



Macao Mixed Architecture and Urbanization

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INTRODUCTION

Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR) of the People's Republic of China is made up of the peninsula of Macao itself (8.50 sq. km.), the islands of Taipa (6.20 square kilometers) and Coloane (7.60 square kilometers) and the Cotai land reclamation (3.10 square kilometers) for a total area of 25.40 square kilometers (Macao SAR Government, Serviços de Cartografia e Cadastro, June 2001).

Macao SAR is a small Chinese territory on the south coast of China and was administrated by the Portuguese from the sixteenth century, having returned to Chinese sovereignty on 20 December 1999.

This presentation is about Macao mixed architecture and urbanization of Portuguese and Western roots or influences. When I say “architecture and urbanization of Portuguese and Western roots,” I refer to the particular influences through the centuries from Western contributions, and most significantly, Portuguese influences.

However, other European influences also were felt, in particular Italian and Spanish during the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries, through the force of religion. French tendencies were also strongly seen during the nineteenth century, driven by the fashion of the time and a tendency to be *à la mode*.

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Previous Page: Illustration 1. As in all the progressively creative and joyful cities, the past can and should live together with the present and the future. Macau stands by this rule, and its constructed heritage lives, side by side, with the constructions of today. To achieve this balance will be the major challenge for the authorities and the civil society of MSAR. (Photo by Wong Ho Sang, 1998, IC Archives.)

Furthermore, we must consider – since the very beginning of Macao – other mixed archetypes and sensibilities brought by the Portuguese from faraway Brazil and Morocco, or from Goa and Ceylon. In these places they learnt and developed tropical African and oriental skills and techniques, and the use of new materials and autochthonous knowledge of climate and spatial approaches never seen before in Europe.

There were also, more or less direct, cultural interchanges through contact between the people of Macao (local Portuguese and Chinese) and those from Malacca, the Philippines, India, Indonesia, Java, Japan and so on.

Last but not least, the Chinese approach to architecture is pervasively present in this western-looking architecture and urbanization, from the building process and materials to ornamental details and spatial organisation, according to the rigid structure of the Chinese family and household – a traditional lifestyle and *fengshui* [風水] principles. All these Chinese features can be found “hidden” in Mediterranean, neo-classical buildings in Macao that give the outward appearance of a purely western building.

These same principles can be found in the process of consolidation of urban structures into more definitive urban spatial patterns. This fusion of architecture and urbanization, enriched by time and space and by multicultural influences, generated a fascinating and specific architectural culture of Macao that we can refer to as Macao mixed architecture and urbanization (MMAU).

The spirit of MMAU has outlasted the twentieth century, even overcoming the pretentiously so-called international style. Therefore, it doesn't refer only to the old style of architecture and urbanization but also to the current situation.

MMAU is a significant and outstanding element of the local cultural identity, which is multicultural and expresses itself in a pluralistic way not only through architecture but also language, ethnicity, religion, law and cuisine, just to name a few elements.

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Illustration 2.

First, I shall try to describe how Macao has evolved over the last four and a half centuries through its architecture and urban structures. Secondly, I will attempt to explain the work of architectural preservation over the last two decades and a half, giving examples of successes and failures.

URBAN FEATURES AND ARCHITECTURE

During the golden age of Portuguese discovery in the sixteenth century, the navigators from Sagres reached almost the four corners of the world, bringing together new technologies and the cross of Christ – the Christian faith and doctrine.

When the Portuguese arrived in Macao around the year 1557, the island was a fertile place with a very small fishing population in a few rural and coastal dwellings. This tiny population originating from Fujian lived mainly from fishing. The Portuguese, when given permission to stay, erected wooden and bamboo palisades surrounding little dwellings which were built around churches as their civic, military, and religious centres. Only later did the city develop



Illustration 3.

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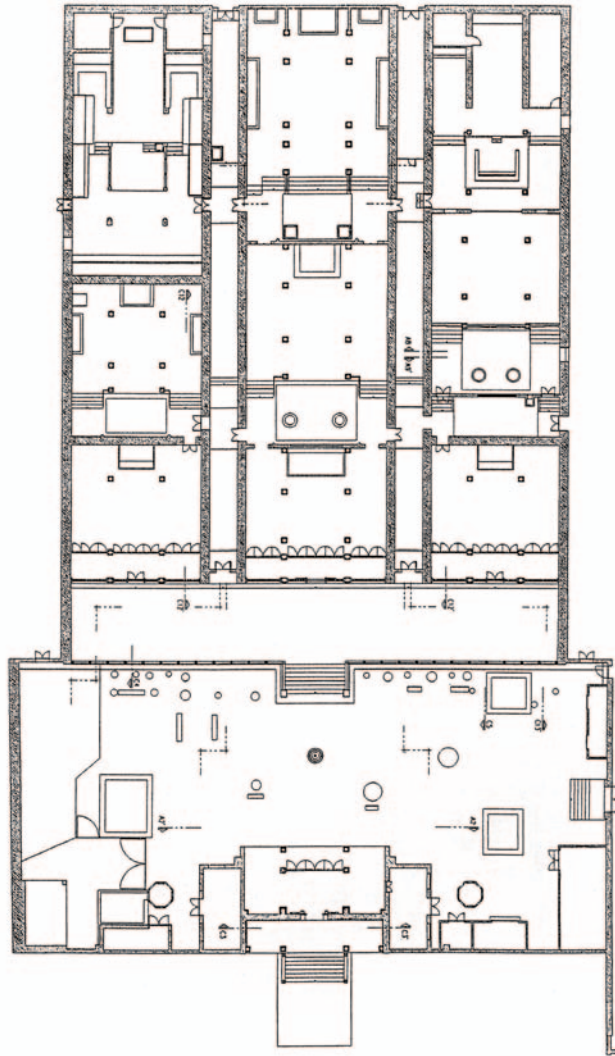


Illustration 4. Plan.

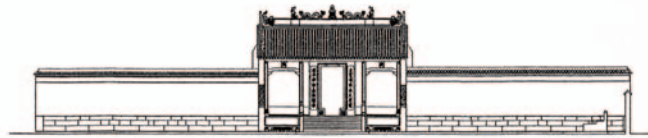


Illustration 5. Front façade.

Illustrations 2, 3, 4 and 5. Kun Iam Temple and Monastery.

The construction dates from 1627, having been several times restored. The present building belongs to the period of Emperor Tong Chi (1862-1875).

We should mention, besides the symmetry, the tripartite composition of the main façade and the other ones. We can see in illustrations 2 and 5 that the upright projection is divided into three different parts: the central body, flanked by two symmetrical sections of the fence wall, which is a characteristic of Chinese architecture, be it religious or urban. In addition, the central body itself is again “broken” into three parts, as a result of the composition of the pillars that sustain the porch; and next to it, on the plan of the wall, with the opening of the main gate, are centred two opaque panes in *qing zhuang* brick. It is the good *fengshui* of the number three, as it is explained below in the article.

The plan of this temple (4) clearly shows how the space is organized: a sequence of constructed bodies (pavilions of different and hierarchized volumes, all along a central axis and, symmetrically, flanked by secondary corridors) articulate themselves, forming yards (3) of different dimensions as well. The main axis longitudinally crosses the whole compound of pavilions, attracting a very powerful energy flow [*qi* 氣]. Therefore, that central axis is partially sectioned by screens or wind-breaks, strategically located inside the pavilions and within the yards. Those partitions can be made of stone masonry and/or brick, or simply of wood, being totally opaque or semitransparent (screens of cut wood or of glazed terracotta). The introduction of these screens and their degree of transparency is related to the form of management of the energy flows (that are more intense or more rarefied, along the different points of the main axis). Both here and at the beginning of the articulation of the yards and pavilions (light and shade, clear and dark) the principle of *yin-yang* [阴阳] is always adhered to.

Finally, one can note the accurate drawing of the plan, concerning symmetry and contention and, once again, the tripartite principle of composition.

(Photos by Mica Costa-Grande, 1998, IC Archives.)

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Illustration 6. Façade of the old Madre de Deus Cathedral, today Ruins of Saint Paul.

Photo taken in 1903. The houses on both sides and along the stairway framed the imposing façade. On the left side and at the top of the small slope, the Na Tchá Temple is attached to the west wall of the Cathedral aisle, creating one of the most beautiful and touching sites in Macau heritage: the warmth, the tolerance and the interaction between two realities and sensibilities as different as the present ones.

(Photo: courtesy of Carlos Marreiros)



Illustration 7. Typical view of the Chinese City (Botelho Sidewalk), near the Chinese Bazaar, showing three moneylenders towers, c. 1890.

(Photo: courtesy of Carlos Marreiros)

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into a more definitive structure. From the early days of Macao until the beginning of the eighteenth century, the architecture was dominated by churches, fortresses, the city walls and, of course, two very important Chinese temples, Ma-Kok Miu (Illustration 38) and Kun Iam Miu (Illustrations 2-5), built during the Ming dynasty. In the beginning, the Chinese authorities did not allow the Portuguese to build churches, interpreted by them as military buildings located on strategically important places like mountaintops and on the coastline. However, frequent Portuguese fights against

part of the peninsula between what is now the Rua da Praia Grande in the east and the Inner Harbor in the west. In the north, the city wall, which stretched from the easily recognizable Monte Fortress to Guia Hill, demarcated the area inhabited by the Portuguese. The plan also shows that the southern tip of Macao peninsula, where Ma-Kok temple [妈阁庙] is to be found, did not belong to the Portuguese settlement.

