The role of women in the cross-pollination process in the Asian−Portuguese varieties

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Abstract

In the particular case of the Portuguese-based Asian Creoles, the structural and lexical similarities found in Creoles from Diu to Macao have for decades raised questions and diverse interpretations of their genetic relationships. Dalgado's notion of a reciprocal partial transfusion between the Asian Creoles accounts, in our view, for these striking similarities. In this paper, we will try to show how the peculiar character assumed by the Portuguese presence in Asia – the Estado da Índia – justifies this reciprocal partial transfusion, through an intense circulation of people and goods. We will further argue that a socio-historical analysis of more localised regional networks within the area covered by the Estado da Índia can contribute to a finer and more comprehensive analysis of their linguistic (structural and lexical) relationships.

1. Introduction

The obvious structural and lexical similarities we find in the Portuguese-based Creoles of Malacca, Macao and Java (Batavia and Tugu)[1] present, in our view, a particular problem for the hypothesis of a pidgin origin common to the Portuguese Creoles in Asia, even if we take into account a strict interpretation of Dalgado's *reciprocal partial transfusion*[2] – the idea that the intense interpenetration of lexical and even structural characteristics among the Portuguese-based creoles of the East, taking place alongside the diffusion of cultural traits, behaviours and objects, would be the major explanation for the similarities observed in the Eastern Creoles.

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[1] See Tomás (2004: 208-217) for a comparison of structural data from Malacca and Java (Batavia and Tugu).

[2] Dalgado [1917] 1998: 164.

With regard to linguistic systems, the common origin in an alleged trade pidgin (brought from Africa, in some interpretations) and such intense cross pollination would have conferred such strong parallelisms to the *lingua francas* being used in Southeast Asia that these would have converged in a kind of *Pan-Proto-Creole*, in such a way that its implantation in Batavia would suffice to justify the close lexical and structural similarities between the Creole of Tugu and the 19th century Creole of Batavia, on the one hand, and contemporary Malaccan Kristang, on the other. But, if that was the case, the Indian Creoles and the 19th century Creole of Ceylon (of which there is an extensive printed corpus) would show much stronger similarities with the Batavia Creole. The structural distance between the Creoles of Ceylon and Java is, however, far greater than the one between Java and Malacca (and Macao, for that matter).

The comparative analysis of linguistic data will not, however, concern us in this paper. Its objective is grounded in the deliberate assumption that social facts, the external aspects of language history, must not be ignored in the discussion of language evolution, as they are indispensable to a clearer understanding of linguistic phenomena.

Gillian Sankoff (2002: 640) states:

> It is important to situate any discussion of the results of language contact within a sociohistorical perspective that considers the historical forces that have led to language contact.

As such, we will focus, in this paper, on the external factors that, in our view, led to the linguistic make-up of the Asian Portuguese Creoles and to their particular groupings.

We will argue that cross-pollination is indeed responsible for the similarities found in the Portuguese-based Creoles of the East, from India to Macao. This cross-pollination or *reciprocal partial transfusion* (in Dalgado's words) can only be explained by the specific character that the Portuguese presence assumed in Southeast Asia from its early stages – an Empire which, in its essence, was based on a network system rather than on the control of a territory for the production of goods. We argue further that an analysis of the particular conditions obtained in different regions of this vast network system, rather than positing a common unattested pidgin in their formation, will help to justify the similarities and, at the same time, clarify the existence of particular groupings, in terms of structural peculiarities, within the general heading of the Portuguese-based Asian Creoles. As a case in point, we will focus in this paper on a restricted group of Creole communities (Malacca, Java and Macao) and on the socio-historical factors that, in our view, may contribute to shed light on the complex sociolinguistic ecologies that gave birth to their Creole languages: the marriage pool available to those who settled in the *Estado da Índia*; the nuptial strategies they followed and subsequent circulation of women in the Portuguese territories; the migratory

movements triggered by the Dutch conquest of Malacca and the role of native groups, such as the *mardikas*, in the spread and maintenance of a Creole far beyond the removal of the lexifier language.

