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bpjs.cham@fcsb.unl.pt

Universidade Nova de Lisboa

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Penalva, Elsa

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CONTRADICTIONS IN MACAO¹

Elsa Penalva²

Abstract

Between 1590 and 1660 Macao was the stage of several contradictions, in particular of struggles of power among the different elites of the city's social scenery. Throughout this article I draw, in general lines, its dynamics and how it was centred in struggles of power. This situation was owned, mainly, to the transformation of Macao into a specific project of Jesuit evangelization as well as to the fact of being a mercantile city presenting a strong autonomy towards a Portuguese centralized power.

Resumo

Entre 1590 e 1660 Macau foi palco de várias contradições, mais concretamente de lutas pelo poder ocorridas entre as diferentes elites que integravam os seus principais núcleos sociais. Através do presente artigo pretendemos traçar em grandes linhas gerais a sua dinâmica que, fruto da transformação do seu espaço num projecto próprio de evangelização jesuíta, e do facto de ser uma cidade mercantil voltada para a afirmação da sua parcial autonomia face ao poder central português, estava centrada em lutas pelo poder.

要約

1590年から1660年にかけてのマカオは多様な対立の舞台であった。具体的に言えば、これらの対立はその社会の主要な要素を形成する様々なエリートたちによる権力闘争であった。本論文では、イエズス会の布教戦略におけるマカオの変遷と、この都市がポルトガルの中央権力に対して、部分的な自治を明確に主張した商業都市であり、権力闘争の渦中に置かれたという事実について、ダイナミックな輪郭を描きだすよう試みる。

1 In this text I have summed up some of the principal questions considered in my doctoral thesis *Lutas pelo Poder em Macau (c.1590-c.1660)* [*Struggles for Power in Macao (c. 1590-c.1660)*], University of Lisbon, 2005 (multicopied doctoral dissertation).

2 Holder of a scholarship from the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia to conduct post-doctoral research. Under the supervision of Professor Luís Filipe Barreto, she is developing the project *Prosopografia das elites e redes sociais na criação e sustentação de Macau (c. 1582-c. 1660)* [*Prosopography of the elites and social networks in the creation and maintenance of Macao (c. 1582-c. 1660)*].

The city of Macao, which arose from private initiative and whose urban structure resulted from the joint efforts of the Society of Jesus and Portuguese merchants, through, the *Santa Casa da Misericórdia*, a charitable organisation, and the *Leal Senado*,³ the senate or council, was involved in a struggle for power between 1590 and the mid 17th century. During this period Macao was ennobled as a city, it was confirmed as a platform for Jesuit Missions in the Far East, it was turned into an evangelisation project, it asserted its social and cultural identity, it reaffirmed its partial autonomy in relation to the State of India and confirmed its strategic importance in Chinese internal politics.

The city of Macao, a Portuguese, Jesuit and Chinese framework, with an unequal distribution of wealth, was shaped by the intervention of different elites that belonged to these nuclei. Social relations were established, whose actions were governed by the attempt of certain elements to impose their will, despite resistance from partners.⁴ Amongst the antagonists were elites who had emerged due to their creative power and an undeniable capacity for social adaptation. Within the community of Macao, where interests were adjusted and united for affectionate, emotional and traditional reasons, there was a struggle for power, or rather, for the chance for a certain group or groups to impose their will, even in the face of resistance and whatever the odds of success.⁵

During the period under study, there were those who were attentive to the city in question from this perspective. According to the Jesuit Stanislaio Torrente there was a “climate” in Macao, or rather, a particular atmosphere, related with the contestation of the legitimate or legitimised power of the constituted legitimate authority, which as such had the right to command obedience. It is in this context that in 1646, writing from Makassar to the priest Giovanni Maracci, who was in Goa, he complained about the priests Paulo da Costa, who had been governor of the bishopric of Malacca, and Diogo de Oliveira, because they had referred to their companions from the Province of Japan in the following terms:

“[...] quantos Padres herão de Macao herão revoltosos, e que parecia clima de Macao”. “[...] some Fathers from Macao were in revolt, and there seemed to be a climate in Macao.]”⁶

3 On the creation of the *Santa Casa da Misericórdia* and *Leal Senado* in Macao, see Luís Filipe Barreto, *Macao: Poder e Saber*, Lisbon, Editorial Presença, 2006, pp. 117, 151-154.