The city structure, which resulted from the defensive system, dominated urban development up to the twentieth century.



Illustrations 8 and 9. Two views of the Moneylender Tower “Tak Sang Tai On”, seen from the interior of the block.
(Photos by Wong Ho Sang, 1998, IC Archives)

pirates and the first attacks of the Dutch on Macao soon convinced the mandarins that the fortification of Macao was also in their own interest. By the time of the most important Dutch invasion (1622), Macao was already a well-defended city, with fortresses on top of the hills and batteries on the coastline. The fortification of the city included São Paulo do Monte Fortress, the fortress of Nossa Senhora do Bom Parto, the São Tiago da Barra battery, and the fortress of Patane or Palanchica. The fortresses were linked together by a network of strong walls built of *chunambo* – a mixture of mud strengthened by oyster powder and dried in the sun – giving Macao the look of a Portuguese medieval town.

If we look at Valentyn’s plan of Macao dating from 1724, it shows an urban structure in the lower

Fortresses and walls surrounded the Christian City (*Cidade Cristã*), also known as the White City (*Cidade Branca*), where the Portuguese lived. The Chinese City (*Cidade Chinesa*) was located outside the fortified skirts of the Christian City and was called Wangxia [望厦] by the Chinese. The Chinese name of Wangxia – Mong-Ha in the local dialect, which today only refers to a northern district in Macao – actually means ‘looking back to Xiamen [厦门],’ indicating that many of the Chinese in Macao were immigrants from Fujian Province [福建省], particularly from the port city of Xiamen. A photograph taken in 1911 shows São Paulo do Monte Fortress and the remains of the city wall seen from the southeast (Illustration 10).

The first Portuguese had settled in an area known as Lilau and also at the foot of São Paulo do Monte,

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Illustration 10. The Mont Fortress of Saint Paul at the top of the hill with the same name was the centre of the defensive system of Macao.

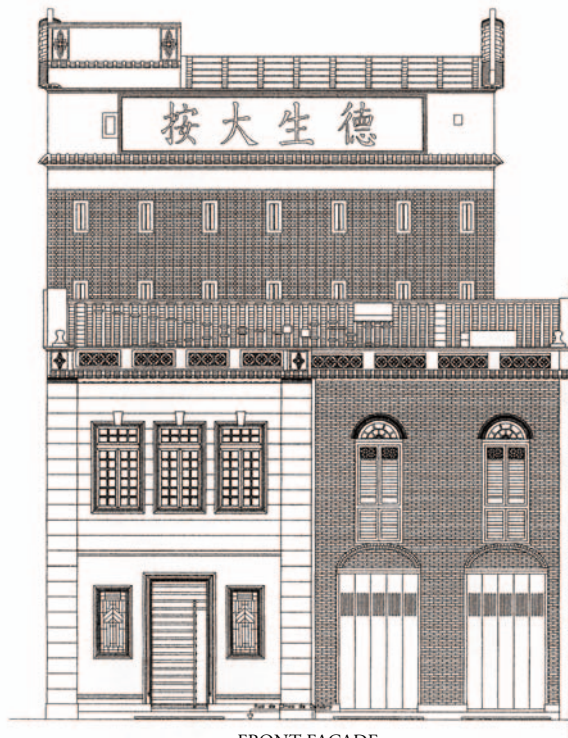
The photo was taken in 1911, and we can still see a magnificent part of the wall that linked that fortress to the Guia Fort. On the right side of the wall we can see part of Saint Lazarus Quarter (whose 1st phase of construction elapsed between 1901 and 1903), which showed the expansion of the new Macao towards the northern part of the Peninsula.

The Saint Lazarus Quarter was constructed on land belonging to the Chinese City, under the project of the architect J. M. Casuso. The constructions on the left side of the wall belonged to the Christian City. (Photo: courtesy of Carlos Marreiros)



Illustration 11. In the foreground stands the Flora Small Palace (Summer Residence of the Governor), beyond is the village of Mong Há and, on the hill top, the Fortress with the same name, where the IFT – Institute of Tourism Formation of Macao – is now located. (Photo: courtesy of Carlos Marreiros)

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FRONT FAÇADE

Illustration 12. The Moneylender Tower “Tak Sang Tai On” seen from its main access, from the building represented on its right side. This building, in spite of its modesty, is curious because it presents, at the level of the ground floor, ornamental designs, wood and iron workmanship of Chinese drawing, as well as the tripartite composition, with predominance of the central gate. In contrast, the top floor and the lateral pilasters (grooved), along the height, are clearly neoclassic with western influences.

which, comprising two thousand square meters, had been the center of the defensive network of Macao. Originally, Jesuit priests had built the fortress before D. Francisco de Mascarenhas occupied and completed it. Monte Fortress also protected the city against attacks from the sea, as before the modern land reclamation, the coastline was much closer to the foot of the mountain. Attacking ships had thus been easy targets for the Portuguese cannons.

The Christian City inside the city walls had an irregular road network, typical of southern European countries. Just outside the old city wall was the Bairro de São Lázaro, the first controlled urban experiment in Macao, designed by a Spanish architect, J. M. Casuso, between 1901 and 1903 (Illustration 10). It consists of a group of rectangular blocks, whose two-storey houses exhibit a Mediterranean appearance. These buildings outside the Christian City mark the beginning of the new Macao, the city that began to

grow to the north in the first decade of the twentieth century from the old Christian City.

The Chinese City comprised all the lands that were outside the walled city, dotted with rural settlements, villages, little bamboo plantations and a lot of mainly Buddhist temples. Illustration 11 shows the fortress of Wangxia in the background, with part of the Chinese settlement as it existed in the early twentieth century. In the foreground we can see the Flora Palace, used by the governor as a summer residence.

More sophisticated was the Chinese Bazaar, the heart of the Chinese urban structure, and its surroundings: on the right hand side of Illustration 7 is a very common housing structure composed of single two-storey buildings, with a commercial area on the ground floor and a living space on the first floor. (This is a typical form of urban Chinese architecture that developed in the majority of mainland Chinese cities and even in the foreign Chinese settlements in Southeast Asia. There is a strange-looking tower with small windows in the center. This is another very common structure in Chinese villages, serving as a sort of safe house, where richer families used to deposit their valuables. It is also believed that at times these houses served defensive purposes.

The Chinese Bazaar, with its modern Chinping Chinese Theatre [清平戏院] was the heart of the Chinese City. Here we can find rather regular blocks served by narrow streets that are also rather regular. Its civil architecture is characterized by the blind partitioned walls (*fanghuo qiang* 防火墙) supporting the roof overhung with decorated wooden eaves. Also typical are the blue bricks [*qing zhuan* 青砖], and the openwork timber windows with translucent mother-of-pearl and some stucco decorative panels.

Ruxin Tea House [如心茶楼] in the Chinese Bazaar showed more detail. Particularly interesting were the carved and gilded wooden panels and plastered reliefs and frescos in the frieze and walls (Illustration 43). Traditional Chinese architecture follows rigid principles of construction and design. Because of this rigidity, buildings for different purposes, whether temples, shops or ordinary residential houses, may often look alike. The former Jinghu Hospital [镜湖医院] could easily be taken for Chinese temple architecture. Here we can see an interesting and common feature of Chinese construction: the composition of the entrance in

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Illustration 13.



Illustration 14.

three parts, which is repeated in the composition of the main door. This design, also to be found in Macao's most important temple, shows the influence of Chinese symbolism and *fengshui* in architecture. Three (*san* in Chinese) is considered a good number presumably because of its pronunciation, which reminds one of *shengming* [生命, 生龙活虎], the Chinese term for "life" or "to live". Of course, this is only a very simple example because *fengshui* is a very complex science that includes sophisticated studies of geography, energetical flows, wind and

Illustrations 13, 14, 15 and 16. Traditional Chinese House at Travessa da Sé (Sé Narrow Street), No. 3.

The principle of tripartite composition, the central body slightly backwards, the porch along the width of the main façade, the *qing zhuan* (blue brick), the rigorous and regular drawing of the plan, combining closed compartments and open yards, are characteristic of the Chinese traditional architecture of the Qing dynasty in Macao.

The wooden works of the windows of the 1st floor, with the exception of the window panel (whose mouldings still present mother-of-pearl leaves) are of Portuguese inspiration (round arched light-fan, blinds, wood sashes and glass); the arched frieze, with polychromatic roughcast, is also of western influence, though it was very much adopted by the Qing dynasty, even in the architecture practiced in the interior of China.

The mouldings of the windows of the ground floor are not, as it is obvious, the original ones.

