou no quarto, encontrou-o morto, semi-vestido, sobre a cama”.<sup>87</sup>

Extinguiu-se pouco antes de fazer 81 anos.

Enterraram-no numa ala do Mosteiro dos Jerónimos, sob a malévola dicidade do beatério, escandalizado com a presença dos ossos de um ateu no espaço sacro. Em 12 de Dezembro de 1966, os seus restos mortais foram mudados para o Panteão Nacional de Santa Engrácia. Nem uma só das suas vontades finais tiveram concretização. A casa e livraria não passaram à propriedade municipal; o Instituto teofiliano ou o colégio Maria da Graça nunca surgiram; para que a sua preciosa biblioteca e todos os seus autógrafos não fossem parar à insensibilidade comercial dos alfarrabistas foi necessária a intervenção do Dr. Luís Bettencourt de Medeiros Câmara, que, como Presidente da Junta Geral do Distrito de Ponta Delgada, conseguiu levar livros e papéis para esta cidade. E os objectos, que lhes aconteceu? Foram leiloados em 10 de Março de 1929, decorrendo a almoeda no interior da própria casa que Teófilo habitara. Essa profanação transferiu para mãos estranhas, decerto mais atentas ao valor venal ou à utilidade imediata de tais coisas do que ao seu significado simbólico a secretária de trabalho, a pasta de quintanista de Direito, bordada por Dona Maria do Carmo, a caneta, o guarda-chuva emblemático... Algumas sobras foram para um pequeno punhado de admiradores licitantes. O republicano Fernandes Baptista conseguiu ficar com o tinteiro de prata oferecido a Teófilo pelos editores Lello, bem como com o capelo universitário e com o *Diário do Governo* que se reportava à constituição do Governo Provisório. Por seu turno, Álvaro Neves, mandatado pela Comissão Teófilo Braga, conseguiu arrematar a meia dúzia de instrumentos de oficina com que o extinto fabricara os brinquedos dos filhos e com que se dera à execução de trabalhos artísticos em madeira. A narrativa do leilão surgiu, anónima, no *Diário de Notícias*. Rematava assim: “Tudo o que foi caro e familiar a Teófilo Braga se dispersa pela cidade – últimas folhas de inverno, levadas por um vento melancólico, naquela tarde sem vento”.<sup>88</sup> **RC**



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

## NOTAS

- 1 Cfr. José Bruno Carreiro, *Vida de Teófilo Braga. Resumo Cronológico*, pp. 17-18.
- 2 Cfr. Rebelo de Bettencourt, *Teófilo Braga, Mestre Nacionalista. Com Duas Cartas Intimas e Uma Breve Antologia Poética*, Lisboa: Edição da *Gazeta dos Caminhos de Ferro*, 1942, pp. 9-14.
- 3 Na sua “Autobiographia mental de um pensador isolado”, in *Quarenta annos de vida litteraria*, p. v), Teófilo voltou a aludir a “uma infância atormentada dos quatro aos dezoito anos sob a pressão antipática de uma madrastra”.
- 4 João Anglin, “Teófilo aluno do nosso liceu”, in *Primeiro Centenário do Nascimento do Doutor Teófilo Braga. Edição Comemorativa da Câmara Municipal de Ponta Delgada*. Ponta Delgada, S. Miguel-Açores: Oficinas Tipográficas do *Diário das Açores*, 1944, pp. 161-162.
- 5 Cfr. *ibidem*, pp. 122-123.
- 6 Cfr. Fran Paxêco, *A Escola de Coimbra e a Dissolução do Romantismo. 1865-1915*. Lisboa: Casa Ventura Abrantes, Livraria Editora, 1917, p. 73.
- 7 Cfr. José Bruno Carreiro, *Vida de Teófilo Braga...*, p. 32.
- 8 Carta transcrita por José Bruno Carreiro, *ibidem*, p. 38.
- 9 Carta de Teófilo Braga para Francisco Maria Supico, com data de 26 de Janeiro de 1862, transcrita em Francisco Maria Supico, *Mocidade de Theophilo. Subsídios Bio-bibliographicos para o Estudo da Obra de Theophilo Braga*. Lisboa: Instituto Theophileano, 1920, p. 155.
- 10 Cfr. A. do Prado Coelho, *Teófilo Braga. Notas de Estudo*, Lisboa, 1936, p. 6. Separata da *Revista da Faculdade de Letras*, t. 2.
- 11 Carta de Teófilo Braga para Maria do Carmo Barros Leite, de 6 de Outubro de 1865, in *Cartas de Marcelo* (provas tipográficas de um livro projectado mas não publicado por Álvaro Neves, com base numa colecção de cartas disponibilizadas por Teófilo Braga ao compilador), p. 1.
- 12 Eça de Queirós, “Um génio que era um santo”, in *Anthero de Quental. In Memoriam*. Porto: Mathieu Lugan Editor, 1896, p. 485.
- 13 Cfr. Manoel d’Arriaga, “Ao correr da penna (Notas)”, *ibidem*, p. 98-99.
- 14 Cfr. José Bruno Carreiro, *Anthero de Quental. Subsídios para a Sua Biografia*. Ponta Delgada: Instituto Cultural/Braga: Livraria Editora Pax, 1981, vol. 1, pp. 164-170.
- 15 Ciado in Francisco Maria Supico, *Mocidade de Theophilo...*, p. 168.
- 16 Cfr. João Machado de Faria e Maya, “Memórias”, in *Anthero de Quental. In Memoriam*, pp. 154-155.
- 17 “O Antero de Quental é o meu alter ego. Quer introduzir-me no seio da sua rapaziada literária” (Carta de Teófilo Braga para Francisco Maria Supico, de 19 de Abril de 1861, transcrita por Francisco Maria Supico, *Mocidade de Theophilo...*, p. 139).
- 18 Teófilo Braga, “Autobiographia mental de um pensador isolado”, in *Quarenta annos de vida litteraria*, p. vii.
- 19 Cfr. Olga de Moraes Sarmiento, *Theophilo Braga (Notas e Commentarios)*. Lisboa: Tipografia da Imprensa Lucas & C.<sup>a</sup>, 1925, pp. 49-50.
- 20 Cfr. Amadeu Carvalho Homem, *A Ideia Republicana em Portugal. O Contributo de Teófilo Braga*, pp. 27-29.
- 21 Cfr. Fran Paxêco, *A Escola de Coimbra...*, pp. 80-81.
- 22 Carta de Teófilo Braga para Francisco Maria Supico, de 25 de Abril de 1864, transcrita em José Bruno Carreiro, *Vida de Teófilo Braga...*, p. 46.
- 23 Cfr. Joaquim de Araújo, “Ensaio de bibliographia antheriana”, in *Anthero de Quental. In Memoriam*, p. XLVII.
- 24 Cfr. *Quinquagenario. 1858 a 1908. Cincoenta Annos de Actividade mental de Theophilo Braga julgados pela critica contemporanea de tres gerações litterarias*, p. 108.
- 25 Carta referida na nota 22, p. 46.
- 26 Carta de Teófilo Braga para Francisco Maria Supico, de 22 de Maio de 1864, *ibidem*.
- 27 Carta de Teófilo Braga para Francisco Maria Supico, de 27 de Junho de 1864, *ibidem*, p. 47.
- 28 Cfr. Francisco Maria Supico, *Mocidade de Theophilo...*, pp. 231-234.
- 29 Carta de Teófilo Braga a Francisco Maria Supico, de 20 de Maio de 1864, *ibidem*, p. 220.
- 30 Cfr. Teophilo Braga, *As Modernas Ideias na Litteratura Portuguesa*, vol. 2, p. 312.
- 31 João Gaspar Simões, *Vida e Obra de Eça de Queirós*. Amadora: Livraria Bertrand, 1980, 3.<sup>a</sup> ed., pp. 56-57.
- 32 Cfr. António Feliciano de Castilho, “Crítica Literária”, in Alberto Ferreira/Maria José Marinho, *Bom Senso e Bom Gosto (A Questão Coimbrã)*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 1985, 2.<sup>a</sup> ed., pp. 175-230.
- 33 Cfr. Antero de Quental, “Bom Senso e Bom Gosto”, *ibidem*, pp. 231-247.
- 34 Cfr. Teófilo Braga, “As Teocracias Literárias”, *ibidem*, pp. 331-341.
- 35 Amadeu Carvalho Homem, *Do Romantismo ao Realismo. Temas de Cultura Portuguesa (Século XIX)*, Porto: Fundação Eng.<sup>o</sup> António de Almeida, 2005, p. 56.
- 36 *Ibidem*.
- 37 “Digamos a verdade toda. O Sr. Castilho deve a sua celebridade à infelicidade de ser cego. O que se espera de um cego? Apenas habilidade. É uma celebridade triste porque tem origem na compaixão, e a compaixão fatiga-se” (Teófilo Braga, “As Teocracias Literárias”, pp. 339-340).
- 38 Carta de Teófilo Braga a Maria do Carmo Barros Leite, de 15 de Janeiro de 1866, Biblioteca Pública de Ponta Delgada – Espólio de Teófilo Braga, cx. n.º 20 de correspondência.
- 39 Carta de Teófilo Braga a Maria do Carmo Barros Leite, de 4 de Março de 1866, *ibidem*.
- 40 Carta de Teófilo Braga a Maria do Carmo Barros Leite, de 14 de Abril de 1866, *ibidem*.
- 41 Cfr. Francisco Maria Supico, *Mocidade de Theophilo...*, pp. 250-254.
- 42 “Concorri à cadeira de Economia Política da Academia Politécnica do Porto. Deitaram-me onze favas pretas. António Girão, então lente do estabelecimento, disse que só um concorrente era água. Foi votado um cunhado de um membro do júri...” (Entrevista com Teófilo Braga conduzida por Rocha Martins, “Cincoenta annos de litteratura”, in *Ilustração Portuguesa*, 2.<sup>a</sup> série, 1.<sup>o</sup> semestre, Lisboa, 1906, p. 22).
- 43 Carta de Alexandre Herculano a Oliveira Martins, in *Quarenta annos de vida litteraria (1860-1900)*, p. 78 (nt. 1 da p. 77).
- 44 Cfr. *História da Universidade de Coimbra nas suas relações com a instrução publica portugueza*, vol. 4 – 1801 a 1872. Lisboa: Typographia da Academia Real das Sciencias, 1902, pp. 546-554.
- 45 Veja-se o depoimento de Sampaio Bruno sobre Moreira de Sousa na obra *Os Modernos Publicistas Portuguezes*. Porto: Livraria Chardron, 1906, p. 307.
- 46 Leia-se as considerações iniciais de Teófilo Braga na *Visão dos Tempos*. t. 1 - *Cyclo da Fatalidade*. Porto: Livraria Internacional de Ernesto Chardron/Casa Editora M. Lugan, Successor, 1894.
- 47 Para Teófilo Braga, a originalidade do trabalho de Comte consistiu em estabelecer a justa dependência entre as ciências e a filosofia, tarefa até então gorada pelo excesso de especialização científica e pelo apriorismo das especulações. Considerou, por isso, “a missão de Augusto Comte na história intelectual da Humanidade” como “brilhante e decisiva no intuito, mas transitória na forma” (“Disciplina mental”, in *O Positivismo*, Primeiro Anno, n.º 1, Outubro-Novembro, Porto: Livraria Universal de Magalhães & Moniz-Editores, 1878, p. 14.

PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

- 48 Cfr. Amadeu Carvalho Homem, *Teófilo Braga. Ramalho Ortigão. Antero de Quental. Diálogos Difíceis*. Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade, 2009, pp. 92-94.
- 49 Albino Forjaz de Sampaio, *Grilhetas*. Lisboa: Empresa Literária Fluminense, 1916, p. 127.
- 50 Hernâni Cidade, *Doutor Teófilo Braga. As Directrizes da Sua Obra de História Literária*, p. 5.
- 51 Eugénio de Castro, *Cartas de Torna-viagem*. Lisboa: Lumen/Coimbra: Atlantida, 1926, vol. 1, p. 47.
- 52 Mateus Moreno, “Dr. Teófilo Braga”, in *Alma Nova*, n.º 13-15, 3.ª série, vol. 2, Lisboa, Janeiro-Março de 1924, p. 13.
- 53 A. R. Galiano Tavares, *Prateleira de Insignificâncias. Um Ano de Modesto Jornalismo*. Porto, Empr. Indust. Gráfica do Porto, [s. d.], pp. 40-41.
- 54 Cfr. Teixeira Bastos, *Theophilo Braga e a Sua Obra*, pp. 14-16.
- 55 Para um conhecimento mais minucioso da forma como se desenvolveu o plano de publicação da revista *O Positivismo* leia-se António Ferrão, *Teófilo Braga e o Positivismo em Portugal. Com um Núcleo de Correspondência de Júlio de Matos para Teófilo Braga*.
- 56 Amadeu Carvalho Homem, *A Ideia Republicana em Portugal...*, p. 65.
- 57 J. D. Ramalho Ortigão, *Theophilo Braga. Esboço biographico*, p. 16.
- 58 Albino Forjaz de Sampaio, *Grilhetas*, pp. 127-128.
- 59 Olga de Moraes Sarmento, *Theophilo Braga...*, p. 25.
- 60 Teófilo Braga, *Soluções Positivas da Política Portuguesa*. Porto: Livraria Chardron, 1912, vol. 1, p. 199.
- 61 Teófilo Braga, “Os nossos fiéis aliados”, in *A Vanguarda*, n.º 7, 20 de Junho de 1880, p.1, col. 1.
- 62 Teófilo Braga, *Soluções Positivas...*, p. 245.
- 63 Carta de Teófilo Braga a Francisco Maria Supico, de 21 de Janeiro de 1887, in José Bruno Carreiro, *Vida de Teófilo Braga...*, pp. 81-82.
- 64 O primeiro filho do casal não vingou, tendo falecido em Fevereiro de 1869, pouco depois do nascimento.
- 65 Carta de Teófilo Braga a sua irmã Maria José, de 4 de Abril de 1887, in José Bruno Carreiro, *Vida de Teófilo Braga...*, pp. 83-84.
- 66 Cfr. Teixeira Bastos, *Theophilo Braga e a Sua Obra*, pp. 17-21; *Cartas de Teófilo Braga a António Tomás Pires (1883-1911)*. Prefácio e notas de Eurico Gama. Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 1968 (Separata da *Revista da Universidade de Coimbra*, vol. xxiii), p. 22, nt. 32.
- 67 Cfr. José Bruno Carreiro, *Vida de Teófilo Braga...*, pp. 84-86.
- 68 Cfr. Teófilo Braga, *Discursos sobre a Constituição Política da Republica Portuguesa. Proferidos na Discussão da Generalidade e Especialidade, nas Sessões de 18 de Julho e 2 de Agosto de 1911, na Assembleia Nacional Constituinte*, p. 23.
- 69 Cfr. Amadeu Carvalho Homem, *A Propaganda Republicana (1870-1910)*. Coimbra: Coimbra Editora (distrib.), 1990, pp. 27-50.
- 70 Cfr. Homem Christo, *Monarchicos e Republicanos. Apontamentos para a História Contemporânea*. Porto: Tip. da Agência de Publicidade Nunes e Rocha, 1928, pp. 303-312.
- 71 Cfr. Amadeu Carvalho Homem, *Da Monarquia à República*. Viseu: Palimage Editores, 2001, pp. 111-112.
- 72 Cfr. *Quinquagenario. 1858 a 1908...*
- 73 Teófilo Braga, “Bernardino Machado – 28 de Julho de 1907”, in *Memórias do Doutor Teófilo Braga. 1843-1924*, p. 448.
- 74 José Relvas, *Memórias Políticas*. Lisboa: Ed. Terra Livre, 1977, p. 98.
- 75 Declarações prestadas ao Dr. Luís de Oliveira Guimarães e transcritas no artigo de Miranda e Costa “Teófilo Braga. Um micaelense que foi um grande Português”, in *Primeiro Centenário do Nascimento do Doutor Teófilo Braga*, p. 148.
- 76 Cfr. Amadeu Carvalho Homem, *A Ideia Republicana em Portugal...*, pp. 75-77.
- 77 Miranda e Costa, “Teófilo Braga. Um micaelense...”, p. 149.
- 78 Citado por Rocha Martins, “Nos bastidores da história contemporânea – Ditos, sínteses e comentários de Teófilo”, in *Fantoches*, n.º 58, 9 de Fevereiro de 1924, p. 13.
- 79 Cfr. Teófilo Braga, *Discursos sobre a Constituição Política da Republica Portuguesa...*
- 80 J. A. da Silva Cordeiro, *A Crise em seus Aspectos Moraes. Introdução a uma Bibliotheca de Psychologia Individual e Collectiva*. Coimbra: F. França Amado Editor, 1896, p. 383.
- 81 Sublinhado nosso.
- 82 Carta de Teófilo Braga a Joaquim de Araújo, de 17 de Outubro de 1911, in *Memórias do Doutor Teófilo Braga...*, p. 494.
- 83 Cfr. Marques Guedes, “A livraria e a casa de Teófilo”, *O Primeiro de Janeiro*, 60.º ano, 8 de Dezembro de 1928, p. 1, col. 2.
- 84 Carta de Teófilo Braga a Fran Paxêco, de 6 de Abril de 1914, in Fran Paxêco, *Cartas de Teófilo*. Lisboa: Portugália Editora, 1924, p. 79.
- 85 Cfr. Álvaro Neves, “Notas teofilianas”, in *Memórias do Doutor Teófilo Braga...*, p. 28; Gomes de Carvalho, “O maior de todos os democratas”, *ibidem*, pp. 212-213; Olga de Moraes Sarmento, *Theophilo Braga...*, pp. 30-31.
- 86 Carta de Teófilo Braga aos editores Lello & Irmão, de 26 de Janeiro de 1924, transcrita por Álvaro Neves, “Doutor Teófilo Braga. Bio-bibliografia”, in *Memórias do Doutor Teófilo Braga...*, p. 465.
- 87 Mateus Moreno, “Dr. Teófilo Braga”, *Alma Nova*, n.º 13-15, 3.ª série, vol. 2, p. 13.
- 88 “Um leilão. Na casa onde viveu Teófilo Braga foram ontem vendidos os seus móveis e muitos objectos de seu uso”, *Diário de Notícias*, 65.º ano, n.º 22 670, 11 de Março de 1929, p. 1, col. 2.

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

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# João Tamagnini de Sousa Barbosa e a Primeira República Portuguesa

FERNANDO MENDONÇA FAVA\*

## INTRODUÇÃO

Por este ano de 2011, até 5 de Outubro, continuam a decorrer, em Portugal, as comemorações do Centenário da República, instaurada, como se sabe, com a queda da Monarquia Constitucional em 5 de Outubro de 1910. Ora, precisamente em 2011, perfazem-se, igualmente, cem anos que o regime republicano foi fundado nesse imenso país que é a China. E os paralelismos e interacções entre os dois fenómenos sociais não se ficam por aqui; lembremos um pouco que o denominado pai da República Chinesa encontrou no então Macau português, e republicano, todo o apoio para a sua causa e para a sua luta. O facto

aparece documentado em carta de agradecimento, datada de 23 de Junho de 1916 e escrita, num francês irrepreensível, pelo próprio punho de Sun Yat Sen 孫逸仙 ao governador José Carlos da Maia, ele próprio um dos celebrados heróis da revolução republicana portuguesa.

Mas, a história do grande país da Ásia, e muito especialmente a história de Macau, cruza-se em muitos mais outros pontos com a história da pequena nação da ponta ocidental da Europa. No âmbito desta realidade, propomo-nos trazer aqui um curto esboço biográfico de uma personalidade que, nascida justamente naquele território do sul da China, teve, no contexto histórico da denominada Primeira República Portuguesa, uma importância e um protagonismo, a todos os títulos assinaláveis.

Falamos do macaense João Tamagnini de Sousa Barbosa, de quem, e em breve exposição, daremos nota de um percurso de vida, das suas convicções ideológicas, da sua carreira militar e profissional, mas sobretudo abordaremos o *homo politicus*, porque é essa faceta a que mais se prende a esse período conturbado, porém historicamente rico, que foi a República Portuguesa, oferecendo-se-nos assim, e em contextualização, o ensejo de a retratar.

## BREVES NOTAS BIOGRÁFICAS

A 30 de Dezembro do ano de 1883, nasceu, em Macau, João Tamagnini de Sousa Barbosa, filho do conselheiro e inspector-geral da Fazenda do Ultramar, Artur Tamagnini da Mota Barbosa, e de sua esposa, D. Fátima Carolina Correia Barbosa. Seu irmão mais velho, Artur Tamagnini de Sousa Barbosa, nascido em Lisboa, foi governador-geral do território macaense por três períodos distintos: 1918 a 1919; 1926 a 1931; e 1937 a 1940.

João Tamagnini ou Tamagnini Barbosa, nome porque ficou mais conhecido, fez os seus primeiros estudos no Colégio Jesuíta de Macau, indo depois para Lisboa onde frequentou a Escola do Exército e a Escola Politécnica de Lisboa, graduando-se em engenharia militar. Militar de carreira e engenheiro, desempenhou, enquanto tal, importante papel em Moçambique, chegando ao elevado cargo de director dos Portos e Caminhos de Ferro. Naquela antiga colónia portuguesa foi ainda presidente das Câmaras Municipais de Lourenço Marques e de Inhambane.

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## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

## PERCURSO POLÍTICO

Acerca do seu percurso político, vemos que, após o advento da República em Portugal, o então tenente Tamagnini Barbosa militou no Centro Republicano Radical Português e por este grupúsculo partidário se candidatou, como deputado, às eleições para a Assembleia Nacional Constituinte, realizadas a 28 de Maio desse mesmo ano de 1911. Data igualmente de 1911 a sua adesão à Maçonaria, com o nome simbólico de Wagner, ocorrendo a iniciação na loja Pátria e Liberdade, de Lisboa.

O Centro Radical Republicano, fundado a 14 de Maio de 1911, agrupava, em torno de um compromisso programático, republicanos federalistas, socialistas independentes e personalidades republicanas dissidentes do Partido Republicano Português, onde predominavam o peso político e o prestígio de Afonso Costa.<sup>1</sup> Com um programa e uma linguagem ostensivamente revolucionários, os republicanos radicais pretendiam o afastamento e/ou neutralização total de monárquicos e católicos, procurando assim a criação de uma República integral e progressivamente socializante, tudo consubstanciado num discurso que era dirigido aos estratos sociais mais populares e evado da presunção de educar politicamente o proletariado. Um tal projecto, já pelo extremismo das suas propostas, já pelo anti-democratismo (obstinada oposição ao Partido Democrático de Afonso Costa) de que era portador, dificilmente encontraria eco na sociedade portuguesa de então, razão pela qual foi praticamente inexistente a sua expressão eleitoral. Veremos posteriormente estes revolucionários radicais a envolverem-se directamente na tentativa revolucionária de 27 de Abril de 1913 contra o primeiro governo monopartidário de Afonso Costa. O falhanço estrondoso dessa revolta ditou o fim do Partido Republicano Radical Português (o movimento havia-se transformado em partido em Outubro de 1911) que desapareceu da cena política portuguesa a partir desse acontecimento.

Entretanto, Tamagnini Barbosa filia-se no Partido Republicano Evolucionista, fundado em Fevereiro de 1912 em torno da figura de António José de Almeida<sup>2</sup> e dos seus mais directos acompanhantes. Ocupando uma posição de centro-direita no espectro político republicano, o Partido Evolucionista pretendia sobretudo destacar-se das teses e medidas mais radicais defendidas pelo Partido Democrático de Afonso

Costa. Neste sentido recusa o radicalismo anti-clerical, propõe amnistias a monárquicos e sindicalistas acusados de crimes contra o regime e advoga, enfim, uma aproximação dos portugueses em torno de ideais patrióticos, designadamente o apreço e respeito pela Constituição Republicana de 1911.

No âmbito da prossecução da sua carreira política, em Janeiro de 1916, Tamagnini é proclamado deputado por Moçambique e, nessa qualidade, toma assento na Câmara do Parlamento. No exercício destas funções, usou, naturalmente, da sua condição de pessoa conhecedora da realidade Moçambique para actuar em defesa do que inculcava serem os interesses legítimos daquela colónia. Nesse mesmo sentido, tentou influenciar positivamente orçamentos e empréstimos monetários e desburocratizar planos e acções, bastas vezes considerando o Ministério das Colónias um entrave ao que reputava ser o desejável e possível desenvolvimento económico, administrativo e social de Moçambique. Por outro lado, como oficial do Exército, actuou no sentido de chamar a atenção da Câmara para várias questões que considerava como insuficiências no funcionamento da instituição militar, mormente aspectos que se prendiam com a reorganização do Exército e com a carreira dos respectivos oficiais e sargentos. Eram assuntos de subida importância, justo num tempo de vigência do conflito mundial que veio a ficar historicamente conhecido por *Primeira Guerra Mundial* ou *Grande Guerra*. Lembre-se que, no contexto desta guerra, Portugal teve de actuar militarmente em várias frentes: primeiramente nas suas colónias (Angola e Moçambique) e depois também no *front* europeu, com a chegada à Flandres do primeiro contingente do Corpo Expedicionário Português (CEP) em Fevereiro de 1917.

Ainda quanto à actividade parlamentar de Tamagnini Barbosa, foi notável a empenhada defesa que fez, na arena parlamentar, do comandante Carlos da Maia, governador de Macau de 1914 a 1916. Este, um dos heróis da República, por actos de bravura cometidos durante a Revolução de 5 de Outubro de 1910, era agora acusado de, enquanto no exercício do cargo de governador de Macau, ter feito uma gestão danosa dos negócios e interesses do território.

As acusações, feitas no Parlamento, em 1916-1917, pelo deputado por Macau, Francisco Velhinho Correia, versavam um conjunto vasto de assuntos respeitantes à administração de Carlos da Maia.<sup>3</sup>

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

A objecção e contra-argumentação em defesa do governador foram protagonizadas pelos deputados Tamagnini Barbosa e Vasconcelos e Sá, ocupando-se Tamagnini da questão das obras do porto de Macau. Logo no início da sua primeira intervenção sobre o assunto, em 28 de Maio de 1917, declarou que desejava entrar no debate porque o mesmo dizia respeito a Macau, terra da sua naturalidade, mas que, com referência ao rol de acusações feitas a Carlos da Maia, iria cingir-se tão-somente às que se relacionavam com as obras do porto de mar daquele território sob administração portuguesa. De notar que estas obras envolviam dragagens de desassoreamento e construção dos cais de acostagem, molhes e diques, tudo visando permitir a cabotagem com os portos de Hong Kong, Cantão e rio de Oeste e a navegação de navios de maior tonelagem para outros destinos como Singapura, Batávia, Manila, Xangai, bem ainda como a navegação de embarcações que, além das actividades comerciais, mantinham um significativo transporte de passageiros de e para as povoações do delta de Cantão.

No tocante a este ponto das obras do porto de Macau, consideradas como gritantemente necessárias, as imputações de má gestão feitas ao governo de Carlos da Maia cingiam-se ao seguinte:

1. Havendo um projecto de obras aprovado superiormente pelo Ministério das Colónias,<sup>4</sup> no qual se recomendava a empreitada geral como método de execução mais rápido, mais económico e mais eficiente, o governador Maia acabara por ignorar a recomendação e por fazer as referidas obras por administração directa, contra a indicação de opiniões mais autorizadas e com prejuízo para a Fazenda Nacional.

2. Tendo sido aberto concurso público para o fornecimento de uma draga, foi esse concurso ganho por uma firma japonesa, a *Osaka Iron Works*. Todavia, o governador resolvera comprar a draga em Singapura, aí adquirindo também batelões, rebocadores, vagões, railés e locomotivas, tudo material já usado. Para a compra de tal equipamento não foi pedida a necessária autorização ao Ministério das Colónias. No entender do deputado Velhinho Correia, a aquisição revelara-se ruinosa, posto que a draga, baptizada com o nome *Carlos da Maia*, se encontrava “cansada e velha”, estando mais tempo parada que a funcionar.

3. Em tudo o mais, designadamente movimentos de terras, construção de muros e instalação de ferrovias, as obras tinham seguido de forma atabalhoada e

sem respeito pelo projecto inicial, muito embora as informações do governador Maia para o Ministério das Colónias fossem sempre de que o projecto estava a ser respeitado.

4. Também do ponto de vista administrativo, a situação se mostrava altamente irregular, com ausência de orçamentos prévios, planos, relatórios e contabilidade adequada e organizada.

Usando dos seus conhecimentos teóricos e práticos sobre construções e beneficiações de portos de mar, Tamagnini Barbosa dispôs-se a dar réplica a este conjunto de questões. Obviamente que nesta contenda não estava arredado o factor político-partidário, factor esse que não deixava de pautar a visão dos contendores. Pela leitura das actas das sessões parlamentares que se seguiram pode ver-se que se, de todo, não conseguiu Tamagnini Barbosa desmontar e provar como improcedente o vasto libelo acusatório empreendido por Velhinho Correia, a verdade é que esvaziou de sentido o conteúdo de muitas dessas acusações. Não houve uma tréplica porque, entretanto, Velhinho Correia, também ele oficial do exército, embarcou para o teatro de guerra, na Flandres. O assunto acabou por ficar relegado para um relativo esquecimento, até porque ao momento existiam questões muito graves para resolver, exigindo todas as atenções da governação e do parlamento.

O problema da guerra e a ida de militares portugueses para a frente de batalha, na Europa, constituiu-se como uma questão altamente fracturante no seio da sociedade portuguesa. Após a declaração de guerra a Portugal feita pela Alemanha, na sequência do confisco, pelas autoridades portuguesas, de todos os barcos alemães surtos em portos sob administração lusa, o Congresso da República, reunido a 10 de Março de 1916, proclamou o estado de guerra em todo o território português. Daí nasceu o ministério chamado de *União Sagrada*, à semelhança do que havia acontecido em França com a formação da *Union Sacrée*. Só que em Portugal a União Sagrada não foi além de um acordo entre o Partido Democrático de Afonso Costa e o Partido Evolucionista de António José de Almeida. Os outros partidos e agrupamentos políticos – Partido da União Republicana, o Partido Socialista, a Liga de Amigos de Machado Santos,<sup>5</sup> também conhecida por Centro Reformista ou Partido Reformista – mostraram-se indisponíveis para a formação de um ministério republicano mais alargado, apesar

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II



dos esforços feitos nesse sentido pelo Presidente da República, Bernardino Machado. Tudo isso se passava num país profundamente dividido entre “guerristas” e “antiguerristas”, querendo as expressões significar os que eram a favor da participação portuguesa directamente no conflito e os que eram contra tal participação.

Nessas condições, a União Sagrada, embora formada pelos dois principais partidos republicanos, com António José de Almeida na chefia do Executivo e Afonso Costa na pasta das Finanças, esteve muito longe de assumir os contornos de um efectivo pacto de regime, como se pretendia, e de atingir os objectivos a que inicialmente se propunha, ou seja, unir a família republicana portuguesa em torno de uma questão considerada eminentemente patriótica, a qual era a da entrada de Portugal na guerra. Só com essa entrada, argumentavam os “guerristas”, o país poderia conservar o seu património colonial e, no fim do conflito, sentar-se, de pleno direito e ao lado dos vencedores, à mesa das negociações para exigir indemnizações de guerra.

Mas, mesmo entre os evolucionistas, começaram a surgir sérias dúvidas acerca da eficácia e das possibilidades de êxito de um governo que não conseguira obter um consenso político mais alargado. E das dúvidas passaram às críticas, com a formação, dentro do partido, de uma facção capitaneada pelo professor de medicina da Universidade de Lisboa e futuro Prémio Nobel de Medicina, António Caetano Egas Moniz.<sup>6</sup> A breve trecho, cairia o próprio Governo, na verdade a 25 de Abril de 1917; havia exercido o poder desde 15 de Março de 1916, por conseguinte, por um ano e quarenta dias.

Entrementes, a facção dissidente que se desenhava no interior do Partido Evolucionista vem a formar, no segundo semestre de 1917, o Partido Centrista, partido que se assume como republicano, liberal e moderado. O seu chefe incontestado é Egas Moniz e do rol de importantes personalidades que compõem o seu Directório figura o nome do então capitão João Tamagnini de Sousa Barbosa.<sup>7</sup> No seu programa, divulgado a 20 de Outubro de 1917, está implícita a ideia e a pretensão de o partido se tornar no centro aglutinador de todas as forças políticas do conservadorismo republicano. Na verdade, estamos em presença da primeira tentativa de formar, na ala direita do republicanismo, um grande partido que

Machado Santos.



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

pudesse disputar os pleitos eleitorais com o Partido Democrático, retirando a este a tradicional hegemonia que, neste campo, registava. Não deixava este de ser um objectivo ambicioso, que fará escola, mas que jamais obterá sucesso. Com efeito, de 1919 a 1926, novos esforços surgirão, novos ensaios serão feitos, porém um divisionismo, que se tornará histórico, impedirá, invariavelmente, o surgimento do sonhado grande partido da direita republicana. Neste contexto, o Partido Democrático, herdeiro natural das estruturas do velho Partido Republicano Português e detentor de uma rede bem organizada de cabos eleitorais, ganhará todas as idas às urnas, com excepção de uma, a 10 de Julho de 1921, em que a vitória será obtida pelo Partido Liberal, resultante este de uma fusão, nos finais de 1919, entre evolucionistas, unionistas e centristas.

Caído, como se disse, o Governo da União Sagrada, constitui-se novo ministério, presidido pelo líder do Partido Democrático, Afonso Costa. Mas eram inúmeras as dificuldades que a acção governativa tinha de enfrentar. Em boa verdade, pode afirmar-se que existiam duas frentes: a externa e a interna. A externa, envolvendo o problema da guerra e todo o cortejo de desgraças daí decorrentes: mortos, feridos, estropiados, desaparecidos; a interna, onde a complicação maior era a das subsistências, aí se filiando uma esteira longa de males: falta de géneros alimentícios, de produtos energéticos, recusa das comunidades rurais em fornecer produtos da terra a Lisboa, alta continuada de preços, contrabandos, açambarcamentos, mercado negro, novo-riquismo. Mas também não faltavam, nesta frente, adversidades de outra natureza, tais como agitação no interior das forças armadas e acções de propaganda de minorias politicamente organizadas visando a desacreditação e queda do governo. Em Maio de 1917 rebentou em Lisboa a famosa *Revolução da Batata* – uma semana inteira em que o proletariado lisboeta saqueou armazéns e lojas de víveres, padarias, mercearias. Decretada a lei marcial, os assaltantes enfrentaram as forças da ordem – Exército, GNR, Guarda Fiscal e Polícia – em lutas que, de acordo com os jornais da época, se saldaram por quatro dezenas de mortos, cerca de 120 feridos e 500 prisões. Deslustrava-se a imagem de Afonso Costa e eram constantes os boatos de golpe de estado. No interior do Partido Democrático começavam a instalar-se desinteligências graves.

Em Novembro, Afonso Costa ausentou-se para Paris, para participar numa conferência promovida

pelos aliados. Decerto não por acaso, a conspiração, que há muito vinha fervilhando, pôs-se mais activamente em marcha.

O projecto sedicioso envolvia unionistas, centristas, os reformistas de Machado Santos, alguns sindicalistas, monárquicos, católicos e, no sector militar, sargentos e oficiais de baixa patente que se opunham mais determinadamente à ida para frente de guerra na Europa. À cabeça de toda esta envolvência aparecia uma personagem politicamente desconhecida, de seu nome Sidónio Bernardino Cardoso da Silva Pais. Major de artilharia e lente coimbrão de matemática, fora, até Março de 1916, ministro plenipotenciário de Portugal em Berlim. Politicamente próximo da União Republicana de Brito Camacho, conspirara contra a União Sagrada e contra o intervencionismo. Nesse afã, frequentara as reuniões feitas na sede do jornal *A Luta* e na Farmácia Durão, sita no Chiado, juntando-se ao comité revolucionário em que pontificavam nomes como Alves Roçadas, Vicente Ferreira, Vasconcelos e Sá e Tamagnini Barbosa. Tentava agora assumir o papel de chefe e de guia de todos os descontentes.

Dispondo de todos estes empenhos e de apoios financeiros dados à causa pela alta burguesia e por grandes proprietários agrícolas, o movimento anti-afonsista e antiguerrista conseguiu a adesão de algumas unidades militares da guarnição de Lisboa. As forças revoltosas, assim constituídas, saíram à rua ao anoitecer do dia 5 de Dezembro de 1917, assentando arraiais no alto do Parque Eduardo VII. A resposta governamental foi fraca, própria de um executivo débil e, ao momento, privado do seu chefe, Afonso Costa. O desânimo e a desorientação instalados no Governo sob presidência interina do ministro da Guerra, major Norton de Matos, acabaram por oferecer a vitória aos revoltosos.