4 Max Weber, *Conceitos Sociológicos Fundamentais*, Lisbon, Edições 70, 2003.

5 Idem.

6 Jacobs Hubert, *The Jesuit Makasar documents (1615-1682)*, *Monumenta Missionum Societatis Iesu*, vol. XLIX, Rome, Jesuit Historical Institute, 1988, p. 73.

“Libertadores”, “parcialidade (...) poderoza”, “bandos”, “gente (...) revolta e baralhada”, “aleuantamento”, “facções”, “violentados nessa cidade”, “Chinas traydores e peruersos”, “gente (...) soberba enquieta e atreuida”, [“Liberators”, “powerful (...) partiality”, “gangs”, “rebellious and disturbed (...) people”, “uprising”, “factions”, “violated in this city”, “treacherous and perverse Chinese”, “arrogant, restless and daring (...) people”] are expressions found in the recurrent vocabulary of the period under study.⁷ However, as well as this line of contradictions of the institutional powers, there is another to explore, the result of the conflict of interests and competition over opportunities to dominate, which affected the residents. Following this line, as an example, I have selected the following expressions from male discourse, some of which were appropriated by female discourse:

“molher de pouco gouerno”, “molherzinha inconsiderada de tão pouca capacidade”, “poderão tanto com seus Rogos femenis que acabarão com muitos o que pretendião”. [“useless woman”, “worthless little woman with such limited ability”, “they made so many womanish pleas that many of them failed to get what they wanted.”]⁸

Macao’s mix of cultures and races meant that its daily life was generally marked by conflicts, which could be revealed explicitly, or otherwise. In the description of the relations established between the Chinese and African population and the merchants of Portuguese origin, one discovers situations revealing battles of strength caused by socially discriminatory situations, which from the Chinese point of view should have been forbidden. On the other hand, the city is described as a stage for debate, widely illustrated by the contradictions and alliances taking place, which was one of the main factors that guaranteed Macao’s survival on the Chinese insular coast.

Between 1594 and 1623 Macao’s urban fabric underwent fundamental changes. From 1592 onwards, this port city became a target for the Society of Jesus and was no longer seen merely as a support zone for the Missions in Japan and China. The Jesuits reassessed their status in the city. The population turned into an objective with specific fields of action, within the ambit of proselytism, alongside the Japanese and Chinese Missions. Under the guidance of the priest Alessandro Valignano, the Society of Jesus began to ennoble the city, positioning itself strategically by means of different con-

7 Elsa Penalva, *Lutas pelo Poder em Macau (c.1590-c.1660)* [Struggles for Power in Macao (c.1590-c.1660)], University of Lisbon, 2005 (multicopied doctoral dissertation).