(Photos by Mica Costa-Grande, 1998, IC Archives)

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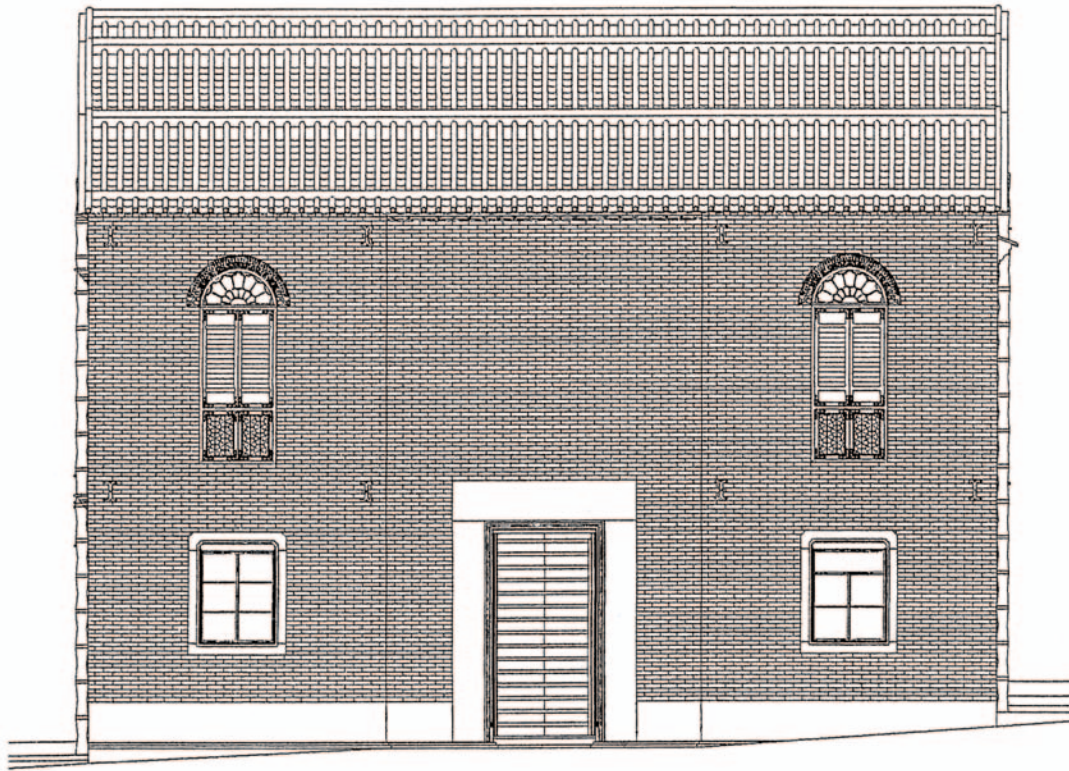


Illustration 15. Front façade.

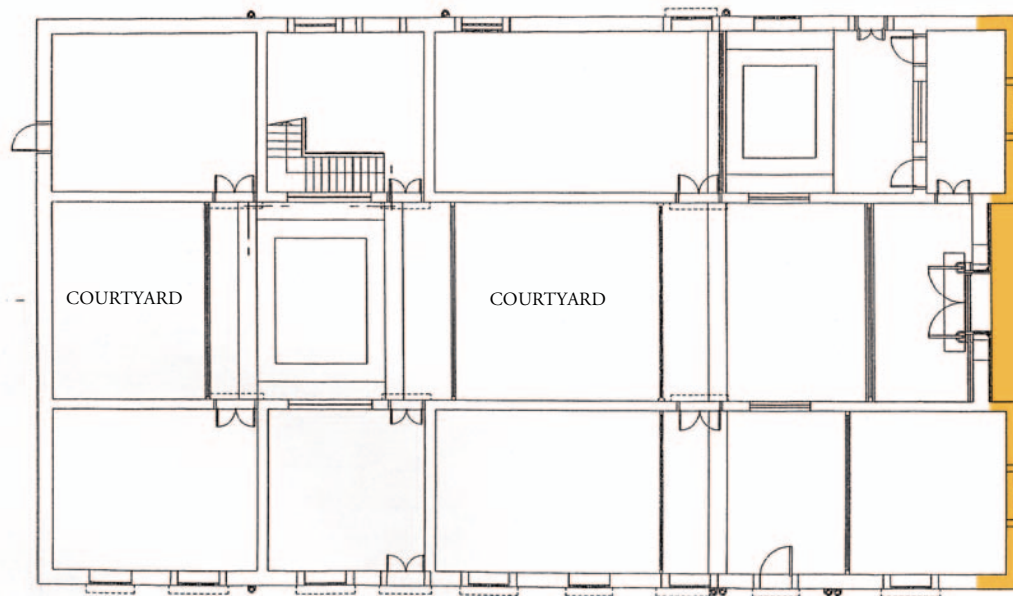


Illustration 16. Plan.

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Illustration 17.



Illustration 18.



Illustration 19.

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Illustration 20. Senado Square in the 1940s.
(Photo: courtesy of Carlos Marreiros)

Illustrations 17, 18 and 19. Ling Fong Temple.

This temple is one of the most beautiful in Macao, and the large atrium that preceded it used to border the river. Although it is believed that an altar of Chinese cult already existed in this place, since 1592, the building that we know today is dated from 1876, in the Qing Dynasty style, of the Southern School (Leng Nam Pai).

The principles enunciated for the Kun Iam Temple and Monastery are applied integrally here. The plan (18) that Lin Fong Temple today presents suffered many increments, though we can still see its initial nucleus, within a perfect quadrilateral and organized according to a main central axis and two lateral corridors (functional and services).

(Photos by Wong Ho Sang, 1998, IC Archives)

orientation, natural and artificial shapes, color and even construction materials.

In the Christian City, the Portuguese erected all the important civic, military and religious buildings. The urban pattern is essentially Mediterranean, with squares (*largos*), public courtyards and narrow streets (*ruelas*; *travessas*). The main roads, normally perpendicular, are open to the sea – the Inner Harbor and the Praia Grande.

This is an interesting difference in the urban spatial pattern from, for example, Hong Kong, where we find a rationalized, Euclidean network of streets, forming geometrically regular blocks and squares, so characteristic of Victorian town-planning principles. In contrast, in the remains of the Christian City of Macao is an irregular, non-rationalized urban structure that has emerged from everyday life. Cases in point are the squares (*largos*), which result from a widening of the streets or grow spontaneously out of street ends or the functional crossing of themselves auto-generating wider spaces. Largo do Senado (square) illustrates the Mediterranean character of the squares, streets and buildings in Macao, as they existed before (Illustration 20).

Except for some Chinese characters and the rickshaws, nothing in Illustrations 20 and 39 indicates that the photographs were taken in the Far East. Styled in nineteenth century design and construction, the

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façades of the buildings are western (not merely Portuguese), inspired by some eclectic neoclassical patterns. This is also true for the Largo do Senado in the center of the town. Commercial buildings with large proportions dominate this square. The upper arcades are now closed as “marquises”. Although the beautiful buildings on the Rua da Praia Grande have almost all been knocked down and replaced by high-rise buildings, the buildings at the Largo do Senado, most of them built in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, have been preserved and today do not look too different from the 1940s.

However, the magnificent buildings on the Rua da Praia Grande were western only on the outside. The three-story building on the Praia Grande seaside promenade, for example, was designed completely in the style of late nineteenth century Europe, but its interior was almost purely Chinese. The building contained a group of individual dwellings formed around a central courtyard on a perfect, symmetrical axis. The main hall, the master bedroom and studio, and the elder son's bedroom and studio occupied the most privileged position. Further back, rooms for less prominent members of the Chinese household were located, such as for the other sons, daughters, concubines, and servants.

This is what makes Macao's architecture truly unique. Of course, Mediterranean buildings exist in much more splendor in Europe, and there is certainly no lack of Chinese architecture in the Far East, but it is the mixture of the two that makes Macao so interesting.

After this summarized trip through the urban features, let us talk a little about Macao's architecture in particular.

The development of the city of Macao and the existence of two distinct cities for centuries might create a false impression. In particular, one might be tempted to think that true Portuguese-style buildings have always existed in Macao, at least in the Christian City. This, in fact, is not the case.

With the exception of the fortress and a very few old churches, the Portuguese architecture brought to Macao has always been subject to distinctive cultural influences, particularly by local workmanship. Ornamentation and decorative details were introduced in the form of motifs and sculptures, rich in local mythology, Chinese beliefs and tradition.

Until the late 1910s, men without adequate academic qualifications conceived almost all of the western-style buildings in Macao. They created buildings from their own memory without fully understanding cultural and architectural models. The result was an excessive concern over style, which, with personal interpretations of the established rules of composition and design, turned out to be in conflict with the integrity of the composition and coherence of the whole. The buildings, therefore, were fundamentally *ad hoc* exercises of personal taste rather than a correct and technically erudite architectural approach. These were combined with local archetypes and other architectural traditions, such as *fengshui*, amalgamated into a vivid, rich, and often ironic architectural discourse. Architectural designs were “written” in Chinese, Portuguese and many other “languages”, usually grammatically incorrect, but nearly always beautifully charming and naïve.

The cathedral of São Paulo, or what still stands of it, is the symbol of Macao. The ruins today are the remains of the second Jesuit church, built between 1602 and 1638. It is believed that its architect was Carlo Spinola, an Italian Jesuit. The church fitted well into the urban structure; unfortunately the row of buildings on the right was destroyed, (Illustration 6) removing the effect of surprise and framing which once distinguished the church. The design of the façade is purely European, the composition inspired by the churches built in the second half of the sixteenth century in Florence and Genoa. The details, however, and some symbolic features are Chinese. The façade, with its unusual composition, was built from local granite and divided into four horizontal spans, crowned by a triangular pediment. The other walls, destroyed in a fire in 1835, were built from *chunambo* with some granite decorations. The roof of the cathedral was wooden, covered with ceramic tiles. The European façade is richly decorated with reliefs, such as liturgical scenes, Chinese pictograms, and mythological monsters. It is a commonplace to show São Paul's Ruins, but it is a worldwide symbol of West meeting East, and of the Portuguese universalistic philosophy.