2. The Portuguese Empire as a network system

During the period of Creole formation, the Portuguese Empire in the Indian Ocean, under the form assumed in the *Estado da Índia*, showed a peculiar character: scattered throughout Asia, its boundaries were imprecise, its institutions heterogeneous, and the territories under its jurisdiction unified by a system of networks. Luís Filipe Thomaz (1994:208) discusses this peculiarity:

> Daí que, quando confrontado com a noção corrente de império, o Estado Português da Índia se nos apresente como algo de original e, por vezes desconcertante. Mais que a sua descontinuidade espacial é a heterogeneidade das suas instituições e a imprecisão dos seus limites, tanto geográficos como jurídicos, que o tornam insólito. A razão é que, normalmente, os impérios representam a estruturação política de determinados espaços geográficos, enquanto o Estado da Índia é na sua essência uma rede, isto é, um sistema de comunicação entre vários espaços.
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> [...] quando o movimento de trocas se tornou suficientemente estável e intenso, sucedeu gerarem-se redes de grande amplitude, abraçando espaços geográficos de extrema diversidade e autonomizando-se em relação a eles. Ao longo dessas redes, produziram-se bastas vezes [...] fenómenos de difusão, nivelamento e uniformização cultural que geraram, por vezes, uma certa unificação ideológica, reforçando a solidez das redes.[3]

Although commerce with the East had been rigidly controlled by the Portuguese Crown, which held the monopoly of the *Carreiras*, from the second half of the 16th century on, "the Crown became disinterested in the direct exploitation of maritime commerce in Asia" (Thomaz, 1994:571) and began renting it out to individuals, through a license system, with

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[3] "Therefore, when confronted with the current notion of Empire, the *Estado Português da Índia* presents itself as something original and, often times, puzzling. Even more than its spatial discontinuity, it is the heterogeneity of its institutions and the imprecision of its geographic as wall as jurisdictional boundaries that render it unusual. The reason is that, normally, empires represent the political structuring of certain geographical spaces, while the *Estado da Índia* is, in its essence, a network, that is, a system of communication between several spaces.
[...] When the exchange flow became sufficiently stable and intense, networks of great amplitude were created, enclosing geographical spaces of extreme diversity and becoming autonomous from them. Throughout those networks, phenomena of cultural diffusion, levelling and homogenization were often produced [...], in some cases generating a certain ideological unification, which reinforced the networks' robustness." (My translation).

consequences for the numbers of Portuguese men involved in the commercial network. Thomaz (1994: 296, 297) points out:

> Quase todos os portugueses da Índia, na medida das suas possibilidades, se dedicavam ao comércio: mercadores de profissão, "casados" ou fronteiros das nossas praças, oficiais de Sua Alteza, homens de armas, "chatins" – soldados que haviam trocado o ofício das armas pela mercancia – etc.
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> [...] A par dos mercadores portugueses, numerosos mercadores mouros e gentios residentes nas nossas praças, continuavam a fazer as suas veniagas de uns portos para outros. Alguns tinham portugueses ao seu serviço ou associavam-se a mercadores portugueses e mesmo, algumas vezes, à Coroa.
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> [...] Deste modo, a rede de carreiras de navegação da Coroa portuguesa, combinada com a das vias preferidas pelo comércio de partes, formava uma apertada trama que envolvia as costas da Ásia e da Insulíndia, pondo em comunicação não apenas os portos das zonas exportadoras de produtos ricos, mas a quase totalidade das cidades marítimas.[4]

The circulation of goods in this network was enormous, in an *Estado da Índia* which didn't care about the production of goods and for which, consequently, the settlement of people (necessary for that production) was not a goal (contrary to what happened in the Atlantic, with sugar production in the islands and in Brazil, for example). A State that "is not as concerned with the men as with the relations between them" (Thomaz, 1994: 210) is characterized by an intense human circulation.