Ironicamente, tudo isto se passa num tempo em que Afonso Costa acreditava que tinha resolvido os problemas do abastecimento em Portugal. De facto, o hábil estadista, na sua reunião e negociação com os outros líderes aliados, havia conseguido a abertura de linhas de crédito, nos Estados Unidos da América e na Grã-Bretanha, que possibilitariam a compra do trigo e do carvão de que o país necessitava, até um ano depois do, já então esperado, fim da guerra.<sup>8</sup>

O certo é que o movimento dezembrista<sup>9</sup> chegara ao poder por via revolucionária e aí se conservaria por um ano, até Dezembro de 1918. O chefe incontestado era Sidónio Pais. Dos diversos governos que se

PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

sucederam fez sempre parte Tamagnini Barbosa: de Dezembro de 1917 até 11 de Maio de 1918, como ministro das Colónias; em 11 de Maio de 1918, assume a pasta da Guerra; quatro dias depois, a 15 de Maio, face ao ordenamento jurídico do regime presidencialista de Sidónio, todos os ministros passam a secretários de Estado, passando Tamagnini Barbosa a estar à frente da influente Secretaria de Estado do Interior; em 9 de Outubro, Tamagnini transita para a chefia da Secretaria de Estado das Finanças.

A República Nova, expressão tão de agrado de Sidónio para designar o regime de que se assumia como principal mentor, foi, por todo o seu tempo, um agrupamento heteróclito, onde conviveram (mal) diversas sensibilidades do conservadorismo republicano, mas onde também tinham assento, por vezes relevante, monárquicos e católicos. O cimento forte que os unia era o ódio a Afonso Costa e à política belicista do Partido Democrático, duas razões que vieram a constituir-se, afinal, como lemes principais da governação. Esta foi sendo feita sem programa político, com recurso a medidas avulsas, ditadas por necessidades pontuais. Daí resultou uma imensa produção de Decretos de iniciativa governamental (quase dois mil num ano), face a uma total ou quase total inoperância de um Parlamento que só formalmente existia. A breve trecho, o “Presidente-Rei”, como lhe chamou Fernando Pessoa, viu as estruturas de chefia do seu Estado e da sua governação serem abandonadas pelos republicanos que, de início, o haviam apoiado. Rodeou-se, então, de monárquicos e passou a cultivar cuidadosamente a sua relação com as camadas populares, visando por essa via manter-se no poder. Assim, sempre envergando a sua vistosa farda, recamada de estrelas, voltou-se para digressões pelo país que envolviam banhos de multidão, para uma presença constante em paradas militares, visitas a centros de assistência à pobreza e a hospitais e participação activa em cerimónias religiosas, em que o irmão Carlyle (nome maçónico de Sidónio Pais), ajoelhando-se nas igrejas, adoptava uma postura mística que tanto fascinava as senhoras.

Como atrás vimos, Sidónio havia hipotecado, logo desde início, a sua revolução aos interesses dos grandes agrários e da alta burguesia. Não podia governar

contra eles e, assim sendo, num contexto de impossível conciliação entre empregados e empregadores, teve de governar contra os direitos e as expectativas dos trabalhadores, sobretudo trabalhadores rurais e das fábricas, justo aqueles que o tinham apoiado, cansados das condições de vida ao tempo do governo de Afonso Costa. A contradição saiu-lhes cara, dado que, no imediato e mau grado as promessas iniciais, as suas reivindicações e lutas começaram a ser objecto de feroz repressão. Em Outubro de 1918, a União Operária Nacional (UON) convocou uma greve geral, que teve enorme efectivação e impacto em Lisboa e no Alentejo. A resposta por parte das polícias foi violentíssima e desproporcionada, espalhando o terror pelos campos do Baixo Alentejo.

A morte de Sidónio Pais, assassinado a tiro na estação do Rossio a 14 de Dezembro de 1918, precisamente por um representante desses trabalhadores rurais que ele tinha ludibriado e perseguido, não pode deixar de ser entendida como o reflexo natural da política insensata e imprudente que empreendeu. Circunstância que mais tarde, o poeta Guerra Junqueiro retrataria, em entrevista a um jornal, onde, com fina ironia, qualificou Sidónio Pais de “Fabricante de Tragédias”.<sup>10</sup>

Morto Sidónio Pais, segue-se uma situação política e social extremamente confusa. A assunção, por parte do elenco governamental, do pleno exercício dos poderes executivos e a eleição de um novo Presidente da República foram actos realizados nos termos da Constituição de 1911, então reposta em vigor. Com isso se fazia letra morta dos rudimentos constitucionais sidonistas, os quais não conferiam ao Congresso da República poderes electivos. E, no entanto, foi este mesmo órgão que, a 16 de Dezembro de 1918, elegeu para a Presidência da República o vice-almirante João do Canto e Castro Silva Antunes,<sup>11</sup> um monárquico que desempenhava o cargo de secretário de Estado da Marinha, desde Outubro desse ano. Note-se, a este propósito da eleição de um Presidente da República em circunstâncias tão especiais, que o convite, formulado pelo colectivo governamental (detentor do poder) foi primeiramente endereçado a Tamagnini Barbosa, que recusou com a alegação de se sentir ainda muito novo para um cargo que considerava ser de fim de carreira política.

Não se dispondo a ser Chefe de Estado, foi, no entanto, Chefe de Governo porque para tanto o

Sidónio Bernardino Cardoso da Silva Pais.

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II



Henrique Mitchell de Paiva Couceiro.

convidou o Presidente Canto e Castro, com indicação expressa de formar ministério. Tamagnini assim o fez, recorrendo, em boa parte, a elementos do anterior executivo. De acordo com disposições governamentais então tomadas, ficavam também repostas a figuras institucionais do presidente de ministério, bem assim como as dos ministros (recorde-se que em tempo de Sidónio Pais, após a sua eleição para Presidente da República, os ministros haviam passado a secretários de Estado).

Agitavam-se, porém, os militares, organizados nos chamados *Núcleos de Guarnição* e depois nas proclamadas *Juntas Militares*.<sup>12</sup> Os Núcleos tinham surgido, ainda em tempo de Sidónio Pais, como mais uma consequência da sua desatinada política de se rodear de monárquicos, provendo com estes as chefias e os mais altos e estratégicos cargos do sector militar. O resultado foi o aparecimento dum exército fortemente politizado e extremado em duas facções principais: de um lado, uma oficialidade monarcófila que se havia mostrado fortemente antiguerrista e que temia o avanço dos democráticos (que apelidavam de “seita demagógica”); do outro, oficiais de fundadas

convicções republicanas, que viam, com fundamento, nas acções e movimentações dos primeiros, o perigo de uma tentativa de restauração monárquica.

Na verdade, em articulação com alguns dirigentes monárquicos,<sup>13</sup> mais ligados a Paiva Couceiro,<sup>14</sup> o verdadeiro e superior objectivo das Juntas Militares era a restauração da monarquia em Portugal. Ao momento, mostravam apenas os seus intentos de tomar conta da situação política, intervindo nas composições governamentais ou promovendo a formação de um governo militar que “jugulasse de vez a fúria revolucionária”.<sup>15</sup> Num primeiro ensaio de força, e sob o pretexto de desconfiança política quanto a algumas personalidades governamentais como Egas Moniz e Afonso de Melo,<sup>16</sup> saíram de quartéis na madrugada de 24 de Dezembro de 1918 os regimentos de cavalaria de Lisboa, acompanhados por elementos das baterias de Queluz e por alunos da Escola de Guerra. Sob o comando do general Jaime de Castro foram acampar no Parque Eduardo VII, de onde enviaram delegados a conferenciar em Belém com Canto e Castro e com Tamagnini Barbosa. Da conferência resultou que continuaria em funções o governo de Tamagnini, tal como estava constituído, aguardando-se melhor oportunidade para introduzir alterações que, de alguma forma, satisfizessem as pretensões das *Juntas Militares*. Após estas conversações, os sublevados, sob a inclemência duma chuva contínua que se fazia sentir, levantaram arraiais e retiraram para Queluz.

Para Canto e Castro e Tamagnini Barbosa que, a todo o transe, queriam evitar derramamentos de sangue, a retirada dos militares constituía uma pequena vitória, uma vez que não só não houvera confrontos, como ainda no difícil plano negocial haviam ganho tempo, não se obrigando, pelo menos no imediato, a satisfazer qualquer das reivindicações das Juntas. De resto, o movimento golpista era condenado publicamente por muitos sectores e membros das Forças Armadas e pela quase totalidade da imprensa. Junto da opinião pública lisboeta, e duma forma geral em todo o país, as Juntas não gozavam de apoios, bem pelo contrário, eram vigorosamente verberadas. Contudo, ainda nessa manhã de 24 de Dezembro, os insurrectos fizeram chegar a Tamagnini Barbosa uma comunicação na qual colocavam uma série de condições para uma retirada definitiva para os quartéis. Designadamente, pretendiam a queda do Ministério e a constituição de outro, integrando pessoas por si



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

indicadas, e reclamavam ainda a prerrogativa de serem eles (militares) a escolher os comandos para os corpos de tropas do país. Tamagnini de imediato taxou as reivindicações de inaceitáveis.

A guerra civil, opondo realistas a republicanos, avizinhava-se, perigosamente. Porém, na sequência de esforços mediados por Canto e Castro e por Tamagnini Barbosa, o Governo e as Juntas chegaram aparentemente a um entendimento, à luz do qual se procedeu a uma recomposição ministerial que afeiçoava o Executivo um pouco mais às exigências dos militares. Apresentado no Parlamento a 9 de Janeiro, o novo Governo mereceu críticas da parte dos vários grupos parlamentares, com excepção da minoria católica, sendo Tamagnini acusado de andar às ordens das Juntas. No Senado, também Machado Santos não se eximiu a proferir opiniões cáusticas quanto à actuação do Chefe do Executivo, chamando-lhe “comerciante de secos e molhados”.<sup>17</sup> Em todo o caso, o remodelado Governo não foi inviabilizado pelas Câmaras do Parlamento.

Todavia, as cedências feitas aos monárquicos das Juntas Militares tiveram o efeito de exaltarem os ânimos dos republicanos. Não tardou muito para que essa exaltação desse lugar a uma revolta republicana com epicentro em Santarém e com focos de rebelião em Lisboa e na Covilhã. As tropas enviadas pelo Governo dominaram as insurreições em pouco tempo e sem dificuldades de maior, excepção feita para Santarém que continuava a resistir. Da cidade, o comandante das forças amotinadas, coronel Jaime de Figueiredo, enviou ao Presidente da República um telegrama, reconhecendo a sua autoridade de Chefe de Estado e justificando a revolta como um meio para libertar o país e os órgãos de soberania da coacção das Juntas Militares. No documento, propõe a organização de um governo “retintamente republicano”.<sup>18</sup> Decidido a não contemporizar, o Governo fez deslocar tropas de Lisboa, do Alentejo e de Coimbra, pondo cerco a Santarém. A estas tropas juntaram-se outras, vindas do norte, enviadas pela Junta Militar e comandadas pelo coronel Silva Ramos, acto que, decerto, obedeceu à dúplice intenção de, por um lado, combater os republicanos (inimigos de sempre) e, por outro lado, afirmar a ideia da existência da Junta como centro de poder alternativo ao Governo de Tamagni. Também a famosa *Coluna Negra*,<sup>19</sup> franco-atiradora e comandada por Teófilo Duarte, um dos cadetes de Sidónio, se pôs a caminho da cidade ribatejana. Cercados por efectivos

poderosos e sujeitos a aturado fogo de artilharia, os sitiados, ao meio-dia de 15 de Janeiro de 1919, mostraram sinais de quererem negociar uma rendição e acabaram por depor as armas ao fim da tarde, não perante o comandante geral das forças militares atacantes, general Tamagnini de Abreu, mas ante a figura de Teófilo Duarte, que era apenas tenente. Na sua declaração de rendição, os revoltosos justificaram tão insólita atitude com o reconhecimento na pessoa de Teófilo Duarte da sua dignidade de governador de Cabo Verde (investido nesse cargo por Sidónio Pais), facto que o transformava no interlocutor mais importante. Não é difícil adivinharem-se outras motivações por parte dos revoltosos, designadamente a intenção de apoucarem o Governo, uma vez que em todo aquele contexto, Teófilo Duarte agira sempre por conta própria, não estando mandatado pelas instâncias governamentais para quaisquer dos actos que cometera.

Esta aventura republicana, em si própria, e a benignidade com que os seus autores foram julgados pôs de sobreaviso os próceres das Juntas Militares. Suspeitavam, aliás com fundamento, de cumplicidades entre insurrectos e membros do Governo para a criação de um facto (a revolta) que se mostrasse como uma contraposição forte às actividades das Juntas Militares, com isso visando a subvalorização do peso e influência destas no xadrez da política nacional. Certas afirmações produzidas mais tarde pelo deputado dezembrista, Cunha Leal,<sup>20</sup> implicado no movimento, dão alguma consistência à suspeição das Juntas. Com efeito, Cunha Leal declarará na Câmara de Deputados que, por amigos do Presidente do Ministério, lhes foi dito, a eles, revoltosos, o seguinte:

“Nós não temos forças para combater as Juntas Militares, mas revoltam-se vocês provando ao Governo que essa força existe, pois assim o Governo em lugar de os combater, dar-lhes-á as mãos”.<sup>21</sup>

O conhecimento dessa situação terá levado os responsáveis máximos pelas Juntas Militares a apressar os seus desígnios. Com efeito, a 19 de Janeiro, na cidade do Porto, reunida toda a guarnição militar no largo do Monte Pedral, deu-se o acto formal de restauração da monarquia. Presidiu às cerimónias, Henrique Mitchell de Paiva Couceiro (o cabecilha das incursões monárquicas) que, a partir de então, passou a intitular-se *Regente do Reino de Portugal*, em nome de D. Manuel II. No seguimento, várias outras cidades do

Diario da Junta



Governativa do Reino

de Portugal

Porto, 19 de Janeiro de 1919.

# RESTAURAÇÃO DA MONARCHIA

Hoje, pela uma hora e meia da tarde, as forças da guarnição desta cidade, reunidas no Largo do Monte Pedral, aclamaram a restauração da Monarchia Portuguesa na pessoa do Seu Augusto representante o Senhor D. Manoel II.

Pelas três horas da tarde foi a restauração aclamada entusiasmamente pelo povo em frente do Governo Civil, constituindo-se a Junta Governativa do Reino de Portugal que prestou juramento e tomou posse, como consta das seguintes proclamações:

Portuguezes!

A lucta das facções, movidas unicamente pela ambição do Poder, vem de ha muito impedindo a normalidade da vida social em todas as suas manifestações e promovendo a anarchia que alastra e se arrega por uma forma tão grave que, se alguma força de dentro da Nação não consegue pôr um dique ao avanço de tantas dissoluções crescentes, o desfecho fatal — quem ousa, hoje, duvidal-o? — só poderá ser uma liquidação vergonhosa sob a tutela de estrangeiros.

A temerosa crise nacional desenvolve-se cada vez mais, precisamente no momento em que as Potencias do Occidente da Europa tratam de regularizar-se e de relazer-se, e os seus Governos, reunidos em Assembléa Internacional, lançam as bases da Sociedade das Nações e deliberam e decidem a respeito dos principios fundamentais da Constituição dos Povos, suas linhas de fronteira e processos de economia. Damos, póntanto, o espectáculo da maxima instabilidade politica e da maxima incapacidade administrativa, precisamente no momento em que mais indispensavel nos seria merecer bom conceito perante os outros povos do mundo, e demonstrar, por manifestações claras e effectivas, a nossa idoneidade para collaborarmos na obra commum da civilização e do progresso humano.

O vossó Exército, com plena consciencia de que as Instituições militares se fizeram para a defesa da Patria e das vidas e fazendas dos seus concidadãos, manifestou o nobre desejo de impedir a sua total ruína, sem intuscar-se nas contendas da politica, delegando nas suas Juntas Militares, o encargo de conseguirem que, após o criminoso attentado que victimou o illustre Portuguez Major Sidonio Paes, se constituísse, sem mudar a Lei fundamental nem o regimen, um governo forte, capaz de entrar a marcha para o abysmo.

Mas, esse desejo, mallogrou-se, graças ás intrigas da politica que o Exército pretendia combater. As Juntas Militares foram forçadas, no intuito de evitarem a guerra civil com que as ameaçava o proprio Governo, a transgirem talvez demasiado, mas apesar da sua abnegação e espirito de concordia, o Governo em cuja organização consertin, resultou fraco e desamparado, pois que, como se viu no Parlamento, a maioria que se mantivera unida em vida de Sidonio Paes, separou-se, caminhando uma grande parte na direcção dos radicais extremistas, cujas facções ficaram assim augmentadas em numero e accrescidas em força. Aos representantes dos partidos conservadores não merecem o governo um apoio, franco e incondicional que lhe compensasse d'esta perda. Por isso mesmo; e porque em face das Juntas Militares foi dubia a politica do Governo, tornou-se este tão fraco para impedir o avanço da anarchia demagogica, que logo poucos dias depois ella explodiu violenta e ameaçadora em Lisboa, Santarem, Alcobaca e Covilhã, sem fallarmos nos successos tristes de Villa Real, de que só a má politica do Governo foi culpada.

O perigo nacional é, pois, evidente, e evidente tambem a fallencia do regimen republicano, a cuja sombra, durante uma vida de mais de oito annos, apenas a anarchia demagogica pôde viver e medrar.

Assim, no meio das justificadas apprehensões que curecem a consciencia publica, é chegado o momento em que o Exército Portuguez, sobranceiro a questões de partidos, mas inspirado pela necessidade urgente da salvação da Patria, tem de reconhecer que o regresso ao regimen anterior representa a unica esperança capaz de alentar o espirito nacional e a aspiração da grande maioria dos Portuguezes que desejam Paz e Ordem para poderem viver e trabalhar.

Tem de reconhecer tambem que a situação de El-Rei Dom Manuel, junto á Córte e Chancellarias Inglesas, significa, a favor dos nossos interesses externos, uma garantia de alta importancia de que

o Paiz muito carece n'esta oportunidade, tanto mais que tel mesquinho, em proporção da nossa categoria de Povo Livre e do esforço com que na guerra contribuimos para a victoria dos alliados, a representação que o governo republicano obteve para Portugal na conferencia da Paz.

Em vista de todas estas circunstancias, o Exército e a Marinha, — conscios de que o Paiz, no estado de confusão e divisão politica, a que infelizmente chegou, não dispõe de nenhuma outra força organizada para quem possa appellar, — resolveram intervir a bem da Salvação Publica.

E, por isso, proclamam a Restauração da Monarchia Portuguesa, na pessoa de El-Rei Dom Manuel II.

Até ao momento da Sua entrada no Reino o Poder Publico é entregue a uma Junta Governativa que, assumindo a gerencia de todos os negocios, deverá internamente tomar por objectivo especial as questões da Ordem Publica e do abastecimento da população, e externamente manterá, sem alteração alguma, as relações solidarias e os compromissos tomados com as Nações Alliadas.

Viva a Patria Portuguesa!

Viva a Bandeira Azul e Branca!

Viva Sua Magestade El-Rei Dom Manuel II!

Em nome do Exército de Terra e Mar:

aa) Henrique de Paiva Couceiro, Coronel

João d'Almeida, Coronel.

Augusto de Madureira Braga, Coronel d'Infanteria

Arthur da Silva Ramos, Coronel.

Martinho Aragão, Tenente-Coronel.

Jayme Carvalho da Silva, Tenente-Coronel.

João Carlos de Castro Corte Real Machado, Tenente-Coronel d'Artilharia.

Carlos Ribeiro Borges, Major.

Antonio Sollari Allegro, Capitão de Cavallaria.

## Soldados!

Tendes deante de vós a Bandeira azul e branca!

Essas foram sempre cores de Portugal, — desde Alfonso Henriques, em Ourique na defesa da nossa terra contra os mouros, — até D. Manoel II, mantendo contra rebeldes africanos os nossos dominios, em Magul, Coellella, Cuamato, e tantos outros combates que illustraram as armas portuguezas.

Quando, em 1910, Portugal abandonou o azul e branco, Portugal abandonou a sua historia!

E os povos que abandonam a sua historia, são Povos que decahem e que morrem.

Soldados! O Exército é, acima de tudo, a mais alta expressão da Patria e, por isso mesmo, tem que sustentá-la e tem que guardá-la nas circunstancias mais difíceis, accudindo na hora propria contra todos os perigos sejam elles externos ou internos, que lhe ameassem a existencia.

E abandonar a sua historia é um erro que mata!

Contra esse erro protesta, portanto, o Exército hasteando novamente a sua antiga Bandeira azul e branca.

Aponta-nos Ella os caminhos do valor, da lealdade e da honra, por onde os portuguezes do passado conquistaram a grandeza e a nobre fama que ainda hoje dignifica o conceito de Portugal perante as mais nações do mundo.

Jurámos seguila, soldados! e amparal-a com o nosso corpo, mesmo á custa do proprio sangue!

E com a ajuda de Deus e com a força das nossas crenças tradicionais, que o azul e branco symbolisam, a nossa Patria salvaremos!

Viva a Patria Portuguesa!

Viva o Exército!

Viva El-Rei D. Manuel II!

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II



Grupo de soldados que entraram em combate em Cabeceiras de Basto em defesa da República. De *Ilustração Portuguesa*, 341 (1912).

norte de Portugal hastearam a bandeira azul e branca, ficando a nação portuguesa dividida em dois regimes, com o rio Vouga por fronteira. Estava implantada a chamada *Monarquia do Norte*. A cidade de Chaves, em Trás-os-Montes, permanecia, porém, como um baluarte republicano,

Na sequência dos acontecimentos, o Presidente Canto e Castro decretou o estado de sítio, para vigorar em todo o país por trinta dias. A 21 de Janeiro, o Chefe do Governo, Tamagnini Barbosa, perante uma enorme manifestação republicana que se concentrava junto às portas do Ministério do Interior, fez um apelo para que se pegasse em armas e se combatesse os monárquicos, inimigos da República. O povo de Lisboa, sempre fiel aos ideais republicanos, respondeu maciçamente. Viva expressão dessa entrega generosa é o episódio seguinte:

“... O Sr. Alferes Sá avisa um popular que vem descalço de que não lhe será dado calçado e não

poderá combater assim, mas ele replica com energia: – Não faz mal; arranjarei umas botas. O que eu quero é defender a República!”<sup>22</sup>

Vendo assim uma hoste grossa e animosa de civis a ser armada, e disso tomando fundados receios, a Junta do Sul e os dirigentes monárquicos de Lisboa, até aí expectantes, decidiram que era chegado o momento de agir. No âmbito dessa decisão, várias unidades do Exército, acompanhadas de alguns civis, na tarde de 22 de Janeiro subiram ao Monsanto e daí fizeram fogo sobre a cidade, declarando-se em estado de pronunciamento pela monarquia. Comandavam as forças realistas o lugar-tenente de D. Manuel II, conselheiro Aires de Ornelas e o tenente-coronel Álvaro César de Mendonça, que fora secretário de Estado da Guerra do último governo de Sidónio Pais. No início, a situação por banda dos republicanos mostrou-se muito difícil, dado que, persistindo as mais importantes unidades militares de Lisboa em manter-se neutrais, o Governo não sabia de que armas ou forças poderia dispor para dar combate

Primeira página do *Diário da Junta Governativa do Reino*, de 19 de Janeiro de 1919, anunciando a restauração da Monarquia.

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

aos insurrectos. O Parque Eduardo VII foi então designado como local de concentração de todos os que quisessem lutar contra a sedição monárquica e para lá foram afluindo civis e militares, fazendo-se estes acompanhar de algum armamento. No dia 23, não sendo ainda as forças republicanas em número suficiente para se tentar um assalto, o comandante das operações, tenente-coronel Vieira da Rocha, decidiu pôr cerco a toda a serra do Monsanto, cortando todas as estradas e caminhos que possibilitassem uma saída dos revoltosos. No duelo de artilharia que se travou durante o dia 23, a vantagem pendeu ainda para o lado dos monárquicos, vantagem que pouco a pouco se foi estreitando, face aos constantes reforços que chegavam às hostes republicanas. Durante todo o dia de 24 de Janeiro, sitiados e sitiadores combateram-se encarniçadamente até que, ao fim da tarde, os republicanos encetaram um ataque geral, que em pouco tempo levou ao desbaratamento e rendição dos monárquicos, constatando-se então que estes se encontravam esvaídos pelo longo esforço e já sem munições para as peças de artilharia.

Esta importante vitória sobre os monarquistas teve, como não poderia deixar de ter, repercussões no plano político. Porque entre os republicanos que tal feito havia cometido estavam, em maioria, os partidários da *República Velha*,<sup>23</sup> o acontecimento representava mais um firme passo na morte, já anunciada, do Dezembrismo e do Sidonismo. A nova situação política exigia um governo representativo dos interesses dos partidos históricos da República e bem depressa foi esse o entendimento de Tamagnini Barbosa e dos restantes membros do seu Executivo, facto que levou a um pedido de demissão em bloco junto do Presidente Canto e Castro, pedido que, naturalmente, foi aceite.

Nos anos de República que se seguiram até 1926, sempre politicamente conturbados, João Tamagnini Barbosa teve menor protagonismo político. Em todo o caso vemo-lo sempre alinhado com os movimentos anti-liberais, anti-parlamentares e de tendências corporativas e mesmo pro-fascizantes, sobretudo, muito empenhado em unir diversas sensibilidades neo-sidonistas que entretanto foram aparecendo e que se distribuíam por vários grupos, designadamente Centro Republicano Dr. Sidónio Pais, Juventude Republicana Sidonista, Acção Nacionalista, Partido Nacional Republicano Presidencialista, Partido Republicano Nacionalista.

Instaurada a Ditadura Militar, a 28 de Maio de 1926, João Tamagnini Barbosa envereda pela actividade empresarial, dirigindo e administrando empresas, quer no Ultramar, quer na Metrópole. Em 1935, o salazarismo recupera-o para a política, fazendo-o procurador à Câmara Corporativa. No decorrer da Segunda Guerra Mundial (1939-1945), Oliveira Salazar e Tamagnini situam-se em pólos opostos: enquanto o primeiro é, reconhecidamente, um germanófilo, o segundo manifesta-se como pro-aliado. A esta divergência seguir-se-á o facto de Tamagnini se aproximar do movimento oposicionista, em 1947, justamente numa data em que na oposição avultava a figura do General Norton de Matos.

No ano seguinte, 1948, João Tamagnini de Sousa Barbosa morre, repentinamente, em Lisboa com a idade de 65 anos,

## CONCLUSÕES

Em torno da figura de uma personagem histórica de republicano heterodoxo, tentámos mostrar um pouco do ambiente político vivido no Portugal de 1910 a 1926, ou seja, durante a sua primeira experiência de regime republicano.

Do que atrás resta escrito, fica-nos uma noção de quanto a ideologia, a intriga partidária, a contenda política e, enfim, os dramas e chagas sociais e até a guerra civil foram factores que pautaram a história dessa primeira experiência.

Todavia, e sem querermos cair em clichés, atrevemo-nos a dizer que, mau grado estes e outros acontecimentos, todos eles não louváveis, a República teve, como não podia deixar de ter, momentos positivos e de grande avanço social e cultural. Estarão neste campo a liberdade, a igualdade de todos os cidadãos, a ausência de preconceitos de sangue e de nascimento, a educação e a instrução, a participação cívica e, até mesmo, as tentativas (algumas conseguidas) de regeneração económica e de renovação do amor-pátrio das populações, principalmente das camadas mais populares, com isso se instituindo, de novo e em parte, o orgulho de se ser português.

Pena foi que os governantes e os detentores do Poder, enredados na discórdia e luta políticas e a braços com gritantes problemas sociais, alguns deles fracturantes, como a repartição de riqueza, a guerra, a hegemonia eleitoral de um partido político, não



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

tivessem dado a todo este conjunto de intenções uma mais completa e cabal realização. A este propósito, pensamos que os republicanos de todos os quadrantes se julgavam, cada à sua maneira, intérpretes de todas essas intenções.

Mas, a República é isso mesmo...regime de liberdade e de confronto de ideias, visando progresso social e civilizacional.

Esse progresso não se constrói; vai-se construindo. **RC**

## NOTAS

- 1 Afonso Augusto da Costa (1871-1937), lente de Direito e notabilíssimo advogado e parlamentar. Deputado republicano, durante a Monarquia Constitucional, em 1899, 1906-1907 e 1908-1910. Ministro da Justiça do Governo Provisório. Líder do partido Democrático e Presidente do Ministério e Ministro das Finanças de sucessivos governos até ao Dezembrismo (5/12/1917). Após o término da Grande Guerra, foi representante de Portugal na Conferência de Paz na Sociedade das Nações. Foi membro da Liga de Defesa da República (vulgo, Liga de Paris), em oposição à Ditadura Militar que se instalou em Portugal em 28 de Maio de 1926. Para mais informes, ver A. H. de Oliveira Marques *Afonso Costa* e idem, *Ensaios de História*, pp. 177-264.
- 2 António José de Almeida (1866-1929), médico, jornalista, escritor e, sobretudo, político. É um dos grandes vultos da I República Portuguesa. Ministro do Interior do Governo Provisório, foi fundador e líder do Partido Evolucionista. Presidente do Ministério da União Sagrada desde 15 de Março de 1916 a 25 de Abril de 1917. Em 1919, o Congresso elegeu-o Presidente da República Portuguesa. Ver Luís Reis Torgal, *António José de Almeida e a República: Discurso de Uma Vida ou Vida de um Discurso*.
- 3 Ver Fernando Mendonça Fava, “José Carlos da Maia. Apontamento Breve”. In *Revista de Cultura/Review of Culture* 36, 2010, pp. 38-54.
- 4 Referência ao chamado “Projecto Castel Branco”, assim denominado por ligação ao nome do respectivo autor.
- 5 António Maria de Azevedo Machado Santos (1875-1921), oficial de administração naval, carbonário e político. Foi comandante do pequeno reduto revolucionário que se instalou na Rotunda, de 3 a 5 de Outubro de 1910. A sua tenacidade e a sua acção e influência sobre os seus companheiros de luta foram determinantes para o êxito da Revolução. Consagrado como herói nacional, encetou então uma carreira política, marcada sobretudo por uma feroz aversão a Afonso Costa e ao Partido Democrático. Foi assassinado no decorrer dos trágicos acontecimentos da chamada *Noite Sangrenta*, em 19 de Outubro de 1921. Ver *Dicionário de História de Portugal*, direcção de Joel Serrão, vol. 5, pp. 477-480.
- 6 António Caetano de Abreu Freire Egas Moniz (1874-1955), médico, cientista e político. Fundador do Partido Centrista foi ministro dos Negócios Estrangeiros de Sidónio Pais, de 8 de Outubro a 23 de Dezembro de 1918. Sobraçou esta pasta nos ministérios de Tamagnini Barbosa de 23 de Dezembro de 1918 a 27 de Janeiro de 1919 e de José Relvas, em 26 e 27 de Janeiro de 1919. Participou nas primeiras sessões da Conferência de Paz de Versalhes. A partir de 1920 dedicou-se inteiramente à investigação científica, criando a angiografia em 1926 e o processo da leucotomia, o que lhe valeu o Prémio Nobel em 1949. Assume-se como oposicionista ao regime salazarista, chegando a ser proposto pela oposição socialista e republicana para candidato à presidência, em 1951. Ver Egas Moniz, *Um Ano de Política*.
- 7 O Partido Centrista Republica era, do ponto de vista da sua essência humana, composto, sobretudo, por intelectuais e quadros.
- 8 Cf. Raul Rego, *História da República. Do Sidonismo ao 28 de Maio*, vol. 4, p. 8.
- 9 Assim chamado por ocorrer em Dezembro.
- 10 Cf. *A Pátria*, de 1 de Junho de 1920, artigo de 1.ª página com o título “Uma Voz de Profeta”.
- 11 Ver Fernando Mendonça Fava “Canto e Castro. Um Monárquico na Presidência da República”.
- 12 Sobre a instituição militar, suas relações com o regime e com políticos e intelectuais, ver, José Medeiros Ferreira, *O Comportamento Político dos Militares. Forças Armadas e Regimes Políticos em Portugal no Século XX*.
- 13 Ver Miguel Dias Santos, *Os Monárquicos e a República Nova*, pp. 107-151.
- 14 Henrique Mitchell de Paiva Couceiro (1861-1944), militar e político, notabilizou-se nas campanhas de ocupação do território de Angola e de dominação dos povos indígenas. Homem de profundas convicções monárquicas, bateu-se com energia contra a Revolução Republicana de Outubro de 1910. Neste sentido, combateu as tropas de Machados Santos, na Rotunda e depois, em 1911 e 1912, comandou as chamadas “incurções monárquicas”. Ver *Dicionário de História de Portugal*, coordenação de António Barreto e de Maria Filomena Mónica, vol. 7, suplemento A/E, pp 457-458.
- 15 “Proclamação da Junta Militar do Norte”, datada de 18/12/1918, in *Diário de Notícias* de 21/12/18, 1.ª página.
- 16 Afonso de Melo Pinto Veloso (1878-1968) magistrado e político. Monárquico do partido progressista, adere ao Sidonismo e depois torna-se militante dos liberais e dos nacionalistas. Ministro da Justiça do Governo de Tamagnini Barbosa de 23 de Dezembro de 1918 a 7 de Janeiro de 1919.
- 17 Cf. *O Século* de 10/1/1919, 1.ª página.
- 18 Cf. *O Século* de 12/1/1919, 1.ª página.
- 19 Agrupamento armado com peças de artilharia e composto por guardas-fiscais, guardas-republicanos e soldados de uma companhia de obuses, arregimentados por Teófilo Duarte em Castelo Branco e na Guarda e que, sob o seu comando, dominaram os revoltosos da Covilhã. Agindo por conta própria, deambularam depois pelas Beiras, numa táctica de movimento nunca antes ensaiada em Portugal por tropas sublevadas.
- 20 Francisco Pinto da Cunha Leal (1888-1970), militar, jornalista e homem da política. Antigo apoiante de Sidónio Pais, destacou-se pela oposição que fez aos governos de Tamagnini Barbosa e de José Relvas em 1919.
- 21 *Diário da Câmara de Deputados* de 11/02/1919, p. 6 (grafia actualizada).
- 22 *O Século* de 23/1/1919, 1.ª página (grafia actualizada).
- 23 Designação atribuída ao período que vai de 5 de Outubro de 1910 a 7 de Dezembro de 1917, por oposição a *República Nova*, expressão muito do agrado de Sidónio Pais, como definidora do seu regime.

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

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# A República e a Herança Económica da Monarquia Constitucional

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“Começemos por fundar a agricultura e indústria, por aumentar população e riqueza, por crear disciplina e ensino, por reconstituir marinha e exercitos, por reorganisar imposto e finanças, por uniformisar e robustecer a nação...”.  
Basílio Teles, *O Problema Agrícola*, 1899, p.159.1

A implantação dos novos sistemas jurídico-políticos de matriz republicana tanto em Portugal, como na China revelam o esgotamento das lógicas de poder monárquicas e das suas dificuldades objectivas de modernização da economia, nomeadamente em aderir a uma produção de escala industrial, a uma agricultura intensiva racional e capitalista e projectar-se no mercado global.

Um relativo consenso historiográfico situa na segunda metade do século XIX as causas do atraso da economia portuguesa, relevando a sua incapacidade em acompanhar os ritmos de modernização tecnológica e de competição nos mercados internacionais. As explicações do fracasso, menos consensuais entre o painel de especialistas, filiam-se tanto em razões de natureza exógena como nas características endógenas ou estruturais do país. Encontram-se na nefasta relação comercial com a Inglaterra, materializada nos Tratados de 1703 e 1810, o que leva a uma orientação exclusiva da economia para o sector primário, nomeadamente

a produção vinhateira, obstaculizando o arranque industrial têxtil<sup>1</sup>; na localização periférica do país face à Europa industrializada; no espírito aristocrático das classes dominantes com um grande grau de rejeição do investimento produtivo e da inovação; na mundividência pré-capitalista da sociedade portuguesa; na estrutura fundiária e regime de exploração da terra; na escala da economia, nomeadamente a debilidade do mercado interno e do poder de compra das populações; na sangria demográfica para as Américas, em virtude do regime de propriedade e de um mercado de trabalho incapaz de cativar os migrantes rurais; na exiguidade ou subexploração dos recursos naturais, nomeadamente matérias-primas e combustíveis; na falta de oferta de crédito ou numa política de juros incomportavelmente elevada; no peso asfixiante e desigual do imposto; na má condução da esfera política e, não menos importante, no fraco índice de escolaridade da população (cerca de 75% de analfabetos à entrada da República), entre outros argumentos.<sup>2</sup>

Não obstante os esforços industrializadores que podem ser constatados nos Inquéritos Industriais de 1881 e 1890, no dealbar da I Guerra Mundial cerca de 60% da população activa trabalhava na agricultura e a riqueza produzida por este sector duplicava a da economia industrial.<sup>3</sup>

A industrialização era incipiente e ancorava-se em sectores da primeira vaga. Em 1881, a indústria têxtil

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## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

representava 55% das unidades fabris e manufactureiras, 53,8% dos operários e 67,6% da energia obtida através da máquina a vapor.<sup>4</sup> A potência total instalada estava então calculada em 7.052 (CV).