8 Idem.

structions, which not only had a particular practical function but also became symbols of power. The *Casa da Madre de Deus* was replaced by the College of S. Paulo or *Madre de Deus*, the simple church of the Society of Jesus that burned down in 1601 was replaced by the imposing church of *Nossa Senhora da Assunção*, commonly known as the church of *Madre de Deus* or S. Paulo, the process of building the *Monte* fortress began and the *Ilha Verde* (Green Island) was enhanced as a place of recreation and study. In 1623 the Society of Jesus claimed the status of “neighbours” of the city for its members.⁹ The Jesuits managed to create a multipurpose architectural complex, which was crucial for their operations on the ground. This way of making their mark on the city of Macao showed a deliberately hegemonic attitude on the part of the followers of St. Francis Xavier, who, by establishing closer relations with the population, imposed themselves as a powerful elite in comparison with the other religious orders. The Society of Jesus took the same approach in seeking to position itself in relation to political power. In order to achieve this aim, the pedagogic and philanthropic activity of the college was essential. The festivities that the pupils of different levels participated in and the social assistance the college was involved in allowed the Jesuits to strengthen ties with the local community. Through this strategy they reinforced their involvement in society, contributing to the reassertion of its own identity. Their initiatives were useful and served the common good, reinforcing their intellectual and religious authority.¹⁰ They found support bases in the Chinese population, especially amongst the literate, whom they were still investigating in 1596. The presence of the representatives of political power in public acts of their responsibility was a synonym of approval, established complicity and consequently of the conquest of power. To assess the receptivity that the Society commanded, the Jesuits kept an account of their supporters, both in quantity and quality. By organising public ceremonies, they were able to establish a closer connection with the lay elite of power and wealth. By encouraging the presence of council representatives, the *capitão-mor* or governor, and the *ouvidor*, or chief justice, and of other religious orders in the ceremonies they organised, they guaranteed publicly acknowledged social recognition. This process was gradual and went on from 1594 to 1602. The ascendance of the Jesuits over other religious orders was also achieved because they were an elite of knowledge. The social mobility they provided to those who enrolled

9 Elsa Penalva, *A Companhia de Jesus em Macau (1515-1626)* [*The Society of Jesus in Macao (1615-1626)*], University of Lisbon, 2000 (multicopied Master’s dissertation)

10 On the question of the intellectual and religious authority of the Jesuits, as well as their status in terms of social and civic power, see Luís Filipe Barreto, *Macau: Poder e Saber, séculos XVI e XVII*, Lisbon, Editorial Presença, 2006, pp. 111-112.

in their circuits guaranteed the adhesion of a large part of the population. The Jesuits furthered the rise of the sons of families who put their faith in their pedagogic competence. Their status as an elite of knowledge was also confirmed in Macao when they officialised an administrative body of Chinese origin.¹¹

The relations of the Society of Jesus with the Merchant oligarchy were not always harmonious. Alessandro Valignano, with the support of the governor D. Paulo de Portugal, tried to alter the hierarchical organisation in the city. According to Valignano, the municipal tradition of council government should be superseded by a governor. The proposal, which also had to do with the alteration of the Macao-Canton axis, met with opposition from the merchant elite and was not passed. However, in 1613, in the three year period from 1623 to 1626, and even at the beginning of the 1630's, the Jesuits undeniably had a predominant position in Macao society.

If the high valuation of the city under study, due to the initiative of Alessandro Valignano, brought greater proximity between the Jesuits and the lay society of Macao, it nonetheless opened up fields of debate within the Institution itself. Nicolao Longobardo, in 1613-1614, together with his companions in the Mission, strove to valorise the nucleus of evangelisation he belonged to. In his texts from this period there is an unease that fails to be resolved by the creation of the Vice-Province of China in 1615 and that is heightened in 1622. Nicolas Trigault, an active element in the process of raising the Mission in China to the status of Vice-Province, clearly reveals the contradictions existing between the Province of Japan and the nucleus of Jesuits evangelising in China. Macao interfered in the questions under debate because the upkeep of the city was problematic. In the 1650's there were ruptures in the heart of the Society. If between 1613 and 1622 the accent was on the financial and organisational independence of the Mission in China, and on maintaining a calculated distance from the city of Macao, whose end was systematically regarded as eminent, between 1651 and 1655, the supremacy of the Province of Japan relative to the Vice-Province of China continued to cause profound instability between the two missionary nuclei. For over a decade (in 1663 the issue was still unresolved), a contradiction opposed the Province of Japan and a widow of Japanese nationality¹² to the

11 Reference to the "Regimento da Língua da cidade, e dos jurbaças menores e escriptaens". Cf. Elsa Penalva, *Companhia de Jesus em Macau (1615-1626)* [*The Society of Jesus in Macao (1615-1626)*], University of Lisbon, 2000 (multicopied Master's dissertation), Luís Filipe Barreto, *Macao: Poder e Saber, séculos XVI e XVII*, Lisbon, Editorial Presença, 2006, pp. 111-112.