The analysis of the List of Ambassadors and the people who accompanied them to Japan in 1640 (*Rol dos embaixadores e da gente que foi em sua companhia ao Japão em 1640),* transcribed by Frei José de Jesus Maria in *Ásia Sínica e Japónica*[5]*,* is paradigmatic of that circulation, illustrating, at the same time, the heterogeneity of the "Portuguese" population of the *Estado da Índia*. Out of the 74 who left from Macao (including the 61 "martyrs" of

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[4] "Almost all the Portuguese in India, as much as they possibly could, engaged in trade: merchants by profession, "married men" or settlers in our forts, His Majesty's officers, soldiers, "chatins" – soldiers who had quit their post and engaged in trade – etc.
[...] alongside the Portuguese merchants, numerous Moorish and Gentile merchants, who lived in our forts, kept plying their trade from one port to another. Some of them had Portuguese at their service or partnered with Portuguese merchants or, sometimes, with the Crown.
[...] In this way, the *Carreira* network of the Portuguese Crown, combined with the network of preferred trade routes in those areas, formed a tight web enveloping the coasts of Africa and Insulíndia, facilitating communication not only between the ports of the exporter areas of rich goods, but also between virtually all of the maritime cities." (My translation)
[5] Reprint (1988) of Marques Pereira's 1941 edition of the 1745 manuscript, Vol. I, pp. 237-240.

Nagasaki), 16 were identified as "Portuguese", 3 were Spaniards, 4 "Chinamen sons of Macao", 13 "Chinamen from within the Empire, Christians of Macao", 8 "of Bengalese caste", 7 of "Malabar caste", 3 of "Kaffir caste", and 7 of "various castes" from Chaul, Malacca, Solor, Manila, Timor and Java. Of the 13 survivors, 6 had been born in Macao. The "Portuguese" were so designated due to their European birth. Out of the 74, 31 had the "*casado* in Macao" administrative status – among them were men born in the metropolis, Ormuz, Chaul, the Northern territories (north of Goa), Diu, Goa, Cochin and Manila. Two others were *casados* in Goa and in Manila. The rest were either single or widowed. All of them were subjects of the Portuguese king, "Christians" and free men with a Portuguese surname. Four went as Ambassadors and the others as "pilots and competent officers and also a few soldiers".

3. Women in the Portuguese Expansion

Nothing is said about the women of the *casados*. This silence concerning women in Portuguese historiography is indeed almost total. The predictable exceptions are a few "illustrious feminine figures" and the wives of those who held power in India, the viceroys, governors and government advisors. Cunha & Monteiro (1995) researched, for the 1505 to 1834 period, the social characterization, social origins and trajectories, and the marriages and family ties of those who held the highest positions in the *Estado da Índia*. They identified a clear differentiation between the viceroys, on the one hand, and the military governors and advisors on the other, all of whom had come from Portugal and belonged to the Portuguese aristocratic elite. Although all of them married within the social elite to which they belonged, the viceroys married outside India the daughters of the high nobility, "at the top of the aristocratic pyramid of the Kingdom" (Cunha & Monteiro, 1995: 110). The governors almost always married in India and settled there, assuming the status of *casados*. For the elites, marriage in India was discouraged and repressed by the royal power, due to a suspicious fear that they might become too deeply rooted in the colonies, serving their own interest and not the Crown's.

> É possível detectar, a partir da segunda metade de Quinhentos, uma clara e auto-reconhecida clivagem no interior do grupo que servia na Índia. A fixação de fidalgos no Oriente – os indiáticos, "casados", e até mesmo, "os fidalgos antigos da Índia" – suscitava desconfiança no Reino (para não o referir mesmo como sinal de desqualificação social), sendo sempre acusados de servir menos o rei que a si próprios. Situações de excessivo enraizamento ou casar lá, podiam mesmo impedir nomeações para vice--rei.[6] (Cunha & Monteiro, 1995: 102)

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[6] "It is possible to detect, from the second half of the 16th Century, a clear and self--acknowledged divide inside the group of men who served in India. The settlement

In time, this double-tiered make-up, in terms of prestige and trust, of the administrative sphere of the *Estado da Índia* would create an inevitable tension between *reinóis* and *indiáticos*, the latter having settled for years and, in many cases, married in India. This tension, felt in India and even in the *Reino*, is evident in Rodrigues Lobo's sharp criticism of the linguistic "indianization" of the *indiáticos*:[7]