The photos and drawings shown in this article reflect clearly this mixture of influences in Macanese architecture. But one of my favorite is that picturing

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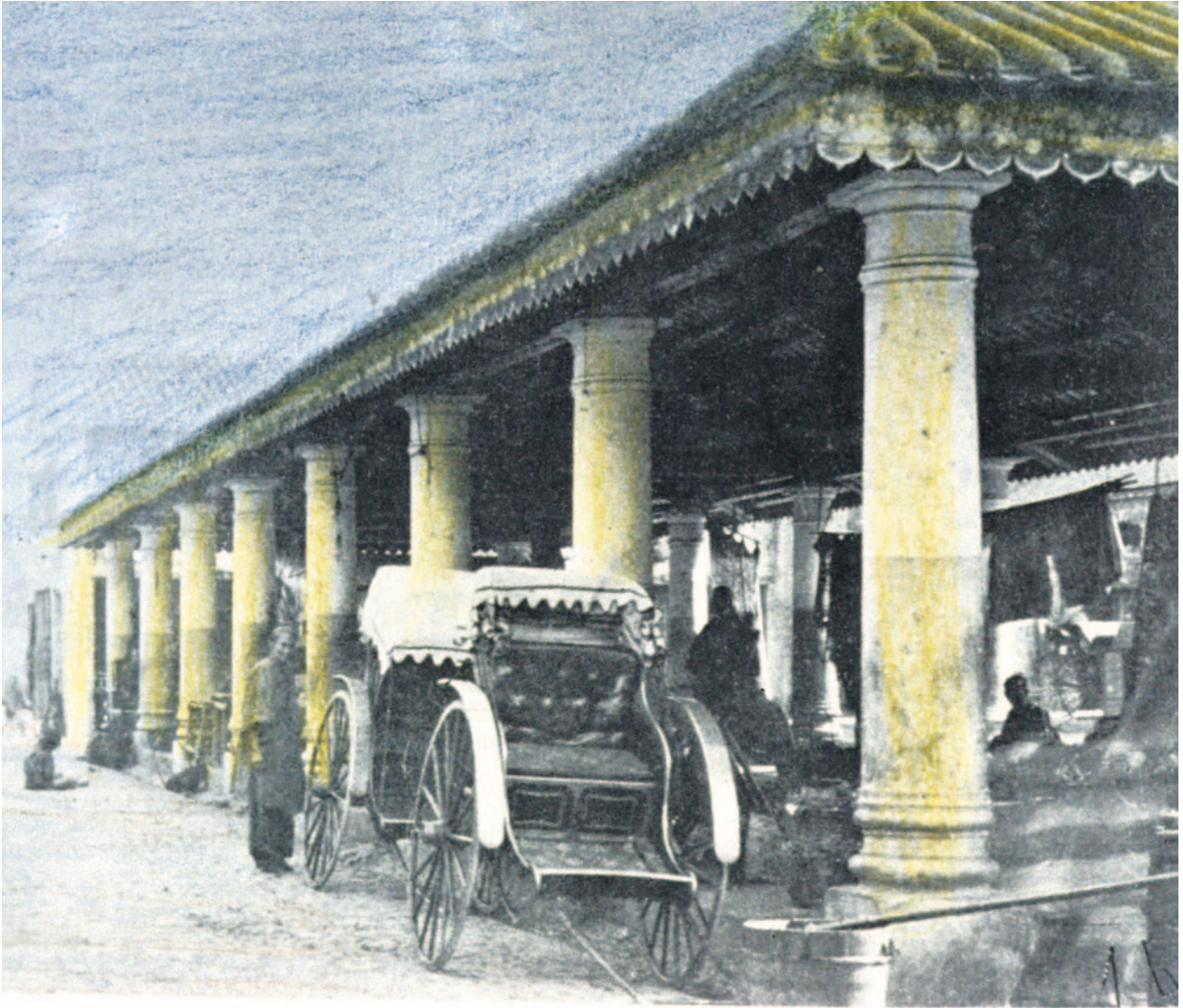


Illustration 21. The Old Market of Taipa, 1903.

The IACMM and the IC currently seek a solution for the Old Market of Taipa, still existing, although it is completely enclosed by walls constructed during the 20th century. It is “hidden” from the streets that surround it by walls constructed in the late 1940s.

With its reconstruction, the local heritage would grow richer and the life of the people of Taipa Village would be happier and more interesting because, besides the merely patrimonial reason, the Village would gain one small square with recreational-cultural facilities. (Original photo in Arquivo Histórico, IC)

the old Taipa Island market (Illustration 21). There is almost an emphatic marriage of pseudo-Tuscan columns with a Chinese roof, decorated with *Shiwan* terracotta figures [石湾陶瓷]. Another Chinese element is the ornamented architrave. Needless to say, this design does not correspond to any school of architectural thought, but it is just this kind of ‘infracture’ of classical Portuguese and European and Chinese design that makes Macao’s architecture both enchanting and unique.

ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

Following this discussion of the architectural origins of Macao, the second part of this article will focus on technical issues related to architectural preservation.

The first signs of concern for architectural preservation in Macao date from 10 December 1953, when Governor Marques Esparteiro appointed a committee to “classify national monuments and

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Illustration 22.



Illustration 23.

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Illustration 24. Front façade.

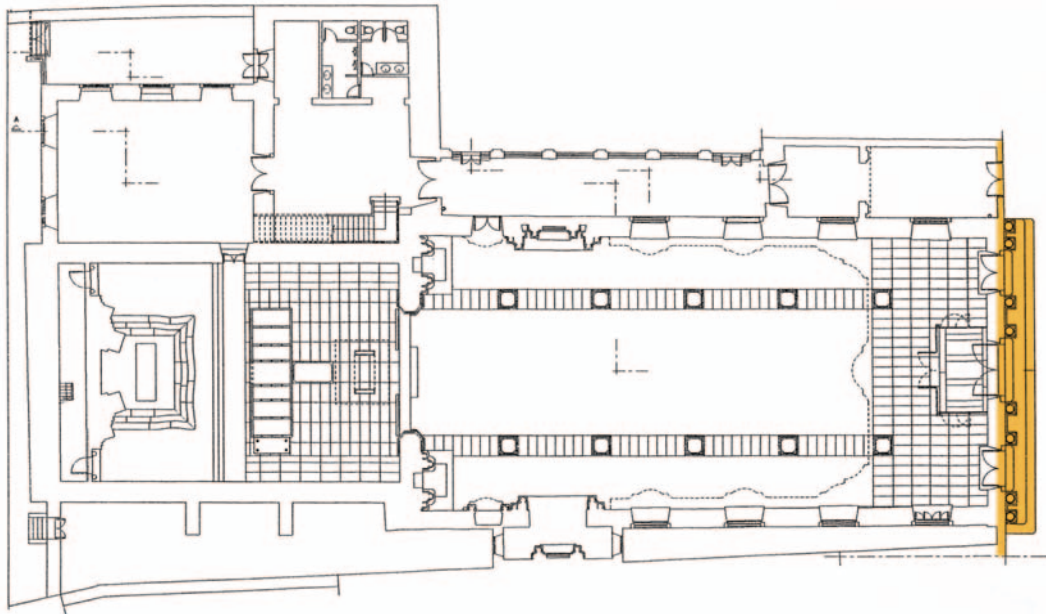


Illustration 25. Ground floor plan.

Illustrations 22, 23, 24 and 25. Saint Dominic Church and respective Museum Nucleus. This church is one of the most beautiful examples of the religious architecture in Macao. (Photos by Mica Costa-Grande, 1998, IC Archives)

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Illustration 26.

buildings of public interest..., which exist in the Province.” In 1960, Governor Jaime Silvério Marques appointed a working group to deal with the same issue, this time taking a more modern approach to the subject of preserving and valuing architectural heritage. Nevertheless, in practical terms, this approach was heavily dominated by the classicism in vogue at the time. Architectural heritage was still regarded as a collection of isolated buildings and monuments such as churches, palaces and fortresses to the detriment of examining them in their urban context.

This classical approach or mentality meant that some buildings of a civilian or religious nature, both Portuguese and Chinese, and even a combination of the two — the so-called ‘Luso-Chinese’ architecture

— were excluded, to the extent that even some important Chinese temples were left out of the process. Although these buildings were also of major interest if we look at their stylistic and anthropological features, they failed to be qualified as portraying the grandiloquence and historical significance that were held so dear at the time. This point of view reflected the archaic tendency to regard architectural specimens as isolated, non-integrated, inert entities, mere showpieces for display in glass cases.

A new, up-to-date attitude that embraced various facets of preservation was only born in 1974, when Governor Nobre de Carvalho appointed another committee. In effect, this committee adopted a more dynamic approach to preservation, and it proposed

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Illustration 27. Front façade.