12 Isabel Reigota was the widow of Francisco Rombo de Carvalho and had a son. She also had charge of her nephew, Diogo Soares, who entered the Vice-Province of China in the 1650's. Although of Japanese origin, she spoke Portuguese fluently. On the contradiction referred to see

Vice-Province of China, represented by its *procurador*, or procurator, brother Manuel de Figueiredo. This specific contradiction involved a sector of Macao society in which people were brought closer by financial operations, and also as a means of survival, through family ties, or through the relationships they established with the Jesuits, both as spiritual guides and as an elite of power. This is the case of the relations established between Isabel Reigota, the *Visitador*, or inspector, Francisco Furtado, the dean of the college of S. Paulo, Father Thomas de Valgarneira, and the Province of Japan. Due to Chinese political and social instability, Macao was a dynamic market at that time, backed by the merchant elites of Canton, such as the dowager widows and *queves*. Isabel Reigota, whose nephew had entered the Vice-Province of China thanks to the influence of the *Visitador* Francisco Furtado, was, together with her nephew, Diogo Soares, the instrument in an effective struggle for power between the two missionary spheres. She was involved in another issue. The procurator of the Vice-Province of China accused the widow of dishonesty in a sandalwood transaction, and tried to prove that she had been conniving with Father Thomas de Valgarneira.

The city of Macao, whose genesis, growth, solidification and maintenance owed much to the efforts of Jesuits and Portuguese merchants, afforded a partnership between these two social sectors. This partnership was politically and economically active in the relations maintained with the State of India and the Portuguese Crown. The other religious orders and the central power, through positions of access to power, tried to diminish the impact of the Society of Jesus on the city and consequently of the merchant oligarchy itself. The management of offices such as those of bishop of China, governor of the bishopric of China, and delegate of the Holy Office, allowed them to build a front to combat the hegemony of the Jesuits, and also to neutralise specific merchant groups with access to municipal power, who had close connections with the Jesuits.

The election of D. Diogo Valente bishop of Funay as governor of the bishopric of China, in 1623, was the culmination of a struggle between the Society of Jesus and the other religious orders, namely the Dominicans, represented by Father António do Rosário, governor of the bishopric of China in the period after D. João Pinto da Piedade abandoned the city in 1613. But it was more than this. The aforementioned election confirmed the importance of the partnership between the Jesuits and the lay elite of power and wealth with access to the *Leal Senado* and the *Santa Casa da Misericórdia*. The Jesuit initiative in choosing the bishop of Japan as the governor of the

bishopric of China counted on the approval of the merchant elite in power in that same year. The appointment of a *capitão geral*, or governor general, who would supersede the *capitão-mor*, or provincial governor, an office which was part of the traditional government of Macao, led the lay and religious elites of the city to unite, so as to impede as far as possible the onslaught of central power that was trying to diminish Macao's partial autonomy. The Society of Jesus - elite of power and wealth of Macao partnership aimed to prevent what it regarded as the interference of central power in the life of the city of Macao. The victory achieved by the neutralisation of Francisco Lopes Carrasco as "war captain and *ouvidor*" was to be repeated, although in a different context.¹³ The opposition between the different religious orders and the Society of Jesus was therefore not limited to spiritual power. When they did not agree with the assignments to political offices made by the central power, they alternated as the means of diminishing Macao's partial autonomy.

Central power gradually encroached on the "City of the Name of God" (Macao) in China, either by imposing new political offices or by appointing non Jesuit clergy to the bishopric of China. Macao was dominated by a network of political and religious powers. This situation invariably caused contradictions, both between central power and the representatives of local power in the city, and between the religious holders of ecclesiastical posts and the elites of Portuguese origin. A representative of ecclesiastical power who could not count on the approval of the elites of power and wealth would have difficulty in exercising authority in the city. This was the case of the government of the bishopric by Father Miguel dos Santos, by D. João Pinto da Piedade, more specifically between 1608 and 1613, and by Father António do Rosário.