> Há alguns que colhendo na prática Ormuz, Malaca ou Sofala, não sabem dar um passo sem palanquins, bajús, catanas, bois, larins e bazarucos; e outras palavras, que deixam em jejum o entendimento dos ouvintes, sem os seus por isso ficarem melhor acreditados.[8]

3.1. The marriage pool

Who, then, did those Portuguese who did not belong to the ranks of the nobility (the *reinóis* turned *indiáticos* and the *filhos da terra*, born to Portuguese parents in the Indies) marry during those two centuries? If we analyse the composition of the marriage pool available to them in the social context of this period, we will see that the partners available to them would fall into the following categories:

a) Women from the Reino

The hardships of the voyage to India (its long duration, the perils of storms and shipwrecks, the inevitable promiscuity in the tight space of the ships, translated also into unhealthy food and hygiene conditions)[9] did not encourage the coming to India of "honest" women, though the chronicles tell us of the existence of female "stowaways", most of them of "doubtful virtue", whose presence on board was the object of severe and repeated repressive measures.

The scarce historical literature on feminine settlement in the *Estado da Índia* tends to emphasize[10] the relevance of orphaned women (the *orfãs d' El*

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of *fidalgos* in the East – the *indiáticos*, *casados*, or even "old India nobles" – raised suspicion in the Kingdom (not to mention it as a sign of social disqualification) being constantly accused of serving the King less than they did themselves. A situation of excessive ties to India or marrying there could even prevent the nomination for viceroy" (My translation).

[7] Criticism also apparent in a curious "Romance Indiático", Colecção Pombalina. Nº 133 Fl 125 v., Biblioteca Nacional da Ajuda. Transcribed in Figueiredo (Filho), João M. Pacheco de, (1958): "'Romances Velhos' Indo-Portugueses," *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa* Sep. (Oct.-Dec), pp. 323-336.

[8] Rodrigues Lobo [1619] 1945: 184 . "There are some who, when Ormuz, Malacca or Sofala happens to be mentioned, are unable to proceed without *palanquins*, *bajús*, *catanas*, *bois*, *larins* and *bazarucos*, with no advantage for the understanding of the listeners and furthermore to their own reputation" (My translation).

[9] See Domingues & Guerreiro, 1989.

[10] See Correia, 1960.

Rei), female convicts and prostitutes (the *convertidas*) who were shipped to India by the royal authorities. Boxer (1963; 1965a) and Coates (1995; 1998), in particular, have convincingly refuted the importance of these women in the ethnic makeup of the colonial population, due to their reduced numbers and to their well documented habitual destination: the convents of Goa.

b) The Native Women

Here too, the folk mythology of the Portuguese Expansion has focused on the role of Afonso de Albuquerque in devising an interracial marriage policy[11], encouraging marriage with high caste women "with very white skin and good looking", converted to Christianity.[12] The truth is that sexual liaisons with native women, however numerous, were concentrated in an out-
-of-wedlock concubinage setting. The "lasciviousness" of the Portuguese libido was the target of recurrent criticism by the clergy:

> [...] sam muitos e muitos e muitos casados que tem quatro, outo e dez escravas e dormem com todas, e se sabe isto publycamente. Há tanto isto, que se achou hum em Malaque que tinha vinte e quatro mulheres de varias castas, todas suas cativas e todas husava.[13]

Unions with slaves or converted natives[14] contributed, without the shadow of a doubt, to the miscegenation of the colonial population. The preference of those who planned to settle in the territories of the *Estado da Índia* and obtain the status of *casados* went, however, to the daughters of the *indiáticos* and to the Eurasian women, the offspring of mixed marriages of the *casados filhos da terra*. For them, marriage (and, to be more precise, the bride's dowry and, not the least, the commercial and political connections of the in-laws) was one of the strategies to ensure economic success.

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[11] Policy repeatedly invoked by the political propaganda of the *Estado Novo* as irrefutable proof of the non-racist inclination of the Portuguese temperament, disregarding the fact that Albuquerque, in his famous letter to Dom Manuel, explicitly asserts that he does not wish his men to marry Malabar "black women".

[12] See Boxer's (1963: 77-78) refutation.