A indústria apresenta-se concentrada em Lisboa e no Porto e nalguns pólos tradicionais, como a Covilhã e a Marinha Grande..., mas a pulverização do tecido industrial constitui a norma. A energia cinética obtida pelas rodas hidráulicas continua a fazer frente à máquina a vapor e a fábrica, embora ganhe primazia no ramo industrial, vê ainda a produção oficial e doméstica ocupar 90% da mão-de-obra operária. É verdade que o esforço da Regeneração tinha garantido as acessibilidades e a mobilidade com uma rede de estradas, pontes e ferrovias, facilitado as comunicações com o telégrafo, a livre criação de sociedades anónimas (lei de 22 de Junho de 1867) que contribuíram para reduzir o risco dos investidores, a emergência de um corpo de novas indústrias de segunda vaga (adubos químicos, em 1884; tintas e vernizes, em 1888; cimentos, a partir da década de 90), uma taxa de crescimento industrial superior à agrícola (2,5% ao ano contra menos de 1% ao ano entre 1851 e 1913<sup>5</sup>). Mas a competitividade nos mercados internacionais estava condicionada ao sector das cortiças (com maior peso em Lisboa e Évora) e conservas de peixe (em Setúbal, Espinho, Ericeira e no Algarve<sup>6</sup>) e o estrangeiro dominava ¼ da renda comercial e industrial. Portugal não conheceu uma revolução industrial à boa maneira inglesa, pautando-se por um arranque tímido e um crescimento difícil.

A dominância do mundo agrário é sufocante. A agricultura assume-se como a forma dominante de investimento, de criação de riqueza, de trabalho e as elites regionais continuam a encarar a propriedade como uma fonte de reconhecimento social. O regime de exploração da terra insiste em privilegiar os contratos de aforamento/arrendamento em detrimento da exploração directa e a maioria destes contratos alicerça-se na longa duração. Nota-se ainda uma lentidão extrema na transição das pensões em géneros para moeda (o que demonstra a deficitária monetarização da economia), permanecendo muitos dos foros a ser pagos em cereais e vivos. Mas não são apenas estes os problemas que tocam a agricultura. A deficiência da gestão agrícola materializa-se na promiscuidade e tradicionalismo cultural, na carência de adubação e mobilização do solo, na má regra de plantação e

compasso, na dificuldade de aquisição de máquinas e alfaias modernas, em suma, uma agricultura diminuída nos métodos e técnicas, na questão complexa da posse e dimensão da propriedade (num retrato dicotómico que opõe o sul mediterrânico do latifúndio ao norte atlântico do minifúndio) e dos foros, na capacidade de inovação e experimentação e na relutância em abraçar o modelo capitalista de exploração da terra.<sup>7</sup>

A revolução liberal de matriz oligárquica e as políticas económicas daí decorrentes não provocaram mudanças substantivas nas relações materiais de produção dos campos. É certo que se verificou um relativo desafogo com o desmantelamento gradual das estruturas senhoriais. A maior amplitude da renda agrária segundo o relatório da Sociedade Agrícola do Distrito de Leiria (1856), parecer que é corroborado por outros distritos, deve-se a um corpo de razões bem identificadas, nomeadamente:

“1.º Extinção dos dízimos; 2.º Venda dos bens nacionais e sua divisão; 3.º Remissão dos foros; 4.º Aumento da população; 5.º Liberdade e o socego que os povos tem governado com o acabamento da guerra civil”.<sup>8</sup>

A nova ordem burguesa vai libertar a terra e suprimir as barreiras ao comércio. Assiste-se à conversão dos bens da Coroa em bens nacionais, revertendo para o Estado todas as terras e direitos que pertenciam aos antigos comendatários e donatários (bens esses que foram colocados em hasta pública para financiar o Estado, alimentando uma complexa e profusa rede clientelar liberal e burguesa), à redução do imposto da sisa (sendo anulado sobre as transacções móveis e reduzindo a sua incidência sobre os bens imobiliários), à abolição do dízimo eclesiástico (imposto que incidia sobre frutos e animais, sendo substituído pela décima, revelando a vitória do público sobre o privado), dos vínculos e morgadios, das corporações de artes e ofícios, dos direitos senhoriais e banais, como o exclusivo sobre as energias cinéticas, a edificação de fornos, lagares de azeite e vinho, moinhos e azenhas, e indústrias, direitos como o relego, a aposentadoria, as coudelarias, as coutadas, as portagens e peagens, as costumagens, as jeiras ou corveias..., da reforma dos forais que reduz para metade as rendas e pensões desde que a terra fosse foraleira e extingue as ltuosas e os laudémios (imposto sobre a alienação do domínio útil).<sup>9</sup>

Mas aprofundemos a análise. A partir da segunda metade do século XIX são tomadas medidas de política



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

agrária que afectam a coabitação de incultos com as áreas de produção. A lei de desamortização dos baldios (1869) acelera a destruição da propriedade comunitária, o que se traduz quer num fenómeno de concentração da propriedade quer na democratização de acesso à propriedade plena da terra. Mas a perda dos baldios traduziu-se em grandes dificuldades para a lavoura campesina que dependia destes espaços para fertilizar as terras de cultivo, conduzindo a atrasos na emancipação global do pousio e opção por novos afolhamentos, levando a quebras acentuadas de produtividade do solo... Mais ainda, estas terras marginais não eram aptas a culturas cerealíferas, revelando um esgotamento precoce. Articulada com a lei de desamortização temos a abolição do compáscuo decretada com o Código Seabra de 1867, o que limitou o pastoreio itinerante, salvaguardando o superior interesse do proprietário como bem mandava a cartilha liberal, mas, em contrapartida, acentuou a fragilidade económica do mundo campesino.

A República e os seus ideólogos em matéria de lavoura, caso explícito de Basílio Teles, não descolam da herança oitocentista e do domínio da problemática fisiocrata. A supressão dos incultos é reforçada pela pressão fiscal, diminuindo mais e mais as terras baldias, tenta-se desviar a deriva migratória da América para os campos do Sul sem ter coragem para encetar uma reforma agrária, continua-se a olhar o Alentejo como o celeiro de Portugal e a solução para erradicar as importações crescentes do trigo exótico, insiste-se na estafada solução da enfiteuse acalentada por Alexandre Herculano e Oliveira Martins, tenta-se resolver o problema do financiamento às explorações agrárias, facilitar o acesso a máquinas e adubos químicos através da acção das caixas de crédito, sedimentar o minifúndio, mas, ao mesmo tempo, onera-se a propriedade rústica para financiar o regime com o decreto de 4 de Maio de 1911.

A esperança da salvação da grei reside na colonização dos incultos do sul acabando assim de vez com a dualidade da propriedade e da demografia, pois como se apregoa por “calculado feito nas regiões officiaes, 4.300:000 hectares esperam ainda por cultura”.<sup>10</sup>

Para os homens da República, a democracia confunde-se com a propriedade plena da terra, por mais exígua que seja, numa acção morigeradora da alma popular. O Ministro da Justiça do I Governo Constitucional pronuncia-se nestes termos:

“A propriedade é a primeira característica, o primeiro estímulo da liberdade do cidadão. A subdivisão da propriedade dispersa, fá-la chegar ás mãos de todos. Nós temos hoje em Portugal 700:000 predios proporcionalmente mais do que a Itália, e o resultado é a democracia rústica portuguesa através dos seculos resistir ao despotismo, é em Portugal não haver as grandes crises agrícolas características dos países sujeitos ao regime da grande propriedade, como nós as vemos em proporções muito reduzidas na parte do nosso país onde ha o latifúndio”.<sup>11</sup>

Mas, como Basílio Teles constata, “a pulverização da terra”, verificada no alfofre minhoto, acaba por ser perversa; de facto, a parcelização extrema da propriedade caminha de braço dado com a emigração. Para este autor, a salvação da grei lusitana dependia da fixação de homens, do amanho do solo e produção de frutos, rompendo com a tragédia secular do abandono, inaugurada com a via dos descobrimentos e mercancia. As soluções para inverter esta tendência estrutural dependiam de uma política agrária integrada, privilegiando o emparcelamento a Norte (embora apresente algumas reservas a esta empresa, motivadas pela veia populista do seu espírito) e o parcelamento a Sul, o investimento e o crédito à lavoura e, por último, a rejeição de uma tributação excessiva e desequilibrada.<sup>12</sup> Mas a emigração, identificada por Basílio Teles como um motor da decadência, podia para pragmáticos, como Afonso Costa, servir de remédio à debilidade financeira da nação. Pois como apregoa:

“Não é o fenómeno em si que é mau; antes, de dentro da desgraça colectiva que a faz multiplicar, a emigração tem ainda virtude de trazer ao organismo nacional o alento das remessas de ouro de Brasil”.<sup>13</sup>

O parque florestal vai também conhecer importantes modificações com o termo do Antigo Regime e o advento da sociedade liberal, em que a floresta sustentável dá paulatinamente lugar à floresta industrial. Em 24 de Julho de 1824 é criada a Administração Geral das Matas, instituto dependente da Secretaria de Estado da Marinha, que vai receber o escasso património da Coroa, da Casa da Rainha e da Casa do Infantado que estava sob administração do Conselho Real da Fazenda, mancha florestal confinada a uns escassos 14 464 hectares (dos quais o Pinhal de Leiria representava

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

10 000 hectares).<sup>14</sup> Estes núcleos vão ser reforçados com o decreto de extinção das Ordens Religiosas de 28 de Maio de 1834. Como salienta Devy-Vareta “a venda dos bens nacionais provoca o desmantelamento da floresta eclesiástica”, sendo o grosso do bolo florestal apropriado pelo privado, embora uma fatia mais diminuta transite para a Administração Geral das Matas.<sup>15</sup> Só a integração das matas dos Coutos de Alcobaça permite contabilizar 1900 hectares, distribuídos entre carvalhal e pinhal.

A partir da Regeneração, o Estado passa a entender a necessidade de conceber e materializar uma estratégia de preservação do território e investimento florestal.<sup>16</sup> Esta necessidade já era sentida anteriormente por alguns dignitários da nação. Na sessão da Câmara de Deputados, de 7 de Fevereiro de 1835, o Ministro da Marinha esgrimia argumentos em prol do património florestal:

“a conservação das matas, não só é muito instructiva, e judiciosa; mas d’interesse publico; muita cousa se podia dizer sobre este objecto, em favor das matas, que tem a vantagem de mudar a constituição física, attraíndo os chuueiros, embaraçando as correntes impetuosas dos ventos, retardando o movimento dos areaes, nas costas do mar, abrigando os portos, provendo a construcção de navios e barcos, ministrando combustivel, de que tanto carecemos, fornecendo os materiaes às construcções novas; e apesar disso é preciso confessar; que estão arruinados, pelo desleixo das administrações passadas”.<sup>17</sup>

Percebe-se que a produção florestal não pode ser deixada ao acaso e que é necessário desenvolver competências para gerir, proteger e explorar a floresta. A Administração-Geral das Matas transita então da Marinha para a tutela do recém-criado Ministério das Obras Públicas, Comércio e Indústria dirigido por Fontes. O ensino superior agrícola arranca em 1852 e, em 1864, é criado o curso de engenharia florestal, dotando o país de um corpo técnico especializado. Em 1886 dá-se a extinção da Administração-Geral das Matas sendo criada, em sua substituição, a Administração Geral das Florestas. Concebe-se um horizonte estratégico, delineando um Plano de Organização dos Serviços Florestais ao serviço do investimento e gestão do espaço silvícola, assim como se constituem os Serviços Aquícolas em 1892 a fim de regularizar o curso dos rios. A partir desta fase

atacam-se os incultos<sup>18</sup> de forma consistente, embora a ambivalência política entre arborização e cultura agrícola persista). Com as chamadas leis do Regime Florestal (1901-1905) o Estado passa a exercer um papel de regulador nas matas privadas, o que é bem exemplificativo da importância que este sector passa a usufruir na fazenda nacional.

O desenvolvimento da arborização deve-se na opinião abalizada de Joaquim Ferreira Borges, chefe de repartição dos Serviços Florestais, à expansão do caminho-de-ferro que agilizou, embarateceu e disponibilizou as madeiras; ao aumento exponencial de consumo desta matéria-prima; ao incremento da exportação e, em parte, à crise vitivinícola (derivada da perda do mercado francês devido à recuperação da fioxera, da concorrência estrangeira em mercados como o Brasil e do aumento da quota produtiva) e irregularidade da produção cerealífera, o que atraiu investimentos privados para a floresta em busca de um retorno pleno de bondade.<sup>19</sup>

O palco florestal não tem toda a mesma sorte, privilegiando-se a floresta de crescimento rápido que pode suprir as necessidades da aceleração demográfica, da urbanização e da industrialização e fornecer proventos em tempo útil. Verifica-se o rápido declínio das matas de folhosas em virtude de arroteamentos agrícolas, derrotes para construção e carvoaria, reconfiguração florestal e altera-se o sistema de exploração de alto fuste para talhadio. Em contrapartida, cresce a área de pinhal com maior expressão no litoral e no território de montanha,<sup>20</sup> embora vá irradiando velozmente pelo país. Desta forma pretendia-se recuperar a área de incultos considerados malditos pela inteligência das “Memórias Económicas da Academia Real de Ciências”, alicerçar a manta dunar, estorvar a acção nefasta dos ventos mareiros sobre as terras de cultura, prover de matéria-prima combustível a população e a indústria. Esta política de fomento e investimento na floresta de pinho consolidou-se a partir da Primeira República ganhando escala com o Estado Novo.<sup>21</sup>

O pinhal não fornece apenas combustível para as caldeiras industriais e madeiras para as construções, concedendo resinas para a indústria. A indústria de resinagem conhece um importante incremento (no ocaso do século XIX sangraram-se 400 000 árvores nos concelhos de Alcobaça e Leiria).<sup>22</sup> Diga-se de passagem que foi a partir do Pinhal de Leiria que esta indústria se difundiu pelo país acompanhando a progressão do

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

pinhal que, segundo Ferreira Borges, se estima em 5000 hectares anuais só por iniciativa particular.

A par das plantações de pinhal verifica-se uma aposta no povoamento de sobreiros a sul do Tejo. A cortiça constitui a primeira fonte de rendimento (em 1913 estima-se o valor da cortiça em oito mil contos), exportando-se em prancha para a Alemanha, Rússia, Inglaterra, Estados Unidos, Dinamarca, Espanha e Suécia, e em rolha para a Inglaterra, Alemanha, Bélgica, Dinamarca e Noruega.<sup>23</sup> A indústria corticeira (de rolhas) vai conhecer um *boom* significativo empregando cerca de 7000 operários antes da eclosão da I Guerra. Assiste-se, aliás, a um conflito que opõe produtores e industriais a propósito dos direitos de exportação de cortiça em prancha: enquanto os proprietários dos montados advogam a liberalização da exportação, a indústria defende um preço controlado da matéria-prima e limitações à exportação.<sup>24</sup> A confrontação de interesses entre a indústria e a lavoura é, aliás, generalizado, sustentando cada sector medidas proteccionistas por parte do Estado. Também os produtores alentejanos de lãs contestam em 1915, através da Associação da Agricultura Portuguesa, a sobretaxa de exportação das lãs sujas, acusando os industriais de se transformarem em meros negociantes e especuladores arrecadando fazenda imerecida com a conjuntura de guerra.

A vinha vai assumir-se ao termo do século XIX como um sector de inovação e motor da lavoura. Mas recuemos um pouco no tempo. Ao longo do período da Regeneração a vinha é atingida por sucessivas doenças, responsáveis directa e indirectamente por uma verdadeira revolução neste sector. O oídio começa a fazer estragos a partir da década de 50 com quebras abruptas na produção. Ultrapassada esta crise, na década de 60 a cultura vinhateira dispara e os vinhos nacionais passam a abastecer a França que se deparava, a partir de 1863, com a praga da filoxera a devastar a totalidade das vinhas, uma verdadeira hecatombe bíblica. Em 1867, o Douro vinhateiro é atingido, mas a cintura de montanhas consegue reter no seu seio o “ignóbil insecto”; a difusão lenta da praga arrasta-se até à década de 90. Vários métodos e técnicas foram ensaiados para aniquilar o odioso insecto, entre eles, a submersão prolongada da vinha, o ensaibramento ou o recalque dos pés das videiras para matar a filoxera por asfixia. Mas estas práticas eram limitadas pelas condições geográficas das vinhas (proximidade de cursos de água, saibreiras) e evitavam

ainda os granjeios e adubações, emagrecendo o fruto. A lavoura de vinho nacional beneficiou das experiências, meios e soluções preconizados na Europa e na região vinhateira duriense e assim pôde medir os prós e contras das várias tentativas e ensaios para exterminar a praga. Mais seriamente, as esperanças de vitória repartiam-se entre os partidários da administração de um poderoso insecticida, o sulfureto de carbono, e aqueles que pugnavam pela arranca total e repovoamento das castas europeias sobre cavalos americanos. Depois de alguma hesitação, o repovoamento da vinha europeia sobre os bravos americanos conquista os lavradores, mau grado o traumático arranque global da vinha (o sulfureto não se adequava a todos os solos, nomeadamente os de estrutura calcária e argilosa e, além do mais, como nem todos os lavradores vinhateiros cumpriam a sua missão as reinfestações eram constantes). Muitos dos pequenos proprietários não conseguiram resistir a esta calamidade, engrossando a fileira da emigração. Multiplicam-se os mortórios e, como a desgraça de uns é por vezes o bem dos outros, a propriedade vinhateira conhece um fenómeno de concentração ao anexar as pequenas parcelas camponesas.

A filoxera implicou, de facto, uma verdadeira revolução que se pode sintetizar nos seguintes aspectos: substituição total da vinha de pé-franco pelas americanas; implantação da vinha em solos de várzea; novas regras de compasso, alinhamento e mobilização; exclusão das culturas de consociação; primado da enxertia; importação de castas francesas; adopção de novas alfaias vinhateiras; adubações e tratamentos. Os resultados materializaram-se em ganhos de produtividade de cerca de 1/3. Por seu turno, o fabrico do vinho conhece uma profunda revolução química e mecânica. Com todas estas modificações o custo de produção dispara, encarecendo significativamente o preço da pipa. Naturalmente, os investimentos de replantação, renovo da maquinaria vinária e o capital de conhecimentos para produzir vinho afastam os camponeses da produção de mercado.<sup>25</sup>

A vinha pós-filoxera ganha grande incremento e o vinho abastece o Brasil e as colónias africanas. O mercado de recepção francês suspende abruptamente as importações, em virtude da recuperação dos seus vinhedos e das massivas plantações argelinas. Mas esta suspensão não se deve exclusivamente à retoma de produção, mas a outro fenómeno que tem a ver

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

com os hábitos de consumo. Na prática, conjugam-se políticas proteccionistas e barreiras de gosto. Os mercados europeus, nomeadamente o inglês<sup>26</sup> (tabela proteccionista de 1881) e francês (1892), recusam os vinhos portugueses que, por serem aguardentados, exibem um teor alcoólico demasiado elevado.<sup>27</sup> Para agravar o cenário, o Brasil é assediado por falsificações facilitadas pela química, a que se vai juntar as falsificações de marca (só no ano de 1894, calcula-se que os espanhóis tivessem feito entrar no Brasil e na África portuguesa 25 000 pipas de vinhos com marcas falsificadas de quintas portuguesas) e por dificuldades económicas e políticas (a República brasileira é proclamada em 1889) que restringem o quantitativo dos vinhos nacionais.

O crescimento vitivinícola acarreta, como vimos, problemas graves de escoamento pela saturação do mercado nacional, pelo fecho do mercado europeu e pela concorrência no mercado brasileiro. Em plena República o problema do vinho continua a fazer-se sentir com acuidade. A Espanha, a França e a Itália começam a introduzir os seus vinhos licorosos na Inglaterra, em detrimento do Porto e do Madeira, e a França entra com o seu champanhe no Brasil arredando em parte o espumoso português.<sup>28</sup>

No século XIX, a frutífera oliveira já estava disseminada por todo o País, aproveitando-se da revolução cultural e paisagística introduzida pelo milho grosso.<sup>29</sup>

A consideração que a cultura olivícola alcança excede o seu tributo directo. O governador civil do distrito de Leiria, D. António de Sousa Macedo, de forma lapidar, declara que:

“Um bom anno de azeite produz isto tudo, augmenta os bachelos, acrescenta os lagares, multiplica as charruas, alarga as sementeiras, desenvolve a indústria, emprega a mão-de-obra, dá salário aos trabalhadores”.<sup>30</sup>

Rebello da Silva, refere em 1868, que o olival abarca

“uma extensão de 42 000 hectares [...] com uma produção média de 148 556 hectolitros e o valor em moeda de 2 228 000\$00 réis. As províncias do Alentejo, da Extremadura, e de Traz os Montes são as que cultivam em proporções maiores”.<sup>31</sup>

No período que precede a I Grande Guerra, Portugal já possui “cerca de 330 000 hectares de olival, produzindo em média 580 000 hectolitros de azeite”.<sup>32</sup>

Como refere Penha Garcia na sua obra *O Problema do Azeite*, a cultura da oliveira vai em crescendo.

“Ao passo que em 1902, dos 5068 milhares de hectares de terras cultivadas em Portugal, 6,49% se destinavam à cultura da oliveira, em 1933 quasi 9% lhe estariam consagrados”.

A região centro detém cerca de 60% da mancha olivícola, verificando-se um renovo do coberto e sobcoberto de olival, assim como de novas plantações nos distritos de Portalegre, Évora, Santarém e Castelo Branco.<sup>33</sup>

O ciclo de crescimento não é, todavia, linear, ressentindo-se duramente a cultura na economia de guerra da I Guerra. A necessidade de combustíveis conduz ao derrote exaustivo de grandes áreas de olival, mas a conjuntura de guerra não é a única responsável pela delapidação deste património. Também a senilidade das explorações que se repercutia na produtividade e o aumento do custo da mão-de-obra em virtude da emigração trouxeram problemas.

A República debate-se com uma carência de azeite para a manutenção da população e para acudir ao mercado brasileiro, sofrendo à semelhança do que se verificava com o sector vinícola da concorrência dos olivicultores espanhóis.<sup>34</sup>

O problema do pão marca perenemente a agenda política. Numa catarse cíclica promete-se tornar Portugal auto-suficiente, evitando o agravamento da balança comercial com as importações do trigo exótico. Mas, de facto, havia muitas bocas a alimentar e o concurso do trigo exótico era indispensável. Este trigo de baixo custo permitia um desafogo às famílias, mas desagradava aos latifundiários meridionais e a todos os fisiocratas que acreditavam na viabilidade de um Portugal cerealífero. Com a lei de 1899 de Elvino de Brito cessa o período de livre-câmbio e entra-se numa fase proteccionista. Acontece que a lei ao proteger a produção nacional e ao colocar obstáculos à importação encareceu o preço do pão entre 40 a 50%, ganhando por isso o nefasto epíteto de lei da fome. É certo que nem tudo foram dissabores, dado que a lei incentivou amplas arroteias nas charnecas alentejanas, aumentando em cerca de um terço a produção trigueira.

No domínio da cerealicultura a novidade oitocentista aporta com o prolífico arroz. O arroz (cultivavam-se as variedades carolino e galego) impõe-se por meados do século XIX como uma cultura de matriz capitalista, desestruturando as tradicionais relações

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II



Cartaz alusivo à implantação da República.

entre proprietário e rendeiro. A cultura do arroz (a par da amoreira) é considerada como uma bênção face à crise do oídio nas vinhas. Mas as sezões palúdicas (malária) que atingem os trabalhadores e povoados limítrofes dos arrozais não autorizam em muitos distritos a manutenção da cultura.

A modernidade aportada pela Revolução Industrial teima em não chegar ao mundo da lavoura. Excluindo as explorações vinhateiras que renovaram as instalações e mobília vinária beneficiando da revolução química e biológica, a tecnologia agro-industrial marca passo. Na realidade, a vinha e o vinho capitalizam as atenções. Introduzem-se nas adegas geradores a vapor para garantir a esterilização e estanquicidade das vasilhas vinárias, bombas de trasfega para pôr o vinho a limpo e estabelecer os lotes, esmagadores e desengaçadores que fazem da milenar pisa a pés uma

arte obsoleta e ocasional, prensas de cinchos que arredam as ineficientes prensas de varas, assiste-se ainda a uma renovação do vasilhame de conservação e estágio dos vinhos e aguardentes, seleccionando madeiras de préstimo como o castanho, o carvalho e o vinhático. Já a frente do azeite insiste nos princípios, métodos e técnicas rotineiras denunciadas no passado por Dalla Bella. Os lagares de azeite mantêm o arcaísmo tecnológico, com as prensas de vara e os moinhos ultrapassados, o período de entulhamento excessivo, problemas de salubridade, erros de produção (queima e salga do azeite, junção dos azeites das espremeduras...), o que leva à recusa do azeite português no mercado europeu. A debulha mecânica do trigo divulga-se timidamente nas primeiras décadas do século xx, enquanto no Alentejo as debulhadoras já eram vulgares na década de 80 do século xix. A própria



## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

tracção das alfaias continua a ser entregue ao gado bovino. No sul de Portugal, o cavalo já se encarregava desta tarefa a partir do último quartel do século XIX.<sup>35</sup>

A plebe urbana que tanto pugna pela vitória da revolução republicana vivia em condições sociais degradantes. Numa intervenção na Assembleia a 11 de Dezembro de 1911, a propósito do projecto-lei sobre os acidentes de trabalho, traça-se um cenário aviltante:

“Basta lembrar a questão da alimentação e das habitações. Se um estrangeiro, que visite a nossa capital, der um passeio pelo bairro de Alfama, ficará com uma triste impressão das baiucas que ali vê, que são mais próprias para animais inferiores, do que para homens. Também é necessário cuidar da maneira prática de fornecer água barata ou gratuitamente, a essa numerosa gente, não só em benefício deles, mas até a bem da higiene. A questão de alimentação é hoje

uma questão que deve preocupar os homens de Estado. A vida está caríssima. Como é que um desgraçado que ganha 360, 400 ou 400 réis, pode actualmente, satisfazer a todos os encargos, fazer face a todas as despesas de alimentação e vestuário?”

O retrato social dos campos nada melhor abonava.

Habitação, higiene e dieta alimentar revelavam um quadro de carências primárias levando os mais ousados à solução obrigatória da emigração.

A República recebeu, de facto, um país visceralmente pobre e culturalmente débil, marcado por notórios estrangulamentos produtivos, em que a inércia no domínio do investimento revelava a imaturidade do capitalismo português. A ruralidade continuou, assim, a ser encarada como a via dominante e quase exclusiva num espírito de autarcia que atravessa a República e entra no Estado Novo. **RC**

## NOTAS

- 1 A propósito da dependência inglesa, veja-se: Sandro Sideri, *Comércio e Poder*. Lisboa: Edições Cosmos, 1978.
- 2 Sobre a problemática do atraso económico português, veja-se: Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, *Estrutura da Antiga Sociedade Portuguesa*, pp. 141-147; Miriam Halpern Pereira, *Livre-Câmbio e Desenvolvimento Económico*; Manuel Villaverde Cabral, *Portugal na Alvorada do Século XX. Forças Sociais, Poder Político e Crescimento Económico de 1890 a 1914*; Jaime Reis, “O atraso económico português em perspectiva histórica 1860-1913”, pp. 12-17; Pedro Lains, *A Economia Portuguesa no Século XIX*, pp. 36-50; Manuel Rodrigues; Amado Mendes, *História da Indústria Portuguesa. Da Idade Média aos Nossos Dias*, pp. 268-275; Pedro Lains, “História e crítica da tese da dependência”, pp. 37-42.
- 3 Pedro Lains, *A Economia Portuguesa no Século XIX*, p. 155.
- 4 Manuel Rodrigues; Amado Mendes, *História da Indústria Portuguesa...*, p. 231.
- 5 Pedro Lains, *A Economia Portuguesa no Século XIX*, p.155.
- 6 J. Oliveira Simões, “A evolução da indústria portuguesa”, in *Exposição Nacional do Rio de Janeiro. Notas sobre Portugal*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, vol. 1, 1908, p. 372.
- 7 Veja-se: Américo Mendes; Líliana Fernandes, “Políticas e instituições florestais em Portugal. Desde o final do Antigo Regime até a actualidade”, in Joaquim Sande Silva (coord.), *Árvores e Florestas de Portugal. Floresta e Sociedade. Uma História em Comum*. Lisboa: Público, 2007, p. 81.
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- 11 *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados*, 8 de Setembro de 1911.
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- 13 Manuel Villaverde Cabral, *Portugal na Alvorada do Século XX...*, p. 259.
- 14 Nicole Devy-Vareta; António Monteiro Alves, “Os avanços e os recuos da floresta em Portugal: da Idade Média ao Liberalismo”, in *Árvores e Florestas de Portugal. Floresta e Sociedade. Uma história em comum*. Lisboa: Público, 2007, p. 73.
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- 16 Maria Carlos Radich; Fernando Oliveira Baptista, “Floresta e sociedade: Um percurso (1875-2005)”, in *Silva Lusitana*, 2005, 13 (2), p. 145.
- 17 *Diário da Câmara dos Senhores Deputados*, 7 de Fevereiro de 1835.
- 18 Segundo o jornal republicano *A Pátria* (159, 7 de Agosto de 1899), os incultos representavam 49% do território nacional.
- 19 J. Oliveira Simões, “A evolução da indústria portuguesa”, pp. 322-323.
- 20 Nicole Devy-Vareta, “Investigación sobre la historia florestal portuguesa en los siglos XIX y XX: Orientaciones y lagunas”, pp. 74-75.
- 21 *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados*, 7 de Fevereiro de 1835.
- 22 Maria Carlos Baptista, *A Agronomia Portuguesa no Século XIX. A Imagem da Natureza nas Propostas Técnicas*, p. 3 81.
- 23 J. Oliveira Simões, “A evolução da indústria portuguesa”, p. 327. Veja-se: Miriam Halpern Pereira, *Livre-Câmbio e Desenvolvimento Económico*, pp. 234-237.
- 24 O deputado Jacinto Nunes lembra ao plenário que, já em 1910, o Ministro das Finanças “por imposição de uma comissão de operários, pôs tais embaraços à exportação de cortiça em prancha, que, tendo se exportado, em 1910, 43 milhões, em 1911 baixou a 35 e em 1912 a 26 milhões”. *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados*, 23 de Abril de 1913.
- 25 António Valério Maduro, *Tecnologia e Economia Agrícola no Território Alcobacense (Séculos XVIII-XX)*, vol. 1, pp. 593-594, 625.

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

- 26 Na sessão da Câmara dos Deputados de 4 de Março de 1912 lamenta-se que a Inglaterra persista em manter “a antiga pauta dos direitos de importação que, para os vinhos até 17°,2 centesimais é cêrca de 6\$000 réis por hectolitro, e de 17°,2 até 24°. é de cêrca de 15\$000 réis, o que, se atendermos a que os nossos Pôrto e Madeira variam de 18° a 21° e os vinhos licorosos de Espanha e de Itália não excedem 17°, nos coloca em situação de difícil luta com êstes concorrentes”.
- 27 Veja-se: *A Pátria*, 73, 13 de Maio de 1899; Jaime Reis, “O atraso económico português em perspectiva histórica 1860-1913”, p. 28; Gaspar Martins Pereira, “Crises e renovação da viticultura duriense na segunda metade do século XIX”.
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- 34 *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados*, 6 de Fevereiro de 1912.
- 35 Manuel Villaverde Cabral, *O Desenvolvimento do Capitalismo em Portugal no Século XIX*. Lisboa: A Regra do Jogo, 1981, p. 233.

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# Who or What's Behind It: The Internal and External Factors Leading to the Fall of the Qing Empire

GUO WEIDONG\*

At the time when the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the outbreak of the 1911 Revolution (also known as the Chinese Xinhai Revolution, the Chinese Democratic Revolution, etc.) is being celebrated, one question should be raised in reviewing the studies on the Qing dynasty: Who or what was behind it? Apart from looking for clues from outside the Imperial power structure, we should also analyse the inside—that is, how did the empire itself come to its self-disintegration step by step? The main reason for the demise of the empire was not simply that it was being toppled; to a large extent, it collapsed of itself. The factors that determine the evolution of an event are often internal rather than external. Prior to the Revolution of 1911, the Qing rule had already fallen into a state of deep crisis. Its armies, gentry, officials and Manchu elites, all pillars of the Qing regime, were in a shaky condition; the accidental Wuchang Uprising that accelerated the collapse of the edifice of the Qing dynasty was a historical inevitability.

## DR. SUN YAT SEN'S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY AND MASS REVOLTS

The year 2011 sees the centenary of the outbreak of the 1911 Revolution. It was on 10 October one hundred years ago that the Wuchang Uprising broke

out. Subsequent revolutions not only brought to an end the Qing dynasty that had ruled China for over 260 years but also proclaimed the complete collapse of the autocratic monarchy that had lasted for more than 2,000 years in feudal China. This is the greatest historical significance of the revolution. At present, after one hundred years of settling down, as the burning situation of the past has gradually cooled down and become clearer, the prevalent traditional views have been subjected to more and more deliberations. For a long time in the past there were two popular main-stream views: one of them holds that the Xinhai Revolution was mainly launched by the revolutionaries such as Dr. Sun Yat Sen 孙逸仙 (Sun Zhongshan 孙中山, 1866-1925) and his associates. The overthrow of the Qing court was the outcome of Sun Yat Sen's revolutionary ideology and practice. This is what is known in the historiographical circle as the 'orthodox view on Dr. Sun'. Another view maintains that the social foundation for the Revolution of 1911 was the extreme sharpening of class and ethnic conflicts. The revolution broke out simply because at that time there were swarms of victims of natural calamities and war refugees all over the country, and frequent revolts indicated that the ruled classes could not bear it any longer. However, when we make concrete examinations into history at that time, we find that the above views left many questions unanswered.

The fact is that before the outbreak of the Wuchang Uprising, Dr. Sun Yat Sen and his United Allegiance

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Society (also known as the Chinese United League, Chinese Revolutionary Alliance, United League, etc.), objectively speaking, were at their low ebb. In the early stage of his life, Sun Yat Sen's activities concerning human resources were focused on the overseas Chinese and the establishment of secret societies; and geographically speaking, he was mostly in Guangdong, Hong Kong, Macao and overseas. Sun Yat Sen had a special relationship with Macao. For instance, when he was still a child, he often travelled with his parents between Macao and Xiangshan, his hometown. When Sun Wen 孙文, that is, Sun Yat Sen, left his hometown for Honolulu

in 1878 for the first time, he went abroad via Macao. His medical career started in Macao, too. In 1892 he practiced medicine for some time at Kiang Wu Hospital and other facilities. The germination of Sun's anti-Qing revolutionary ideas was also closely connected with Macao. Together with Yang Heling 杨鹤龄 (1868-1934), Chen Shaobai 陈少白 (1869-1934) and You Lie 尤烈, the four are known as the Four Bandits or Desperados, and Sun Yat Sen was a frequent visitor at the Hall of the Four Desperados, Yang's home in Macao. As he was well-connected in Macao, Sun Yat Sen, after his founding of the Chinese Revolutionary Alliance, immediately dispatched Feng Ziyou 冯自由 (1882-1958) and Li Zizhong 李自重 (1882-?) to set up on Rua do Volong in the vicinity of Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida a book club called Lequn (*lequn shushe* 乐群书社), which served first as the branch apparatus and later as the official chapter headquarters of the Revolutionary Alliance in Macao.

It should be pointed out, however, that Sun Yat Sen was not as well connected in other places. As his



General Huang Xing.

contact with young students was limited, internal discord between Sun and students soon occurred after the establishment of the Revolutionary Alliance (whose members were mainly students). In the spring of 1907, Sun Yat Sen had a heated argument with Huang Xing 黄兴 (1874-1916) over the design of the Alliance flag. A little while later, over such matters as Japanese donations and the failure of the Huizhou Uprising, Sun Yat Sen split with Zhang Taiyan 章太炎 (1869-1936), Tan Renfeng 谭人凤 (1860-1920), and Song Jiaoren 宋教仁 (1882-1913), who later launched an anti-Sun motion at a meeting and had Huang Xing replace Sun Yat Sen as the prime minister of

the Alliance. Although the agitation was later pacified by Huang Xing and others, Sun began to mistrust the Revolutionary Alliance's Tokyo headquarters and many of the key editors of the *Min Bao* 民报 (People's Journal). In the autumn of 1908 Sun Yat Sen, Wang Jingwei 汪精卫 (1883-1944) and Hu Hanmin 胡汉民 (1879-1936) formed in Singapore the Nanyang Branch of the United Allegiance Society. In addition to not mentioning its relationship of administrative subordination with the United Allegiance Society's Tokyo headquarters, the constitution of the Nanyang chapter is quite different from that drafted by the Tokyo headquarters, indicating Sun Yat Sen's intention to discard the Tokyo headquarters and set up a new centre of revolution in Southeast Asia instead. At the end of 1908 Zhang Taiyan, Tao Chengzhang 陶成章 (1878-1912) and Li Xiehe 李燮和 (1873-1927) brought up once more the request to expel Sun Yat Sen from the Alliance, and in March, 1910 started to reorganise the headquarters of the Revive the Light Society (also known as the Restoration Society) in Tokyo. (As a matter of fact, the Revive the Light Society

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II



Hu Hanmin (1879-1936).

existed openly or secretly even after the founding of the Revolutionary Alliance). The Alliance was crumbling.