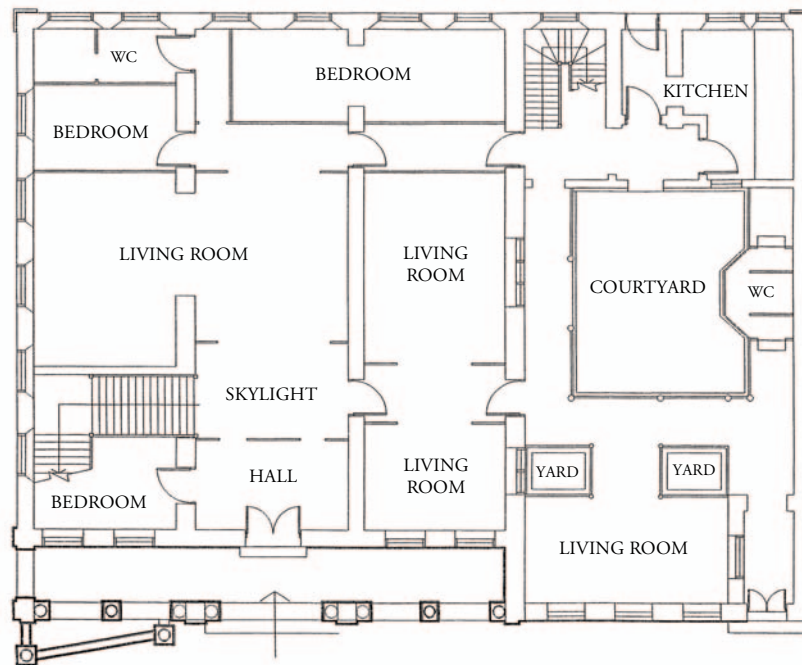


Illustration 28. Ground floor plan.

Illustrations 26, 27 and 28. Commendatory Kou Ho Neng House (and Annex) in Campo Street No. 29.

A beautiful specimen of the present Macanese civil architecture, in which the façades, seemingly in western style, have eminently Chinese plans and functions. The wide loggias of the main façade, of neoclassic flavour, protect the building against excessive exposure to the sun. They are a fundamental characteristic of Macao architecture, from the beginning of the 19th century until the mid 20th century, no matter the ornamental or stylistic aspects of their drawing. In spite of the beauty of its global or detailed drawing, it is curious to notice that the columns of the 1st floor are excessively small and the respective capitals are over-dimensioned. In contrast, the columns of the ground floor are slightly thin. These and many more details of the drawing do not always follow the rigid principles of classic architecture, which is what makes Macao architecture, of neoclassical inspiration, an "architecture of transgression". It is definitively one of the charms of Macao heritage.

The interiors of this building are very well drawn and sophisticatedly decorated in the Chinese style, with small occidental influences. Its carpentry, painted glass and furniture are remarkable. The government could acquire it and turn it into the House-museum of the City. It is, at the present, the most complete building of Macao, in terms of exteriors and interiors, as well as the whole movable contents.

(Photo by Wong Ho Sang, 1998, IC Archives)

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Illustration 29.

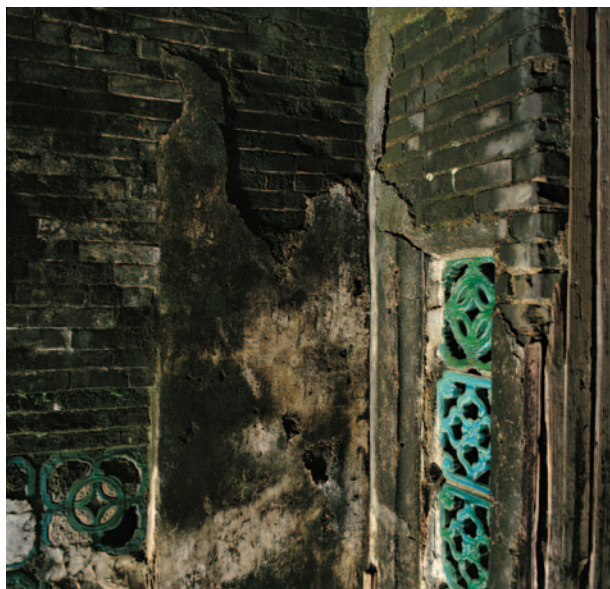


Illustration 30.

Illustrations 29, 30, 31 and 32. The House of the Mandarin (Cheng Kun Ieng) “Cheang Ka Toi Hok”, a beautiful piece of Chinese architecture in the late Qing style, which is located in the middle of the “Portuguese quarter” of Lilau. Although it was classified as a “Monument” in 1976, its state of deterioration reached unthinkable levels until the Government acquired it in 2001, and is financing at the present its integral recovery. (Photos by Mica Costa-Grande, 1998, IC Archives)

classifying and valuing both isolated buildings and also groups of structures (*conjuntos*) and itineraries (*percursos*) in an integrated way. Quarters (*bairros*), squares (*largos*) and streets (*ruas*) were classified alongside Chinese temples, parks and buildings which had, up to that point, been regarded as of lesser architectural importance. Charters and recommendations from national and international organizations involved in preservation were implemented in the new enthusiastic approach, this time with much more successful results.

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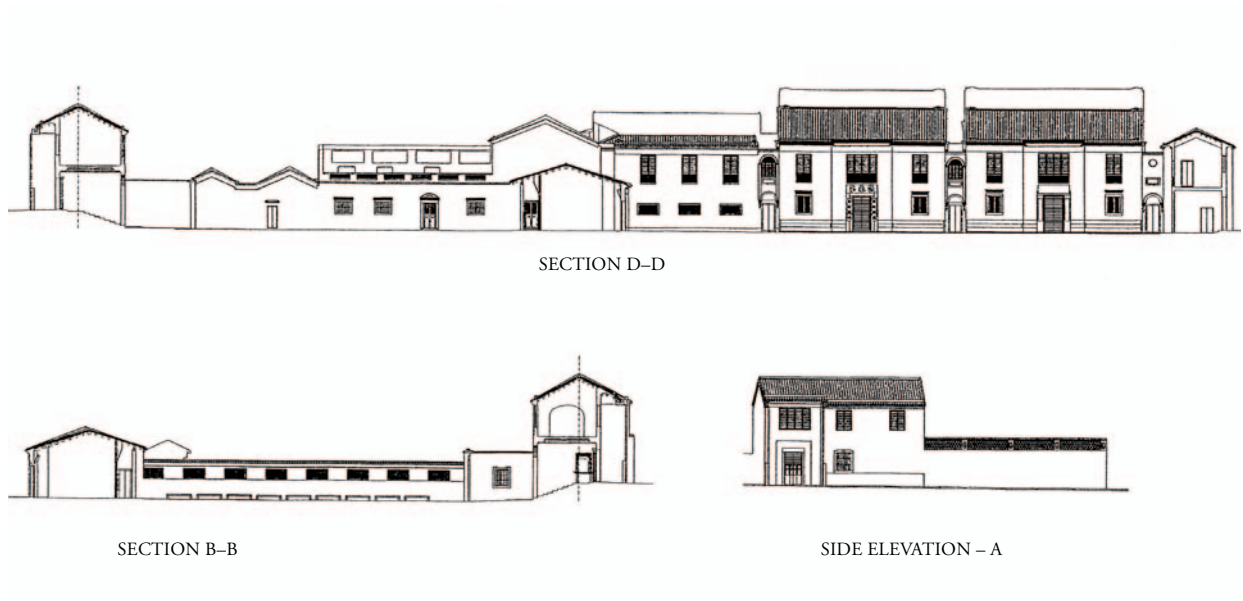


Illustration 31.

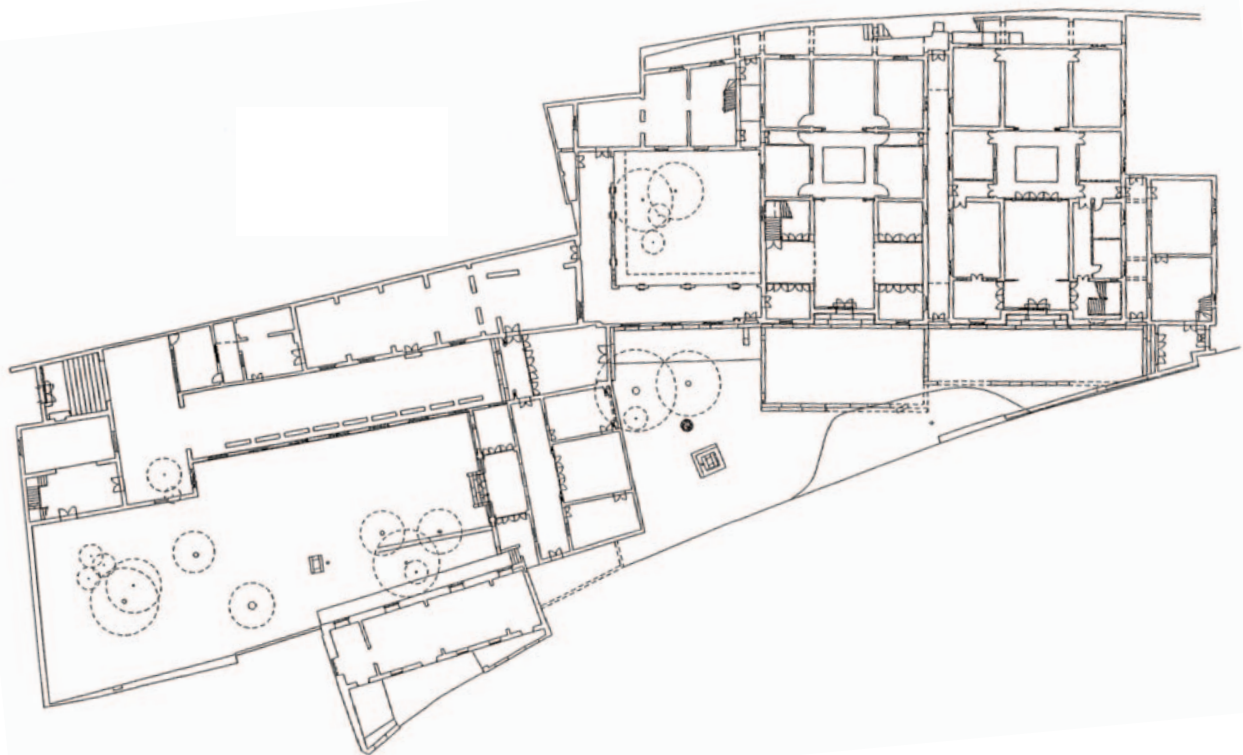


Illustration 32. Ground floor plan.