[13] Commentary by the Jesuit Nicolas Lanciloto (1550), quoted in Boxer, 1963: 63. "[...] there are many and many and many *casados* who have four, eight and ten female slaves and sleep with them all, and that is known publicly. There is so much of this that one was found in Malacca who had twenty four women of different castes, all of them his slaves and all of them he used" (My translation).

[14] Those were legal unions, mainly in the case of brides who belonged to the native nobility, a strategy actively pursued after a while as it contributed to the reinforcement of political and commercial alliances with the native potentates. One exemplary case is that of Emanuel de Eredia, author of the *Declaraçam de Malaca,* whose mother was a Macassar princess and the father a Portuguese nobleman. In the lower social strata the legal union had as a prerequisite the conversion of the native bride. It should be noted that conversion implied, later on, the freedom of the converted slave women and their children.

c) The "Creole" Women

There are no studies that provide data on the intensity and directionality of the marriages with Eurasian women in the space covered by the *Estado da Índia*. The circulation of men in the Empire's networks provided, no doubt, the required connections for the creation of a marriage market and for the circulation of women. The recently published genealogies of the "traditional" Indo-Portuguese (Forjaz & Noronha, 2003) and Macanese families (Forjaz, 1996) reveal the importance of that circulation of women between Macau and Goa and between Macau and Malacca. Based on the lexical and structural analysis of the two creoles, Graciete Batalha (1965-66; 1988) argues that the Macanese Creole originated in the marriages with Eurasian women from Malacca and with Malay women, brought as servants or slaves. Ana Maria Amaro (1988) looked at the historical references to the ethnic origin of the Macanese and concluded that Eurasian women from India and Malacca would have been the crucial element in the formation of this community.

This option for a specific segment of the available matrimonial pool was grounded on three characteristics of these Eurasian women: they had European blood (even if this was seen to be diluted); they were the daughters of *casados*, with the financial attraction of a dowry, sharing in the family networks and social, political and economic connections of the future father-in-law; they were born and raised in homes where the Christian religion and Portuguese (European) culture were the rule or where there was at least a significant degree of acculturation. Those were the women who would become part of the "founding" family *nuclei* of the Portuguese-based Creoles in the East.

d) The local converts

One further group of women was undoubtedly included in the marriage pool: the daughters of the *cristãos da terra*, the natives converted to Catholicism by the Portuguese missionaries. Though numerous, we have no reliable data, at the moment, about their relevance to the pool. We can only guess that resorting to women of this group, in the Portuguese nuptial strategies, would depend on the scarcity of Eurasian women and on the wealth and local status of their families.

4. The social context of the Dutch expansion

The nuptial strategy described above was also pursued by the Dutch of the *Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC) after the conquest of the Portuguese possessions in Ceylon (1638-1658) and Malacca (1641). Even less inclined than the Portuguese toward legal unions with the natives, and facing the same obstacles to the importation of European women, marriage with Eurasians of Portuguese origin, with a modicum of European blood and cultural behaviours

(Christians, moreover, facilitating the conversion to the Lutheran faith), allowed them to expand their marriage pool and create, at the same time, a new reservoir for the marriage of Dutch men in their other settlements, such as Java (Batavia) and the other islands of the Archipelago: the daughters of the unions between the Dutch and the Portuguese-Asian women.

The fact that the Dutch also resorted to this matrimonial context is abundantly referred to both in the Dutch sources and analyses thereof[15].

> [. . .] in the towns and strongholds which the Dutch took from the Portuguese there were [. . .] a large number of Portuguese women, both of pure and mixed descent, with whom many of the Dutch intermarried. (Anthonisz, 1908: 30)

> [. . .] within a couple of months of the capture of Colombo, some hundred and fifty Dutchmen contracted marriages with women from Colombo. (Goonawardena, 1959: 226)

There are also abundant historical sources for the Dutch period of Malacca. The report of Governor Schouten,[16] following his visit to Malacca, points to the immediate activation of this strategy, in the wake of the city's conquest. On June 2, 1641, a Sunday, the freshly arrived parish priest Loosvelt "performed the marriages of Sabanbdhaar Jan Jansz Menie to Dona Isabella da Mora, widow of Manuel da Roger who was the *Tommagon* of this city; and Roelop Manningsz Shaep, upper-merchant, to Jeronima da Mato – widow of Juan Fernandez, a Portuguese merchant".