Although Sun Yat Sen and his associates attempted to launch many uprisings in Guangdong and Guangxi provinces, they all ended in failure, probably due to the fact that the anti-revolutionary forces in the region were too strong. The Yellow Flower Mound (*huang hua gang* 黄花岗) revolt made the revolutionaries pay a much heavier price when the last attempt was launched on 27 April 1911. Sun Yat Sen said, 'The elite of the revolutionaries were all lost in the revolt.'<sup>1</sup> This was not just Sun's personal feeling. Huang Xing lamented in grief and indignation, 'There is nothing more that the Alliance can achieve. I'll never be involved with it anymore.'<sup>2</sup> After the failure of the uprising, Zhao Sheng 赵声 (1881-1911) deeply regretted that 'his ambition had not been accomplished and that the revolution had lost all its elites.... Looking around, he realised that the human and financial resources for the Revolutionary Alliance were now completely depleted and that it would be impossible for the Alliance to achieve anything in the future. His health deteriorated rapidly,<sup>3</sup> and he died of indignation before long. It can

thus be seen that a grave pessimistic mood hung over the revolutionary leaders. As a result, the split among the key members of the Alliance became increasingly serious. On July 31, Tan Renfeng and Song Jiaoren, who had long been dissatisfied with Sun Yat Sen's strategy to operate mainly in Guangdong, set up a 'Central Section of the Revolutionary Alliance' in Shanghai. By that time the Revolutionary Alliance existed only in name. Sun Yat Sen himself left for the United States. It can thus be said that Sun Yat Sen and his associates were not mentally prepared for the upcoming Wuchang Uprising.

On 10 October 1911, the Wuchang Uprising broke out when some soldiers rose in revolt. Two days later—that is, at noon on Oct. 12—Sun Yat Sen unexpectedly read the news from a local newspaper in Denver, tens of thousands of miles away from Wuchang. Although 'he could secretly return to Shanghai in some twenty days via the Pacific Ocean and take part personally in the revolutionary war so as to realise his life-long dream,' he believed that 'it was better and more effective for the revolutionary cause for him, at that particular time, to engage in diplomatic activities rather than fight on the battlefield. Therefore, he decided to dedicate himself to diplomatic activities before coming back to China.'<sup>4</sup> Because of his misjudgement, Sun Yat Sen gained very little on his American and European diplomatic tour. His efforts basically failed.

Back in China, Sun's belated return made him lose his best opportunity for taking up the leadership of the revolution. On the day following the Wuchang Uprising, the revolutionaries in Wuhan sent telegrams nationwide, 'asking Sun Wen to come back to China as soon as possible and take up the leadership'.<sup>5</sup> On November 14, in his open telegram, Cheng Dequan 程德全 (1860-1930), Military Governor of Jiangsu Province, claimed, 'Mr. Sun Yat Sen, pioneer of the Chinese revolution, has won the admiration of both the Chinese and foreigners. Except for him, no one is entitled to organise the provisional government.'<sup>6</sup> Opinions from Guizhou indicated: 'We agree to elect Sun Yat Sen as our President.'<sup>7</sup> The attitude from Yunnan was: 'It is quite natural for Dr. Sun Yat Sen, who is highly respected by people all over China, to be elected President by all provinces.'<sup>8</sup> Thus, it can be seen that immediately after the outbreak of the Wuchang Uprising, opinions supporting Sun Yat Sen dominated the nation. But Sun did not make any timely response;



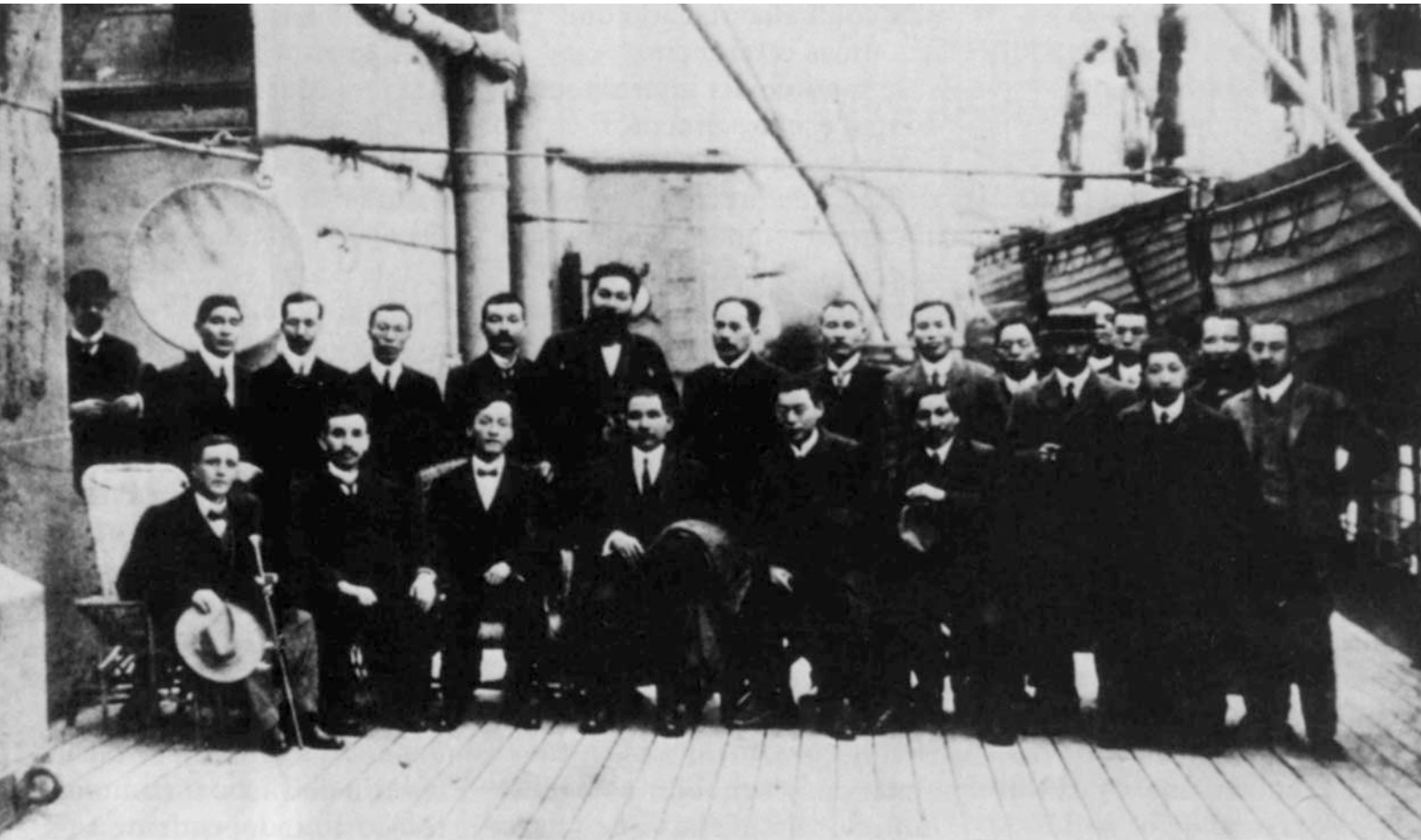
## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

neither did he return to China at once. It was not until 2 November before he set out from the United States, not directly for China, but for the United Kingdom and France. He reached Hong Kong on December 21 and arrived in Shanghai on the 25<sup>th</sup> to assume the responsibility of direct leadership of the revolution. By that time, however, 14 provinces in China had already declared restoration, and preparation was underway to form the new government. But the situation and public opinion had turned from ‘Sun as the sole candidate’ to ‘reserving the office of presidency for Yuan Shikai 袁世凯 (1859-1916)’. That is to say, at the most critical moment, Sun Yat Sen was not personally leading the revolution. Sun’s delayed return provided Yuan Shikai an immediate opportunity to replace him. As Qiu Jin 秋瑾 (1875-1907), a revolutionary and feminist, wrote in her poem: ‘We’re determined to reverse the tide of the situation, even though a hundred thousand brave men will be beheaded.’ On September 13 1912, a poem

was published as a response in *Min Li Bao* 民立报 (People’s Independence Journal), stating: ‘Numerous brave men have shed an immeasurable amount of blood for a fake republic. What a pity!’ Such an outcome was really disheartening.

The question is: How should we understand the intensity of social conflicts on the eve of the 1911 Revolution? Here we would like to use civil rebellions as parameters for our analysis not only because popular revolts from the lower classes in society represent the intensity of social conflicts, but also because they typically convey information on social unrest. What is the situation of civil commotions like those on the eve of the Xinhai Revolution, then? Three previous studies of statistics on internal revolts are available. The first study is C.K. Yung’s ‘Shijiu shiji zhongguo minzhong yundong de jizhong jiben tongji leixing’ 十九世纪

Sun Yat Sen on board a ship in Hong Kong on 21 December 1911 before returning to China.



## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

中国民众运动的几种基本统计类型 (Several Basic Categories of Statistics on the Popular Movements in 19<sup>th</sup> Century China).<sup>9</sup> This paper, based on information in the *Qingshilu* 清实录 (Veritable History of the Qing), has made a statistical analysis of the civil revolts from the first year of the Jiaqing 嘉庆 reign (1796) to the last year of the Xuantong 宣统 Emperor (1911). The second paper, Qiao Zhiqiang's 乔志强 'Xinhai gemin qian shinian jian nongmin douzheng de jige wenti' 辛亥革命前十年间农民斗争的几个问题 (Some Issues Regarding the Peasant Struggles during the Decade before the Xinhai Revolution), has analysed statistically the mass uprisings ranging from 1901 to 1911.<sup>10</sup> The third study is 'Qingmo minbian nianbiao' 清末民变年表 (A Chronological Table of Civil Rebellions at the End of the Qing Dynasty),<sup>11</sup> co-authored by Zhang Zhenhe 张振鹤 and Ding Yuanying 丁原英. Apart from the *Qingshilu*, the authors also consulted 22 different newspapers and journals in addition to collections of private works before compiling the civil rebellions in Chinese rural areas from 1902 to 1911 into a table. Comparing the three studies, we find that more rebellions are included in the last two studies. Qiao's counting, limited to rural China, numbers 326, while that of Zhang and Ding amounts to 1,300 as their statistics cover both urban and rural areas. However, from the statistical point of view, we could only use C.K. Yung's study as our main parameter of reference. This is not only because the sources he used are simpler, more complete and cohesive, but also because his statistics extend beyond the year 1901, which enables us to make a quantitative comparison between uprisings that took place before the revolution and those that occurred during the revolution so as to see roughly whether the number of revolts increased during the Xinhai Revolutionary period. Using periods of about ten years, C.K. Yung listed the number of uprisings as follows: There were 258 mass revolts from 1836 to 1845, 959 from 1846 to 1855, 2,483 from 1856 to 1865, 391 from 1876 to 1885, 315 from 1886 to 1895, and 566 from 1896 to 1911. From these statistics it is not difficult to see that the most civil revolts took place in the 1850s and 1860s. This phenomenon coincides with the period when the Taiping Rebellion was rolling on with full force. In the 15 years from 1896 to 1911, however, the number of revolts was less than one-fourth of those that occurred during the decade from 1856 to 1865.

It should be pointed out that the years 1899 and 1900 witnessed the high tide of the Boxer Rebellion. If revolts in this period were not counted, the number of civil commotions during those fifteen years would be far less. Popular commotions are violent actions waged by the lower classes against the existing institutions and serve as a gauge for the intensity of social conflicts. If we use this criterion, then the traditional theory that insists that social conflicts were unprecedentedly intense during the period of the Xinhai Revolution will not stand by any means. Therefore, it can be argued that the Democratic Revolution of 1911 was mainly a revolution fomented by middle- and upper-class people. It had little to do with the lower-class masses (The Railway Protection Movement in Sichuan and the uprisings of secret societies in Shaanxi are probably exceptions.) Lu Xun 鲁迅 (1881-1936) portrayed the lower classes' alienation from and misunderstanding of the Xinhai Revolution in his short story entitled 'A Q zhen zhuan' 阿Q正传 (The True Story of Ah Q). And Mao Zedong 毛泽东 (1893-1976), a political polemist, pointed out: 'The National Revolution requires a great transformation in rural China.' The Xinhai Revolution failed because it brought about no such transformations.<sup>12</sup> Although different methods of presentation were employed, the event they describe is the same.

## THE INTERNAL CRISIS OF THE QING POWER STRUCTURE

It seems that the traditional single-track (revolution) paradigm is far from enough to explain the colourful history of the late Qing dynasty. This brings us another question: What is the reason for the fall of the Qing court, an unprecedented historical transition in the Chinese political system? The answer might be that it was brought down by a combination of forces. Regarding the collapse of the Qing Empire, most of the previous research focuses on its opponents, putting the collapse of the Empire into the category of the history of the Xinhai Revolution. They study how the Empire was toppled by the revolution and the forces that overthrew it, such as Sun Yat Sen, the United Allegiance Society, revolutionary parties, constitutional monarchists, mass revolts and civil commotions. These studies are, without doubt, necessary and important. However, this single perspective model is now found

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

to be unable to provide reasonable explanations for a series of major issues. We need to expand our point of view and use a more spacious multi-perspective model to examine the historical issues and history of issues. Since we are studying the collapse of the Qing dynasty, we should examine the inside of its power structure in addition to looking for reasons from the outside. We should also analyse how the Empire itself came step by step to its self-destruction in addition to seeking answers from the forces of opposition that brought it down. Maybe, the inside aspect is more important. Prior to the Wuchang Uprising, the Qing ruling clique was really beset with crises. The major pillars of the state apparatus had all crumbled, and administrative resources had been greatly depleted. The foundation of political power had become too narrow for it to continue. It can be argued that the very existence of such a political power itself had become superfluous. Let us analyse this view step by step.

The army is an important constituent part of the state machine. The crumbling process of the armed forces in the late Qing dynasty started at the latest during the reign of the Daoguang 道光 Emperor (some scholars even claim that it began to fall apart much earlier during the revolt of the White Lotus Society in the Jiaqing reign). The Eight-Banner Army and Green Standard Army were first devastatingly defeated by the foreign powers during the Opium War and later almost completely wiped out by the Taiping rebels. The rise of the Xiang 湘 and Huai 淮 armies eventually served, especially after the second defeat of the Jiangnan Army Group in 1860, both as a turning point for the Xiang Troops to completely replace the Green Standard Army and the beginning of the Huai Troops to become a standing Imperial army. From the 1860s to the 1890s, the Xiang and Huai armies were the main military units of the Qing dynasty. During that period, units of the Trained Army (*lianjun* 练军) and Garrison Army imitated those of the Xiang Army. However, the Xiang and Huai armies were not regular Imperial hereditary troops. Instead, they were called 'Braves Units' (*yongying* 勇营) with local and private characteristics.<sup>13</sup>

This brings to our attention a series of paradoxes in the process of the modernisation of Chinese military forces. Paradox one: generally speaking, in the modernisation process of a national army, two developments that run neck and neck are included—

that is, the modernisation of military equipment and formation and training go hand in hand with the nationalisation of the armed forces. But the emergence of the Xiang and Huai armies saw the above two developments go in opposite directions. During the process of modernisation of military equipment and training, the army not only was not nationalised, but actually went through a process of privatisation, becoming in the end a tool in the hands of some individuals or power groups. Paradox two: due to frequent wars in modern China, soldiers gradually occupied the centre of political power. 'As far as promotion is concerned, military exploits are far more useful than scores in the civil service examinations. It can thus be seen that the importance of soldiers is greatly stressed.'<sup>14</sup> However, while the army was getting nearer to the centre of political power from its formerly marginalised position in society, it was beginning to deviate increasingly from the orthodox institutions of the Empire. Paradox three: modern China then was developing civic awareness. Individuals were emerging from the bonds of Imperial power, patriarchal clans and regional systems to become legitimate citizens. But while the awareness of modern nationhood and citizenship was increasing in China, the localisation and privatisation of soldiers as a group was being strengthened as well. Such a situation eventually led to the soldiers' intervention in politics and incessant wars among the warlords.

Although the First Sino-Japanese War resulted in the decline of the Xiang and Huai forces, the rise of the Beiyang Army (also known as the North Sea Army) represented a stronger colour of privatisation. Although the Qing court planned to resume control of the army and established one after another such institutions as the Military Supervision Agency, Wuwei Troop, Military Training Agency, War Department, and Office of Military Consultancy, limited effects were achieved. The fourth paradox is that the nationalisation of the army was entangled with its royalisation. The attempt of a couple of young men from the royal family to assume control of the army greatly disgusted the officers and soldiers in the 'New Army,' rendering the modernisation process of the New Army into a revolutionary process. The army, instead of protecting the Qing court, turned out to be the most important force in the overthrow of it. By the time of the Xinhai Revolution, most of the new army units in the south

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

had come under the influence of the revolutionaries. Dr. Sun was pleased to note that the campaign launched by the revolutionaries ‘to win over the New Army has spread to Yunnan, Guangxi, the three-Jiang (*san jiang* 三江, that is, Jiangsu, Jiangxi and Anhui) and two-Hu (*liang hu* 两湖, that is Hunan and Hubei) regions, and the opportunity for the revolution is ripening.’<sup>15</sup> In the north, the New Army was largely under the control of Yuan Shikai. The Xinhai Revolution, launched by the New Army in Wuchang, a strategically important

Yuan Shikai (1859-1916).



place in central China, touched off positive responses among the new armies both in the south and north. Of the 14 organised divisions and 18 mixed brigades of the New Army nationwide, seven divisions and ten mixed brigades came to the side of the revolutionaries, and of those units, seven divisions and eight brigades were from the New Army in the south. Under their influence, many provinces were restored. The Beiyang Army under the command of Yuan Shikai, however, played a different role in the overthrow of the Qing Empire. Upon receiving Sun Yat Sen's promise to ‘reserve the presidency for him’, Yuan Shikai instructed Duan Qirui 段祺瑞 (1865-1936) to send a joint telegram with a dozen Beiyang generals to the Qing court, demanding the ‘establishment of a republic’ in the name of 400,000 soldiers, or he would ‘march the army into the capital and discuss the matter with the princes’.<sup>16</sup> The Qing Emperor was forced to abdicate the throne. It is therefore quite understandable that some overseas scholars simply treat the Xinhai Revolution as a sort of ‘Soldiers’ Revolution’ or ‘Mutiny of the New Army’. After the Xinhai Revolution, many restored provincial governments were preceded with the adjective ‘military.’ This tells us vividly and profoundly that an administration must rely on the military, and a government must be led by the military before it can live and function in peace. If this was just a wartime exception, then after the Revolution of 1911, of the 22 provincial governors in the country, 15 were generals. This situation shows that soldiers, a relatively low-status group, had become the most powerful group that was able to sway society. However, such a shift deviated from the right track of the Qing dynasty.<sup>17</sup>

Officials are both the representatives of ‘political rule’ and the executors of state power. The problem of officialdom in the late Qing dynasty lay in the disloyalty of many officials, the expansion of local forces, and corruption. For a government at any level, the key components of political power are the military, financial and administrative powers. Previous passages have discussed the loss of military power. As far as the erosion of financial power is concerned, the static and fixed financial institutions that had long worked for the Qing dynasty began to show signs of their inability to cope with the rapidly changing situation as early as the 1840s. The gap between the rigid revenue system and the dynamic expenditure system was getting increasingly larger. First of all, the spending for a series

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

of wars against foreign powers, such as the Opium War, and their subsequent reparations became unprecedented extra expenditures in the history of Qing finance. The Taiping Rebellion that would break out later dealt another blow to the Qing financial system because the areas occupied by the Taiping Army happened to be the most important sources of revenue for the Qing court. As a result, the policies of revenue submission to the central court and inter-provincial transfer payments were completely upset. Rich provinces like Jiangsu and Zhejiang, originally big revenue providers to the Qing court, were then mostly controlled by the Taiping Army. Instead of submitting revenues to the central court, these provinces had to rely on the central court for financial support; and they had to seek financial aid from poorer provinces instead of providing financial transfer payments to them. Large-scale wars depleted the state coffers too. During the reign of the Yongzhen 雍正 Emperor, the central treasury normally had a surplus of about 60 million to 70 million silver taels in reserve; by July 17, 1853, however, the Ministry of Revenue had only about 2.27 million silver taels left for regular expenditures. The Qing court, which had 'never experienced such a strained financial situation before',<sup>18</sup> totally lost its ability to coordinate and balance the local finances. Under this situation, the local governments had no other alternative but to raise their own funds. At a time when the central government had to reduce or give zero financial support to the local governments, it had to reduce or give up its financial monopoly too. A plethora of new revenue sources (controlled or shared by the local governments) were established one after another, such as the *likin* tax of one-thousandth. From 1853 to 1864 the country collected an average annual *likin* tax of 10 million silver taels, making it the second largest source of revenue after the land and poll taxes. However, the authority to collect the tax and spend the income was vested in the local governments rather than in the central court.<sup>19</sup> Another source of revenue was the tariff. In 1849 the total tariff collected by customs nationwide was only a meager 2.21 million silver taels. By 1863, however, it had grown to 8.75 million and continued to grow in subsequent years, making it the third largest source of revenue.<sup>20</sup> The income was shared by the relevant foreign powers, the Qing court and local governments, which usually had the lion's share. For instance, a large portion of the military expenditures of the Xiang and Huai armies



Duan Qirui(1865-1936).

came from the import tariff collected by the Shanghai Customs House. 'In the past years, the war in Jiangsu was steadily financed by the import tariff.'<sup>21</sup> Mintage is the other source of revenue. In 1887 the Qing court approved a proposal submitted by Zhang Zhidong 张之洞 (1837-1909), viceroy of Guangdong and Guangxi provinces, to institute a modern mint to manufacture dragon silver coins. The government's mintage of silver coins was controlled by local governments at its very beginning. By 1905 there were altogether fifteen mints established by 12 provincial governors, who made huge profits in the production of coins and distribution of banknotes 'without being censured' by the Ministry of Revenue.<sup>22</sup> Borrowing money from foreign countries is another way of fund raising. Local governments started to borrow money from foreign countries much earlier than the central court. From 1853 to 1864 China borrowed foreign money twelve times, totalling 2.07 million silver taels, which was mostly done by local governments. 'In the late Qing dynasty, Zuo Zongtang 左宗棠 (1812-1885) was the staunchest supporter for borrowing foreign debts. Debt-borrowing was an



## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

important turning point in the history of the Chinese economy.<sup>23</sup> Bonds issued by the four provinces of Hunan, Hubei, Zhili and Anhui from the 31<sup>st</sup> year of the reign of Guangxu 光绪 Emperor to the first year of Xuantong amounted to 9.6 million silver taels. Financial institutions such as the Provincial Bank, fiscal authorities such as the Commission of Grain Supply (*zong liang tai* 总粮台) and Security Garrison Bureau (*chou fang ju* 筹防局), and the Commercial Tax Bureau (*juan ju* 捐局) and Donation Bureau (*li jin ju* 厘金局) formed by the local provinces became increasingly well established. The rapid expansion of local finance in the provinces was accompanied by the rapid shrinkage of central financial power. ‘The authority of the Ministry of Revenue was diminishing day by day while that of the provincial governors was increasing day by day.’<sup>24</sup> What is more, local governments also began to withhold more money that should have been handed over to the central court. ‘Annual hand-over was no more than 60-70%.’<sup>25</sup> While the central government reduced or gave no financial support to the local governments, it had to reduce or give up its monopoly over the financial authority too. The Qing court, under the double pressure of the erosion of financial power and fiscal strain, made a meagre living. The repeated attempts made by the Qing government to rectify its finances and restore the lost financial authority all failed. It is estimated that in 1908, the total amount of revenue collected by the Qing government accounted for a mere 2.4% of the gross national product, whereas that of Japan reached over 12% as early as 1880.<sup>26</sup>

Now let us discuss the issue of the erosion of administrative power at the end of the Qing dynasty. Since the local forces were too strong to control, the ‘Preparation for Constitutional Government’ initiated in September 1906 was aimed at the reform of the bureaucratic system. At first, the court, ‘eager to strive for the centralisation of power,’<sup>27</sup> hoped for the reform of local bureaucracy, but many of its proposals met strong opposition from local officials. The ‘Local Bureaucracy Regulations’ introduced after much difficulty on 7 July 1907 only brought about some trivial reforms.<sup>28</sup> The Qing court intended to use the reforms to curtail the power of provincial civil and military governors with the aim of centralising power, whereas the governors used the reforms to advocate local autonomy. In the end, both sides had to compromise. On 3 November 1908, as the health of both Emperor Guangxu and Empress

Dowager Cixi 慈禧太后 (1835-1908) deteriorated rapidly, the Empress Dowager appointed the 25-year-old Zaifeng 载沣 (1883-1951), the second Prince Chun, as regent and had his three-year-old son Pu Yi 溥仪 (1906-1967) brought to the Palace for education. When Emperor Guangxu passed away the following day, Cixi proclaimed Pu Yi emperor, that is, Xuantong, the last emperor of the Qing dynasty. Zaifeng, although made regent, had to seek instructions on all matters of state from Cixi. Another decree was issued on the following day to give Zaifeng authority over all military and state affairs in the nation, but he was required to ask the Empress Dowager Longyu 隆裕皇后 (1868-1913) for instructions on important issues. Shortly afterwards, Cixi also died of illness. The Emperor and Empress Dowager died in succession within two days. As Cixi was more than 70 years old, her death should be natural, but Guangxu was only 38. Why did he die so young? And why did he die just one day before Cixi’s death? As there are many suspicions, there are as many explanations. What is worse, the deaths of Guangxu and Cixi and the assumption of Zaifeng as regent greatly weakened the capability of the supreme rulers to control the situation. Zaifeng, who became a member of the Grand Council in February 1908, was weak in character and indecisive. His political experience, leadership ability and manoeuvring skills were far behind those of Cixi. As he was made the chief executive of a big country all of a sudden, he was under a lot of pressure and unable to exercise his power. This resulted in the expansion of power in the provinces and the increasing tension between the central court and local governments.<sup>29</sup> After the outbreak of the Xinhai Revolution, most of the provincial governors opposed the central court or were reluctant to help when needed. By that time, the cohesive power of the central court had been totally lost.

The gentry, whose status was between ‘semi-officials and non-officials,’<sup>30</sup> constituted an important foundation for feudal autocratic rule and an indispensable class in society. In the Chinese language, the character 士 (*shi*, gentry, literati) often goes with 大夫 (*dafu*, officials). This indicates that the gentry are not only the reserve force of officials, but also serve as a link between the government and the populace. If a ‘gentleman’ fails to start his career by entering officialdom through the civil service examinations, his social position will always be ignored; if an ‘official’ has

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

not taken any civil service examination, he will always be regarded as someone who has not yet embarked on the right path. It is through the system of civil service examinations, the obligation to cultivate the populace, and power distribution at the roots of society that the autocratic Imperial authority found itself living in a state of symbiosis with the rights of these scholar-bureaucrats.

In modern times the status and functions of the gentry have undergone a persistent and profound transformation. This change was first caused by foreign invasions. Generally speaking, when a country is under foreign invasion, its army should take up the responsibility of resistance. While protecting the country, the army protects the gentry of the country. However, as the defeats suffered in the Opium War indicated that the nation was incompetent in taking up this responsibility, the gentry took it upon themselves to bear arms. While protecting themselves, they protected the country. The most prominent case in this regard was the performance of community schools in rural Guangzhou. Both the Sanyuanli 三元里 Resistance and the protest against the British troops' entry into the city of Canton were led by the local gentry. Consequently the gentry, as a class, started to play an important leading role in China's foreign relations. They first pushed the local Guangdong government, then the Daoguang and Xianfeng 咸丰 emperors, into adopting a tougher foreign policy. This is, however, a special local case. Nationwide, there was not much change in the rights of the gentry. Fundamental changes in the gentry class took place only after the outbreak of the Taiping Rebellion. The defeat of the hereditary Imperial army and the formation and training of local militias resulted in some decisive changes in the relationship between the monarchy and the gentry. The Qing court's protection of the gentry was reversed, and the gentry's dependence on imperial institutions was eroded. The balance between the monarchy and the gentry began to tip towards the latter. In particular, the practice of having civil officials take command of the Hunan troops in the army opened a wide path for scholars. In addition to their dream of 'becoming a prime minister', they could also serve as military generals. In the late Qing dynasty, the gentry class saw its first split, resulting in a new sub-class—that is, the military gentry.

The self-strengthening movement that started in the 1860s brought about the second split in the

scholar-gentry class. As some of the gentry turned to the operation of modern enterprises and various kinds of modern cultural and educational institutions related to those enterprises, a new sub-class, that is, the merchant gentry emerged.<sup>31</sup> The rise of the gentry class was not a simple matter of ranking higher or lower than other classes such as peasants, workers and merchants. As the gentry became involved in heavy industry, they became a brand new class qualitatively different from the feudal system. The new merchant gentry were not only alienated from monarchical power but also took on the nature of checking other forces. The social status of merchants rose rapidly. 'The power of a nation and the prosperity of the Chinese race are really controlled by merchants.'<sup>32</sup> Under the system of mercantilism in the late Qing dynasty, it was quite a vogue for people to go into business. For example, Zhang Jian 张謇 (1853-1926) was rather unlucky at the civil service examinations. He failed five times before passing the provincial examinations and failed four times before passing the top level of the examinations. Shortly after he obtained the title of *zhuangyuan* 状元 in 1894, the highest achievement for a scholar, which opened up a bright path for his future, Zhang Jian unexpectedly gave up his hard-won official career and resolutely stepped into the realm of industry. Although this may be regarded as a special case, statistics on the categories of occupation taken by the residents in Hankou in the late Qing period indicate that of 99,833 residents investigated, 30,990 were merchants and 9,464 were peddlers. Nearly half of the residents were engaged in business.<sup>33</sup> Although these merchants may not necessarily have been from the gentry, we can be sure that some of them, especially those who had greater social influence, could be regarded as new merchant gentry.

In July 1898 Yan Fu 严复 (1854-1921), in a tone typical of a modernist, sternly questioned the legitimacy of the integration of politics and education: 'As a nation gets more civilised, the division of labour becomes more detailed. Why are education and politics, two great branches of labour, not separated?'<sup>34</sup> Zhang Taiyan was even more radical when he resisted resolutely any links between the 'government and education,' stating that 'government should not be involved in the administration of schools as the latter are aimed at teaching people to become wise and competent.'<sup>35</sup> These are some of the challenges levelled at the very foundation of survival for the scholar-gentry class. The abolition of the Imperial civil service examination

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II



Zhang Jian (1853-1926).

system in 1905 eventually severed the link between the scholar-gentry class and the government. As a result, the educational system in China gradually became a part of the Western educational system that had been expanding all over the globe. The ‘common knowledge’ that had remained unchanged since ancient times and the sacred and dignified ‘classics’ were re-examined by the new knowledge system based on Western learning, and knowledge was re-defined by alternative standards. The subsequent study-abroad program and the establishment of new Western-style schools, while blocking the old path of career through the Imperial examinations, opened up new routes for aspiring scholars. The separation of politics from education shows that the traditional system was weak in attracting the scholar-gentry group on the one hand, and the new system was strong in attracting and transforming the scholar gentry class on the other hand. According to the official Qing report, ‘Initially, students in the new schools set up in the provinces are mostly recruited from the former graduates of the Imperial civil service examinations.’<sup>36</sup> It is said that at least 100,000 old scholar-gentry entered the new Western-style schools for re-education. Studying abroad rapidly became a vogue among those scholars who had passed different levels of the civil service examinations. The crash

program offered by the Hosei University in Japan, catering to the special needs of the Chinese scholars, enrolled 1,868 Chinese scholars in a period of four to five years, of whom 10% had passed the metropolitan examinations and three had passed the palace exams.<sup>37</sup>

The new trend of the old scholar gentry trying to take on new identities resulted in the third split in the scholar-gentry class: that is, the rise of the new scholars. The statistical document mentioned earlier in this paper shows that at the end of the Qing period, there were in Hankou only 293 self-acknowledged gentry, although 2,025 residents were engaged in education.<sup>38</sup> This is a true reflection of the rapid approach of the old gentry toward their new identity as new-style intellectuals. Gentry mainly exist as a group of intellectuals. As this transformation was fundamentally a subjective shift, the class of gentry began to fall irretrievably. The group of modern intellectuals arose in its stead. If the old gentry was naturally, inseparably and inevitably connected with the dynastic institutions, the group of the new-style intellectuals then seemed to be absolutely incompatible with the dynastic system because the two, widely different from each other, could not live side by side. Chen Kuilong 陈夔龙 (1857-1948), Viceroy of Zhili Province in the late Qing period, once asked a penetrating question: ‘Who could predict the harm that modern schools should bring us today? Look at the revolutionary leaders. Aren’t they all trained in modern schools?’<sup>39</sup>

The establishment of the provincial assemblies and the National Assembly was an attempt on the part of the Qing court to re-establish its link with the scholar-gentry class. As a result, in order to ensure the victory of the scholar gentry, the ‘Ziyiju yiyuan xuanju zhangcheng’ 諮议局议员选举章程 (Regulations on the Election of Members to the Provincial Assemblies), introduced on July 22, 1908, included inflexible stipulations unfavourable to young graduates of modern schools. The shared requirement requested that the voters must be 25 years or older, and those elected must be 30 years or older. Such an age requirement excluded those people who had freshly graduated from the new-style schools from taking part in the election because the Imperial civil service examination system had been scrapped only three years before, and the new-style schools had only a very short history. Other stipulations were more favourable to the candidates. For instance, they must have been engaged in education

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

for no less than three years—a policy favouring the scholar gentry; and the candidates must have assets of no less than 5,000 silver coins—a policy favouring the merchant gentry. Stipulations on the accomplished scholars, senior licentiates and those who had served as civil officials (7<sup>th</sup> rank and above) or military officers (5<sup>th</sup> rank and above) appointed by the central government showered privileges directly on the scholar gentry and local gentry. On the other hand, the stipulations that current students were not entitled to vote or be voted for, and primary school teachers were not entitled to be voted for, excluded many new intellectuals from the election.<sup>40</sup>

The resulting situation greatly narrowed the path for the new-style intellectuals to go into politics. Many of the young students were forced to join the New Army, with the hope of winning promotion in the military. At that time, most of the educated who joined the New Army were primary and secondary school students. In 1905, of the 96 conscripts recruited in Huangpi, Hubei province, 24 were accomplished scholars and 12 were scholars who lived on government grants. In the 32<sup>nd</sup> Regiment of the New Army in Hubei, primary and secondary school students accounted for more than 20% of the troops.<sup>41</sup> Such a high concentration of educated people in the army earned it the appellation: the ‘Accomplished Scholar and Student New Army’. In contrast, most of the middle- and high-levelled old-style intellectuals ended up in provincial and national assemblies. Of the sixty-three speakers and deputy speakers in provincial assemblies nationwide at that time, apart from three people whose identities are unknown, only five had not passed the Imperial civil service examinations. Most of the members of the provincial assemblies come from the gentry class. For instance, of the 94 members in the Guangdong Provincial Assembly, all had passed the Imperial civil service examinations.<sup>42</sup> This resulted in the dominance of the moderate Constitutional monarchists in the assemblies. However, in the New Army, which was composed of younger people, radical revolutionaries held more sway. The establishment of the assemblies not only failed to strengthen the links between the gentry and the Qing court, but actually served as a turning point for the expansion of ‘gentry power’ in modern China. The inclusion of the gentry into the assemblies is a decisively significant example of tradition turning into modernity. It also made the assemblies into

another political centre in opposition to the Imperial and bureaucratic powers. Instead of getting closer to the Imperial court, the gentry in transition become more alienated. The gentry power in its modern sense could hardly exist together with the Imperial power, for they were frequently engaged in conflicts over such issues as the model of the constitutional government, the duration of the preparation for the constitutional government, the authority of the assemblies, the composition of the cabinet, and the taking back of rights. As a result, in the last few years of Qing rule, there appeared a situation in which, as political representatives of the new gentry, the Constitutional monarchists made demands that were turned down by the court. After the Constitutional monarchists made repeated complaints, however, some of their demands were met. Then they raised even higher demands and increased their stake until the court was no longer able to satisfy them. This also put the Constitutional monarchists on a path of no return because they had been repeatedly disappointed by the court. As the gentry could not solve their problems with the Imperial court, they were forced to go down to the grass roots

Yan Fu (1854-1921)



## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

level, bringing their problems to the populace. As E. Young, a noted Sinologist, wrote of Chinese history, ‘the politicisation of the gentry is probably the most prominent feature in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.’<sup>43</sup> If the politicisation of the gentry could not be controlled, then the politicisation of the populace could hardly be put under control. The degree of social upheaval was in proportion to the politicisation of the populace. The higher the politicisation of the populace, the lower the politics descended to the grass-roots people, and the more irrational and disordered factors there could be. The Railway Protection Movement in Sichuan and other places ‘initiated by the gentry and responded to by the labourers’ was just such an act in which the gentry and the populace interacted and instigated each other until the Imperial government finally lost control.<sup>44</sup>

The Manchu people are the origin of the rise of the Qing dynasty and the foundation of racial dominance. As China at that time was a nation in which the ethnic minority ruled over the majority, conflicts always existed between the Manchus and the Han Chinese. Since the reign of Emperor Xianfeng, although the place of the Han officials in the power structure became increasingly important, the superiority of Manchu political privileges remained unchanged. That is why when Dr. Sun Yat Sen raised the flag against the Manchu rulers, ‘Overthrowing the Manchu empire’ became the most popular slogan in Chinese society. To counter the anti-Manchu propaganda, to rectify the collapsing privileged Eight Banner system, and to reconcile relations between the Manchu, the Han and other ethnic groups, the late Qing court overhauled its policies toward the Manchu and Han Chinese. Distinction was no longer made between the Manchu and Han Chinese. Official positions formerly reserved for Manchus were open to Han Chinese officials, promotions of Manchu and Han officials were unified, the Banner system was abolished, and the Banner men and common people were reorganised into the New Army. The legal privileges of the Manchus were discarded so as to ensure that the Manchu and Han Chinese were governed by the same law. Inter-marriage between the Manchu and Han Chinese was permitted, the Manchu and Han Chinese students could attend the same schools, rituals and customs were made uniform, stipends for the Banner men were scrapped, Banner soldiers were returned to the farmland, the parasitic privileges of the Banner people were abandoned, the

practice of separate governance over the Banner men and Han Chinese was abolished, and Manchuria was put under the framework of provinces in the hinterland.