In 1623, the priest Sebastião Vieira, in his *Apologia*, defended the thesis that the ecclesiastical authorities should be Jesuit affiliates. He tried to prove that, at least since 1604, the Jesuits had been the only guarantee of political, economic and religious stability in the city. He justified in writing what he sought to bring about in practice, via two elections, namely the resignation of the bishop of China, D. João Pinto da Piedade.

The deposition of Father António do Rosário from the Office of governor of the bishopric of China, and the subsequent election of Father Adriano da Cunha, and upon da Cunha's resignation, of the bishop of Japan, D. Diogo Valente, following the arrival in Macao of the first governor general, D. Francisco Mascarenhas, clearly reveal the strategy of the partnership between the elite of power and wealth and the Jesuits. Greater proximity to Goa brought

13 Elsa Penalva, *A Companhia de Jesus em Macau (1615-1626)* [*The Society of Jesus in Macao (1615-1626)*], University of Lisbon, 2000 (multicopied master's dissertation).

about by the priest António do Rosário – D. Francisco Mascarenhas partnership (whose circle included Lopo Sarmiento de Carvalho), explains the resignation of Father Adriano da Cunha and the choice of D. Diogo Valente. Even though the first Jesuit chosen could count on the support of the “greatest and best part of the city”, or rather, on the population in general, and on the elite of power and wealth, precisely because of his elevated status in Macao, the bishop of Japan, as a result of the wide powers of the first governor general,¹⁴ became the most effective means of preventing Macao from being taken over by the State of India.

The Jesuits- elite of power and wealth partnership rejected “a governor sure to be head and manage absolutely everything on his own”.¹⁵ For reasons that ultimately had to do with their ecumenical project, the Jesuits came to accept the predominance of the political system of government in force in the city, founded on “custom” and with a gradually encompassing office. Contrary to what Alessandro Valignano and later Nicolao Longobardo had defended, the Society of Jesus no longer wished for an alternative channel to that instituted by custom in the political sphere, but rather, alongside the merchant oligarchy, to be a pillar of freedom in the city. Between 1623 and 1626 the Jesuits assumed a libertarian position. In the opinion of the central power, the degree of autonomy in Macao should be diminished, if not annulled.

In 1613, the possibility of the extinction of the bishopric of China was raised, and in 1622, and also in 1625 and 1626, its integration into the bishopric of Malacca was discussed. The Society of Jesus, in an attempt to annul the possibility, acted concertedly in Goa, Malacca, Manila and Rome. These cities, strategic zones that the Jesuits sought to have within their sphere of influence, were important for gauging the receptivity towards the Institution, be it positive or negative, through the powers instituted in them. The measurability of the positive or negative receptivity was fundamental in assessing the strategy adopted.

In 1623, D. Diogo Valente assumed his political facet, valuing it above the missionary one. The Jesuits involved in his election made the government of the bishopric of China a bulwark of resistance to political power outside the organisation of Macao’s mercantile republic. This event occurred after D. Francisco Mascarenhas’ arrival in the city, on 14th July, 1623. In that same year, in the months preceding the arrival of the governor general, the Jesuits – elite of power and wealth partnership, took the necessary measures

14 *Idem*.

15 Elsa Penalva, *Lutas pelo Poder em Macau (c.1590-c.1660)* [*Struggles for Power in Macao (c. 1590-c. 1660)*], University of Lisbon, 2005 (multicopied doctoral dissertation).