Three decades later, Navarette, the Jesuit priest who visited Malacca in 1669, reported meeting a Dutch *burgher*,[17] whose words highlighted the Dutch nuptial strategy when confronted with the scarcity of European women:

> As I was going home with some friends, we found a jolly Dutchman with his table and bottles in the cool air; he invited us, and I accidentaly ask'd, Are you married, Sir, in this country? He answer'd me very pleasantly, Yes, father I married a black, since I cannot eat white bread I take up with brown.[18]

A Dutch *Plakat* of 1617 decreed that the Dutch *burghers* could only marry Asian or Eurasian women with the authorization of VOC local officials (see Boxer, 1965b: 242). Further evidence that such marriages (and their linguistic consequences) became banal is found in the successive promulgation of *Plakats* by the VOC authorities repressing the use of the Portuguese Creole in the Dutch homes of Ceylon and Batavia.

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[15] See in particular McGilvray, 1982 and Roberts *et al.*, 1989.
[16] Transcribed in Leupe, 1859: 65. Note also the reference that "Many Netherlanders married *Portuguese* widows" (in italic in the original), p. 73.
[17] The Dutch equivalent to the Portuguese label *casado*.
[18] Sheehan, 1934: 92.

Faced with cultural subversion from within, defeated in their own homes by the enemy they had expelled from the Island, the Dutch tried to eradicate the mark left by the Portuguese, at least as far as the language was concerned. The Dutch Governor Ryklof van Goen sentenced, in a *Plakat* dated November 16th, 1659, all slaves who would not learn Dutch to have their heads shaven and their masters fined, so that "entire families, in particular, the young children would come to learn the language of their fathers" and so that "the name and memory of our enemies be forgotten and ours perpetuated" (Goonawardena, 1959: 241-242).

Another Dutch governor was more realistic:

> The Portuguese language is an easy language to speak and easy to learn. That is the reason why we cannot prevent the slaves brought here from Arakan who never heard a word of Portuguese (and indeed our own children) from taking to that language in preference to all other languages and making it their own. (Goonawardena, 1959: 242)

Successive *Plakats* in Batavia decreed similar measures, including the prescription that the Asian and Eurasian women whom the "free burghers" intended to marry should have reasonable knowledge of Dutch and not only of "Portuguese" (Boxer, 1965b: 243). The use of Portuguese Creole continued in Ceylon even during the British period. The Dutch Burghers, their Portuguese ancestry forgotten, kept it for a few generations as the language of the home. Anthonisz (1908:31) remarks on a conversation of a father with his dying daughter, transcribed in a Dutch Burgher family diary (*Stam Boek*): "The whole conversation was in Portuguese!", Anthonisz exclaims. Soon, though, it would be replaced by English.

The nuptial strategy described above constitutes one of the determining vectors to be taken into account in the analysis of the formation of the Portuguese Creoles in the Orient. Here, the cohabitation context, centred in the domestic space and trade relationships, provided the background for the creation of the Creoles in the trade cities, forts and entrepots, a socioeconomic ecology diverse from that of the Atlantic Creoles, born in a context of typical colonial exploitation based on a plantation economy and intensive slave labour.[19] In the Dutch case, this nuptial strategy led to the adoption of an already consolidated Portuguese-based Creole as the language of the home for many of the colonial households in Ceylon and Java. Nicolas de Graff reported on what he observed in the city of Batavia, during the trips he made between 1639 and 1687:

> Die Kinder der Holländer sind lieber mit den Sklaven als mit ihren Eltern zusammen. Von jenen lernen sie Malabarisch, Bengalisch und das

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[19] Note that slavery in the *Estado da Índia*, though involving a considerable number of slaves, was used, almost without exception, in the domestic service and as auxiliary manpower in the small crafts and petty commerce.

verdorbene Portugiesisch; daher können sie, wenn sie grösser geworden sind, auch kaum ein Wort auf gut Holländisch sagen.[20]

However, when we look at the structural and lexical similarities between the Eastern Creoles, we find that Malacca, Java (Batavia and Tugu), Flores, Larantuka and Macao show such close structural ties that those can only be explained in terms of the regional networks of contact and circulation of people, including the circulation of women, rather than in terms of a Pan--Proto-Creole, which would have brought them structurally closer to the India and Ceylon Creoles.