It should be acknowledged that in the last years of the late Qing period, the Qing court adopted some active adjustment policies to eliminate the dividing line between the Manchu and Han Chinese, and the extent of such adjustments was unprecedented in history. The purpose of this policy overhaul was to ‘wipe out the boundary between the Manchu and Han Chinese so as to make them all into citizens.’<sup>45</sup> However, the adoption of these measures failed to reconcile the conflicts between the Manchu and Han Chinese people. It is exactly during the last years of the late Qing period that the ethnic suspicions and conflicts grew more intense instead of becoming reconciled. Why did these measures bring exactly the opposite of the desired effect? One of the important reasons is that these social policies were offset on the political level by the precautionary anti-Han Chinese policy continued by the Qing government. During period of social upheaval and transition, political measures are, more often than not, of the utmost importance, and this is focused on the distribution of political power. In the bureaucratic reform carried out by the central government at the end of 1906, although it was said that no distinction would be made between the Manchu and Han Chinese, the actual line-up of officials was like this: of the thirteen ministers and secretaries of the eleven boards or ministries, seven were Manchus, one Mongolian, and five Han Chinese, breaking the long-standing policy of appointing equal numbers of both ethnicity. No wonder people at the time challenged, ‘Isn’t the preparation for Constitutional government a preparation for a second big conflict between the new and old, between the Manchu and Han Chinese?’<sup>46</sup>

The political disturbance in 1907 dealt another heavy blow to the political force of the Han Chinese. The most powerful Han Chinese officials, such as Qu Hongji 瞿鴻禨 (1850-1918), Cen Chunxuan 岑春煊 (1861-1933), Lin Shaonian 林紹年 (1845-1916), Yuan Shikai, and Zhang Zhidong were all suppressed during the disturbance.<sup>47</sup> Qu, Cen and Lin were dismissed from their posts. The other two most powerful Han local officials, Yuan and Zhang, were kicked upstairs to the Grand Council. Shortly afterwards, Zhang Zhidong died of illness, and Yuan Shikai was removed from his posts and sent back to his ancestral village. The removal



## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

of Yuan by the Qing court was aimed at suppressing the rising Beiyang Clique. This act was similar to the control of powerful and imperious senior officials in previous courts by any new successor to the throne in any dynastic change. Similar cases include Emperor Jiaqing's order of Heshen's 和珅 (1750-1799) suicide, Emperor Daoguang's dismissal of Cao Zhenyong 曹振鏞 (1755-1835), Emperor Xianfeng's removal of Mujangga 穆彰阿 (1782-1856) and Emperor Tongzhi's 同治 (1856-1875) execution of Sushun 肃顺 (1816-1861).

However, in the eyes of the populace the Qing court was again implementing its anti-Han Chinese policy.<sup>48</sup> At that time, as the conflicts between the Manchu and Han Chinese were so intense and commonplace, people would consciously or unconsciously associate everything that took place in the court with the issue of Manchu-Han relations. The more blatant the racial segregation practiced by the Qing court, the more strongly disgusted the Han and other ethnic groups felt with the racist regime. This led to a vicious cycle: the more suspicious the Manchu aristocrats became of the Han Chinese, the higher the anti-Manchu sentiments of the Han Chinese people were; the stronger the anti-Manchu consciousness on the part of the Han Chinese, the more suspicious and fearful the Qing court was of the Han Chinese. This chain of interactions disqualified the Qing court from ruling over the other ethnic groups in the end. 'The northern barbarians are not our own people. Those who refuse to carry out reforms should be removed and those who agree to carry out reform should be removed too; those who are unable to save humanity should be dismissed and those who are able to save humanity should be dismissed too.'<sup>49</sup>

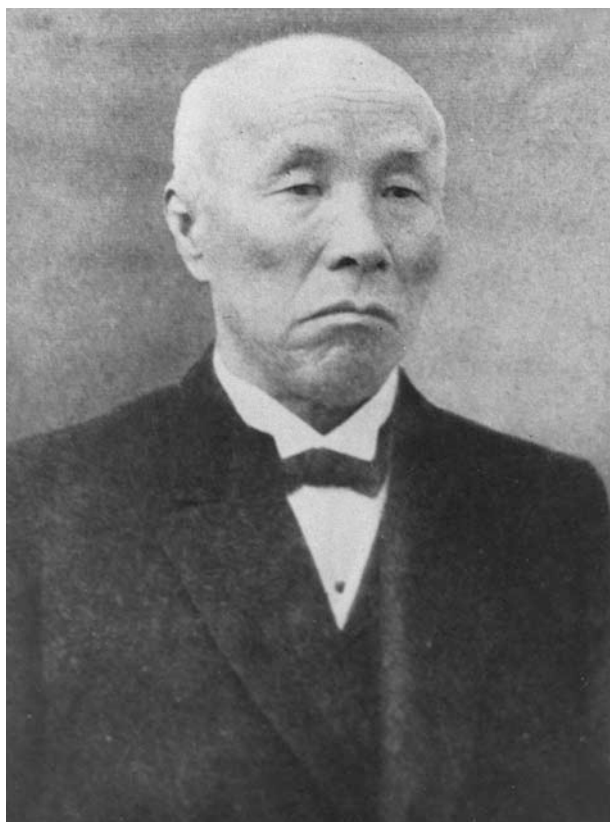
The different policies toward the Manchu and Han Chinese adopted by the Qing government also brought about another conflict. As the Qing social policy to restrict Manchu privileges made the Manchu people unhappy and even antagonistic because it affected their traditional vested interests, they became more alienated from the court. Although the Qing court aimed to win over more Han Chinese with this policy, its anti-Han Chinese political policy prevented it from achieving this purpose. The outcome was that the Qing court pleased neither side, and both the Manchu and the Han Chinese became alienated at the same time.

The emergence of the 'Imperial Family Cabinet' on 8 May 1911 accelerated an alienation that was

unprecedented in history. Although people of all walks of life had looked forward to the emergence of the new cabinet, they did not anticipate that of the thirteen cabinet members, nine would be Manchus, and of the nine Manchu members, seven would be relatives of the Emperor! This result made the people feel that they had been cheated, while the Han officials complained to the Emperor, saying, 'It is not proper to make Imperial family members cabinet ministers.'<sup>50</sup> The Constitutional monarchists resented it bitterly, claiming, 'As the creation of the Imperial Family Cabinet failed to meet the requirements of the Constitutional government, it has dashed the hopes of the people promoting the Constitutional system. We demand that it be reorganised so as to pay more respect to the Constitutional government and consolidate the foundation of the nation.'<sup>51</sup> They also issued a warning against a possible breakup: 'We are afraid that people might be motivated to overthrow the cabinet upon its establishment.'<sup>52</sup> The international responses were not favourable either. Despite the fact that the Constitutionalism favoured by the Qing court was based mostly on the Japanese model, Okuma Shigenobu 大隈重信 (1838-1922), former Japanese Prime Minister, commented: 'Considering that Royal members are not entitled to any position of responsibility in a Constitutional monarchy, the cabinet created by the Qing court fails to conform to this rule.'<sup>53</sup> *The Times* in London published an even harsher commentary on the Manchu-Han Chinese conflict, which was carried in the *Shanghai News*: 'The new cabinet is nothing but a sobriquet for the old Grand Council. As all those who are assisting the Emperor are watching the Manchu-Han Chinese ratio, it is just a foolish idea to have the Manchus dominate the political stage.'<sup>54</sup> To say 'to have the Manchus dominate the political stage' was only half correct; the other half was to maintain Imperial dominance. Hu Sijing 胡思敬 (1869-1922), a censor, saw that

The most important thing of a nation is government administration, then comes the authorities over the military and finance. If everything is put in the hands of the relatives of the Emperor..., then the outsiders might probably think that the country is a piece of private property of the Imperial family. Trust no Han Chinese, and trust no Manchu either, for they both pursue their own private interests,...

## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II



Okuma Shigenobu (1838-1922).

That is why the country becomes more and more isolated from its people.<sup>55</sup>

This is the impression left by the Imperial Family Cabinet on the people: Trust no Han Chinese, and trust no Manchu either—only Imperial family members are trusted! Unfortunately, the abilities of the Imperial family members and noblemen were going downhill. Since the implementation of bureaucratic reform in 1906, the Qing court had been trying to concentrate power into the hands of the Manchus before placing it under the control of Imperial family members. The Prime Minister of the ‘Imperial Family Cabinet’ was Yikuang 奕劻 (1838-1917), the Prince Qing of the Imperial family; the Minister of Finance was Zaize 載澤 (1876-1929) of the Imperial family; and the military was completely under the control of the Imperial family. Prince Zaifeng himself, as the Grand Marshal of the Army and Navy, commanded all the armed forces in the nation. Prince Zaixun 載洵 (1886-1949), one of his brothers, served as the Minister of the Navy. Prince Zaitao 載濤 (1887-1971), another brother, headed the General Staff. The Minister of the Army was Yinchang

荫昌 (1859-1934), a Manchu. Thus the cabinet was dominated by the Aisin Gioro clan.

On the surface, although the most important posts were placed in the hands of the most reliable relatives of the Emperor, the foundation of political power was actually in the process of disintegration and erosion. The Imperial Family Cabinet narrowed to the extreme the power foundation, which turned from the original practice of appointing equal numbers of both Manchu and Han ethnicity to the practice of concentrating power in the hands of the Manchus, and then of a few Imperial relatives. All others were excluded from the power structure. The ultimate goals of constitutionalism were the decentralisation of power and the simultaneous expansion of the base of political rule with the expansion of political participation. The Constitutional monarchy practiced by the Qing court, however, resulted in the centralisation of power, the exclusion of both the Manchu and Han Chinese, and vigilance against both civilians and officials. The self-isolation of the ruling clique of the Empire could be no worse.

The ‘hierarchical service of the Eight Banners,’ relied upon heavily by the ethnic rulers of the Qing dynasty for its rise and existence, was now shaking. After the start of the anti-Manchu movement, strange things happened: the Manchu students began to change their family names into Han Chinese ones, aristocratic families that hung plaques of honour above their front gates saying they had sons in the military were in a hurry to take them down, women started to wear men’s outfits and men changed their names, to name only a few.<sup>56</sup> What was a strong and united Manchu society in the early Qing period was no longer in existence; the Qing regime was rapidly disintegrating. The outbreak of the Wuchang Uprising does not see much resistance in the whole Manchu society except from the Imperial family. Let us take a look at the banner garrisons throughout the nation: the Chengdu garrison was peacefully disarmed, Zhenjiang garrison surrendered on its own initiative, most of the garrison troops in the three provinces of Northeast China went to the Republican camp, and the Guangzhou garrison was even reorganised into the ‘Canton City Army’ under the command of the Republican government. Only the banner troops in Fuzhou, Jingzhou and Xi’an made some resistance before they soon fell apart.

The army, gentry, bureaucrats and Manchus, the most important pillars of the Qing rule, were the

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

key to the survival of the Qing court. On the eve of the Xinhai Revolution, however, they were all in a shaky condition. It would be hard to explain if the tower of the Qing dynasty, having lost its support, would not soon crumble. It was historically inevitable that a little push by such an accidental incident as the Wuchang Uprising would make the Empire of Qing collapse.

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE XINHAI REVOLUTION AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE EMPIRE

Based on the information above, some basic historical concepts and political ideas should be distinguished:

Firstly, the history of the fall of the late Qing regime is not equivalent to the rise of the Chinese Democratic Revolution. This is an indisputable historical and logical thesis. However, many studies in the past have fallen victim to some kind of misconception. For a long time, we have focused our study on Dr. Sun Yat Sen from the perspective of revolutionary history, concentrating our attention on the opposition to the court instead of the court itself. Who or what was behind the fall of the Qing dynasty? It should be the coordinated efforts of both internal and external forces, but the evolution of the internal structure of the Empire is undoubtedly the main factor because it is the internal factor rather than the external one that determines the change of matters. Therefore, apart from looking for causes from outside the power structure of the Empire, we should also search for reasons from the evolution of the internal power structure. We should look at the issues from the perspective of internal causes that determine the evolution of issues. The main cause of the fall of the Empire is not simply that it was being overthrown; to a large extent, it fell apart itself. The Qing dynasty had come to the end of its historical 'life' because its power infrastructure had completely fallen apart. Instead of being toppled by alienated forces, the Manchu Qing dynasty was killed by itself. It is important here for us to expand and change our point of view. If we examine the history of the last few years of the late Qing Empire only by including it in the discussion of the Chinese Democratic Revolution, our research vision will be greatly limited. Similarly, the history of the Xinhai Revolution does not incorporate the whole

history of the late Qing dynasty either. The history of the Revolution of 1911 is only part of, rather than the whole of, late Qing history, and for a considerable period of time it is not even the principal component of this history. If we looked at the issue only from the perspective of the overthrow of the Empire, then it would be likely for us to reach a false conclusion, which is 'farewell to revolution.' That is to say, if the opposing forces had not toppled the Qing Empire, if they had given the Qing court plenty of time to carry out its 'reforms' in an unhurried manner, it would be more favourable for the growth of modernisation in Chinese society. However, it was not Dr. Sun Yat Sen who did not give time to the Qing court—the Qing dynasty had already pronounced a death sentence on itself. They set a timetable for their own death.

Secondly, examination into the alienated forces against the Empire should be carried out, to a large extent, from the perspective of the Empire itself because they were the rulers. The adoption of the 'New Deal' was very important. Scholars from both China and abroad have conducted many discussions on the causes of the failure of the New Deal instituted by the late Qing government. One of them should be that the aged body of the late Qing Empire simply could not take in the elements of the New Deal and reforms. The aim of the Qing government in implementing the New Deal was to keep the old production relation and superstructure. However, the institution of the New Deal led to the evolution of new productive forces and an economic structure that excluded each other. The result was that the addition of new factors, instead of maintaining the aged body, helped disintegrate it. The objective effect was entirely the opposite of the subjective desire of the Qing government. The Qing court aimed to overcome its financial crisis through economic reforms, but the reforms led to the growth of both capitalist industry and commerce and the bourgeoisie class. The bourgeois political factions that developed on this economic and class foundation included the revolutionaries headed by Sun Yat Sen, overseas Constitutional monarchists led by Kang Youwei 康有为 (1858-1927) and Constitutional monarchists in China headed by Zhang Jian. These three active parties converged in the end and raised huge anti-Qing tides.

Military reform was aimed at building military forces to defend the Qing court and suppress the revolutionaries, but unexpectedly it provided the

按月發  
單清收

# 鏡海叢報

每月收  
銀半元

CHING-HAI TS'UNG-PAO.

大清光緒九年己巳六月初六日 西曆一千八百九十三年七月十八日

禮拜日 下環正街鏡海叢報南第刊印 新開紙第壹號

## 目錄

- 本局告白
- 錄列叢報利益佈啟
- 振興澳門商務論
- 長安日近
- 著譯談
- 五洲雜俎
- 景樓瑣誌
- 羊石叢談
- 囚案堪駭
- 澳中瑣案
- 鏡湖拾彩
- 前山遠影
- 五羊官報
- 閩史有感

## 代派紙之處

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## 本局告白

本報局創辦之始轉擬每禮拜派報一次每次由禮拜二開派一兩月後加增一次由禮拜六日派送報價每張每月收銀五毛按月清收外埠不增信資按期派到一誤并接郵費諸單張等件諸色花邊精緻各士商欲刊告白印件者煩到本局面議取價甚廉不致有誤倘有惠到時古文詞不收印費惟刊與不刊原稿概不發還

## 創辦鏡海叢報條列利益佈啟

澳門自通商開埠以來三百有餘歲矣商賈不繁戶宇不闢其故何哉始緣於不設日報貨物漲跌無由先知禁令更張無由通曉商賈若而不前耳當今日報風行凡屬通商之埠必有華文日報以通中外之情以達官民之隱法之安南英之港叻美之金山中國之天津上海武昌廣州連年報局繁興後先爭趨澳門何獨無焉溯夫日報規模原有兩等一為都會快捷報遍設探訪遍設電信門捷速於剎刻越農朝而陳腐矣此等報章雖曰快捷而未盡確實也又非具大資本未易流通一為偏僻確實報泰西各國細至一郡一鎮必有報以報之衆情不致遺棄機得以流通此等報章雖遲快捷而實多確實也澳門一埠非第一郡一鎮之繁而已上有西洋官下多閩粵人下有鬱抑多不能達于上有誤猷亦無由佈于下積而不通或成痼重前車未遠本報主人思所以振革之擇得澳門下環正街第三號門牌開設日報館一周名曰鏡海叢報前用西洋字後用中華字每月收銀五毛每禮拜開派一次每次準于禮拜二日派送定于西七月十八號即華五月初六日印派先做備閱確實報款式本地風光實事求是逐漸推廣再照都會快捷報款式爭新競捷焉本報之創辦非為營牟財利起見實為振興商旅擴充智識起見中間具有兩要義其一專為有益澳門凡有官紳議論交涉事務行情市價雜劇俚聞與或商家所欲陳而不致積陳可代陳於報以助官之酌奪庶府有欲宣而不能通宣亦可詳宜於報以令民之曉暢稍有涉於本澳者每次登諸首幅藉寓樹植春秋之微旨此創辦之本意也 專為有益外埠日報之益亦俾閱者自便於學問也

First page of Jinghai Congbao no. 1, 18 July 1893.

## PORTUGAL AND CHINA: TWO REVOLUTIONS, TWO CENTENARIES – II

revolutionaries with armed forces. The educational reform, intended to train talents for the Qing court, forced the old-style intellectuals to change directions and form a group of new-style intellectuals unlike the traditional scholars. The bourgeoisie and their political representatives, the New Army and the new-style intellectuals—the three products made by the New Deal—turned out to be the major gravediggers for the diseased Qing court. The old saying ‘Lift the stone only to drop it onto one’s own foot’ is vested with some irrefutable truth of historical dialectics. The superstructure must be in line with the theory of changing economic structures. The question is not whether the Qing court was carrying out the New Deal reforms or not, or whether the pace of reform was fast or slow. The problem was that the ‘internal change’ caused by the reforms was incompatible with the old ‘outer shell’ of the Qing court. What is worse, the Qing government was bent on maintaining this old outer shell instead of carrying out a comprehensive reformation. Another problem was that during the New Deal period, although various concrete institutions in China had already been oriented to capitalism and modernisation, the institutions at the top level, stuck in feudal autocracy or the Middle Ages, still remained unchanged. It was really hard for the Qing government to give up the Imperial autocratic system. Then the end was inevitable. The outer shell was destined to be blown up by the fusion of internal forces.

Finally, making an alternative comment on Dr. Sun Yat Sen and the Revolution of 1911 is not intended to negate the lofty position occupied by Sun Yat Sen and the great achievements made by the 1911 Revolution. Instead, it is aimed at a repositioning of Dr. Sun and the Xinhai Revolution based on historical facts. To put it simply, the study of Sun Yat Sen and his role in the history of the Chinese Democratic Revolution is going through a shift from the original political orientation toward academic research, or what is called a reversion to the truth. This is especially true of scholarly research. It should be admitted frankly that the political era of the studies on Dr. Sun Yat Sen and the history of the Xinhai Revolution is vanishing (but it is impossible to make it go completely), and a comparatively independent age of academic research is approaching. The hustle and bustle of the study of Dr. Sun and the history of the 1911 revolution as a hot topic cannot go on forever. Studies in these realms worldwide are returning from

an abnormal state to a normal state.<sup>57</sup> Needless to say, Sun Yat Sen is mainly a political figure, and the Xinhai Revolution is mainly a political event, but academic studies are based on the academic principle of seeking truth from the facts. As far as the relationship between Sun Yat Sen and the 1911 Revolution is concerned, Dr. Sun’s contribution to the great revolution is irreplaceable, and he will always be the flying standard of the Xinhai Revolution. However, we should also see that Dr. Sun’s contributions to the Revolution of 1911 were mainly embodied in his ideological guidance, his democratic enlightenment and his encouragement of the pioneering spirit.


In his early years, Sun Wen displayed his outstanding propaganda skills. ‘Zhi zheng zaoru shu’ 致郑藻汝书 (A Letter to Cheng Tsao Ju) published by Sun Yat Sen in a Macao newspaper in 1892 is the earliest political essay written by Sun discovered so far. His ‘Nong gong’ 农功 (Agricultural Work), ‘Shang zhan’ 商战 (Commercial War) and ‘Shang li hongzhang shu’ 上李鸿章书 (Letter to Li Hung-chang) had some social influence too. His treatises such as ‘Agricultural Work’ were even included in *Sheng Shi Wei Yan* 盛世危言 (*Words of Warning in Times of Prosperity*), a book compiled and edited by Zheng Guanying 郑观应 (1842-1921), whose family had lived in Macao for generations. The more than 180 issues of *Echo Macaense* (*Jinghai Congbao* 镜海丛报) created and run by Sun Yat Sen and his friends from 1893 to 1895 in Macao had seventeen distributing offices ranging from Qianshan, Waizhai, Shiqi, Canton, and Hong Kong near Macao, to far away Shanghai, Beijing, Singapore, San Francisco, Portugal, and Yokohama. Their views and opinions spread from Macao to China and the rest of the world. The most significant contribution made by Sun Yat Sen was his enlightenment of the Chinese nation and promotion of the Republic. When Dr. Sun passed away on March 12, 1925, Macao people were deeply mournful. Businesses were closed and flags flown at half-staff. Of a population of 100,000 in Macao then, 20,000 went in the rain to the Kiang Wu Hospital to express their condolences. It was the largest memorial activity witnessed by Macao in history. As the sayings go, ‘A mustard seed can contain a huge mountain of Sumeru,’ and ‘One can visualise the whole leopard by looking at one spot on it.’ From Macao, a small territory that has a close connection with Dr. Sun Yat Sen, we can see the great respect cherished by the local populace



## PORTUGAL E CHINA: DUAS REVOLUÇÕES, DOIS CENTENÁRIOS – II

to the founder of the Republic! At the concrete level of academic research, at the level of speaking with the historical facts, we can also see that Dr. Sun Yat Sen's actions were mainly reflected in his initiation of the principle of anti-Qing revolution and the establishment of a Republic, in his creation of anti-Qing revolutionary societies such as the Revive China Society and the Chinese Revolutionary League or Alliance, in his formation of the platform and theoretical system for the Chinese revolutionary democrats, in his persistent and inspiring spirit in his fight against the Manchu Qing dynasty, in his extensive publicity of the view that the feudal Imperial system was no longer suitable for China, and in his drawing and public declaration of the blueprint for the Republic. As to the questions of the relationship between the Revolution of 1911 and the fall of the Manchu Qing Empire, the main reasons for the fall of the Qing court, and how to examine the history of the Chinese Democratic Revolution, etc., more deep studies are needed before we can get the answers.

The Xinhai Revolution, a great revolution that changed the political system in China, broke out in October, 1911. On 1 January 1912, the Republic of

China was founded. In his inaugural speech as the first provisional president of the Republic of China, Dr. Sun Yat Sen proclaimed, 'The root of a nation lies in its people.'<sup>58</sup> For the first time in history, products of modern institutional civilisation such as the constitution, national assembly and republic appeared in China. Before long, the republic became an established political institution acknowledged by all Chinese people. After the overthrow of the Qing dynasty in 1911, the Leal Senado of Macao raised flags as a token of congratulations—that is, congratulations on the decisive progress made by the Chinese political system toward the modern system of civilisation. The Xinhai Revolution played a landmark role in the evolution of Chinese civilisation from its barbaric state, its classic state to its modern state. The establishment of modern institutional civilisation indicates that the greater Chinese civilisation in modern times, protected by its institutional and legal systems, has become sacrosanct and the new 'orthodoxy.' 

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# Floating Brothels and the Canton Flower Boats 1750-1930

PAUL A. VAN DYKE\*

The floating brothels of the Pearl River Delta were part of the river scene for hundreds of years. They rose in unison with the trade, and depended heavily on it for their survival, directly or indirectly. Floating brothels at Whampoa helped to keep the peace among the visiting foreign community. The floating brothels at Canton were more commonly referred to as 'flower boats'. They serviced Chinese only.

Until recently, little was known about the social function of these brothels. In the historical literature, they are often referred to as places of debauchery, which is not an entirely true or accurate depiction of all of them. Chinese men could experience all the pleasures they desired in a flower boat, but these establishments were much more than simply floating brothels.

Being one of the major trading ports of the world, with hundreds of foreigners arriving every year, one would expect that prostitution was a regular part of the scene in the delta. During their stay in China, most of the sailors remained aboard the ships at Whampoa, and only went to Canton occasionally. The floating brothels there operated very differently from those at Canton in that the former serviced everyone, whereas the latter only serviced Chinese. Without the former, however, it would have been very difficult for the latter to maintain exclusivity so they were indirectly connected in various ways. I begin by looking at the Whampoa brothels.

## THE FLOATING BROTHELS AT WHAMPOA

In the Whampoa region, floating brothels were referred to by foreigners as '*lob lob* boats' rather than flower boats. The Chinese characters are unknown. One author has suggested that '*lob lob*' may have been Pidgin English for 'love love'.<sup>1</sup> Paintings of Whampoa harbour from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century show that flower boat type of vessels were prevalent there as well. Other references also show that public flower boats were in operation in other areas of the Pearl River Delta such as Foshan and Macao.<sup>2</sup>

The floating brothels that operated at Whampoa serviced everyone, foreigners and Asians alike. Some of these vessels were of very limited resources, consisting of a small one-family sampan with a girl aboard. It is unclear who these girls were or where they came from. The reference below suggests that they may have been family members, but they could have also been purchased which made them the property of the sampan owners. Small one- or two-girl sampan brothels were part of the environment at Whampoa throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

European sailors, taking advantage of their necessity, will bargain with a father and mother for an embrace of their daughter. This must be done however very privately, lest they should be discovered by the petty Mandarines, who are appointed to visit often, and keep order and discipline in their floating world. These Mandarines are continually going up and down the river, searching such boats as they have any reason to suspect; and, in case a European is caught in them, with young women, he, together with the people of the boat, must

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undergo the chastisement of the bamboo, or bribe the Mandarin with a dollar or two to let them pass.<sup>3</sup>

These 'lob lob boats' in the Whampoa area, were of varying sizes and operated primarily as brothels. As far as the records reveal, they did not offer meals or other types of entertainment as did their counterparts in other parts of the delta. The Whampoa brothels also differed in that they serviced everyone, Chinese and foreigners alike.

There are some of these boats, called *Lob Lob boats*, well stocked with a number of beautiful

benefited from increased sexual exchanges and probably not the girls. But it was probably in their interests to gain customers so their owners would not be displeased with them. If they did not bring in enough money to pay for their support then owners might be tempted to sell them, which meant an uncertain future that could turn out worse than their present situations.

The freedom to provide sexual services in the Pearl River Delta did not come without a price. *Lob lob* boats at Whampoa had to pay regular fees to the local mandarins, just like their counterparts in other locations.

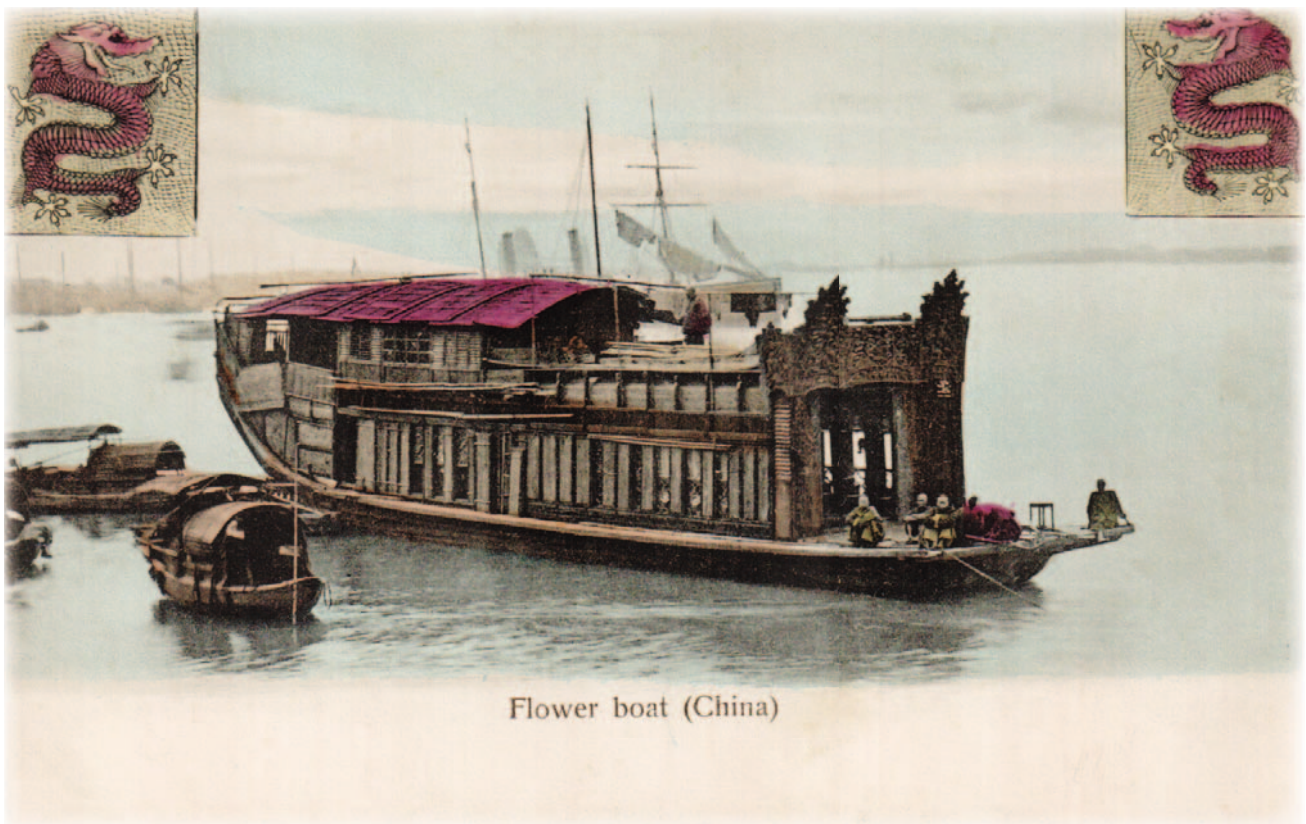


Plate 1: Canton flower boat, ca. 1910. Private Collection.

young women, of different ages, to whom everybody, Chinese or European, may have access at any time.<sup>4</sup>

Because of their broad customer base, it was helpful to learn a few foreign words to better entice an undecided or reluctant customer. 'Many of these [public women], as well as the washerwomen, speak English, Hindostanee, and Portuguese'.<sup>5</sup> It must be remembered, however, that it was the boat owners who

Though these boats are under the jurisdiction of the Mandarines, and equally liable to punishment with the others; yet there is so good an understanding between the Mandarines and the proprietors of these boats, that they deal pretty extensively, and with great safety.<sup>6</sup>

Sexual diseases were as much of a concern and risk in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, as they are today. All sex in the 18<sup>th</sup> century was, for the most part, 'unprotected' so sailors who engaged these public women at Whampoa and

## HISTORIOGRAFIA

Canton may have had greater risks compared to the present day. If patrons were so unlucky as to contract one disease or another, the place to go for a cure was the Chinese barber.

They [the Chinese] cure every disease by herbs. When any sailor or officer was so imprudent as visit Loblob Creek and received the reward of their folly, our surgeons could not cure them, yet the Chinese barber did so with ease.<sup>7</sup>

Every ship at Whampoa and foreign trading houses at Canton (more commonly referred to as ‘factories’) hired at least one Chinese barber during their two to four month stay in China. Barbers were often hired on a monthly basis, where they worked full-time for a ship or factory and clipped everyone’s head. In other cases, they just visited the ships on a daily basis and were paid so much according to each head they clipped that day, week or month. Chinese barbers had the reputation of being ‘walking newspapers’ and carried all the latest news and gossip from one customer to the next. For Chinese who just arrived in Canton from the countryside, the first thing to do was to get a haircut. They could learn from the barbers where the best places were to stay, eat and find employment.

Foreign sailors at Whampoa could also order small items from their Chinese barbers such as a pair of shoes, a shirt, or a trinket to take home. The barbers would purchase the items in Canton and then deliver them to the sailors at Whampoa on their next visit to the ship. And because barbers were also in the herbal business helping with sexual diseases (and cleaning ears as well), they probably knew which public women were best to stay away from. In fact, for a small fee a sailor could probably also arrange with his barber a visit with a ‘safe’ woman. I have no references to this actually happening, but some of the Chinese barbers were very enterprising individuals. Besides cutting hair, they supplied foreign sailors with anything they were willing to pay for. Making sexual arrangements with foreigners was a tolerated activity so long as it was done with the acceptable women (not in the factories and not with the flower boat girls) and did not lead to trouble erupting.<sup>8</sup>

In regard to the public women operating at Whampoa, Noble advised staying away from them. He warned that these women were

subject to the several stages of the venereal distemper; which, either from the frequency of

their prostitution, the grossness of their food, their ignorance of medicine, or a combination with other diseases, usually arrives at the most exasperated degrees, and puts a period to their unhappy lives. I have known several instances, even in the soundest constitutions, where an infection caught from these women, has been infinitely more rapid in its progress and fatal in its effects, than in Europe. As to the leprosy, it is not so certain it can be communicated by mere contact—yet it is a risque [risk] to be avoided. Another consideration ought to deter Europeans from intercourse with these prostitutes, which is, that a proneness to venery is a concomitant symptom of this loathsome distemper.<sup>9</sup>

Historians often point out that it is not good to base one’s assumptions on a single source of information. All historical writers, regardless who they were, had biases. Their comments need to be cross-checked with other data for accuracy. Noble could have been driven, and/or blinded, as much by his morals and religious beliefs as he was by his ignorance of Chinese society. Fortunately, there are other sources that allow us to cross-reference his information and they support some of his claims.

In 1769, William Hickey also mentioned the activities going on at *Lob Lob* Creek.

We were also shewn, when nearly half way [between Whampoa and Canton], a small inlet or creek called ‘Lob Lob Creek,’ from whence in ‘sampan’ (the name of the country boats) came forth certain women, who, if required so to do, board the boats. The females who ply at Lob Lob Creek are supposed so to do by stealth. I say *supposed*, because the fact is that they pay a proportion of their earnings to the mandarin upon duty, who thereupon, like an upright administrator of justice, shuts his eyes and his ears to the breach of the law, those public officers being invariably corrupt.<sup>10</sup>

This creek was still known by this name as late as the 1860s.

We had scarcely passed the pagoda in the neighborhood of Old Whampoa, and the towering one of nine stories on Lob Creek, when the Barrier pagoda came full in view.<sup>11</sup>

This pagoda was upriver from Whampoa and called Pazhou Ta 琶洲塔. It is still a prominent landmark today. *Lob Lob* Creek, where the brothels were moored,



## HISTORIOGRAPHY

ran along the north side of the pagoda. As far as their business was concerned, this was a very convenient location. Mariners could stop in the creek on their way to and from Canton. During the height of the trading season (August to January) there would have been a steady flow of potential customers passing by almost every day.<sup>12</sup>

An incident that occurred in 1781 at *Lob Lob* Creek suggests that mariners were free to stop and 'take advantage of their necessity' whenever they felt the need and had the money to do so. In this particular case, however, the opportunity resulted in a fatal dispute over money. But this then produced an entry in the English East India Company's (EIC) journal, which gives us one of the only detailed descriptions we have of what actually went on at this location.

I am sorry to inform you that a very unfortunate accident happened on last Sunday Evening [11 November 1781], the particulars of which as far as I have been able to learn are as follows: About 5 O'clock in the afternoon Mr. Evans Surgeons Mate, & Mr. Burton Midshipman, both belonging to the ship *Ponsborne* engaged a passage boat to come to Canton having obtained leave of the Commanding Officer. After having passed the usual examination at the Whampoa Hoppo House they proceeded up the River & were boarded by two girls who staid with them about half an hour and then went away; soon after this they missed three Dollars, which they accused the Boatmen of having stolen; after some altercation he agreed to give them two Dollars back, but as they would not consent to that compromise, he promised to procure them other girls for the money he had taken.<sup>13</sup>

In the end, the Chinese boatmen did not deliver more girls or give the money back which resulted in a fight erupting. During the scuffle, Burton was thrown overboard and managed to swim ashore. He spent the night wandering through the Whampoa paddy fields until he finally made it back to his ship. The last Burton could remember was that before he had been forced out of the boat, Evans was lying in the bottom. Evans was never heard from again.