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Illustration 33.



Illustration 34.

An important watershed in the effort to protect Macao's heritage came with the restoration of the Lou Lim Iok Municipal Garden [卢九花园] (Illustration 47). This private garden originally belonged to a wealthy Chinese family and formed part of the estate surrounding the mansion known as Lou-gau [卢九], which in 1974 became a classified building. The garden with its buildings was later sold to a private school. When the government purchased the garden and buildings — a neo-classical pavilion in Macanese style standing over a lake, two Chinese pavilions and other features typical of Chinese garden architecture with its winding walls, waterfalls and aesthetic arrangements of rocks — the whole area was in an advanced state of decay. In 1976, after six months of intensive repairs, this public park was put at the disposal of the people of Macao. The park also paid witness to the city's architectural variety, being a place where East and West met, creating a mélange of the most delicate refinement.

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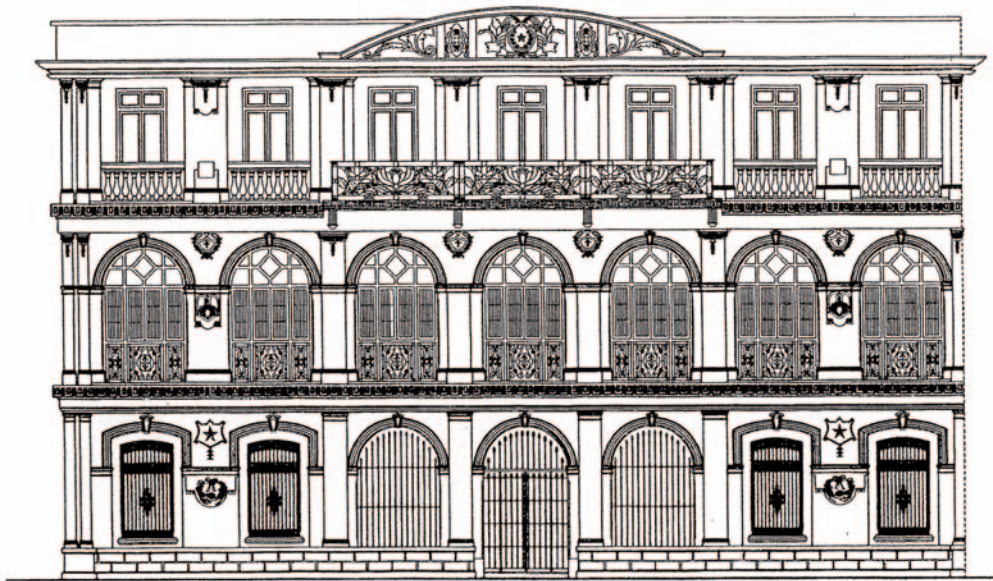


Illustration 35. Front façade.

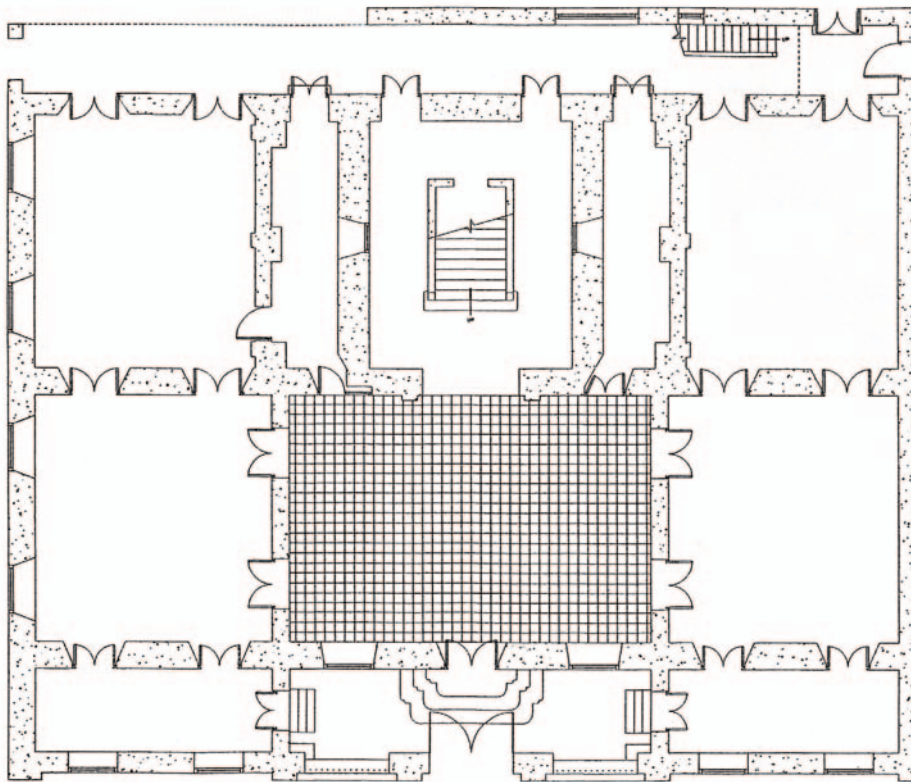


Illustration 36. Ground floor plan.

Illustrations 33, 34 35 and 36. Pui Tou School, Praia Grande Street, No. 107.

The loggias were covered by marquees, and a floor above was added to the original building. These operations were very popular in Macao since the 1930s of the last century. (Photos by Wong Ho Sang, 1998, IC Archives)

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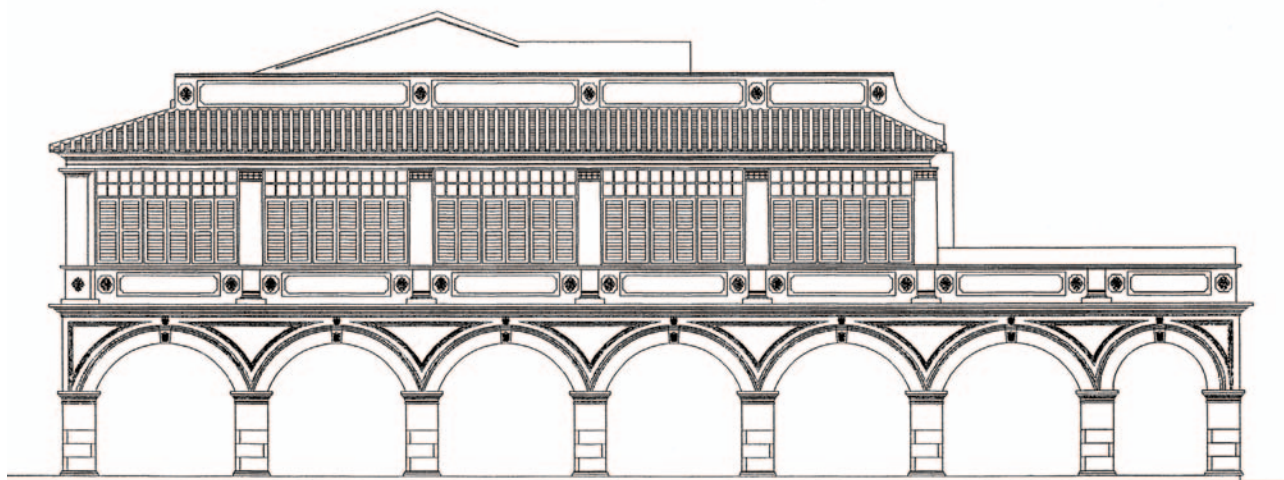


Illustration 37. Old House of Opium in Ponte e Horta Square and Lorchas Street (side elevation), built in the second half of the 19th century. See photo, page 32. It is a very curious and important building because all the others belonging to its generation and previous to it were demolished or hopelessly adulterated (see Illustration 41). In the sweetly nostalgic Inner Harbour, buildings like this one, of western style, stood together with others of more traditional Chinese design, like the ones in Caldeira Square, and all along Almirante Sérgio Street from Ponte e Horta Square to Barra Square. Two of the three façades of this building show large loggias, being the ones on the ground floor in arches, and the ones of the 1st floor in marquee style with blinds.

The row of houses on Avenida de Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida in that engaging eclectic and neoclassical style also commonly described as colonial architecture, was gradually restored. Today, several public offices have been located in the houses and, together with Lou Lim Iok Municipal Garden, they represent one of Macao's finest architectural sites.

Some buildings in the Largo do Senado — the most important square in the city — were also undergoing restoration work when, in 1976, the first legal provisions were made to produce a list of buildings, sets of buildings and sites to be protected. Decree-Law No. 34/76/M saw the establishment of the Cultural, Architectural and Landscape Preservation Committee, which was given the kind of continuity and stability needed to examine the issues in question. This committee provided a basis for all policies concerning the protection of Macao's heritage until the Instituto Cultural de Macau (ICM) was created in 1982 under the terms of Decree-Law No. 43/82/M. The Cultural and Architectural Preservation Department of ICM took over the task of giving logistical and administrative support to the Preservation Committee.