to guarantee the city's "liberties" and to safeguard what they described as its "common good". And "common good" meant the preponderance of the merchants' interests with greater power to intervene in municipal life. The bishop of Japan, as a figure of power with affiliation in state intervention, precisely because he interwove political and religious powers, arose as the ideal choice to head the opposition to the annulment of greater proximity to the State of India. On the other hand, D. Diogo Valente knew how necessary the assertion of his political role was for carrying out the project of the Society of Jesus in the Far East. The viability of the Jesuit project lay in the support of the "most and best of the City". His attitude and that of his companions was regarded by D. Francisco Mascarenhas as a channel of resistance of local power to the political changes imposed by the central power, even though the crossing of political and religious powers, the option taken by the Jesuits – elite of power and wealth partnership had not been made explicit. The main reason for this was that whenever other representatives of religious power had tried to do the same, it had not been accepted by the Society of Jesus and the merchants that were in partnership with it. This led the elite of power and wealth with responsibilities on the council to issue certificates to try to prove that the Society of Jesus respected the narrow realm of temporal power, when in reality, it in fact managed issues of a political, military and diplomatic nature.¹⁶ In its reaction to Alessandro Valignano's proposal, there was a concession in which it found a way both to stay close to the elite with access to the government of that mercantile city and to continue to be a power elite itself. In the new relations that the Society of Jesus had established with the political power lay the reason why the *Leal Senado* passed guarantee certificates, confirming that the Jesuits did not interfere in political and economic domains, but solely on a spiritual level. According to the official discourse of the merchant elite in power, Jesuit intervention had an edifying character and was strictly for the purpose of promoting common good. However, the merchants in power in 1623 formalised the denial, not simply because they wanted to tell the central power that the two spheres of power were separate, but because they actually wanted the demarcation of powers to exist. Thus they made it a reality, making clear to the Jesuits that as soon as they convinced a common opponent of the existence of that type of model relationship, it would in fact exist.

Between 1615 and 1628, the central power had failed in trying to take away Macao's partial autonomy through an ambivalent policy, resorting to the political and religious powers that came from the city and that were

16 Elsa Penalva, *A Companhia de Jesus em Macau (1615-1626)* [*The Society of Jesus in Macao (1615-1626)*], University of Lisbon, 2000 (multicopied Master's dissertation).

closely interwoven in Macao. The alliance between the Society of Jesus and the elite of power and wealth proved effective. Even though D. Francisco Mascarenhas sought to weaken it during his mandate, he achieved little more than occupying the Monte Fortress. Coming from mainland Portugal, he was unfamiliar with the particularities of the city and consequently did not understand it. It caused him to enter into conflict not only with the Jesuits and the mercantile elite in power but also with the Chinese authorities.

If the mercantile elite allied to the Society of Jesus, had tried to reinforce local power when confronted with the attempt to incorporate Macao within the State of India through the offices of “war captain and chief-justice” and “governor general”, over the following two decades, as a reaction to the new onslaught of central power, it tried to impose self-management. To achieve this, by creating adjuncts and giving status to the offices of procurator and judges in 1623, between 1634 and 1643 it did everything possible to assert its autonomy. The Society of Jesus did not participate in this process. In 1633 the Jesuits lost two important elements in the alliance Apostles of St. Paul – elite of power and wealth. I am referring to the priest João Rodrigues and to D. Diogo Valente, who, as well as being bishop of Japan, had become governor of the bishopric of China and delegate of the Holy Office.

In the short period of time now referred to, the central power focussed its intervention on the elites of power and wealth in Macao. If the plural is used, it is because alongside an elite of power and wealth, in around 1616-1617, an elite of power, wealth and knowledge had gained strength and was trying to institutionalise itself. The legitimacy of the process led to a battle of strengths which lasted even longer than the phase during which the merchant elite in power in 1623 had been fighting to reduce the power of intervention of the first governor-general, and to confirm D. Diogo Valente’s accumulation of the offices of bishop of Japan and governor of the bishopric of China.

The Viceroy, Count of Linhares, through the chief judge Sebastião Soares Pais, tried to attack the elite in power in 1632 by reducing the earnings of the council clerks, which, so he claimed, had risen since 1616-1617. He also wanted to restrict the room to manoeuvre of the *Leal Senado*. He wanted to replace council officials by outside elements, namely the governor general, the bishop and the chief-justice. Sebastião Soares Pais argued that an elite was being favoured to the detriment of the majority, that was tyrannised, and being unaware of the mixed composition of Macao’s political and administrative system, he tried to impede the running of the *Leal Senado*, which had become gradually more encompassing.