If Evans had been thrown or jumped overboard and drowned, his body would have resurfaced a couple days later. And if he had managed to escape

like Burton had done, he would have eventually been directed back to his ship. He could not have remained among the Chinese community. He did not know the language, and would not have been welcomed. Local authorities were obligated to report the presence of any non-Chinese wandering about. Because Evans disappeared without a trace, it was presumed that he had been murdered.

The *Ponsborne's* pay book in which the crew's wages are recorded shows the following entry: 'Anthony Evans Surgeon's Mate ... Drowned at China'. Wages were calculated up to 11 November 1781, which was the day of the incident. The wages owed to him were given to 'Peter Turnbull attorney to Sarah Evans the executor'.<sup>14</sup> This was a very unfortunate end for a half hour romp with a *lob lob* girl.

The Chinese culprits were later caught by the local magistrate. After being tortured, they confessed to the crime. The reason they gave for the dispute was that 'these people [Burton and Evans] insisted on having more girls brought them, which the boatmen refused to comply with'. The EIC supercargoes recorded nothing more about the event. The local magistrate left them with the confidence that 'the boatmen will suffer the punishment their crime merits'.

This melancholy event is one example out of hundreds of sexual encounters that were likely to have occurred each year at Whampoa. As far as the EIC officers and Chinese officials were concerned, the crime was not that these men stopped to engage the women or that the Chinese boatmen were offering sexual services. The crime was that an incident had occurred whereby the foreigners suffered damage. It was feared that if the issue were not resolved quickly, it could escalate into foreigners arming themselves whenever they traversed the river and becoming suspicious of every boat they encountered. If this happened, it could easily result in more incidents.

Fortunately, out of 140 years of exchanges from 1700 to 1840, we only have a couple of examples of such misfortunes. The silence in the records suggests that these sexual encounters probably contributed more to keeping the peace than to disturbing it. In August 1763, for example, the customs superintendent (more commonly known as the Hoppo) in Canton was informed by citizens at Whampoa that 'a group of officers from the European ships' had entered their village in an effort to 'become familiar with their

## HISTORIOGRAFIA

women'.<sup>15</sup> If these brothels had not been in operation at Whampoa, there would certainly be many more incidents like this in the historical literature.

Concerning prostitution at Whampoa, Dobell wrote in 1798 that

some years ago, none but washerwomen were allowed to visit the ships, but now all sorts are permitted, and an unrestrained intercourse is as common at Whampoa as at London or Portsmouth. Certain boats, having licenses from the Mandarins, visit the ships as soon as it is dark, literally loaded with women.<sup>16</sup>

In 1748, Noble also pointed out that

The pimps are numerous. If an European wants to see a lady of pleasure, it is only speaking to these fellows, who will immediately conduct you in a small sampan, to a place, where your wishes may be gratified. These enterprises however are not always executed without danger.<sup>17</sup>

Dobell further stated that

Most of those [prostitutes] brought at night are poor girls, whom the extreme destitution of their parents has obliged them to sell for a certain term of years; and they are slaves until that time expires. Whatever they can earn belongs to their master; he disposes of them as he pleases, often times beats them, and clothes and feeds them badly. The custom of buying and selling children for a term of years is very common, and is the only species of slavery allowed in China.<sup>18</sup>

Writing in 1836, Downing gives a much different picture of these public women at Whampoa. They were still allowed to go aboard the foreign ships and engage their customers directly just like Dobell had mentioned in 1798.

They [the women] come very often on board the ships to see their old friends, and to talk over old times. Besides these, there are a few women, both old and young, who have always maintained and still preserve an excellent character, who come on board now and then to see the captain and officers. They bring their chiloes, drink a glass of wine, and talk away in a very pretty manner, so that they are esteemed very pleasant visitors. Some of them have known particular persons in the ship for many voyages, and, therefore, when the vessel leaves, they generally expect a small

present of a piece of blue nankeen or something of that kind for friendship's sake. This request is generally complied with. The names of the girls are soft and pretty, and are in accordance with their very musical voices. Great numbers begin with an A, so that it would not be at all strange if you were to find Ally, As-sou, As-say, and A-moy all in the same boat together.<sup>19</sup>

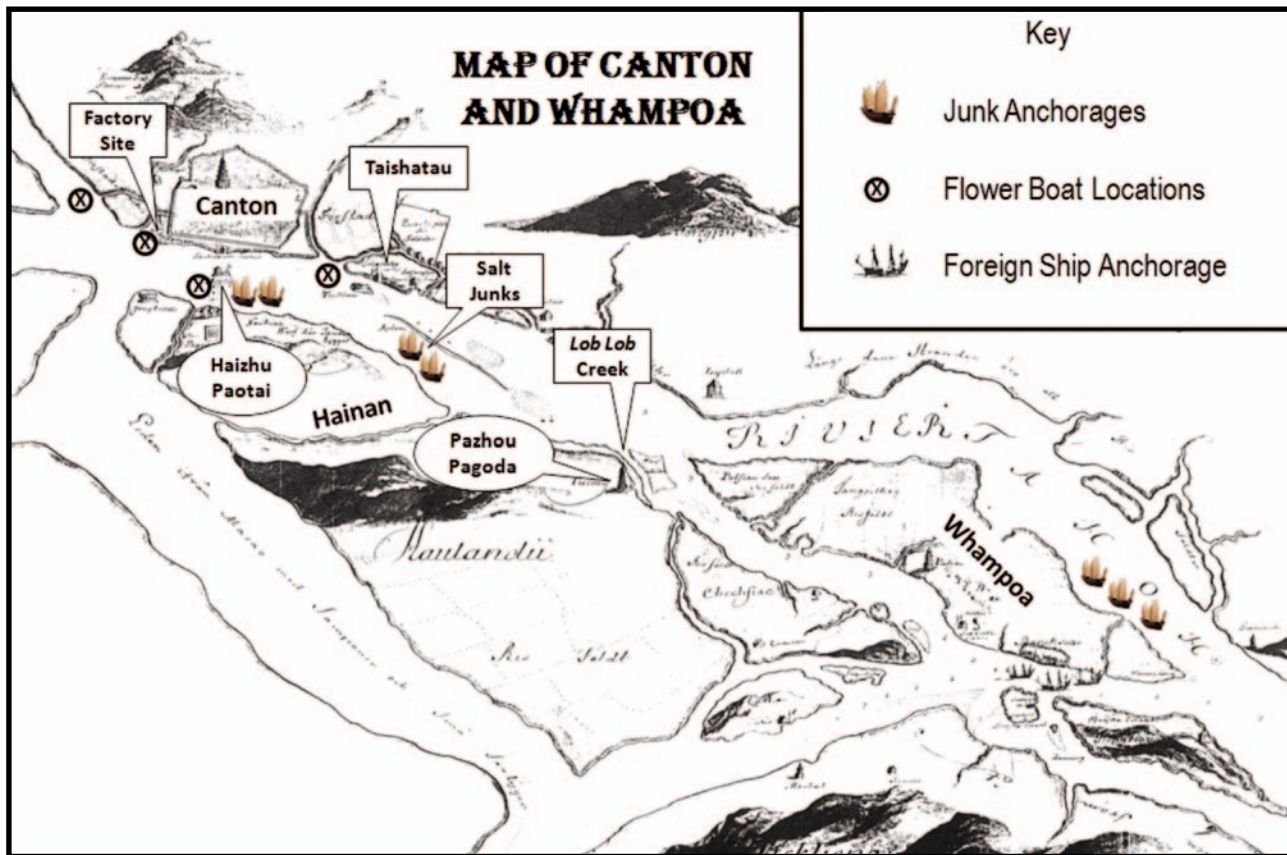
During the Qing Dynasty, children—especially girls—could be easily purchased. One author estimated in 1859 that there were upwards of six to ten thousand prostitutes in Canton. Girls of five or six years of age could be purchased from poor families for as little as four or five dollars.<sup>20</sup> Flower boat owners trained the girls in the arts of being courteous and pleasing men. They began work as prostitutes when they reached puberty, around twelve or thirteen years of age.

## THE CANTON FLOWER BOATS

The term 'flower boat' is an elusive term, which some scholars have suggested had foreign origins.<sup>21</sup> However, so far, the earliest references we have to these pleasure boats in Guangdong Province come from Chinese sources. During the Qianlong period (1736-1796) references to *hua ting* 花艇 or *hua fang* 花舫 begin to appear in local gazetteers.<sup>22</sup> There were in fact many variations of these boats, with some being much longer and larger than others. Some of them had elaborate cabin structures with a copula, extensive upper rooms and deck. Each different type of vessel had a different Chinese name, but they were all part of a more general classification of 'pleasure boats'. In the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Chinese and foreigners alike began referring to all of these vessels as flower boats.

This is the same time that Chinese artists in Canton began producing 'China trade paintings' for export. Many of the landscape scenes they drew of the Pearl River include flower boats. By matching these images with references to them in written documents we can now restructure a good part of their history. Trade paintings are especially important to this study in helping to determine the number of flower boats in operation and their locations. Although it is acknowledged that care needs to be taken when using trade paintings as references, there are enough written and visual data to back up the scenery presented below.

## HISTORIOGRAPHY



Map of Canton and Whampoa. From Kungliga Vetenskapsakademiens Bibliotek, Stockholm: RLF50.

Pleasure boats were not new to Guangdong or China. Elaborately adorned vessels were part of Chinese culture, and show up in Chinese literature, hundreds of years before the Qing Dynasty. A term with the same pronunciation (*hua chuan* 画船 or *hua fang* 画舫) was already in usage as early as the Tang Dynasty, and probably earlier.<sup>23</sup> Schlegel and other scholars have also pointed to much earlier references to pleasure boats such as these, with women aboard, so they have a long history in China.<sup>24</sup> But the flower boats in the Pearl River Delta went far beyond their predecessors in reputation and fame, and became known as the most beautiful boats in the world.

There are three distinctions that need to be made between the prostitutes in the Canton flower boats and those at Whampoa. First, girls in the Canton flower boats only serviced Chinese, whereas the Whampoa prostitutes serviced anyone. Second, Canton flower boat girls tended to cater to the wealthy elite, whereas the Whampoa girls paid no attention to social status and accommodated anyone who had the money to pay.

Third, the Canton flower boat prostitutes had their feet bound, whereas, as far as we know, the Whampoa prostitutes did not.

I will not go into detail about these three distinctions because except for the first one, there is not much information available about the other two. But references cited below will show all three of these differences, which need to be kept in mind. Even though brothels at both places depended very much on the growth of trade and the advancement of commerce for their livelihood, the environment at Canton was very different from that at Whampoa.

Foreigners were forbidden aboard the Canton flower boats. From 1750 to 1930, there are only a few references to foreigners actually being able to enjoy an evening in a flower boat, and these were exceptions. In each of these cases—a couple of which are described below—no sex (as far as we know) was involved. These foreigners were able to gain entrance because they were invited by Chinese friends, who were with them throughout the evening.

## HISTORIOGRAFIA



Plate 2: Flower boats anchored above Canton, ca. 1910. Private collection.

From 1750 to 1850, there were three areas where Canton flower boats were normally stationed. Some time after 1850, a fourth group emerged. One area where flower boats anchored was near the mudflats in the western suburbs. This land was reclaimed in the late 1850s, and became Shameen Island 沙面. These boats serviced the community in the western suburbs and the tens of thousands of people traversing the river. After Shameen emerged, these flower boats moved farther upriver (Plate 2). At about the same time, another group

Plate 3: Row of flower boats in Canton. Photo by Mee Cheung, Hong Kong, ca. 1910. Private collection.



appeared on the eastern side of the city, near Taishatau (*da sha tou* 大沙头) Island. The Taishatau flower boats remained in this area at least until January 1909, when most of them were destroyed by a devastating fire (see below).

A third group of flower boats were stationed in front of the factories. They serviced the prominent Canton merchants, local officials, and inland agents who arrived each year from the interior. By about 1800, these boats had become fairly permanent fixtures and remained in this general location until the 1920s. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, this group consisted of about a dozen flower boats. In 1856, during the Second Opium War, all of the foreign factories were burned to the ground and rebuilt on Shameen Island a couple of years later. The flower boats, however, did not move to this new location because they serviced Chinese, not foreigners. Photos of these flower boats in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century show fifteen to twenty boats stationed at the old factory site (Plate 3).

A fourth group of flower boats serviced the hundreds of sailors that arrived every year on the Asian junks. They also serviced the sailors on the Canton junks when they were in harbour. Many of the sailors on the junks were not from Canton so they had no



## HISTORIOGRAPHY

homes to go to in the city. The Canton junks anchored near the military fort called the *Hai zhu paotai* 海珠炮台 (Dutch folly). The salt junks from Hainan anchored near Henan Island, downriver from the Chinese dockyards. This location was rather far from the city. The junks from Siam and Cochin China anchored farther upriver. And there were also a number of coastal junks that anchored along the river in both Canton and Whampoa (Plate 4).

Unlike the foreign ships which stayed at anchor at Whampoa from the time they arrived to the time they departed, junks moved about from one place to another. They anchored near the warehouses to unload their imports and take in supplies for the next voyage. They might stay at the dockyards for several weeks for repairs, and then move back to their anchorages. When it was time to load again, then they moved back to their warehouses to receive the cargo. Thus, the flower boats that serviced the junks tended to be less stationary as well. They can be seen in paintings moving about with their customers. Depending on the number of ships arriving each

year, this group of flower boats might consist of half-a-dozen to a dozen.

The number of public flower boats operating in Canton each year (including all four groups above) increased over time. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were maybe 30 or 40 operating as entertainment houses and brothels, in the areas mentioned above (excluding those that were privately owned). By 1900, there were no less than 80 or 90 of them. There is no way to get an exact number, because the boats were not always stationary. Patrons might hire them for a moonlight cruise on the river, or request them to anchor near their residences for a night or two to entertain guests. But these estimates agree with the many paintings and photos that show them anchored along the river. Although these numbers are not large, thousands of people depended on the flower boats for all or part of their living.

Plate 4: Flower boats servicing the fleet of Canton Junks at Dutch Folly, ca. 1850s. Courtesy Martyn Gregory, London, Cat. 83, No. 97, p. 112.





## HISTORIOGRAFIA

### A LETTER FROM THE CANTON FLOWER BOATS

When I was scrounging through the American archives in 1999, I stumbled across a very curious letter in the Massachusetts Historical Society that was written by the eleven flower boats anchored at the old factory site in Canton.<sup>25</sup> It was addressed to Mr Forbes of the American firm Russell and Company, and dated 25 March 1868. The letter was written in English, but signed and stamped by each of the eleven flower boats in Chinese. Because we have no records from these establishments, despite the many years they were in operation, it is very fortunate to have this letter (Plate 5).

Why did the flower boat owners send the letter? In 1867, Russell and Company received permission to build a large import-export house on the old factory site. The building was completed by early 1868, and Forbes and his staff moved in. As mentioned above, the flower boats were anchored in front of this location.

After a few nights in the new building, the Americans discovered that they could not get any rest

with all the noise from the flower boats out on the water. They sent a request to the local mandarin asking him to move the boats to another location. The flower boat operators responded by writing a letter to Forbes and Russell pleading with them to reconsider the relocation. They argued that some of the boats were in very poor condition and might sink if they were moved. They pointed out that 3,000 men, women and children depended on the brothels trade for their living. If they lost their jobs because of the move, they would have no means of supporting themselves. If the Americans would withdraw their request to move, then the flower boat operators promised to keep the noise down at night so it would not disturb them.

I could not find an answer in the archives mentioning this incident again so it is unclear what happened. We know from many photographs that flower boats remained in this approximate location up to the 1910s and 1920s. A painting from around 1875 shows the Russell building with the flower boats,

Plate 6: Canton flower boat, published by M. Sternberg, Hong Kong, ca. 1910. Note the men using poles to move the vessel along. Private collection.



## HISTORIOGRAPHY

Canton 25<sup>th</sup> March 1868

Honorable Forbes Esq.

Sir,

We the undersigned humbly bow & beg to appear before you, and hope that we do not disappoint and disturb your valuable time and trouble our humble petition which will effect your hearty conscience and trust that you will grant our meanest solicitations

Your honorable House Messrs Russell & Co had been erected on the ground of the old factory and has recently completed, we learn that your goodself and your honorable House Messrs Russell & Co intend to remove to the new building in a few days, by your honorable order, that your honorable Sir, has asked the Commissioners of Chinese Customs to drive away all the flower boats laying in front of your goodself new building, which took effect on Friday last, two or more of the customs gigs were on duty driving away the boats and were all cleared in the frontage,

Plate 5: Letter from eleven Canton flower boats to Mr. Forbes of the American firm Russell and Co., pleading with them to allow the vessels to remain anchored in front of Russell's new building for the sake of the 3,000 people who depended on their brothels business. The letter is signed and stamped by each of the eleven flower-boat operators. Courtesy of Massachusetts Historical Society, Ms. N-49.67 James Murray Forbes Papers 1868-1957, Box 1, letter to Forbes dated 25 March 1868.



## HISTORIOGRAFIA

and they extend to drive us too, and told us it was  
a nuisance, \* by your good self order

We herewith humbly beg to show to your  
goodself a plan of our position, which we humbly  
hope that it will not injure your feelings and grant us  
our request.

We knew for many years that your good self  
is a gentleman of high talents, and of great experience  
would never a moment think to injure, or trying to starve  
the poor which this city abounds and the means in trade  
if it pleases your good self for us to mention, it consists  
of nearly 3000 men, women + children depended  
their living on the brothel-trade, and we again mention  
the bottom of our boats became daily rotting, should we  
move a few yards from our present anchorage our  
boats will sink in no time, and starving the 3000  
beings, it will be a great charity for your good self  
to confirm the commission of Chinese customs  
to allow us to anchor or lay in our present anchorage,  
provided we bind ourselves that we will not  
make the noise to disturb your goodself when in  
bed, and we await your goodself proposition as to  
what hour we stop our music, which will be honorably



## HISTORIOGRAPHY

Submit by your humble petitioners

If your honorable Sir, is busy in your office we humbly request your good self to write a note and give to us to be handed to the Commissioner of Chinese Customs telling him to allow us to stop in our present anchorage, who after receipt of your honorable note willingly permit us to lay on our berths

We are the poorest and meanest class of Chinese, bow + beg that your good self will write to the Commissioner of Chinese Customs, if not personally go across see him, and inform him of our troubles

On receipt of your note to the Commissioner of Chinese Customs, who will have much pleasure to grant us at once the permission

We will chin chin Joss, and ask Joss for your good self a great fortune + prosperity

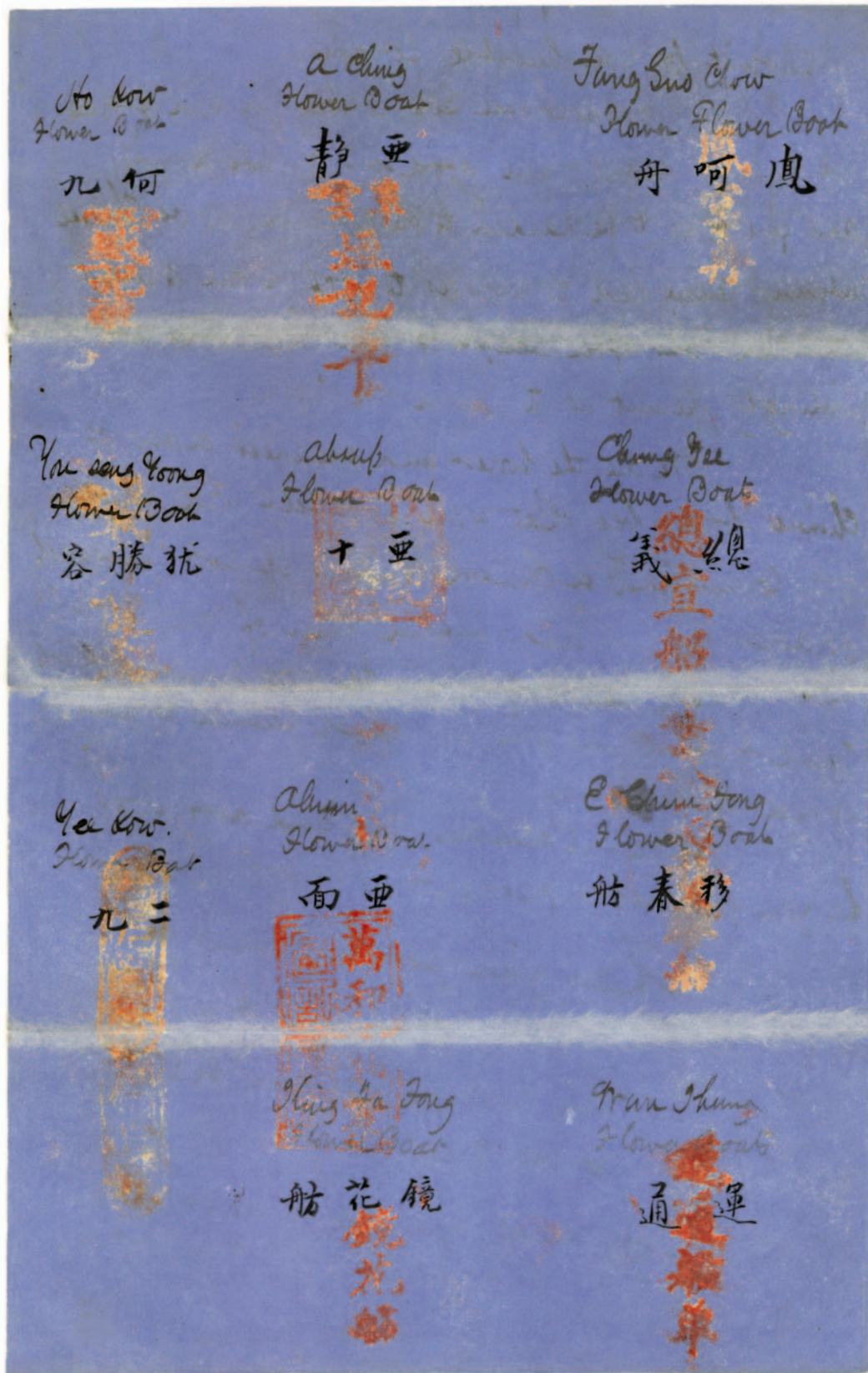
Shall your petitioners wait for the note to the Commissioner of Chinese Customs -

Your petitioners will ever pray  
we beg to subscribe ourselves

Your most humble + most obedient  
slave.



HISTORIOGRAFIA





## HISTORIOGRAPHY

not in front as they had been for decades, but rather slightly to the east.<sup>26</sup> Perhaps this move eastward was the solution.

Besides giving us insights into the world of the flower boats, the signatures and stamps on the letter are also revealing. After examining hundreds of business signatures and stamps from the Canton merchants in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, we can see that owners sometimes signed their personal names on letters and contracts. Other persons who worked in those firms never wrote their personal names in Chinese, but only used the firms' names. Chinqua, for example, was the bookkeeper in the Fengyu Hang 丰裕行 in the 1730s. He might contract with foreigners using the Fengyu Hang name and stamp, but would not sign his own name. The owner of the Fengyu Hang, Tan Suqua 陈寿官, on the other hand, might sign only his personal name or both personal name and business name or just the business name. If there is a personal name in Chinese on a document, then that person was usually the owner. Employees did not write their names in Chinese on commercial documents.

From these hundreds of examples, we can surmise that if there are personal names included in the flower boat signatures, then those persons were probably the owners. As it turns out, seven out of the eleven signatures have personal names. The remaining four have only business names so those could have been signed and stamped by either the owners or their employees. If these assumptions are correct, then we can conclude that most flower boats were probably run by owner-operators. This suggestion concurs with what Ricalton found in 1901; that flower boats were 'generally owned by the men in charge of them.'<sup>27</sup>

Despite their many differences, all of these types of pleasure vessels, large and small, private and public, were of a similar construction and propelled in the same manner. They moved along the river very slowly, but that was part of their charm (Plate 6).

The boat varies in length from thirty to sixty feet and draws about four feet of water. It is built on the familiar ark-like lines with one large room or saloon opening on to the small deck in the prow. Back of this saloon are the cramped quarters of the boat people, cabins more confined and comfortless than a dog's kennel. A narrow ledge surrounds the saloon and cabins, and serves as a foothold for the men who propel the boat.



Plate 7: View of the foreign factories (ca. 1850), with a Canton flower boat moving along the river by four rowers in the front. Courtesy Martyn Gregory, London, Cat. 77, No. 95, p. 92.

The craft is propelled by an ingenious method, possible only in a country where man is the cheapest commodity. Four or five men with long bamboo poles run lightly along the narrow outside ledges, then at a sudden shrill call drive the bamboo into the water. A swirl and the bamboo strikes bottom. Another shrill cry from the leader and with an echoing cry the men throw their weight on the poles and with a terrific push move the boat forward. It is very simple, very easy, but very, very primitive. With a heavily freighted boat progress is very slow, but this is a country where time is not money and haste is unesthetic.<sup>28</sup>

Besides using the pole method above, there was another means of propelling the boats. On the open platform at the front of the boats were places for oars to be mounted. The same four to six men would sit on the platform and row the boats. This was a faster means of travel than the poling method described above (Plate 7).<sup>29</sup>

Paintings and photos of Canton from the mid-to late-19<sup>th</sup> century show privately owned flower boats gradually disappearing from the river, leaving only the public brothels. These private boats often appear in the foreign literature as 'mandarin boats', even though they may have been owned by merchants, or other wealthy persons, and not officials. They were not open to the public, but were of the same type of construction as flower boats. The only distinguishable difference between private and public pleasure boats in paintings is that the former often displayed banners while the

## HISTORIOGRAFIA

latter usually did not. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, private pleasure boats all but disappeared from the river, and all that we see in paintings and photographs are the public flower boats (Plate 8).

From at least the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was popular for Chinese in Canton to offer visiting celebrities an elaborate evening on a public flower boat. Any type of meal could be ordered, which were delivered to the flower boats by 'floating kitchens' (*chu ting* 厨艇). Floating kitchens arrived at the scene at the appointed time, and anchored near the rear of the flower boat. After the meal was prepared, servants carried the food into the boats through the rear service entrance. Guests in the main hall of the flower boats might have no idea that the food was coming from an outside kitchen (Plate 9).

There are floating kitchens, provided with an extensive brickwork cooking-range, where most elaborate dinners are cooked; these are served on board of floating dining-halls euphoniously called 'flower boats'.<sup>30</sup>

Besides meals, entertainment was also outsourced.

It is not considered decorous for a Chinese gentleman to invite friends to dinner at his family residence, excepting on the marriage of a son or daughter, or when honouring the natal anniversary of a member of his family. He therefore issues cards of invitation to his friends to meet him at dinner on board a certain flower-boat. The dinner is cooked in a large floating-kitchen anchored near. At such banquets there are invariably a number of public singing-women attired in beautiful garments and highly rouged. These women are much more modest than those of their class in the streets of English cities. Whilst some of them are employed in filling the cups of the guests with wine, others sing and play upon various musical instruments.<sup>31</sup>

Another witness explains more clearly how an evening in a flower boat progressed as the night went on.

Late in the evening most of the diners had either moved into outer rooms close to the

thoroughfares, or had crossed the pathways to small, half-circular places sometimes railed off in front of each house-boat. There the gentlemen and ladies sat on benches in the open air, round little tables, sipping liquors and smoking. Sometimes girls were singing, or, on addition, four or five men musicians were hired.<sup>32</sup>

Any type of entertainment could be arranged, but only in small numbers. As the many paintings of the flower boats reveal, small orchestras of three or four persons seem to have been one of the preferred forms of



Plate 8: Scene showing the foreign factories in Canton, with their flags aloft (ca. 1850). The factories burned down in 1856, and was the sight where Russell and Co. built their new building in 1867. The flower boats shown in the centre anchored before the factories are the ones that sent the letter to Russell (Plate 5). On the lower right is a flower boat displaying banners at the rear, which means it is probably a private vessel, and not a public brothel like the others in the painting. Courtesy Martyn Gregory, London, Cat. 64, No. 124, p. 57.



## HISTORIOGRAPHY

entertainment. The young prostitutes on the boats were trained from youth to memorise numerous poems and songs for the entertainment of their guests.<sup>33</sup> Because wives of prominent persons were not allowed out in public, these evenings were exclusively the abode of male patrons. The only females present were consorts who lived in, or were outsourced by the flower boat owners. They were often referred to by foreigners as 'sing-song girls' (Plate 10).

At night, the flower boats were the most brilliantly illuminated and adorned objects along the river.

The flower-boat is illuminated by means of innumerable lamps—lamps with flaring rose-coloured glass shades with pendant prisms, as many coloured as the rainbow. It is garish, maybe, but it is undoubtedly picturesque, and it suits the Oriental in his rich satins and brocades.

After the sun sets is the best time to view a flower-boat. When the quaint little 'sing-song girlies', who are the great attraction of the craft, put on their prettiest silken robes, heavy with



## HISTORIOGRAFIA

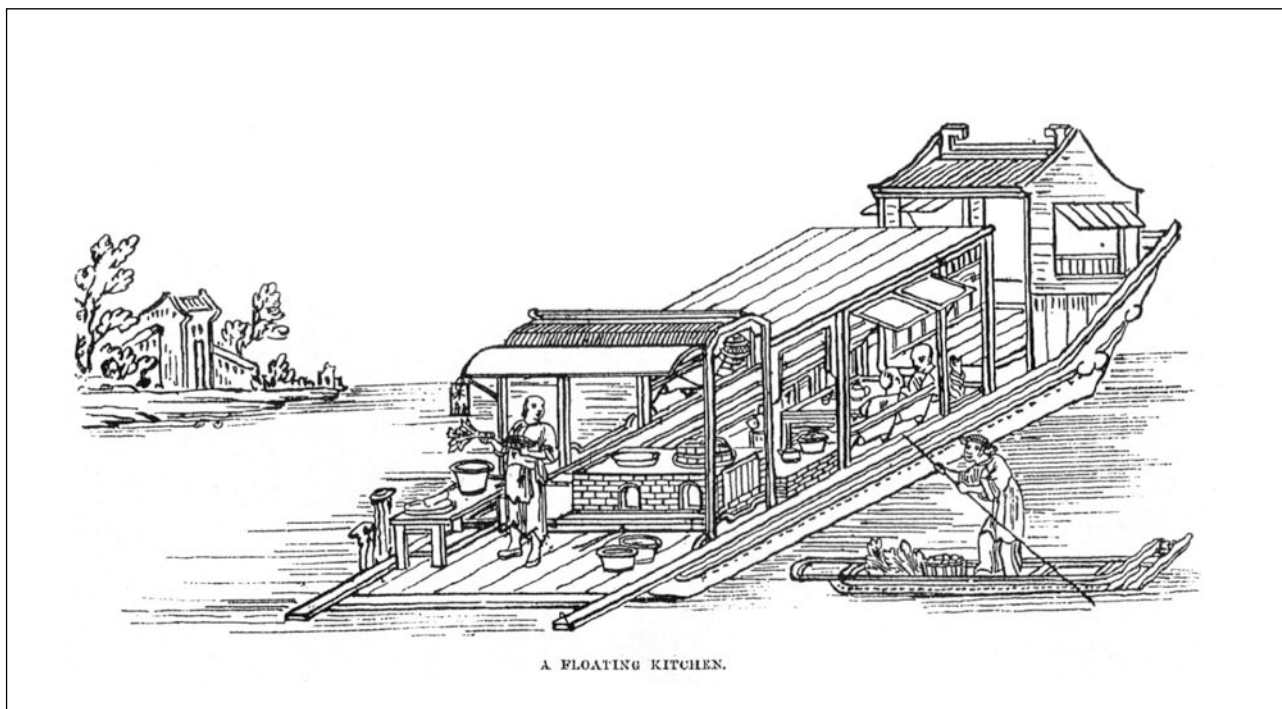


Plate 9: Drawing of a floating kitchen in Canton, ca. 1878. Reproduced from John Henry Gray, *China. A History of the Laws, Manner, and Customs of the People*. London: Macmillan and Co., 1878, vol. 2, p. 78.

intricate embroideries and in colours blended in a gorgeousness truly Oriental, then the two-stringed Chinese fiddle twangs out shrieking notes soothing to the Chinese ear, but fearfully grating to the Westerner, while the little dainty painted women sing their songs of love and war.<sup>34</sup>

The reference above is from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when glass and oil lamps were popular. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the boats were equipped, inside and out, with paper and/or silk lanterns. Wax candles rather than oil provided the light at night.<sup>35</sup> In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, photos show that the flower boats were using electric lighting, when in their stationary positions. Long cables were run out from shore to provide the electricity (Plate 11).

The smaller flower boats could accommodate a party of five to 10 customers, and the larger boats, perhaps 10 to 15 people. If prostitutes were not desired for the evening then the girls would assist where they could (keeping in mind their feet were bound). It is probable that prostitutes were rented out to other flower boats, when business was slow. As noted above, many professions in Canton were outsourced which eliminated the need to support those persons when

there was no demand for their services. Some flower boats may have had none of their own prostitutes.

Occasionally, foreigners tried to sneak into the Canton flower boats, which were open only to Chinese. Ill-intended Chinese might try to entice foreigners by promising them a secret visit, without being detected. In either case, the outcome could have very serious consequences. In reference to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, Dobell wrote that there was

a positive prohibition for Europeans; and any stranger found in a flower-boat would not only be punished severely, but also be fined several thousand dollars.<sup>36</sup>

In 1836, Downing found that the situation had not changed.

It is considered very dangerous for strangers to go near these [flower] boats during the night... A party of young men returning from town one night, ran their boat alongside of one of them, just to have a look, as they said, at the women. One, who was a little in liquor, jumped on board and was quickly assailed by eight or ten men, who seized upon him and were going to throw him into the water, and it was only by

## HISTORIOGRAPHY

the greatest exertions of his messmates, that he was rescued from their hands. One poor fellow, at another time, went on board by himself, and insisted upon penetrating into the interior. It was ascertained that he had gone in, but he was never heard of afterwards. What became of him was never discovered.<sup>37</sup>

After the First Opium War (1839-1842), a few foreigners managed to gain entry into flower boats, when they were accompanied by Chinese friends. Although there were exceptions, foreigners who tried to enter the flower boats on their own encountered aggressive responses from the inhabitants.

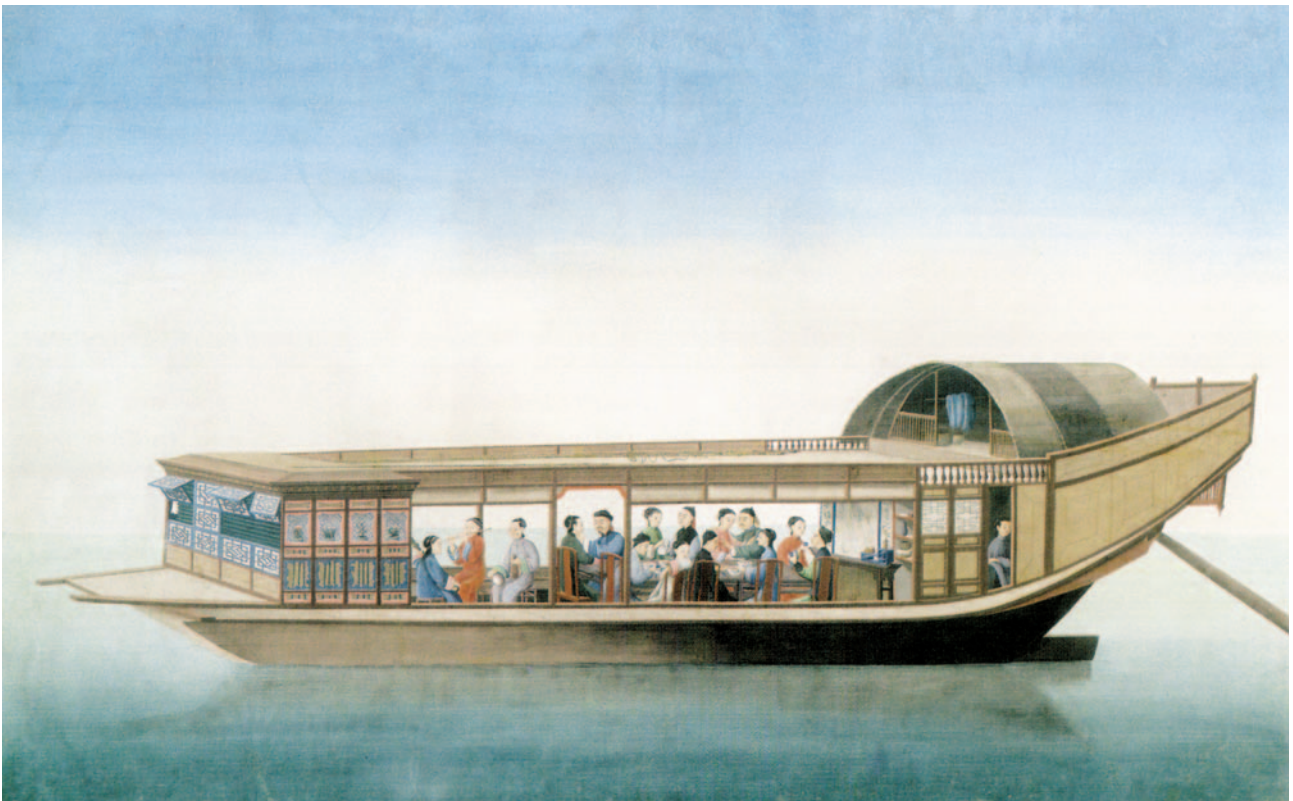
The flower-boats compose several streets in the floating city, which streets constitute the most elegant quarter in it. They are naturally the parts most frequented by idlers and pleasure-seekers; but Europeans generally purchase, at the price of some outrage or other, the satisfaction of going over them, either by night or by day. There is usually at the entrance of these handsome edifices, a crowd of blackguards, who, when they observe a foreigner, pursue him with their cries.