Among the complexity of factors behind the close links we find between these Creoles, other elements and events will have to be taken into account. The specific regional network that linked Malacca, Macao, Batavia and the Indonesian Archipelago exhibited, within its space, a pattern of contact and circulation far more intense and lasting than those that linked these territories with the *loci* of the other Eastern Portuguese Creoles and pidgins.

5. The migration from Malacca to Batavia

The circulation of people in the region was not, of course, restricted to the females. In the case of Java, we will have to take into account the departure from Malacca of a considerable number of Portuguese families, at the time of the Dutch conquest in 1641. The city of Batavia, a number of islands in the Indonesian Archipelago (the Moluccas and the Celebes), and the Portuguese possessions (Macao, in particular) were their recorded destinations. Schouten, reporting to the Company the events and the situation in Malacca in the months that followed the conquest, asserted that "contrary to law, the vanquished Portuguese were granted life and freedom and about 200 to 250 of their prominent and wealthy men and women, including clergymen, were allowed to travel by the yacht Bredam to *Goa* with all their wealth"; that two other ships carried to *Batavia* "many Portuguese prisoners", and that among them "the most qualified, the wealthiest and the most intelligent prisoners, both laymen and clergy together with the most prominent ladies, were permitted to sail to *Negapatam* in a yacht [with all their gold and jewellery] besides the best slaves of both sexes, artists and musicians"[21].

But other people too took the route to Batavia: merchants and craftsmen of other races, who lived in Malacca, moved to Batavia, now the capital and the strategic centre of the VOC enterprise. Malacca had lost its role as a hub in the maritime trade and was downsized to that of a fortified post controlling

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[20] Quoted in Schuchardt 1890: 8. "The children of the Dutch prefer the company of the slaves to their parents's. From them, they learn Malabarese, Bengalese, and the corrupted Portuguese; thus, as they grow older, they can barely speak a word of good Dutch" (My translation).
[21] Leupe 1859: 52, 74, 80.

navigation in the Strait (see Andaya, 1983). Batavia held for them the promise of economic prosperity.

6. The *mardikas*

One other group seems to have played a relevant role in spreading the Portuguese expanded pidgin or Creole in the area: the group formed by native soldiers recruited by the Dutch in the Southern coastal areas of the Indian Ocean (Malabar, Coromandel and Malacca). They were Christian, spoke no Dutch, and were known, even though no Portuguese blood ran in their veins, as the "Black Portuguese", the *Zwarte Portugueesen* of Dutch descriptions. With a low social status but extremely numerous, they were later exempted from taxes, and for that reason known as *mardijkers* or *mardikas* ('men exempted from taxes'). Slaves too, recruited forcibly for the construction and repair work in the forts and as ship crews when the scarcity of manpower demanded it, were numerous and, when freed, gained the status of second class *mardikas*. The term came to mean in Dutch and even Portuguese documents – concerning the private Portuguese settlements in the Archipelago – the generic connotation of "foreign Christians".

Most of these *mardikas* came from the Moluccas, Makassar, Ternate and from Larantuka, in Flores Island, places where many of the Portuguese *casados* who had left Malacca resettled and where Portuguese private settlements were already a feature (see Daus, 1989).

Thus, the conditions were met for the transplantation of the Creole of Malacca to Batavia, brought to that city by a significant number of *Kristang* speakers who arrived in successive waves, speaking no Dutch or Batavian Malay. The Creole continued to be the language of home and Church as well as the contact language among various other groups. The coexistence in Java of a considerable number of *Kristang* speakers also included the Dutch families who, throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, spoke a Portuguese--based Creole and the two groups who spoke or, at least, had a fair knowledge of the extended pidgin used as a *lingua franca* in their area of origin: the *mardikas* and the slaves. This human circulation created a "critical mass" of Creole speakers, thus ensuring its continuity and contributing to its speciation in Batavia, with contributions from a new linguistic environment: a much stronger lexical influence of Dutch (which we do not find in present day Malacca Kristang, the number of Dutch speakers in the past having been comparatively insignificant), the influence of a local form of Malay diverse from the Malaccan vernacular Malay, and the inclusion of lexical forms from the Portuguese *lingua franca*.