It is no exaggeration to describe the period covering the mid-1970s to the early 1980s as heroic. Despite an almost total lack of resources, the framework for the present preservation policies was mapped out.

After 1982, a plan of locating monuments (*monumentos*), groups of structures (*conjuntos*), sites

(*sítios*) and areas of protection (*zonas de protecção*) was published. Through its Preservation Department, ICM implemented various activities intended to make the general public more aware of this issue. Included in this plan of action were the publication of monographs on buildings, collections of slides, sets of postcards, tourist maps, cardboard models and so on. There were also two excellent, comprehensive exhibitions for which detailed catalogues were published, the best known of these being *Património Cultural de Macau* (1983).

On 30 June 1984, Decree-Law No. 56/84/M was published, which, in addition to updating the Official List of Buildings, Sets of Buildings and Sites, provided a framework of strict regulations governing the sale and purchase of classified monuments and the land on which they stood, laying down the conditions governing classified sites and areas of protection. It also provided a series of tax incentives intended to encourage investment in cultural and architectural preservation. These covered property taxes, additional taxation on rents, business taxes, the sales tax, inheritance taxes, taxation on donations and indirect taxation. Government measures intended to promote preservation policies have only existed since 1982 when the subject was given an entire chapter in the Annual Government Plan. Tax incentives were introduced in 1984 to support these measures.

From 1984 until the present, the Official List of Buildings, Sets of Buildings and Sites, known as the "Pink Plan", has been classified into zones and

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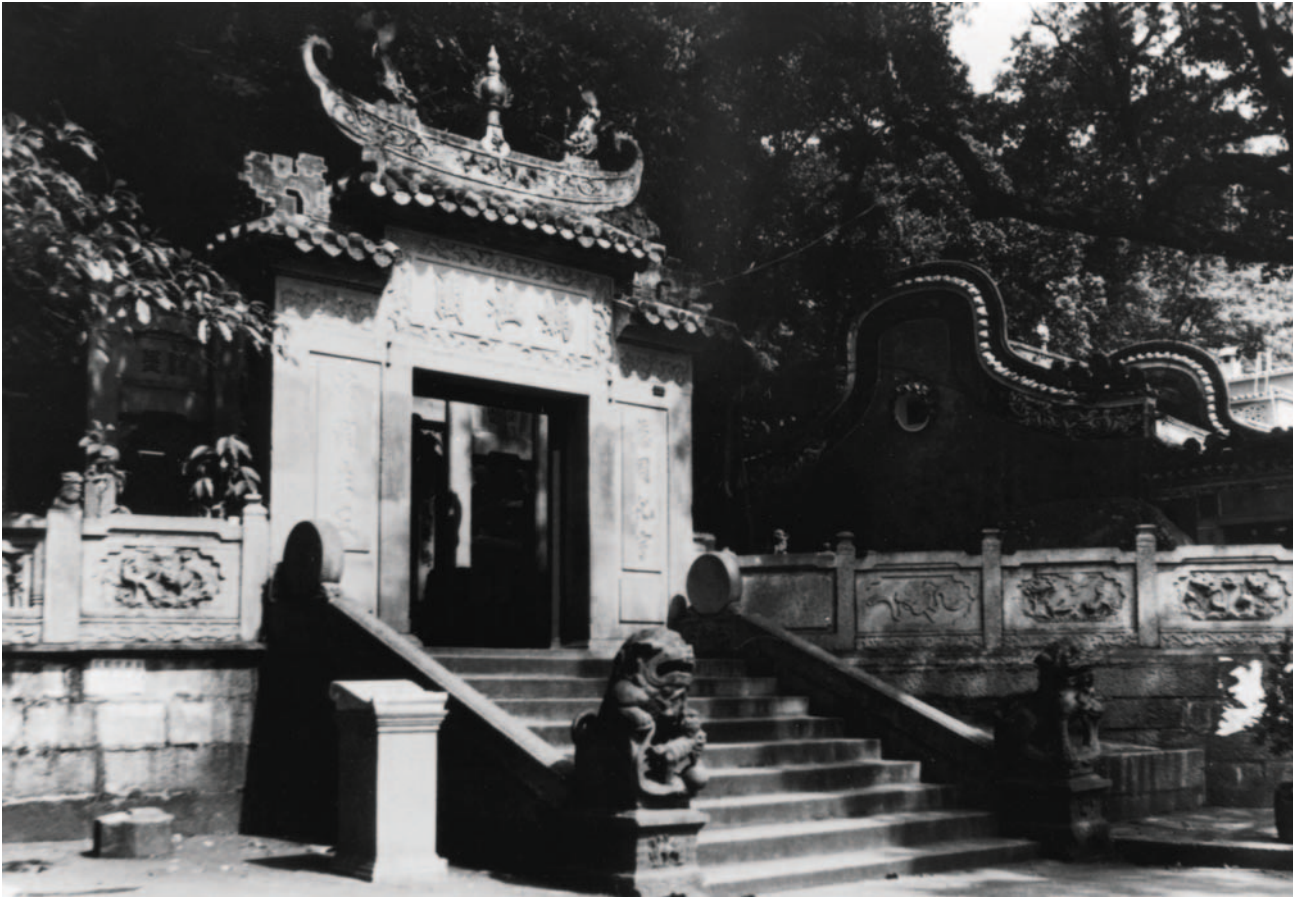


Illustration 38. Ma-Kok Temple, 1970s.

It is believed that, in its basics, this temple presents the original Ming dynasty plan, made during the reign of Emperor Wanli (1573-1619). The low wall and portal, both with good granite work, were built after 1746, proved by the engraving in “Ou-Mun-Kei-Leok,” by U. L. Tcheong and K. I. Ian, translated by Luiz Gonzaga Gomes, page 75. (Arquivo Histórico, IC)

elaborated in greater detail. This has been possible with the aid of plans of plots of land regulating areas of protection (*Mapas de Condicionismos Urbanísticos*). These plans show in reasonable detail not only the buildings and sites to be protected but also the height, size and land occupation ratio of buildings to be constructed on the site. They control regulations governing unobstructed views and serve as a link between the various Sectorial (Master) Plans run by the Department of Public Works.

From 1987 to 1989 there was an attempt to prepare legislation based on the well-known example of the Chicago Plan, which had met with tremendous success in Chicago during the 1940s and later. The intention was to apply the Chicago experience to Macao by implementing a series of measures to calculate potential construction areas on protected sites

and then transferring this area to a new location in Macao. In other words, the theoretical “area” could be transferred. To give an idea of how this policy would work, let us take the example of an owner of a historic building who, by the very fact that his building is historic or listed, would be prevented from developing it by building beyond a certain height. His potential loss thus leaves him at a disadvantage, so in order to ameliorate the situation, the owner would be issued with a license allowing him to transfer the calculated construction potential to a new site — the “transfer zone”. If the owner were not interested in developing a site in the transfer zone, or if he had no land to develop, he could sell his license to a third party, thus recouping the potential loss on his original building.

This system allowed for the protection of zones with low buildings of historic value, while in the new

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transfer zones, building heights would be pushed up to the limit. The theoretical example given above is simple. However, its legal application and the management of the plan would have proved extremely complex in Macao, and the proposed legislation was dismissed as being too avant-garde. In the ensuing return to a more orthodox approach, more mainstream legislation was prepared. This legislation (which is still waiting for the green light) is, in fact, no more than an improved, up-dated version of the Decree Law of 1984 with the introduction of a Preservation Fund to be supported by contributions from the government budget and private institutions. The Decree-Law No. 83/92/M published on 31 December 1992 was only an updating of the previous Classified List of Buildings and Sites without any novelty.

We must also mention that in the late 1980s and 1990s Macao saw the introduction of a newcomer into the history of its preservation: the figure of private institutions. These institutions have invested in buildings of historic interest, buying and restoring historic buildings such as: S. Rafael (formerly a hospital, now the General Consulate of Portugal, just after being the head office of the Macao Monetary and Exchange Authority); Casa Garden (formerly the Luís de Camões Museum, now the head office of the Fundação Oriente); a group of houses on Avenida de Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida (including the Cultural Institute's Historical Archives and Central Library, Instituto Português do Oriente, and Centro de Arte Contemporânea de Macau); and the Bela Vista Hotel.

Important public buildings and monuments were also subject to rehabilitation by the Government during the late 1990s, such as the Sacred Art Museum of S. Paul Ruins, the Macao Museum at the Monte Fortress and the Macao Monetary Authority at the Convent of the Precious Blood of Christ.

Some figures will give an idea of Macao's present architectural and cultural heritage. In the peninsula of Macao are 36 monuments, 41 architecturally outstanding buildings, 8 sets of buildings and 18 sites classified as being of architectural and cultural importance. On the islands of Taipa and Coloane, there are respectively 5 and 7 monuments, 2 and 1 architecturally outstanding buildings, 2 and 1 sets of buildings and 1 and 2 sites, giving us a total of 48 monuments, 44 architecturally outstanding buildings, 11 sets of buildings and 21 sites, with an obvious

concentration on the peninsula (Anexe V of Decree-Law No. 83/92/M).