Generally, when the presence of a man of white race is signalled, these horrible, dirty, ragged, and hideous vagrants greet him with cries of *fan-bouai* ! then, seizing their greasy queues with their left hands, they make signs to him that he will have his head cut off, if he approaches the seraglio.<sup>38</sup>

These prohibitions to foreigners visiting flower boats remained in effect until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. There were brothels in Canton that serviced foreigners so there was no need for them to go to the flower boats, except perhaps to fulfil some fantasy. The foreign brothels were land-based and separate from the flower boats. A painting of this red-light district exists from the post-Opium War era, and the following is one of the few references we have to this activity.<sup>39</sup>

A certain sort of ladies here [Canton], of the Cyprian order, are not, as in Europe, allowed to dispose of their own favors. Such as have

Plate 10: Cutaway of a flower boat (ca. 1780s) showing three musicians on the left, and six Chinese male guests in the centre, each with a flower boat girl attending him. A servant or owner can be seen at the right through the service door. This was the door through which the floating kitchens (Plate 9) brought in the meals. On the second storey (upper right) is a covered area where the occupants slept. Courtesy Martyn Gregory, London, Cat. 83, No. 65, p. 74.





HISTORIOGRAFIA



## HISTORIOGRAPHY

strayed from the paths of delicacy, and prefer a promiscuous intercourse with the other sex, to the happiness and enjoyment of the domestic comforts, are obliged to devote themselves to the mercy and disposal of men, wretches who sell, or rather hire them out to the Europeans, or others who trade here ...

.... I have been credibly informed by gentlemen, residents at the English Factories in Canton, that the common women there are more numerous than in London, whole streets being occupied by them.<sup>40</sup>

Foreigners could also arrange, with their compradors (*maiban* 买办, provision purveyors), for prostitutes to be smuggled into their factories. Chinese authorities strictly forbade women from entering these buildings, which is why all house servants were male. And in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, East India companies generally forbade employees from inviting unknown Chinese into their residences. But if an officer had a mind to engage prostitutes privately in his room, he could find means to make it happen.

On 4 December 1749, for example, the Dutch captain Betting and officer Haganan made such arrangements. They managed to sneak two Chinese men and two 'bad' women into the factory late in the evening. The doors of the building were locked each evening at about 10 o'clock so special arrangements had to be made with the doorkeeper to give these persons entrance. Two of the intruders (a man and a 'bad' woman?) went to Betting's room and the other two, went to Haganan's room. At about 2 o'clock in the morning, after they had performed their duties, the two men and two women escaped through the water port trap (possibly the sewage drain).

This incident raised much concern among the chief Dutch officers the next day about the security of the building. But they were careful not to let the Chinese authorities find out about what had happened. Betting and Haganan, and the Dutch soldiers who were on duty at the time were strongly reprimanded and informed that all of this activity was strictly against company policies. This is the only reference I have

found to such activities in the factories. But one can imagine that there were probably other encounters such as this that never got recorded.<sup>41</sup>

The flower boats in Canton were staffed by more genteel women than the brothels that were frequented by foreigners. Some of the top people in Cantonese business, government, and society were the patrons of these boats, which gained them the reputation of being the ultimate in luxury and pleasure.

Next to quail-fighting, the flower-boats occupy most of a Chinese gentleman's leisure hours. They have assured me that the women in those boats have more agreeable conversation, and are better educated than others, and are more genteel and engaging in their manner. A well-spread table, of which the Chinese are great lovers, is always found prepared for the guests.<sup>42</sup>

Dobell was informed by Chinese acquaintances 'that from forty to sixty thousand Spanish dollars are expended daily in the flower-boats in Canton!'<sup>43</sup> In 1901, Ricalton estimated that the flower boats 'cost from five hundred to a thousand dollars.'<sup>44</sup> In 1875, Mundy estimated the cost of hiring a flower boat for an evening, as follows.

It may be as well to mention that these houses are regular dining establishments, each party hiring one for the occasion, and the proprietor provides everything as part of his contract. These dinners for, say ten persons, usually cost from £20 to £25, which is expensive.<sup>45</sup>

At an exchange rate of \$4.15 to one pound, the outing for ten persons would amount to from \$83 to \$104, or about \$8 to \$10 per person. This cost, of course, does not include sexual services, opium smoking, gambling, or other extras, only dining and drinks. But these figures are sufficient to give us an idea of what the owners' gross annual revenues might have been. If flower boats booked, on average, six customers every night of the week, then their minimum gross daily income would be \$48, monthly income \$1,440, and annual income \$17,280.

We can assume that the owners would have earned at least 10 to 20 per cent on their investments, after overhead and operating costs and other expenses were deducted. They could make 10 to 15 per cent on their money by loaning it out to others, so logically many of them would not have bothered with, or risked, running a business, unless they could make more

Plate 11: Photo of the inside of a Canton flower boat, ca. 1900. Holmes prided himself in taking this photo. The people inside were unaware of his presence outside, with a camera. Reproduced from Burton Holmes, *Burton Holmes Travelogues. With Illustrations from Photographs by the Author*. New York: The McClure Company, 1901, vol. 5, p. 199.

## HISTORIOGRAFIA

money. This means they would have had an annual income of roughly \$1,700 to \$3,400.

Of course, prices inflated, and/or currencies deflated, over time so we cannot use these figures as constants from 1750 to 1930. But if we look at the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, for example, when the average wage for a common labourer in Canton was from \$24 to \$48 per year, then we can see why the flower boat owners were able to adorn the boats with so much luxury.<sup>46</sup>

If these figures are at all representative of reality, then one person's evening out in a flower boat might consume as much as three or four months' wages of the common labourer. As far as poor prostitutes were concerned, who were often sold by their parents who could not afford to feed them, this was an incredible opportunity for them to possibly enter the world of the rich and famous. Of course, they had to pay dearly for this opportunity, of which they had no choice in the matter.

But considering all of the above, we can imagine how the girls' parents might have thought about all of this when they decided to sell their children to the flower boat owners. If the girls were lucky enough to catch the eye of a wealthy patron, they entered an entirely different world where everyone was clothed, had enough to eat, and a comfortable place to sleep. If they were unlucky and contracted a disease such as syphilis for which there was no cure in the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century, the girls at least enjoyed a good childhood and part of a good adulthood with enough food to eat everyday, a luxurious place to live and work, and a comfortable place to sleep. For many poor families, such a life was probably much more than what they could offer any of their children. As far as brothel owners were concerned, they could probably recoup their initial investments in purchasing the girls and the boats within a few years.

It is difficult to balance the pros and cons of being a flower boat girl. They were separated from their parents and had to endure the painful process of having their feet bound. And one can only wonder what they might have had to endure at the hand of their owners or patrons. If girls did not become a concubine to one of the customers, and worked until they were no longer useful to their owners, then they had little prospect of a future. Because of their small feet, they could not perform normal duties needed to take care of themselves or find employment. If the boat owners could not sell

them, and did not want to bear the expense of taking care of them any longer, then the women might be abandoned to wander the streets as beggars. Brothel owners were undoubtedly aware of this outcome and would have probably tried to sell them to someone before it reached that point (Plate 12).

Over the course of a couple of years, flower boat girls undoubtedly had many opportunities to mingle with someone who might become interested in purchasing them. Important decisions in business and government were often done on the flower boats. An inland merchant, for example, with a large batch of tea for sale would expect to be wined and dined on a flower boat before making a contract. Visiting celebrities and important persons in government were also entertained on flower boats. The music and festivities would commence every evening around five or six o'clock and continue into the early hours of the morning.<sup>47</sup>

In the more elaborate boats, attendants, guests and entertainers were dressed out in their best costumes. Female attendants, prostitutes and musicians alike, were elaborately adorned with makeup and hairstyles which were certain to absorb much time in preparation. These floating palaces were where high male society met and intermingled so owners spared no efforts to ensure their guests were pleased and impressed.<sup>48</sup> The following reference was written by Florence O'Driscoll and published in 1895. O'Driscoll spent considerable time examining the activities in the Canton flower boats and described them in great detail.

When, for instance, a Chinese gentleman intends giving a dinner to three friends, he will arrange for it to be provided on a flower-boat at a certain hour, and also for the company of eight dining-out girls—two for each gentleman. I call them dining-out girls, as it best describes to me their calling. They will come prettily dressed, their hair done up in most wonderful shapes, and brushed over with a sort of varnish which makes it appear like a fantastic head-dress carved in ebony. They will ornament this structure with bright flowers, though the wreaths will be as stiff as their hair; or they may sometimes add jade, gold, or feather-inlaid ornaments. Their faces will be painted in white and pink—very artistically painted, smooth, and soft-looking; delicately traced, sharp, black crescents will mark their eyebrows.

## HISTORIOGRAPHY



Plate 12: Photo of the Canton flower boat girls, youths and adult, ca. 1930s. Private Collection.

Dainty, demure dolls they will appear, and pretty to look upon; but seemingly one touch would destroy their artistic effects, as a rough hand the radiance of a butterfly's wing.

Two of these young ladies will attend to each gentleman, sitting slightly back from the table at each side of the entertained. They will fill his liquor-cups, sip from them, and pass them on, pick out dainty pieces of 'chow' (food) with chop-sticks, and hand them to him; crack jokes, fill and light his pipe, and all the while chat gaily, and eat dried watermelon seeds. That is all I ever saw them eat. Behind each group of three a solemn-looking coolie, or waiter, will stand to fan them all the while. Other waiters bring in food, wine, and tea, change the dishes, and attend to their wants. The meal will last for a long time. Eventually all will rise, and retire to an outer room furnished with broad couches covered with matting. Opium-pipes will be there for those who

care for them, and tobacco and cigars in plenty. The girls will sit on the couches, laugh, fill the pipes, and still eat watermelon seeds, while the gentlemen will recline at their ease, enjoying their society.<sup>49</sup>

O'Driscoll, and a few other foreigners, did not believe that the women in these boats were prostitutes. The girls did not look or act like the public women they were used to seeing in their own countries. In fact, they sometimes compared them with the most genteel and educated women from their homelands. But many references above and below, written by foreigners and Chinese, confirm their connection to brothels. In 1793, for example, a Chinese traveller by the name of Shen Fu visited the Canton flower boats. He wrote a famous journal entitled *Six Records of a Floating Life* (*Fu Shen Liuji*) which has been since published many times in Chinese and English.<sup>50</sup> Shen Fu also talked about the prostitutes he encountered in the flower boats.

Here is a more accurate description from Walter Del Mar in 1903.

One evening after dinner a party of us went by sampan to visit the 'Flower Boats' (*hwai'ing*), so called because the young women to be met with there occupy the relation of flowers to the male butterflies who resort to them. The finest of these house-boats are moored side by side in long rows with planks from one to another just below the landing stage, and you are welcome to walk from one to another, and look in upon the amusements going forward without let or hindrance. These boats are used for all the purposes of clubs, music halls, gambling dens, and brothels. Some of them are private, some may be hired for an evening, and some are open to all who can afford to pay. In one you may see a group watching two veterans contest a game of *go* with black and white counters on a board of 324 squares. In another there may be a domino competition. Fan-tan may absorb the occupants of a third, and a singing girl with an orchestra of four pieces may be entertaining at a fourth. A big dinner may be going on in one, and behind the diners will be seated their women, sedately nibbling watermelon seeds whilst the men gorge themselves with Javanese bird's-nest soup, salted duck's eggs, cooked dog's meat, and a hot dish of boiled or steamed dough cut into strips like



## HISTORIOGRAFIA

*nouilles*. Flour is increasingly consumed in China in this way; but bread is practically unknown to the Chinese. The favourite drinks seemed to be warm *samsbu* (or *samsu*), a sort of arrach distilled from rice, and tea scented with chulan seed or rose leaves.<sup>51</sup>

The flower boats that Del Mar visited were those located at the old factory site. O'Driscoll and Del Mar both mentioned the women eating nothing but watermelon seeds, which probably had two reasons behind it. The most obvious, of course, would be not to gain weight. A second reason might be to keep the cost of the evening down, and competitive with other flower boats. The latter rationale is not unlike tour guides today in Canton who take their patrons to nice restaurants, but they themselves return to the bus for a box lunch. If flower boat girls and tour guides were allowed to partake in the same meals as their guests, then the costs of their services would increase accordingly, and make them less competitive with other businesses (Plate 13).

As was pointed out, the girls were renowned by the male population as being the best at satisfying men's desires. But to get the best customers, they needed to keep their reputations pure (free from foreign contamination). After Del Mar's visit above to the flower boats, he was later invited by a Chinese acquaintance to enjoy an evening in one of the vessels. He and others, who had such fortune, commented how the women on the boats were very careful to keep their distance from foreign guests.

These and the other young women present [in the flower boat], many of whom were between the ages of thirteen and sixteen, were all richly dressed, and freely covered with powder and paint, and were all of the higher caste of Chinese women, who resort to foot-binding, and of a physique which seemed as fragile as their morals. But no amount of persuasion would induce any one of them to so much as shake hands with us, and our host apologized for this in explaining that they were bound to avoid all contact with Europeans for fear of losing caste, and endangering their chances of advancement to the position of concubine with an established legal position. Only the sampan women, who are physically the finest class in Canton, but who are at the bottom of the social scale, prostitute

themselves to Europeans, and on the way back to Shameen, where we stopped to watch two old boat-women quarrelling, until the climax of the row was reached in the deadly insult conveyed by shaking their trousers at one another, we received many offers from these enterprising creatures for considerations ranging from four down to two shillings.<sup>52</sup>

Walter Mundy also spent a long evening on a flower boat with another foreigner in the early 1870s. The two men were accompanied by seven Chinese friends, who had invited them to join the dinner party. Mundy and his partner received the same treatment from the flower boat girls.

None of them [flower boat girls] spoke anything but Chinese, so conversation was out of the question; besides, it is not at all sought for by them, as they shrank away at the slightest sign of approach on our part, the reason being that they lose caste among their own people if a foreigner even chances to touch them.<sup>53</sup>

Prostitutes on the flower boats could indeed improve their situations considerably if they were purchased by a wealthy patron. In the 1850s, for example, Melchoir Yvan was informed by Pun Chi Toung (the descendent of the famous merchant family Pan 潘) that two of his concubines had been purchased from the flower boats.<sup>54</sup> It was in the interests of both the girls and the brothel owners to do their best at attracting wealthy and prominent customers. Thus, when we read accounts of flower boat girls showing themselves off, such as Downing's comments below in 1836, we can understand what might have been going through their minds.

The women [on the flower boats] sit out in rows on the balconies, dressed in the gayest style, with flowers in their hair and jewels adorning their persons. Some toddle about to show off their little feet, which are considered the extreme of beauty in this singular country.<sup>55</sup>

During the Qing Dynasty, the colours yellow and red were reserved exclusively for the emperor. But flower boat girls, who were hidden away inside walls of the most elegantly adorned surroundings, might use those colours to create a greater sense of grandeur. In 1858, Yvan grabbed a glimpse of one of these girls when the boat was temporary upset during a collision.

## HISTORIOGRAPHY

... this little collision created a commotion among the passengers of the Tze-Toung [flower boat], and one of them [girls] appeared at a port-hole of the elegant craft. She wore handsome gold bracelets, or, at least, perfectly gilt ones. Her gown was of a clear yellow, and embroidered with flocs silk; in a word, she was armed, from head to foot, ready to lead a formidable attack on the heart of some rich person.<sup>56</sup>

## THE END OF THE FLOWER BOAT ERA

In 1848 and 1849, gold was discovered in the San Francisco area and in Australia. These events set off a large migration of Chinese going to try their luck in the gold fields. Or they might go in order to service those who were searching for gold. Many Chinese, of

Plate 13: Stereoview of the Canton flower boats, published by C.H. Graves, Philadelphia, in 1902. Private collection.



## HISTORIOGRAFIA

course, had been traversing the globe for decades by this time, so this was not the start of such activity. But the attraction of the gold mines gave additional boost to the numbers of Chinese who went abroad. Because almost all of these adventurers were men, there very quickly emerged a strong demand for Chinese prostitutes in these new communities.

There have been many studies done on Chinese prostitution in these areas and the thousands of women who were purchased in South China and sent abroad to work in the brothels. I mention it here only to point out that as more Chinese prostitutes arrived in those countries, foreign attitudes towards the Canton flower boats, who were training and selling many of these girls, turned negative. At the same time, attitudes in China towards this type of human trafficking also began to change. Flower boat operators and agents who were recruiting women to send abroad came under sharp criticism from many directions.

Obviously, these changes in attitudes towards prostitution, the purchasing and selling of young girls, and the training of them to serve as prostitutes, had a huge impact on the flower boat culture in Canton. In the early 1890s, a group of overseas Chinese and foreign women from Singapore and Hong Kong paid a visit to Canton. Many of the Chinese prostitutes in those cities had originated from the Canton flower boats so the ladies wanted to see first hand what those establishments were all about. The delegation included overseas Chinese who could speak Cantonese.

When the group arrived at the Canton flower boats, they went from one vessel to the next examining all of the operations. They were welcomed at each place, and shown around as if they were a customer looking to purchase some young prostitutes. The following is what they recorded in their journal (Plate 14).

1894, Feb 14: 'We went in company with a missionary and a native, both of whom could talk both English and Chinese, and visited some 'flower-boats' on the river. Many of these boats are quite pretentious, with their rich wood-carving, fine furniture, and gaudy display of tinsel. There were whole streets of them—floating houses moored together; we walked along the length of the street on one side, stepping from the bow of one boat to the next, the bows of the boats constituting front verandahs. We called at almost every place, but a description of one will do for

all. First, as we entered, was a couch for opium smoking; just beyond this a reception room, very gaudy, with dozens of hanging lamps, and at one end a shrine for the gods, and offering before it. In a room back of the reception room, and also upstairs, there were girls in large numbers. A hard-featured old woman came forward from the back room, who, our interpreter said, was as good a specimen as we could possibly have seen of an old brothel-keeper of Canton, one who had been in the business for many years of buying or otherwise obtaining babies and girls, and training them for prostitution. The girls came crowding to the door of the back room, and looked in upon us with eager curiosity. Our interpreter called our attention to the manner of dressing the hair—like married women—indicating their bad life. The interpreter said they were inducted usually at about thirteen years of age. They were all dressed very showily, and heavily powdered and painted, excepting some mere babies who were plainly dressed. Troops of little girls, from four to five years of age, swarmed out of the neighboring 'flower-boats' and gathered around us, screaming and scrambling, falling, laughing, and following us the full length of the street, which was made up of about twenty such boats on either side. And none of these innocent little things at all realized the fate in store for them. In one place we saw two very old women in the front room. In another, a woman knelt before the idolatrous shrine engaged in her devotions. At one point there was a very large boat brilliantly fitted up for music, dancing, smoking opium, and feasting. At the far end of the street was a 'kitchen-boat,' from which supplies of food, ready cooked, could be bought. All the way along we saw little girls with the unmistakable signs of their destiny upon them. Our interpreter said the girls were usually made to stay upstairs during the day time, but at night the whole place was illuminated and alive; then they were brought down and to the front. Occasionally we would see one of these huge house boats full of painted girls, floating down the middle of the stream, for they move about from place to place at will.<sup>57</sup>

There is much more in this journal about their experience at the flower boats, and their attempts to

## HISTORIOGRAPHY

capture some of the girls, but this extract is sufficient to show how and why the flower boat culture came to an end. As the world inside and outside of China, became more aware of how women were being bought, trained, used and sold for prostitution, more pressure fell upon the flower boats owners to change their ways. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was still popular for tourists to sneak a peak into the mysterious vessels, but they continued to lose their appeal and with that change,

they began to lose their customer base. Pictures from the 1890s to the 1920s show them gradually falling into decay (Plate 15).

In 1908 and 1909, the Canton flower boats in the Taishatau area suffered a couple of disasters which further propelled their decline. Many of the boats were

Plate 14: Stereoview of the Canton flower boats, published by Underwood & Underwood in 1900. A note at the bottom states that they are 'places of Amusement and debauchery'. Private collection.



## HISTORIOGRAFIA

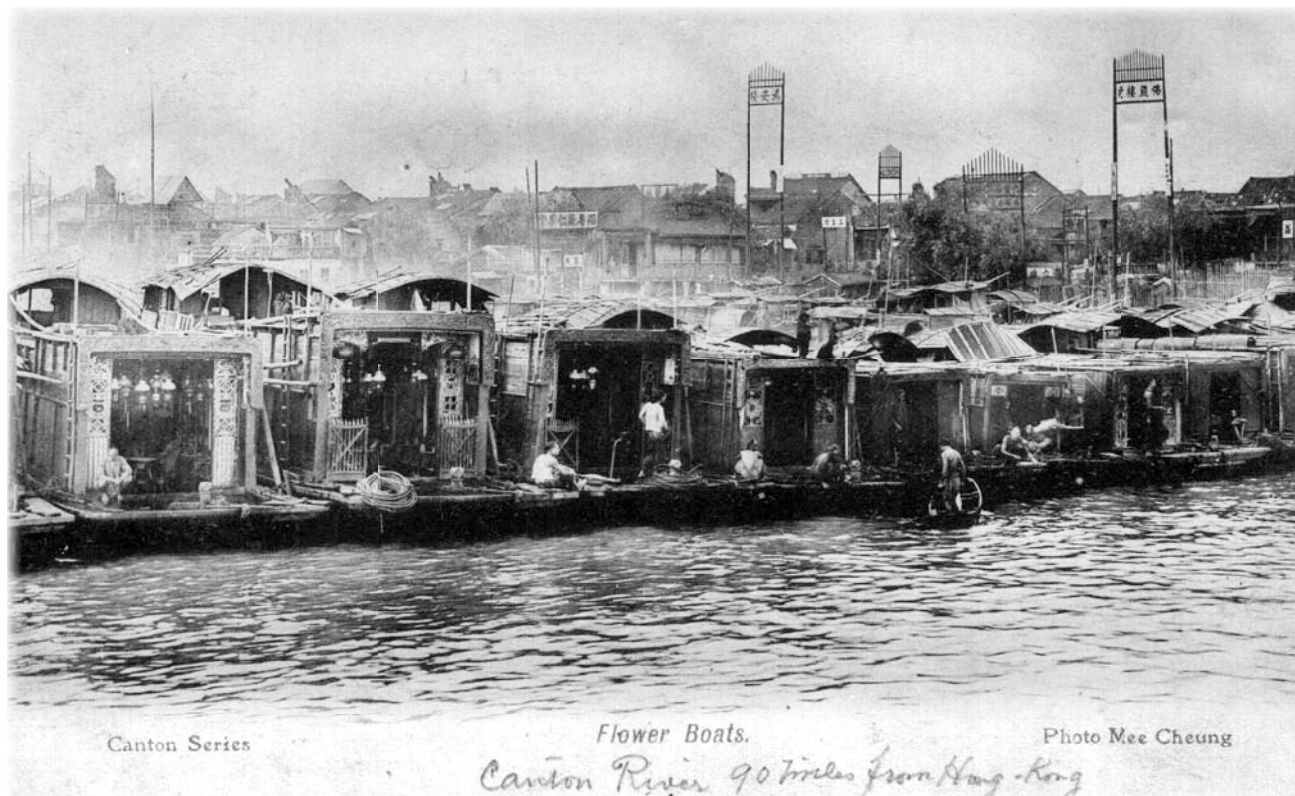


Plate 15: Photo of the Canton flower boats, by Mee Cheung, ca. 1910s. Note how the boats are beginning to fall into disrepair. There are electric cables coiled in the front. Private collection.

damaged by a typhoon on 27 July 1908. Then on the evening of 30 January 1909, a fire broke out in the Tsoi Kee flower boat at the Taishatau anchorage. The fire grew rapidly and one by one many other boats caught fire.

When the flames were finally extinguished 'about 40 flower boats were entirely gutted'. It was estimated that one thousand people lost their lives. Many prominent persons were among the victims, including several Chinese officials, and 'about ten bankers and a number of prominent business men'. The fire police went about trying to rescue the inhabitants and prevent scavengers from plundering their contents. The crew of the steamer *Fu Shiu* was also on hand to save who they could.

The next day hundreds of dead bodies were discovered, many of whom had drowned after jumping into the water. A few years earlier a fire had caused much damage to the flower boats as well. This fire in 1909, however, marked the decline of the flower boat culture in Canton. People who were opposed to the establishments hoped that the Canton officials would

forbid the construction of new ones. They argued that the boats were fire-traps and potential disasters waiting to happen.<sup>58</sup>

By the late 1920s, there were only a few of these boats left on the river. Some of them were outfitted with a full second storey and converted into cheap hotels. They lost their former glamour and took on a rather grotesque appearance—like huge rectangular boxes protruding out of the water. Pictures from the time continue to show a few of these large boats anchored in the river. But by the late 1930s, they had disappeared from the landscape (Plate 16).

## CONCLUSION

Floating Brothels were central to the advancement of trade in Canton. The increase in ships and junks arriving in the Pearl River Delta coincided with the increase in brothels. At Whampoa, prostitutes waited at *Lob Lob* Creek and enticed men into their vessels as they passed by on their way to and from Canton. At night, they went down to the ships and junks anchored



## HISTORIOGRAPHY

at Whampoa. They serviced all sailors Asians and non-Asians alike. They were the brothels for the common man. Being such, we would not expect these women to have had bound feet, and we have no references stating that they did.

In Canton the floating brothels became known as flower boats. They also grew in number and in luxury as the trade expanded. However, unlike the Whampoa prostitutes, the flower boat girls only catered to wealthy Chinese. Foreigners were not allowed on the boats. After the First Opium War, there are cases when foreigners were invited to spend an evening on the boats in company with Chinese friends. These were exceptions. I have found no references to foreigners being allowed in flower boats before the opium war. A few men tried to enter, but were sharply expelled.

Many of the most important decisions were made on flower boats. If a wealthy merchant wanted to purchase a large batch of good quality tea from an inland agent, he might first need to treat him to an evening out on a flower boat. When important dignitaries and officials arrived in Canton, they might

also be treated to a night on a flower boat. The vessels gained the reputation of being the most beautiful boats in the world, and surrounded by much romanticism (Plate 17).

But these establishments were for Chinese males only. Chinese women did not accompany their husbands outside of the home. Instead, each flower boat had women who were trained from youth in the arts of pleasing men. The girls were purchased very young, at maybe five or six years old, from poor families. Their feet were bound, and the girls went through years of training in how to be polite and attractive. Then when they reached puberty at about 12 or 13 years old, they began working as prostitutes. They were adorned with expensive clothing, and with artistically designed hair and makeup. They intermingled with the elites of society, so the girls needed to know how to speak with them, and learn how to impress their guests with the recital of a famous poem or hymn.

Plate 16: View of a 'Flowery Boat, Canton', ca. 1930s. As the flower boat culture drew increased criticism in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, they began to lose their customer base. Some of these vessels were given a second storey and converted into inexpensive hotels. Private collection.



## HISTORIOGRAFIA

The flower boat girls might work ten years before they were diseased or no longer attractive to customers. If the women were lucky, and caught the fancy of a wealthy patron, then they could enter his household as a concubine, and live the rest of their lives in luxury. Prostitutes were property and sold to whoever was willing to pay the price. Flower boat owners probably tried to sell their girls before they reached the point that they could no longer attract customers.

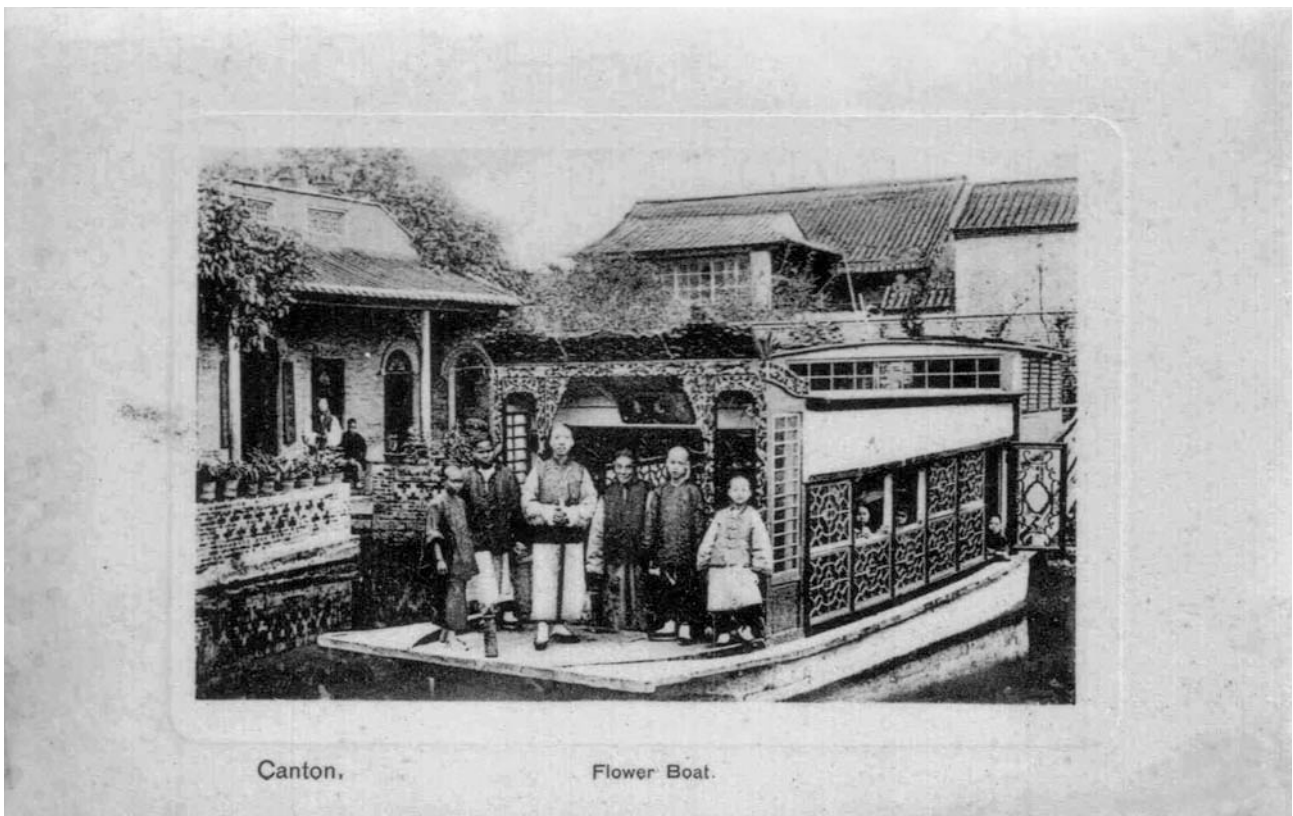
If owners were not successful at selling them and the women could no longer make money, then the prostitutes were in a very vulnerable situation. Owing to their small feet, they could not do many of the normal daily tasks of taking care of themselves or finding employment. If the flower boat owners rejected them, they might be left to wander the streets as beggars.

Owning a flower boat was probably a very lucrative business. According to rough estimates, owners might have been able to recoup their initial investments of purchasing the boats and prostitutes

within a few years. But having all of your money invested in one boat could also be quite disastrous if a fire occurred or a typhoon struck. And because flower boats were the ultimate in luxury, they were also targets of local thieves so there were considerable risks involved.