Between 1634 and 1636 the city reacted, impeding the new directives issued by the central power, that wanted to impose on the city a new election system for the *feitor*, or administrator, for the journey to Japan, based on six

elected persons, chosen by the governor-general, the bishop, the chief-justice and the alderman of the month.

The city governed by a representative merchant oligarchy, composed of different elites, systematically questioned the government policies taken by the elites with access to power. Once the custom was innovated, it depended on the will of these different and dominant groups which had established mutual interests. Between 1631 and 1646, Macao discussed the efficacy of the proposals for management in order to resolve successive problems affecting it, making the officials of the Realm see that only Macao's "neighbours" had the authority to do so. Systematically opposing the representatives of central power in all the situations that arose, they demonstrated that only the knowledge from experience based on Asianisation, the result of prolonged periods of residence in the city, would provide the capacity for analysis and decision-making. The importance given to knowledge based on experience perhaps had its roots in 1623, more specifically amongst the "*adjuncts*", described at the time as "men, from amongst the elderly, and experienced" of the republic. With this action, once again the *Leal Senado* revealed the capacity to both uphold a custom and renew itself as a governing body, whenever its partial autonomy was questioned. It was in this context that it was consolidated as an elite of power, wealth and knowledge, which gradually became imperative. Its fields of knowledge, resulting from long experience of life in the city, afforded it unequivocal independence in the management of all issues concerning the different areas of government in Macao.

The insertion of knowledge within the framework of values of the oligarchs was fundamental for keeping a distance from central power. Antiquity and knowledge became decisive factors in consolidating the elites of Portuguese affiliation. The elite of power, wealth and knowledge, if not part of the circle of the *Leal Senado*, through its intervention in the resolution of key issues for the sustenance of Macao, ended up by acting as a decisive element and consequently sharing power. This power-sharing, generated by extended power, reinforced the power of the Macao oligarchy. In practice, the elite of power, wealth and knowledge was never excluded from what the central power regarded as the principal circle of power. During the years of great debate at the heart of the Merchant oligarchy, and the opposition of central power, namely in 1633 and 1636, a high number of citizens belonged to this elite of power, wealth and knowledge in the *Leal Senado*. Four out of every six elements belonged to the ruling elite.¹⁷ Although the city's self-government was based on a circle of power only accessible to citizens, it was

17 Elsa Penalva, *Lutas pelo Poder em Macau (c.1590-c.1660)* [*Struggles for Power in Macao (c.1590-c.1660)*], University of Lisbon, 2005 (multicopied doctoral dissertation).

not confined to a restricted group. From 1631 to 1646, 81 citizens had access to the *Leal Senado*. A sign of the strength of the elite of power, wealth and knowledge was that there was still a restricted circle of those with access to the cells of “adjuncts” and “the elected”; twenty in total, of whom seventeen are identified. The group of citizens comprising these nuclei functioned as controlling groups of the *Leal Senado*, whether or not they belonged to it.

The system of adjuncts described as a “board of good government”, which was prohibited in 1634 by the viceroy D. Miguel de Noronha, proved victorious in 1643, when citizens with the specific post of “adjunct procurators of the people” participated in a council meeting¹⁸. Twenty years after the resistance to the first general governor, the merchant oligarchy continued to act as “absolute lords and free republic”.¹⁹ A fact that revealed that the central power did all it could to neutralise the growing autonomy of the Macao oligarchy was that the governor general D. Sebastião Lobo da Silveira widened his sphere of influence with a court-martial. He used this strategy to widen his power and enrolled in the renewed type of government that had given rise to debate from 1634 onwards. He tried to find a possible counter-acting force in an attempt to balance power. From its autarchic situation, with the contribution of the circle of power composed of “the elected” and “adjuncts”, the oligarchy had the means to impede the interference of central power in the economic and financial organisation of the city. Macao was able to support itself thanks to the dynamics of its self-government, founded on keeping a calculated distance from central power and taking advantage of the autarchic system. With the establishment of another order of power arising from the creation of an elite of knowledge, another variable was introduced into the power relations. In 1646, the Crown finally sanctioned the elite of power, wealth and knowledge, when it accepted its participation in the assessment process preceding the final decision over the sending of an ambassador to Japan.