Of Macao peninsula's 8.50 square kilometers, 1.2 are areas of protection (*zonas de protecção* and *sítios*), equivalent to more or less 14% of the total area. In terms of square kilometers, 1.2 does not seem to be very much, but if we examine the figures in relation to the total area of the Macao SAR, one can appreciate that a substantial proportion of the land has been put under official protection.

The Cultural, Architectural and Landscape Preservation Committee that had fought for preservation in Macao for so long was finally dissolved in 1989 by Decree-Law No. 63/89/M, which sought to reorganize the Instituto Cultural de Macau in preparation for the transition period envisaged by the Sino-Portuguese Joint Declaration. Since that time the Cultural and Architectural Preservation Department (DPC) has been responsible for assisting the government in its policies concerning cultural heritage. The government also established its own consultative body, in which issues related to preservation are given a significant position on the agenda – the Council of Culture (Conselho de Cultura).

Despite the fact that progress is inevitably taking its toll on Macao's architectural heritage, with many historic buildings being irreparably lost, the policies implemented in the city have still allowed it to retain and even restore some of its *fin-de-siècle* atmosphere. This, combined with the city's historic buildings, pays just homage to the preservation efforts made over the last two decades and a half.

The Macao SAR Government, through the Cultural Institute (IC), is doing its best to be successful in the application of Macao to be included in the UNESCO World Heritage List by the year 2004-5. Alongside this application project, IC has prepared a Macao Cultural Heritage Awareness Project whose goal is to raise the consciousness of Macao's citizens *vis-à-vis* their urban and architectural legacy. Through a wide scope of activities, this program aims to make Macao residents aware of their city's role as a cultural centre and of the need for all to cooperate in this fundamental task. **RC**

Editor's Note: This article is based on a presentation made by the author in a conference organized by the Ricci Institute of Macao ("Macao on the Threshold of the Third Millennium - An International Conference," 14-15 December 2001). The captions of the illustrations were written by Carlos Marreiros. The drawings were executed by the Heritage Department (Departamento de Património Cultural) of the Cultural Institute.

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Illustration 39. Praia Grande Street, 1940. Demolished group.

A beautiful set of representative buildings of Macanese architecture of neoclassical inspiration. The loggia arches mark an inefaceable presence in the built landscape of Macao Peninsula.

(Photo: courtesy of Carlos Marreiros)

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Illustration 40. Façades of the rough side of the walls of Chinese typical houses. Photo c. 1980.

These humble old houses retained their distinctive character thanks to the side wall and the great terraces that were used to dry products of the small craft industry.
(Photo: courtesy of Carlos Marreiros)



Illustration 41. See the caption to Illustration 37. (Photo: courtesy of Carlos Marreiros)

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Illustration 42. Ruxin Tea House. Photo c. 1890. Demolished.

Located in the Chinese Bazaar, its two-level façade presents sophisticated carpentry on the windows and polychromatic panels in high relief of roughcast, in the frieze under the porch and in the lateral gable.

There still exists a remarkable specimen, of the same style, in 5 de Outubro Street: the Chinese Pharmacy Tai Leng Tong.
(Photo: courtesy of Carlos Marreiros)

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Illustration 43.

Illustrations 43, 44, 45 and 46. Interiors of the House of the Commendatory Kou Ho Neng, (and Annex) in Campo Street No. 29, as they are today. These magnificent interiors of mixed style were already referred to on page 23.
(Photos: courtesy of Carlos Marreiros)

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Illustration 44.



Illustration 45.

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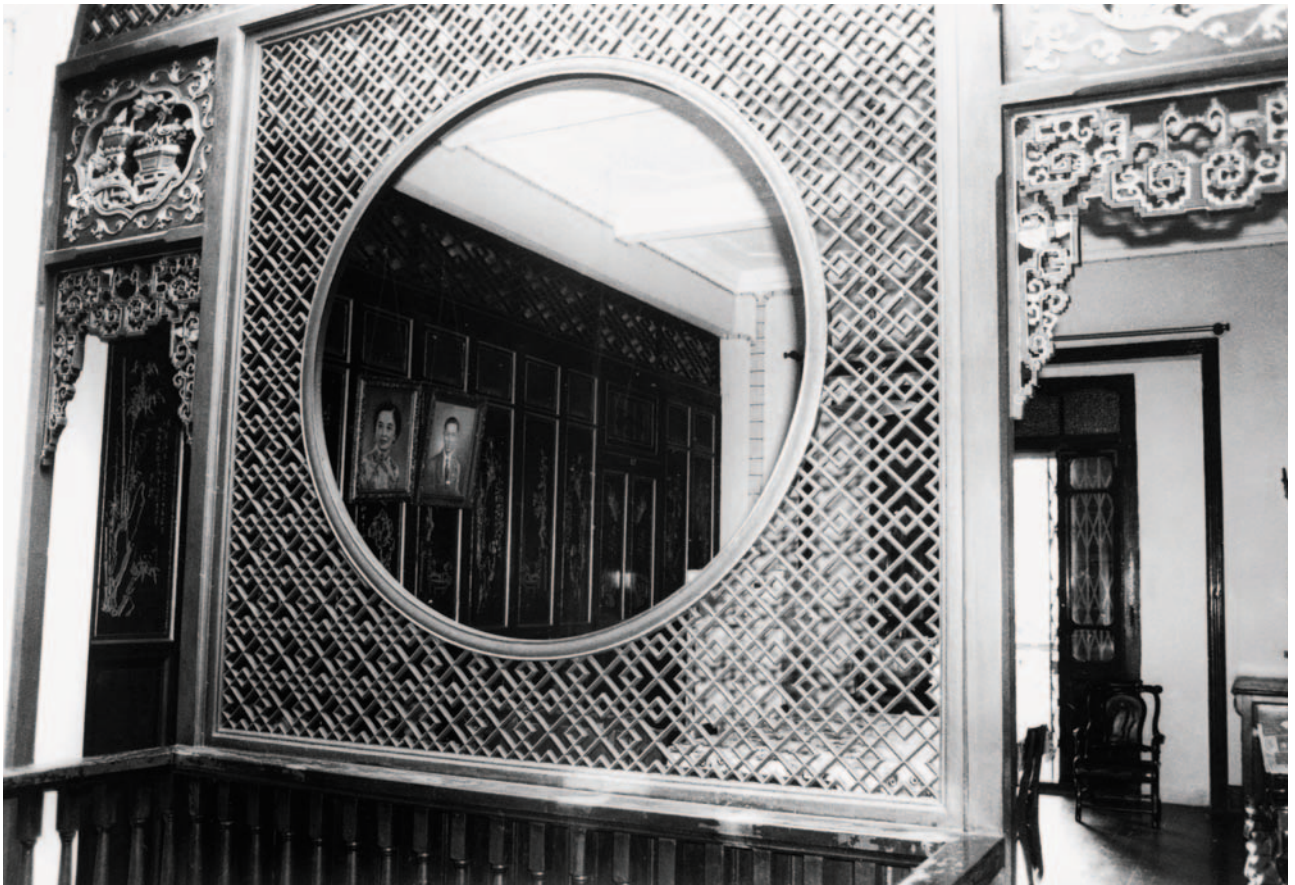


Illustration 46.

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Illustration 47. Small Palace integrated in the Municipal Garden of Lou Lim Iok, on Conselheiro de Almeida Avenue. Photo c. 1979. Demolished. A beautiful example of Macanese neoclassical architecture built in the first decade of 20th century, in the 1970s it began to decay progressively and would be incomprehensively demolished at the beginning of the 1980s. (Photo: courtesy of Carlos Marreiros)

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Illustration 48. Vista Alegre Villa, today the Secondary School Leng Nam, was built in 1921 for a wealthy Macanese family under the direction of the architect Francisco da Silva.

(Photo: courtesy of Carlos Marreiros)

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Illustration 49. Small Palace of Chan Chi, at Sanches de Miranda Street No. 5, photo of 1982, taken before the restoration. The reconstruction project of this small palace, as well as of the No. 3 of the same street, dates from 1987, by architects Carlos Marreiros and Luís Sá Machado. It has been the headquarters of IASM, Cabinet of the High Commission Against Corruption and Administrative Illegality, and, at present, houses the headquarters of the Council of Environment of the Government of MSAR.
Photo: Catalogue "Património Cultural de Macau" ICM, 1982.

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Illustration 50. House in República Avenue No. 54. Raul Lino's "Portuguese House" style that had a great follower, the Macanese architect Gastão Borges, a civil engineer by education. The "Portuguese House" style is characterized by soft lines and covering roof with several levels, panels of tiles, *joanino* arches, and a preference for traditional Portuguese models, of historical inspiration. It appeared as an answer to the internationalization of the architectonic styles, since that the Art Deco style and the Modernism began to impose. It is supposed that architect Raul Lino has visited Macao and that, in his return to Portugal, introduced the curved and sharp saliencies in the roofs in the Portuguese architecture, due to the influence of the traditional Chinese architecture. The "Portuguese House" style became very popular in Portugal and was introduced in Macao in the twenties, together with the referred specificity of the roof, previously acquired in Macao. Some species of this style still exist in República Avenue, Chácaras Sidewalk, do Cemitério de São Miguel Road, and Coronel Mesquita Avenue, even though some important groups have been destroyed in the so called "New Avenues", as the ones in Sidónio Pais, Ouvidor Arriaga and Horta e Costa. (Photo: courtesy of Carlos Marreiros)