The Dutch missionaries, in a similar fashion to the Wesleyan missionaries in Ceylon, were forced to use the Creole in the liturgy, in particular in the two

"Portuguese churches" of Batavia.[22] The proposal made to the VOC governor--general, in 1708, to alternate the Portuguese service with a Malay service, met with a strong reaction from the Dutch clergymen who highlighted, in their answer to the Council, among other arguments, the existence of numerous groups of Creole speakers:

> Des nombreuses familles qui appartienent à l' Église portugaise, qui sont presques toutes occidentales, ou descendantes de familles occidentales;

> [. . .] Toutes les personnes d'origine orientale [. . .] ne parlent pas le malais mais le portugais [. . .] celles qui sont nées ici parlent le portugais comme leur langue maternelle, dès leur premiére enfance.[23] (Huet, 1909:153)

This Creole was also used as a *lingua franca*:

> [parlée] universellement par les propriétaires d' esclaves et leurs enfants dans les relations journalières avec les esclaves et les Chrétiens indigènes; par les familles et les personnes qui viennent du Siam, de Malaca, de Bengale, de la côte de Coromandel, de l' île de Ceylan, de la côte de Malabar, de Surate [...].[24] (Huet, 1909:153)

7. Conclusion

Rather than arguing for an Asian Portuguese Proto-Creole which would have developed locally into the Creoles of Malacca, Macao and the Indonesian Archipelago, the socio-historical context in the region during the 17th and 18th centuries seems to be consistent with the hypothesis of a Malay--Portuguese Creole originating in Malacca and spreading through Southeast Asia by means of the regional circulation networks, though at different moments and in differing social and political contexts:

a) In the case of Macao, from the first decades of the Portuguese settlement, through the matrimonial strategies, the circulation of men in the *Estado da Índia*, reinforced after the Dutch conquest of Malacca through the

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[22] Schuchardt, 1890; and Huet, 1909. Huet translates to French the source used by Schuchardt, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indië*, by Valentyn, 1724.

[23] "Numerous families belonging to the Portuguese Church, most of them Westerners or their descendants, [...] People from the East do not speak Malay but Portuguese [...] those who are born here speak Portuguese as their mother tongue, since early childhood." (My translation)

[24] "[spoken] universally by slave-owners and their children in their daily intercourse with slaves and local Christians; by the families and people coming from Siam, Malacca, Bengal, the Coast of Choromandel, the Island of Ceylon, the Coast of Malabar, Surat [...]." (My translation).

immigration of a vast group of Portuguese "refugees", the local speciation assuming the form of the *Maquista* or *Patois*;

b) In the geographical context of the Indonesian Archipelago (in the Moluccas, the Celebes and Flores Island), starting with the local settlement of Portuguese merchants, "free lancers" in a lucrative spice trade and with the *merdequas* Bocarro speaks of.[25] The migration of Portuguese *casados* to the Moluccas, at the time of the Dutch occupation of Malacca, reinforced and maintained the Creole language;

c) In the specific case of the city of Batavia, beginning in the second half of the 17th century, an equally intense human circulation, though with different contours, would account for the transplantation and maintenance, in Batavia, of the Malacca Portuguese Creole, later taken, with its speakers, to Tugu[26].

Based on the analysis sketched above, we believe that further research on the socio-historical context of the regional circulation networks (in particular between the Indo-Portuguese varieties of Diu, Daman, and the Bombay area, and between Cochin and the Ceylon Portuguese Creole) would contribute towards clarifying the genetic makeup and taxonomy in the particular case of the Portuguese Asian Creoles.

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[25]　In his description of the Fort of Amboina, *A Capitania de Amboin.* Bocarro [1635] 1990.

[26]　For the history of the community and commentaries on the linguistic situation in Tugu, see Schuchardt, 1890; Beukoff, 1890; Huet, 1909; Wallace, 1978, Daus, 1989.

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