

ABSTRACTS

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Arms and the Asian. Revisiting European Firearms and Their Place in Early Modern Asia

The “Military Revolution” which transformed European warfare in the early modern period from about 1500 to 1800 also had significant repercussions for the extra-European world. In Europe, the impact related to changes in techniques of fortification, naval warfare, and the use of infantry volley fire. This collaborative essay reconsiders the “Military Revolution Abroad” taking as its point of departure Geoffrey Parker’s *The Military Revolution* (1988). It argues that in Asia there were two distinct vectors of transmission so far as changes in military techniques were concerned: one that involved Muslim polities (in particular the Ottomans and their “Rumi” agents), and one that involved the Europeans who spread across maritime Asia from 1500. These two vectors came at times to be intertwined. It further argues that the nature and extent of the changes varied considerably across Asia, from Iran to Japan. In this context, the essay surveys in broad terms changes in various parts of Asia using a mix of primary and secondary materials. Finally, it looks into the question of the forms of culturally-based reticence and fascination that the new technologies and their proponents produced, before placing the Asian histories in a global context.

[Authors: Sanjay Subrahmanyam & Geoffrey Parker, pp. 12-42]

Portuguese War Weapons and Equipment in the East in the Early Fifteen Hundreds

The quickly acquired military strength of the Portuguese in the Eastern seas in the early fifteen hundreds has been explained by most historians, following the lead of Carlo M. Cipolla, above all by the huge superiority of their “cannons and sails”. Our study emphasises this dominance as we detail the kind of artillery used, both aboard Portuguese ships and in land operations (field campaigns or sieges), as well as in fortresses. We also seek to show that this naval superiority was attained thanks to the adoption

of innovative battle tactics in the Indian Ocean: fighting with recourse to artillery which, by replacing the traditional incursion on board, optimised the full potential of the Portuguese firearms. We also focus on other domains of military technology that were equally crucial in making the Portuguese the strongest military naval power in the Indian Ocean in the early decades of the 16th century. As such, we pay special attention to individual weapons and other war equipment (mobile towers, prefabricated stockades and mobile wooden forts), not only due to their importance in giving the Portuguese a leading edge during battle, but also because this subject is usually only touched on superficially in most specialised studies.

[Author: Vitor Luís Gaspar Rodrigues, pp. 43-55]

Did Zheng Chenggong Need a Drunk German’s Help to Capture the Dutch Colony of Taiwan?

Was the western artillery fortress a key engine of European expansion, as Geoffrey Parker argues, or has its importance been overrated, as Jeremy Black has suggested? The case of Fort Zeelandia in Taiwan may help us decide. Its capture in 1662 by Chinese warlord and Ming Loyalist Zheng Chenggong supports Black’s point that non-Europeans were entirely capable of overcoming western artillery fortresses. But the Siege of Zeelandia, which has not been studied in depth until the present article, shows that Zheng Chenggong had considerable trouble capturing the fort, which was, as a Dutch governor once wrote, “no cat to be handled without gloves.” Although Zheng did not need European help to grasp the fort’s weaknesses, which I show he understood from the very beginning, he did have trouble understanding its strengths, such as its capacity for lethal crossfire. More intriguingly, his attempts to capture the fort progressed through a clear process of learning and adaptation. Although Black is right to note that the artillery fortress was by no means invulnerable to non-Europeans, this article comes down

on the side of Geoffrey Parker, suggesting that the artillery fortress deserves its reputation as a prop to European expansion because it enabled small garrisons of Europeans to hold off large and powerful armies.

[Author: Tonio Andrade, pp. 56-76]

“Taking up the Gun”: Early Modern Japanese Firepower and the Siege of Hara Castle

The only major government military engagement in early modern Japan between the final consolidation of Tokugawa authority at the siege of Osaka Castle in 1614/15 and the Boshin War of 1868/69 was the Tokugawa response to the Shimabara Rebellion at the siege of Hara Castle during the winter months of 1637/38. This article will focus on the impact of firearms, including shoulder arms and cannon, on the efforts of the army of around 150,000 assembled by the Tokugawa to breach the defenses of Hara Castle and the resistance of the peasants within. Not only did each side use handheld arms in their skirmishes, the Tokugawa called in their Dutch allies who used cannon – from both land and sea – to blast the castle defenses. This article will look closely at the types of firepower used and the tactics each side employed to deploy them. This study will arrive at two important conclusions. First, even though the Japanese were alleged by some to have “given up” firearms after Toyotomi Hideyoshi’s sword hunts (and other efforts at stratifying Japanese society) had supposedly stripped the country of firearms, they still figured prominently on both sides of this siege. Second, despite the use of shoulder arms, and more importantly Dutch cannon, gunpowder weapons had little to no impact on the outcome of the siege.

[Author: Matthew Keith, pp. 77-95]

The Capture of the Galleon *Santiago* in 1602

In 1602 the Portuguese galleon *Santiago* was captured by two Dutch ships off the Island of Saint Helena, in the South Atlantic. It was the first ship of the India Route taken far from

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Portugal or the Azores and also the first to be captured by the Dutch. The battle consisted of a three-day artillery fire-fight, which came to an end without any incursion on board; the Portuguese surrendered when they felt the galleon was in danger of being sunk. As far as we know, this is the most detailed account of the clashes between vessels on the India Route and Dutch ships. There are in-depth accounts of the events, one written by the Portuguese Melchior Estácio do Amaral, and another by the Italian Francesco Carletti. It was chiefly based on these texts that we looked to recreate the battle, in which artillery played such an important role.

[Author: André Murteira, pp. 96-105]

A European View of the Revolt of the Three Feudatories. Gabriel de Magalhães and the Notes for the 1674 Annual Letter from China

A document held in Lisbon's Ajuda Library/Archive dated 1674, and signed by the Jesuit Gabriel de Magalhães, resident at the Court in Peking at the time, is the focus of this study. The document discusses notes which the heading indicates were to be added to the annual letter for that year. The manuscript, included in the "Jesuits in Asia" collection, is significant in that it provides pertinent information on China during the turbulent 1670s and on the Revolt of the Three Feudatories. The account is also interesting due to Gabriel de Magalhães' perspective on the vast country with a civilization and culture so different from what he, as a European, was accustomed to. Who was this missionary to the imperial court? And how important were the annual letters as a report on or account of the period? The article attempts to answer these questions by looking at the life and writings of this Portuguese Jesuit.

[Author: Anabela Nunes Monteiro, pp. 106-116]

Traditional Pharmacies and Herbalists in Macao

Hidden in the urban fabric of 1960s/70s Macao, mainly in the old streets of the Bazaar, there were still the curious

"apothecary's" shops, the traditional pharmacies and dispensaries of Chinese herbalists, who were authentic masters in the art of healing, combining a knowledge of medicine with that of their mainly herbal pharmacopoeia. Many were highly sought after, both by Chinese and Portuguese. The author visited these pharmacies and herbalists, studying the names of the medicines sold and the art of making a diagnosis, prognosis and combining ingredients, mainly from the wealth of herbs in the pharmacopoeia. Many of these traditional shops disappeared in the guise of false progress, which forgets that all cities have their own history and that their traditions, alongside the built heritage, are also a cultural vestige meriting protection. This study aims to perpetuate the memory of these marvellous pharmacies where famous old masters toiled along with the modest herbalists, to assist the needy that sought their help when they fell ill.

[Author: Ana Maria Amaro, pp. 117-130]