Between 1642 and 1654, the citizens of Macao were divided over the decision respecting Manila. News of the proclamation of King João IV’s accession to the throne, on 31st May, 1642, gave rise to a complex debate. The question of national awareness and of the choice to be made between Spain and Portugal, brought up another question relating to a contradiction that successively opposed the governor of the bishopric, Father Bento de Cristo, to the delegates of the Holy Office, the Jesuits Gaspar Luís and Gaspar do Amaral. When the Jesuits lost the bishopric of Japan and the govern-

18 *Idem*.

19 Elsa Penalva, *A Companhia de Jesus em Macau (1615-1626)* [*The Society of Jesus in Macao (1615-1626)*], University of Lisbon, 2000 (multicopied Master’s dissertation).

ment of the bishopric of China to the Franciscans, on the death of D. Diogo Valente, the Society of Jesus was left at a disadvantage by the new balance of power in the city, which had previously been to its advantage. In 1642 a sector of the society continued to defend the idea that Macao should have a Jesuit bishop. This opposition gradually turned the Society of Jesus against the other religious orders, including the sisters of St. Clare; although at first the issue was over jurisdiction, it was later caught up in the open debate over Macao's decision regarding the proclamation of King João IV. This was a difficult issue to deal with because if Macao were to decide against it, it would mean giving up Manila, upon which Macao was economically dependent, in the opinion of the priest António Cardim.

In the opposition between the Society of Jesus, Father Bento de Cristo, and the other religious orders, "four persons elected for the accords" intervened. This confirmed the idea that an elite of knowledge, composed of elements described as the "elected", comprised an elite of power. The governor-general D. Sebastião Lobo da Silveira also intervened, even though the measures he took had little effect. As an outsider, he had reduced power which was not necessarily in proportion to the number of citizens in the faction that in his view was the correct one. According to sources affiliated to the Jesuits, he took the side of the delegates of the Holy Office, and consequently of the Society of Jesus. His attempts to clearly define two distinct spheres of power and to resist the split in the heart of the *Leal Senado* were largely fruitless. Marginalised by the nature of the power he held, he encountered difficulty in acting when confronted by the introduction of a new variable in the question which opposed the government of the bishopric to the Society of Jesus: all the residents of Macao who supported the Holy Office were regarded as "true" Portuguese. The city suffered a social and political crisis whose roots emerged from the domain of the so-called "spiritual power". The political power suffered, as the different organs of power questioned established power relations as a consequence of the contradiction in the city at the level of spiritual power.

The question of nationality came to the fore on different occasions. If, on the one hand, some of the most important residents of Macao were willing to open their houses to Castilians from Manila, Father Bento de Cristo, on the other hand, wanted to deport the vicar-general, Father Gaspar de Carvalho, for being of Castilian origin. Between 1642 and 1654, or thereabouts, Macao underwent a period of transition. A sign that there was no consensus over the choice of Portugal was the fact that on 16th July, 1642, many citizens had still not signed a declaration of allegiance to the king, D. João IV. Amongst the supporters of the Holy Office, the idea spread that Manila wanted to intervene at the religious level by sending a Dominican priest of

Castilian origin as delegate of the Holy Office. The presence of Castilians became a problem of an institutional nature. This problem was aggravated by the fact that, thanks to sixty years of Macao's relations with Manila, the Spanish had been assimilated by the population in general. Spanish citizens were involved in the political and economic management of the city.

From the 1630's to 1648, the socio-political organisation proved its competence and revealed the superiority of its capacity to govern. In 1648, the "neighbours" of Macao, described as "macaenses" by the Jesuit Nicolao Longobardo, in 1613, confronted by an economic crisis, decided to opt for the Realm, whilst maintaining unofficial relations with Manila. Between 1648 and 1654, private trade with Manila continued on the fringe of official directives. In 1654 Macao broke off relations with Manila on its own initiative.