Attitudes towards prostitution, the purchasing and selling of women, and the raising of children to work in brothels began to change in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Flower boats came under increased attack from within and without China for their 'inhuman' treatment of women. As attitudes changed, the flower boats' customer base began to dwindle. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, photos reveal many of the flower boats falling into decay. Some of them were refitted with a full second deck and turned into cheap hotels. Photos reveal that a few of these floating hotels lasted into the late 1930s, and then they disappeared. This ended the long 180-year history of the flower boat culture of the Pearl River Delta. **RC**

Plate 17: Photo of a Canton flower boat and crew, published by M. Sternberg, Hong Kong, ca. 1910. Private Collection



## NOTES

- 1 Kingsley Bolton, *Chinese Englishes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Pidgin English for the word 'have' was pronounced 'hab', and by extension, 'love' would have been pronounced 'lob'.
- 2 For a brief history of prostitution and flower boats in Macao in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, see Isabel Nunes, 'The Singing and Dancing Girls of Macau. Aspects of Prostitution in Macau'. *Review of Culture* 18 (1994), pp. 61-84.
- 3 Charles Frederick Noble, *A Voyage to the East Indies in 1747 and 1748* (London: T. Becker and P.A. Dehondt, 1762), p. 280.
- 4 Noble, *A Voyage to the East Indies*, pp. 280-281. 'We had scarcely passed the pagoda in the neighborhood of Old Whampoa, and the towering one of nine stories on Lob Creek, when the Barrier pagoda came full in view'. Mrs. H. Dwight Williams, *A Year in China; and a Narrative of Capture and Imprisonment, when Homeward Bound, on Board the Rebel Pirate Florida* (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1864), p. 176.
- 5 Peter Dobell, *Travels in Kamtchatka and Siberia; with a Narrative of a Residence in China*. 2 vols. (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1830. Reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1970), vol. 2, pp. 140-141.
- 6 Noble, *A Voyage to the East Indies*, p. 281.
- 7 Tim Flannery, ed. *The Life and Adventures of John Nicol, Mariner* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1997), p. 107.
- 8 For a discussion of the Chinese barbers, see Van Dyke, 'Port Canton and the Pearl River Delta' (Ph.D. diss., University of South California, 2002, pp. 207-209, 538-539).
- 9 Noble, *A Voyage to the East Indies*, pp. 280-282. See pages 237-243 in this journal for a description of a foreigner illegally visiting a Chinese brothel in Canton.
- 10 Alfred Spencer, ed., *Memoirs of William Hickey (1749-1775)*. 4 vols. (London: Hurst & Blackett, Ltd., 1913; reprint 1950), vol. 1, p. 198.
- 11 Williams, *A Year in China*, p. 176.
- 12 All of the pagodas along the Pearl River downriver from Canton still stand today. The Pazhou Pagoda is located not far from the Canton Trade Fair pavilion.
- 13 British Library (BL): India Office Records (IOR) G/12/73, letter dated 1781.11.14, pp. 12-13.
- 14 BL: IOR L/MAR/B/0462-O(1) Ponsborne Ledger 1780-1782, folio 6.
- 15 Paul A. Van Dyke and Cynthia Viallé, *The Canton-Macao Dagregisters*. 1763 (Macao: Instituto Cultural do Governo da R.A.E. de Macau, 2008), August 27.
- 16 Dobell, *Travels in Kamtchatka and Siberia*, vol. 2, p. 140.
- 17 Noble, *A Voyage to the East Indies*, p. 281.
- 18 Dobell, *Travels in Kamtchatka and Siberia*, vol. 2, pp. 140-141.
- 19 Toogood C. Downing, *The Fan-Qui in China in 1836-7*. 3 vols. (London: Henry Colburn, 1838), vol. 1, pp. 245-246.
- 20 William W. Sanger, *History of Prostitution: its extent, causes, and effects throughout the World* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1859), pp. 433-435; Williams, *A Year in China*, p. 208.
- 21 Earlier versions of this study were presented at various places in Macao, Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Responses from the audience have suggested that the term 'flower boat' was of foreign origins. Some of this conjecture derives from a note written by John Henry Gray in 1878, stating that 'there are large boats on the Canton river called by the Chinese Wang Lau, and by the foreigners flower-boats'. John Henry Gray, *China. A History of the Laws, Manner, and Customs of the People*. 2 vols. (London: Macmillan and Co., 1878), vol. 2, p. 77. Writing in 1858, Yvan thought the name had European origins. 'It was not the people of the extreme East who gave the flower-boats their poetical name, but the Europeans. The Chinese, much more prosaic in the things of this life, call these establishments simply *houses of the four pleasures*, designating them, according to their importance and dimensions, by the names of Keng-Heou, Cha-Kou, Tze-Toung, and Tuen-Pou.' These latter terms were the Cantonese names for the different types of flower boats. Melchior Yvan, *Inside Canton*. London: Henry Vizetelly, 1858), pp. 144-145. But as shown above, the term 'flower boat' (*hua fang* 花舫 or *hua ting* 花艇) was already being used by Chinese during the Qianlong period. By the late 18<sup>th</sup> century the term 'flower boat' became popular among foreigners. As will be shown below, Chinese sources show a term similar to this as early as the Tang and Song dynasties so it is unclear where the term came from.
- 22 The *Funing fu zhi* 福宁府志 and *Panyu xian zhi* 番禺县志 show the terms being used in the Qianlong period. *Funing fu zhi* vol. 36, p. 689; and *Panyu xian zhi* vol. 17, p. 338. These terms continue to show up in Guangdong gazetteers up to the Republican Period. For several examples, see *Guangzhou fu zhi* 广州府志 vol. 15, p. 311 and vol. 163, p. 4345 (Guangxu period); *Panyu xian zhi* vol. 6, p. 48 and vol. 23, p. 448 (Tongzhi period); *Shunde xian zhi* 顺德县志 vol. 27, p. 632 (Xianfeng period); *Qingyuan xian zhi* 清远县志 vol. 12, p. 640 and vol. 13, p. 688 (Min Guo period).
- 23 In a Tang Dynasty poem by Bai Juyi 白居易 (772-846), there is a description of an evening of entertainment on a boat in the Xunyang River 浔阳江 (part of the Yangzi). The passengers spent an evening on the river dining and listening to music. The terms *hua fang* 画舫 and *hua chuan* 画船 appear frequently. Although *hua fang* 画舫 (painted boat) is a different term from 花舫 (flower boat), the pronunciation is strikingly similar. They both refer to a type of pleasure boat where one went to enjoy an evening out on the river. Exchanging characters with similar pronunciations was common in the Qing Dynasty even with personal names. Thus, it is possible that foreigners translated the terms *hua fang* 花舫 or *hua ting* 花艇 from Chinese, into 'flower boat' in English, rather than the other way around. I thank Elizabeth Sinn at the University of Hong Kong for pointing out this reference to Bai Juyi, *Bai Juyi Shigejingsuan* 白居易诗歌精选 (Bai Juyi. Selected Poems), sel. Shi Yizhi 时宜之. Shijiazhuang: Huashanwenyi Chubanshe, 1996.
- 24 G. Schlegel, 'A Canton Flower-boat'. In *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1894), pp. 1-9. See page 4 for references to Chinese pleasure boats in the Liang Dynasty (CE 502-556).
- 25 Massachusetts Historical Society: MS. N-49.67, James Murray Forbes Papers, box 1, letter addressed to Forbes dated 25 March 1868.
- 26 Charlotte Havilland, ed. *The China Navigation Company Limited. A Pictorial History 1872-1992* (John Swire & Sons Ltd., 1992), see view of Canton on page 7.
- 27 James Ricalton, *China Through the Stereoscope: A Journey Through the Dragon Empire at the Time of the Boxer Uprising*. (New York: Underwood & Underwood, 1901), p. 33.
- 28 Elizabeth Lovatt, 'River Life in Canton', *The Newcastle Weekly Courant*, 5 August 1899. *The Newcastle Weekly Courant* mentions that this article was copied from the *San Francisco Chronicle*.
- 29 Paintings show how the boats were propelled by rowing. For a couple examples, see Martyn Gregory, *Artists of the China Coast* (London: Martyn Gregory Gallery, 1994) Cat. 64 No. 124, p. 57 and Martyn Gregory, *Hong Kong and the China Trade* (London: Martyn Gregory Gallery, 1997), Cat. 70 No. 90, p. 53.
- 30 C.F. Gordon Cumming, *Wanderings in China* (London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1900), p. 59.
- 31 Gray, *China. A History of the Laws, Manner, and Customs of the People*, vol. 2, pp. 78 and 272-273. Gray's wife and other authors

## HISTORIOGRAFIA

- mentioned the floating kitchens as well. Mrs. Gray, *Fourteen Months in Canton* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1880), p. 153; and Elizabeth Wheeler Andrew and Katharine Caroline Bushnell. *Heathen Slaves and Christian Rulers*. (Plain Label Books, 1907), p. 189.
- 32 Florence O'Driscoll, 'Scenes in Canton. The Punishment of Criminals, and the River Population', *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* (January 1895), p. 367.
- 33 Some of the popular poems and songs could be purchased in Canton. Schlegel reproduced a few of these, which he purchased during his visit to Canton in 1861. He could speak Cantonese and mentioned that these tunes were the same that the flower boat girls sang. Schlegel, 'A Canton Flower-boat', pp. 1-9.
- 34 Lovatt, 'River Life in Canton'.
- 35 Silk lanterns were still being used as late as the 1870s. 'And still another kind is soon seen, the most gaily decorated of all, which have carved fronts, gaily painted, silken lanterns suspended from their roofs, with looking-glasses, pictures, and verses of an amatory character, inscribed on colored paper, hanging on their sides. These are called the 'Flower Boats,' and are sinks of iniquity.' Rev. I.W. Wiley, *China and Japan: A Record of Observations made During a Residence of Several Years in China, and a Tour of Official Visitations to the Missions of Both Countries in 1877-78* (Cincinnati: Hitchcock and Walden, 1879), p. 306.
- 36 Dobell, *Travels in Kamtchatka and Siberia*, vol. 2, p. 226.
- 37 Downing, *The Fan-Qui in China*, vol. 1, pp. 243-244.
- 38 Yvan, *Inside Canton*, pp. 144-145.
- 39 Lee, *Philadelphians and the China Trade*, p. 35.
- 40 George Wilkinson, *Sketches of Chinese Customs & Manners, in 1811-12* (Bath: J. Browne, 1814), pp. 127-130.
- 41 NAH: Canton 12, Resolution dated 1749.12.05. The corporal who was on duty at the time, and who allowed the water port door to be opened, was sent to Whampoa aboard the ship *Sarah Jacoba*, where he was to be punished in front of the crew as an example to others not to allow such things to happen.
- 42 Dobell, *Travels in Kamtchatka and Siberia*, vol. 2, p. 225.
- 43 Ibid., pp. 224-225.
- 44 Ricalton, *China Through the Stereoscope*, p. 33.
- 45 Walter William Mundy, *Canton and the Bogue. The Narrative of an Eventful Six Months in China* (London: Samuel Tinsley, 1875), p. 150.
- 46 The Canton and Macao price and wage data from about 1700 to 1830 are available online at the International Institute of Social History webpage: [www.isg.nl](http://www.isg.nl).
- 47 Dobell, *Travels in Kamtchatka and Siberia*, vol. 2, pp. 225-227; Delight Sweetser, *One Way Round the World*. (Indianapolis: Bowen-Merrill Co., 1898; reprint 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 1899), pp. 126-127.
- 48 There are many references to these elaborate occasions on the flower boats, with everything beautifully adorned and attendants dressed in elaborate costumes.
- 49 O'Driscoll, 'Scenes in Canton', p. 367.
- 50 Leonard Pratt and Chiang Su-hui, trans. and eds. *Shen Fu. Six Records of a Floating Life*. London: Penguin Books, 1983. Flower boats are mentioned on pages 120-127. The Chinese name for the book is *Fu Shen Liuji* 浮生六记.
- 51 Walter Del Mar, *Around the world through Japan* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1903), pp. 98-99.
- 52 Del Mar, *Around the world through Japan*, pp. 99-100.
- 53 Mundy, *Canton and the Bogue*, p. 152.
- 54 Yvan, *Inside Canton*, pp. 176-178.
- 55 Downing, *The Fan-Qui in China*, vol. 1, pp. 241-242.
- 56 Yvan, *Inside Canton*, p. 144.
- 57 Andrew and Bushnell. *Heathen Slaves and Christian Rulers*, pp. 187-189.
- 58 The information about the fire in 1909 is mentioned in two articles entitled 'The Chinese Disaster. Burning of the Flower Boats' and 'Arrest of Looters' in *The Advertiser* (9 March 1909) (Adelaide, SA: 1889-1931), p. 8. Different reasons were given for the cause of the fire. One report said it was the result of a kerosene lamp falling. Another report claimed it started in the kitchen of one of the boats, while another said it was the result of incendiarism. The information was taken from the *Weekly Post* (6 February 1909) and reprinted in *The Advertiser*.

## RESUMOS

**As Questões Actualmente Pendentes entre Portugal e a China (1911)**

A implantação do regime republicano em Portugal e na China, entre 1910 e 1912, não alterou a agenda dos temas que se mantinham em aberto no diálogo entre as duas nações. No que diz respeito a Portugal, as elites republicanas, reconhecendo as especificidades da “questão de Macau”, sentiram a necessidade de fazer um ponto de situação, nomeando uma Comissão com esse objectivo. Assim nasceu, por portaria de 3 de Abril de 1911, a Comissão Nomeada para Estudar as Questões Actualmente Pendentes entre Portugal e a China constituída, na sua maioria, por homens ligados à governação de Macau nos últimos quatro anos de monarquia. Pelo desenrolar dos trabalhos, que se prolongaram até Janeiro de 1912, e pelo conteúdo das conclusões ficamos a conhecer os principais temas que preenchem o diálogo luso-chinês, as posições que Portugal deveria assumir e as estratégias que poderiam ser adoptadas. [Autor: Alfredo Gomes Dias, pp. 6-15]

**Sun Yat Sen e a Segunda Internacional**

Não há dúvidas de que a Terceira Internacional, o Comintern, desempenhou um papel fundamental nas transformações ocorridas na China na década de 20 do século passado: organizou o Partido Comunista Chinês (PCC) em 1921, criou a Academia Militar de Whampoa, em 1924, e apoiou a Expedição ao Norte em 1926. Face ao insucesso da revolução socialista em espalhar-se pela Europa, após o sucesso inicial dos bolcheviques na Rússia, em 1917, Lenine virara rapidamente a sua atenção para a Ásia e, em particular, para a China. Muitos dos líderes do Comintern, incluindo o próprio Lenine, tinham emergido da organização precedente, a Segunda Internacional. De acordo com o autor, seria extremamente difícil defender que a Segunda Internacional não tenha tido relações com os revolucionários chineses antes de Lenine

ter fundado a Terceira Internacional em Março de 1919, tendo em conta a batalha estratégica que estava a ser travada pelo controlo da Manchúria, de 1895 a 1919, entre a dinastia Qing, a Rússia czarista e o Japão imperial. A primeira Revolução Russa de 1905, que contou com o envolvimento profundo dos socialistas da Segunda Internacional, esteve directamente relacionada com o conflito russo-japonês, enquanto Sun Yat Sen conseguia fundar o principal movimento republicano da China, em Tóquio, o Tong Meng Hui, face à permanência dos violentos combates na Manchúria. Finalmente, a guerra veio a terminar no mesmo mês em que Sun Yat Sen constituiu o TMH através do Tratado de Portsmouth, patrocinado por Theodore Roosevelt, em Agosto de 1905. O papel fundamental que a Segunda Internacional desempenhou no desenvolvimento do movimento socialista internacional indica-nos que uma história completa da revolução republicana chinesa de Outubro de 1911 tem de abordar a estratégia e o papel desempenhado pela Segunda Internacional na Ásia. [Autor: Paul B. Spooner, pp. 16-26]

**Song Ailing e a Elite Revolucionária Chinesa**

A importância de Song Ailing para a história de Macau durante as décadas que mediaram o crescendo da revolta chinesa de Xinhai, em 1909, e a Guerra Sino-Japonesa de 1937-1940 reside na clarificação das origens do seu suposto poder na família Sun-Song e nos governos de Nanjing-Chongqing. Provavelmente, esta posição única resultou do seu cargo de secretária confidencial do Tong Meng Hui entre 1909 e 1914 e da sua posição no seio do governo do KMT Chongqing como matriarca do clã da família Song e mulher de H.H. Kung, o vice-primeiro-ministro e primeiro-ministro do Executivo Yuan, ministro das Finanças e governador do Banco Central da China. O seu papel histórico na rede revolucionária do KMT tem sido obscurecido por muitos historiadores e jornalistas, ao mesmo

tempo que a sua história particular é muitas vezes inapropriadamente associada à da sua irmã Song Qingling. O presente artigo pretende identificar as imprecisões em publicações de renome sobre o papel de Song Ailing como secretária confidencial do Tong Meng Hui, do seu pai e de Sun Yat Sen, procurando esclarecer o seu papel como, eventualmente, a mulher mais relevante do Período Republicano da China.

[Autor: Paul B. Spooner, pp. 16-26]

**Evocando Teófilo Braga, Literato da República**

A abordagem à vida e obra de Teófilo Braga permite concluir que o seu pensamento e acção marcaram alguns dos mais decisivos momentos intelectuais e políticos que foram vividos em Portugal nos séculos XIX e XX. No plano literário, contribuiu, com Antero de Quental, para a renovação dos respectivos cânones estéticos, travando uma polémica célebre, que ficou conhecida sob o nome de “Questão Coimbrã”; no plano filosófico, foi um estudioso das principais correntes sociológicas da Europa do seu tempo, vindo a introduzir em Portugal o positivismo; no plano político integrou a corrente federalista do republicanismo português e foi um dos seus maiores e mais respeitados representantes.

[Autor: Amadeu Carvalho Homem, pp. 46-67]

**João Tamagnini de Sousa Barbosa e a Primeira República Portuguesa**

João Tamagnini de Sousa Barbosa, natural de Macau, onde nasceu em 1883, foi, sem sombra de dúvida, um dos agentes históricos activos da chamada Primeira República Portuguesa. Engenheiro, oficial do Exército, administrador ultramarino, político, governante, administrador de empresas, em todas estas áreas e funções, esta figura se distinguiu e se tornou notada. No âmbito da sua carreira política, pois disso essencialmente se pretende tratar, há que dizer que Tamagnini Barbosa sempre se afirmou republicano, porém teve neste campo um percurso algo sinuoso,



## RESUMOS

em termos partidários e ideológicos. Desde uma militância no pequeno Partido Republicano Radical, de pendor esquerdizante, até organizações partidárias e partidos de direita, marcadamente nacionalistas e mesmo pro-fascistas. Ao longo desse trajecto, foi também deputado, ministro, chefe de governo, chegando a ser convidado para a presidência da República, convite que declinou. Com o advento do Estado Novo de Salazar, colou-se a este regime, sendo Procurador à Câmara Corporativa. Face a diferenças de posição perante a II Guerra Mundial, haveria de se desentender com o ditador, aproximando-se da oposição a este. Pouco depois, em 1948, Tamagnini Barbosa morre, subitamente, em Lisboa. [Autor: Fernando Mendonça Fava, pp. 68-82]

### A República e a Herança Económica da Monarquia Constitucional

Portugal perde o desafio da modernidade no curso da segunda metade do século XIX. O tecido industrial é rarefeito e limita-se a algumas bolsas nas principais cidades (Lisboa, Porto...) constituídas por indústrias da primeira vaga. A agricultura continua a assumir a forma dominante de investimento, de criação de riqueza, de trabalho e as elites continuam a encarar a propriedade, na tradição do Antigo Regime económico, como uma fonte de reconhecimento e prestígio social. É uma agricultura diminuída nos métodos e técnicas, na questão complexa da posse, dimensão da propriedade e dos foros, na capacidade de inovação e produtividade, na relutância manifesta em abraçar o modelo capitalista de exploração da terra. A República recebe, assim, um país de industrialização incipiente, com uma população maioritariamente analfabeta, gentes forçadas pela miséria a abandonar os campos e a engrossar as fileiras da emigração transoceânica. Para além das guerras intestinas de natureza política, ideológica e de foro religioso que assolam o período republicano, reside na economia da nação o principal problema para a salvação República portuguesa. [Autor: António Valério Maduro, pp. 83-91]

### Quem ou o que Está por Detrás: Os Factores Internos e Externos que Deram Origem ao Colapso do Império Qing

O autor analisa os estudos realizados sobre os finais da dinastia Qing e, além de abordar pistas com origem no exterior da estrutura do poder imperial que conduziram à Revolução Republicana, analisa igualmente o interior, tentando responder à questão fundamental: como é que o império se foi, ele próprio, gradualmente desintegrando? A principal razão para a queda do império não residiu apenas no facto de ter sido deposto; em grande medida, foi ele próprio a entrar em colapso. Frequentemente, os factores que determinam a evolução de um evento devem-se mais a questões internas do que externas. O poder Qing tinha entrado numa profunda crise já antes da Revolução de 1911. Os seus exércitos, a pequena nobreza, os funcionários e as elites manchus, que no seu todo constituíam os pilares do regime, encontravam-se num estado periclitante; a acidental Revolta de Wuchang acidental, que acelerou o colapso do edifício da dinastia Qing, constituiu, segundo o autor, uma inevitabilidade histórica. [Autor: Guo Weidong, pp. 92-111]

### Os Bordéis Flutuantes e os “Barcos de Flores de Cantão”, 1750-1930

De há muito que os bordéis flutuantes do delta do rio das Pérolas são objecto de curiosidade, fascínio e mística. Durante a dinastia Qing, os bordéis flutuantes eram numerosos. Os que se encontravam em Cantão tinham o nome de “barcos de flores”, enquanto os de Whampoa eram chamados de “barcos lob lob”. Os primeiros eram frequentados apenas pelas elites chinesas, enquanto os últimos eram por centenas de marinheiros estrangeiros e chineses que chegavam todos os anos. Os bordéis aumentavam e prosperavam em paralelo com o grande crescimento do comércio externo. Porém, os barcos “lob lob” de Whampoa constituíam operações totalmente independentes dos “barcos de flores” em Cantão. Estes eram locais onde algumas

das virtudes e vícios mais destacados da sociedade chinesa se juntavam, independentemente da combinação, para impressionar os superiores hierárquicos e oferecer aos seus parceiros e amigos uma noite que perdurasse nas suas mentes. A comida era a melhor que podia haver, as mulheres eram as mais belas e o cenário e o ambiente eram o melhor que Guangdong tinha para oferecer. Porém, no final do século XIX, o mundo mudou. O rio das Pérolas deixou de ser o centro do comércio externo da China; os chineses do Sul da China emigraram maciçamente para Hong Kong, Singapura, Austrália, Estados Unidos, Canadá, América do Sul e muitas outras paragens. A esmagadora maioria destes primeiros emigrantes eram homens, o que levou a uma grande procura de prostitutas chinesas. Com a sua fama há muito estabelecida de criarem mulheres treinadas para dar prazer aos homens, os bordéis flutuantes do rio das Pérolas transformaram-se em canais pelos quais milhares de mulheres foram compradas, treinadas e vendidas para servirem em casas de prostituição chinesas no estrangeiro. Com o aumento deste tráfico de seres humanos cresceram os temores sobre os efeitos que este comércio de mulheres estava a ter nas sociedades chinesas, tanto interna como externamente. No início do século XX, começou a haver uma mudança de atitude face a estes estabelecimentos, facto que acabou por levar ao seu encerramento. [Autor: Paul A. Van Dyke, pp. 112-142]

## ABSTRACTS

**Pending Issues between Portugal and China in 1911**

The establishment of the Republican regime in Portugal and China, between 1910 and 1912, did not change the agenda of topics open for dialogue between the two nations. The Portuguese Republican elite acknowledged the specific characteristics of the 'Macao question'; in their desire to analyse the situation, they set up a Committee for this purpose. The 'Committee Appointed to Study Today's Pending Issues between Portugal and China' was set up by decree passed on 3 April 1911. It consisted primarily of men who had been involved in the governance of Macao during the last four years of the monarchy. The main topics in the Sino-Portuguese discussions, Portugal's stance and potential strategies are revealed through the way the work was pursued until January 1912, and by the content of the final conclusions.

[Author: Alfredo Gomes Dias, pp. 6-15]

**Sun Yat Sen and the Second International**

There is no question that the Third International, the Comintern, played a fundamental role in social change in China in the 1920s: it organised the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 1921, created the Whampoa Military Academy in 1924 and supported the Northern Expedition in 1926. After failure of the Socialist revolution to ignite in Europe following initial Bolshevik success in Russia in 1917, Lenin had quickly turned his attention to Asia, and China in particular. Many of the Comintern leaders, including Lenin himself, had emerged from that organisation's predecessor organisation, the Second International. According to the author, it would be extremely difficult to make the case that the Second International was not in communication with Chinese revolutionaries before Lenin's founding of the Third International in March 1919, given the strategic battle that was taking place for control of Manchuria from 1895 and 1910 between the Qing Dynasty, Tsarist Russia

and Imperial Japan. The first Russian Revolution of 1905, in which Second International Socialists were profoundly involved, was directly related to the Russian-Japanese battle, while Sun Yat Sen arranged for the founding in Tokyo of China's main republican movement, the Tong Meng Hui, as fighting raged in Manchuria. The war was eventually brought to a close in the same month that Sun Yat Sen established the TMH through the Theodore Roosevelt-arranged Treaty of Portsmouth in August of 1905. The significant role that the Second International played in the development of the international Socialist movement suggests that a complete history of the Chinese republican revolution of October 1911 must address the strategy and role of the Second International in the Asian region.

[Author: Paul B. Spooner, pp. 16-26]

**Song Ailing and China's Revolutionary Elite**

The relevance of Song Ailing for the history of Macao during the decades from the build-up to the Chinese Xinhai revolt by 1909 to the Sino-Japanese War between 1937 and 1940 lies with clarifying the origins of her reputed power in the Sun-Song family and the Nanjing-Chongqing governments. This unique position may have arisen from her role as the confidential secretary of the Tong Meng Hui between 1909 and 1914 and her position in the heart of the KMT Chongqing government as matriarch of the Song Family clan and wife of H.H. Kung, the Vice-Premier and Premier of the Executive Yuan, Minister of Finance and the Chairman of the Central Bank of China. Her historic role in the KMT revolutionary network is obscured by many historians and journalists, while her specific history is often inaccurately merged with that of her next sibling, Song Qingling. This article will seek to identify the inaccuracies in leading publications concerning Song Ailing's role as confidential secretary to the Tong Meng Hui, to her father and to Sun Yat Sen, and

thereby bring into clarity her role as arguably the leading women of China's Republican Era.

[Author: Paul B. Spooner, pp. 27-45]

**Recalling Teófilo Braga, Republican Intellectual**

The treatment of the life and work of Teófilo Braga allows us to conclude that his thinking and actions marked some of the most decisive political and intellectual moments experienced in Portugal in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the field of literature, along with Antero de Quental, he contributed to a refreshing of aesthetic canons, raising a famous controversy that became known as the 'Coimbra Question'. In the philosophical arena, he was a scholar of the main sociological currents in Europe at the time and introduced Positivism to Portugal. In the political area, he was part of the federalist current of Portuguese republicanism and was one of its greatest and most respected representatives.

[Author: Amadeu Carvalho Homem, pp. 46-67]

**João Tamagnini de Sousa Barbosa and the First Portuguese Republic**

João Tamagnini de Sousa Barbosa, born in Macao in 1883, was without a doubt one of the historical agents of the so-called First Portuguese Republic. He distinguished himself in all his roles as an engineer and army officer, overseas administrator, politician, Governor and company manager. Within the scope of his political career, which is the focus of this article, Tamagnini Barbosa always proclaimed himself to be a Republican, although he had a somewhat meandering path in terms of political parties and ideological lines. He travelled from a militant in the small, left-leaning, Radical Republic Party to the right-wing party organisations, which were markedly nationalistic and even pro-fascist. Throughout this path he was also a parliamentarian, minister, government leader, and was even invited to the presidency of the Republic, although

## RESUMOS

he declined the offer. With the advent of Salazar's New State, he immersed himself in this regime, and was the Attorney of the Corporate Chamber. Differences of opinion during the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War led him to fall out with the dictator, and move towards opposition to him. Shortly afterwards, in 1948, Tamagnini Barbosa died suddenly in Lisbon.

[Author: Fernando Mendonça Fava, pp. 68-82]

### The Republic and the Economic Legacy of the Constitutional Monarchy

Portugal had lost out on the path to modernisation during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Its industrial base was scarce and limited to some pockets in the main cities (Lisbon, Oporto...) and consisted of first-wave industries. Agriculture was still the main form of investment, wealth generation, and labour, while in the tradition of the old economic regime the elite continued to view property as a source of social prestige and recognition. However, agriculture was already lagging behind in terms of methods and techniques, the complex issue of property ownership, the size of properties and leases, the capacity to innovate and produce, and a clear reluctance to embrace the capitalist model of land exploitation. Thus, the Republic inherited a country in the early stages of industrialisation, with a largely illiterate population, people forced by poverty to abandon the land and fill the ranks of transatlantic emigrants. In addition to the internal warring over politics, ideology and religion which marked the Republican period, the nation's economy was the biggest challenge to salvaging the Portuguese Republic.

[Author: António Valério Maduro, pp. 83-91]

### Who or What's Behind It: The Internal and External Factors Leading to the Fall of the Qing Empire

The author reviews the studies on the late Qing dynasty and, apart from looking for clues from outside the Imperial power

structure leading to the Republican Revolution, he also analyses the inside, trying to answer the one key question: how did the empire itself come to its self-disintegration step by step? The main reason for the demise of the empire was not simply that it was being toppled; to a large extent, it collapsed of itself. The factors that determine the evolution of an event are often internal rather than external. Prior to the Revolution of 1911, the Qing rule had already fallen into a state of deep crisis. Its armies, gentry, officials and Manchu elites, all pillars of the Qing regime, were in a shaky condition; the accidental Wuchang Uprising that accelerated the collapse of the edifice of the Qing dynasty was, according to the author, an historical inevitability.

[Author: Guo Weidong, pp. 91-111]

### Floating Brothels and the Canton Flower Boats 1750-1930

The floating brothels of the Pearl River Delta have long been a subject of curiosity, fascination and mystique. During the Qing Dynasty, there were many floating brothels. The ones at Canton were called 'flower boats', while the brothels at Whampoa were called '*lob lob* boats'. The former serviced Chinese elites only, while the latter serviced the hundreds of common foreign and Asian sailors that arrived every year. The brothels increased and prospered in unison with the great growth in foreign trade. The *lob lob* boats at Whampoa, however, were completely separate operations from the flower boats at Canton. The latter were places where some of the most prominent virtues and vices of Chinese society came together, in any combination one desired, to impress superiors and treat associates and friends to an evening they would long remember. The food was the best to be had, the women were the best to be desired, and the scenery and environment were the best Guangdong had to offer. By the late-19<sup>th</sup> century, however, the world had changed. The Pearl River was no longer the centre of China's foreign commerce, and Chinese from South China had migrated en masse to Hong Kong,

Singapore, Australia, United States, Canada, South America and many other locations. The overwhelming majority of these early migrants were male, which led to a huge demand abroad for Chinese prostitutes. With their long-established reputation of raising women skilled in pleasing men, the floating brothels of the Pearl River became channels through which thousands of women were bought, trained, and sold to serve in Chinese overseas prostitution houses. As this human trafficking increased, it raised concerns of the effects this trade in women was having on Chinese societies at home and abroad. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, attitudes towards these establishments began to change, which eventually led to their demise.

[Author: Paul A. Van Dyke, pp.112-142]

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- ANTUNES, Sérgio Pereira; ANTUNES, Sheila Barroso Alves  
Rio de Janeiro no início do século XIX. Uma vila chinesa no Ocidente e o seu legado  
19世纪初的里约热内卢：一个在西方的中国村镇及其使者  
N.º 35, Julho/July 2010, pp. 49-59
- BUCHILLET, Dominique  
The 1895 Epidemic Outbreak of Bubonic Plague in Macao. A Portuguese View on the Transmission and Spread of Plague  
一八九五年澳门爆发黑死病：葡萄牙对瘟疫传播的看法  
N.º 34, Abril/April 2010, pp. 77-91
- CHENG, Christina Miu Bing  
On the Border Gate: João Maria Ferreira do Amaral and Vicente Nicolau de Mesquita  
临界之上——亚马喇和美士基打  
N.º 33, Janeiro/January 2009, pp. 99-111
- DIAS, Alfredo Gomes  
Os refugiados de Hong Kong (1942)  
香港难民 (1942)  
N.º 34, Abril/April 2010, pp. 117-128
- DIAS, Alfredo Gomes  
Portugal e a China: Os anos da República (1908-1928) / *Portugal and China: The Years of the Republic (1908-1928)*  
葡萄牙与中国在共和年代 (1908-1928)  
N.º 36, Setembro/September 2010, pp. 65-87
- DIAS, Alfredo Gomes; HO, Vincent  
Portugal, China, Macao and the Beginning of Republicans Regimes (1908-1928)  
葡萄牙、中国、澳门以及共和制伊始 (1905-1928)  
N.º 36, Setembro/September 2010, pp. 6-17
- FAVA, Fernando Mendonça  
José Carlos da Maia. Apontamento breve  
若塞·卡洛斯·马雅 - 简短记录  
N.º 36, Setembro/September 2010, pp. 38-54
- GAGO, Dora Nunes  
Macao “pintada” em versos de “pedra e água” por Eugénio de Andrade  
欧热尼奥·恩特拉德之诗篇“石与水”中的澳门描述  
N.º 34, Abril/April 2010, pp. 110-116
- GONÇALVES, Arnaldo  
A Primeira República, Macau e os maçons  
第一共和国、澳门及共济会成员  
N.º 36, Setembro/September 2010, pp. 55-64
- GONG Yingyan  
Shuangyu (Liampó) em antigos mapas chineses  
中国古地图上的双屿  
N.º 34, Abril/April 2010, pp. 24-33
- HE Sibing  
Forging America's Informal Empire in Asia: Caleb Cushing in Macao, 1844  
在亚洲打造美国非正式帝国：凯莱布·顾盛在澳门 (1844年)  
N.º 35, Julho/July 2010, pp. 134-152
- HO, Vincent; DIAS, Alfredo Gomes  
Portugal, China, Macao and the Beginning of Republicans Regimes (1908-1928)  
葡萄牙、中国、澳门以及共和制伊始 (1905-1928)  
N.º 36, Setembro/September 2010, pp. 77-91
- HUNTER, Phyllis Whitman  
English Regattas, Scottish Reels, Italian Operas, and Chopstick Dinners: The Commerce of Sociability in Canton and Macao  
英国赛舟会、苏格兰双人舞曲、意大利歌剧和中式晚餐：广州和澳门的社交商业  
N.º 33, Janeiro/January 2010, pp. 128-138
- IOOSS, Filomena  
A quinta-essência da recordação em terras da Deusa A-Ma  
女神妈祖之地的主要记忆  
N.º 34, Abril/April 2010, pp. 102-109
- LIMA, Jomar  
As lápides tumulares da Igreja da Ordem Terceira do Carmo de Cachoeira (Baía)  
卡舒埃拉市 (巴西) 的天主教嘉谟第三会墓碑  
N.º 35, Julho/July 2010, pp. 129-133
- LIU Xiaoshan; CHEN Xizi  
Portuguese Jesuit Missionary João Rodrigues' Birth and Early Activities in Japan  
葡萄牙传教士陆若汉身世及于日本早期活动之考证  
N.º 34, Abril/April 2010, pp. 52-63
- LOBATO, Manuel  
A influência europeia na tradição arquitectónica das ilhas Molucas. Alguns exemplos de Ternate, Tidore e Halmahera  
欧洲风格对摩鹿加群岛传统建筑的影响：在德尔纳特、蒂多雷、哈马黑拉岛的有关实例  
N.º 35, Julho/July 2010, pp. 114-128
- LOMBARDI, Rosa  
1930s Shanghai and Beijing: Descriptions of Three Italian Writers: Giovanni Comisso, Mario Appellius and Alberto Moravia  
三十年代的海上和北京：三位意大利作家——科米索、阿佩里乌斯和莫拉维的叙述  
N.º 34, Abril/April 2010, pp. 92-101
- LOURIDO, Rui d'Ávila  
Comércio de importação e exportação em Macau, dos finais da dinastia Ming ao declínio da dinastia Qing. Mercadores portugueses, outros europeus e chineses  
从明朝末年至清朝末年时期澳门的进口贸易。葡萄牙商人、其他欧洲商人及中国商人  
N.º 33, Janeiro/January 2010, pp. 38-56
- MASINI, Federico  
*Novus Atlas Sinensis*  
新版中国地图册  
N.º 33, Janeiro/January 2010, pp. 6-15
- MONTEIRO, Anabela Nunes  
A Companhia de Jesus e o Leal Senado de Macau. O caso de Bento Pereira de Faria (1676)  
澳门市政厅与耶稣会之间的支持与冲突：奉托·佩里拉·法里亚的个案 (1676)  
N.º 33, Janeiro/January 2010, pp. 22-37
- MONTEIRO, Anabela Nunes  
S. Tomé de Meliapor nas fontes Quinhentistas e Seiscentistas

## ÍNDICE N.ºs 33-36

- 十六世纪和十七世纪文献中的圣·多美·梅利亚波尔  
N.º 34, Abril/April 2010, pp. 6-23
- MURTEIRA, André  
Os primeiros bloqueios neerlandeses de Goa. Expedições da VOC contra a Carreira da Índia no Índico Ocidental, 1604-1623  
荷兰人对果阿的第一次包围：1604-1623 年荷兰人向印度西部通道的远征  
N.º 36, Setembro/September 2010, pp. 117-134
- OLIVEIRA, João Nobre de  
A presença judaica em Cabo Verde  
犹太人在佛得角  
N.º 35, Julho/July 2010, pp. 95-105
- PANTOJA, Selma  
Luanda e o seu quotidiano no século XVIII  
18世纪的卢旺达及其日常生活  
N.º 35, Julho/July 2010, pp. 106-113
- PINHARANDA-NUNES, Mário  
A representação da noção de identidade nos textos em maquista do século XIX  
在十九世纪方言著作中身份概念的体现  
N.º 35, Julho/July 2010, pp. 18-33
- PINHEIRO, Francisco Vizeu  
Macao's Coolie Trade: One City, Two Cultures, Three Communities. Social Harmony, Separate Development and Taxing Vices  
澳门的苦力贸易：一个城市，两种文化，三个社群，社会和谐，分别发展，以及罪恶税的垄断  
N.º 35, Julho/July 2010, pp. 60-83
- RCI  
Editorial  
社论  
N.º 35, Julho/July 2010, pp. 7-8
- RODRIGUES, Vitor Luís Gaspar  
Portuguese Daman under Pressure: The Mughal Threat (1572-1605)  
葡萄牙达曼受压：莫卧儿的威胁 (1572-1605)  
N.º 36, Setembro/September 2010, pp. 93-116
- SARMENTO, CLARA  
Culturas, políticas e novas identidades. Uma leitura europeia sobre questões de género na Ásia  
文化、政治和新身份：欧洲人对亚洲性别问题的看法  
N.º 34, Abril/April 2010, pp. 129-141
- SILVA, Roberval Teixeira; LIMA-HERNANDES, Maria Célia  
Ligas urbanas. Atitudes linguísticas na trama discursiva de macaenses e paulistas caipiras  
都市联盟：澳门与圣·保罗市对难点推论的语言学态度  
N.º 35, Julho/July 2010, pp. 34-48
- SIM, Teddy Y. H.; LIU, Sandy J. C.  
Probing Macao as Part of the Larger Analysis of Global City and Megalopolis (1720-1820)  
澳门作为对全球化城市和特大城市的人口稠密区进行深入研究分析中的一部分 (1720-1820)  
N.º 33, Janeiro/January 2010, pp. 57-74
- SMITH, Stefan Halikowski  
*Tempestatem, Quae cum Adventuro D. Francisco Pallu Timero Potest.* Jean-Baptiste Maldonado SJ, a Missionary Caught Between Loyalties to the Portuguese Padroado and the Political Ascendancy of the Missions Étrangères de Paris in the Siam Mission  
耶稣会士尚巴提·玛尔多纳多在暹罗传教任务中，周旋于对葡萄牙保教权的忠诚和巴黎外方传教会的政治优势之间  
N.º 34, Abril/April 2010, pp. 34-51
- SOUSA, Ivo Carneiro de  
População e sistema demográfico em Macau (séculos XVI-XVIII)  
澳门的居民与人口统计系统 (16-18世纪)  
N.º 33, Janeiro/January 2010, pp. 75-98
- SOUSA, Lúcio de  
Slave Networks and their Expansion Through Macao to Europe and America  
透过澳门扩展到欧美洲的奴隶网络  
N.º 35, Julho/July 2010, pp. 84-94
- SOUZA, George Bryan  
Merchants and Commerce in Asia and the Portuguese Empire Over the Long 18<sup>th</sup> Century  
十八世纪的亚洲商人、商业和葡萄牙帝国  
N.º 34, Abril/April 2010, pp. 64-76
- SPOONER, Paul B.  
Republican Revolutionaries: Sun Yat Sen, Carlos da Maia and the Macao Harbour Project  
民主主义革命家：孙中山、嘉路米耶与澳门港口计划  
N.º 36, Setembro/September 2010, pp. 18-37
- VENÂNCIO, José Carlos  
Vestígios da presença portuguesa nos trópicos. Processos de criouliização e comunidades crioulas  
葡萄牙在热带地区之遗迹克里奥尔化进程与克里奥尔人社团  
N.º 35, Julho/July 2010, pp. 9-17
- VILA-SANTA, Nuno Luís  
Revisitando o Estado da Índia nos anos de 1571 a 1577  
从1571年到1577年多次访问印度  
N.º 36, Setembro/September 2010, pp. 88-93
- WEI, George  
A Unique Place in the World: Historical Western Images of Macao  
全球独有的地方：历史上的澳门西化形象  
N.º 33, Janeiro/January 2010, pp. 112-127
- ZHANG Minfen  
Os exames imperiais chineses na perspectiva do Padre Álvaro Semedo  
曾德昭神父眼中的中国朝廷科举制度  
N.º 33, Janeiro/January 2010, pp. 16-21