

The Development of Malacca and Macao as Portuguese Ports and the Imperative for Preserving Maritime Cultural Heritage

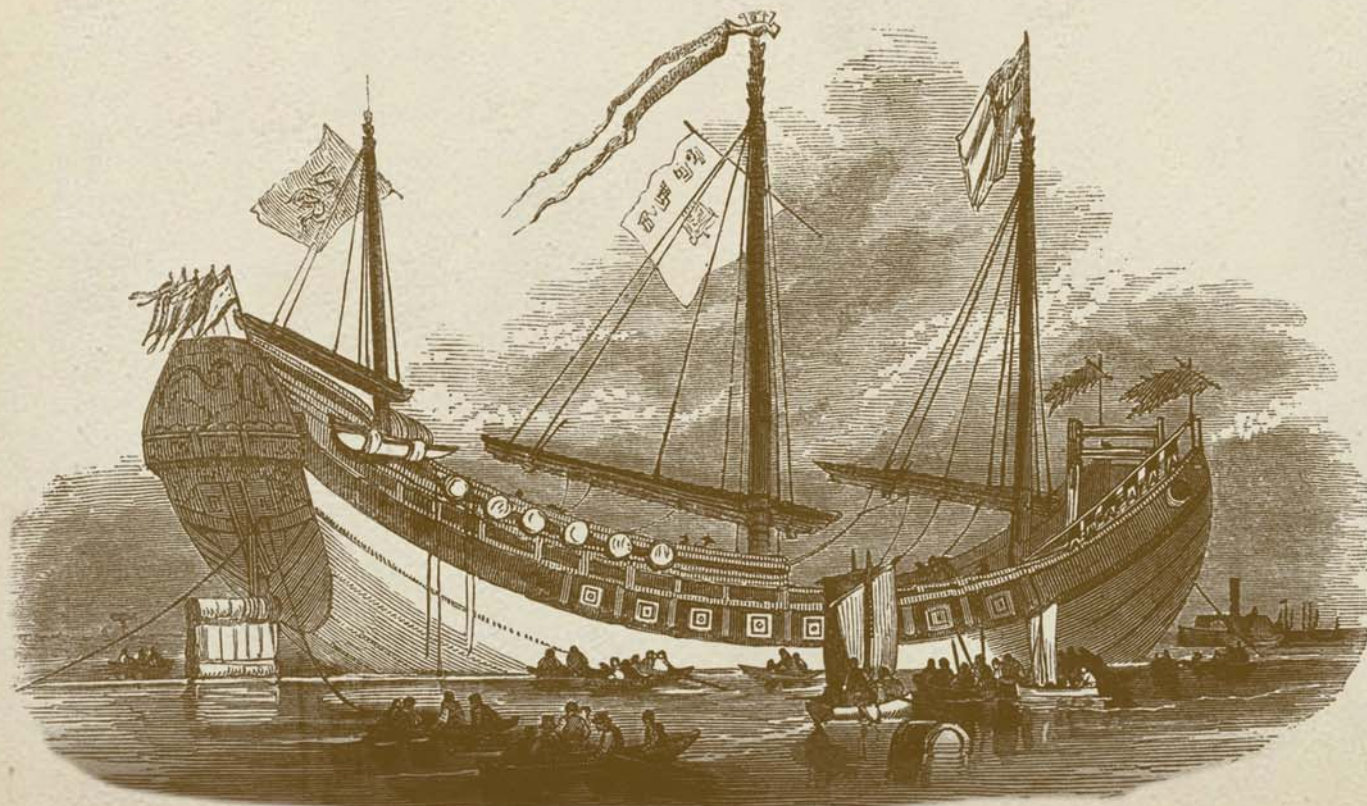
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MALACCA: THE MING, THE PORTUGUESE AND EAST AND WEST TRADE

This study aims to examine the tangible 500-year-old legacy of Portuguese maritime history in Southeast Asia through a comparative analysis of the preservation and celebration of maritime heritage in Malacca and

Macao as World Heritage sites. The findings of the study reveal that, particularly in the case of Macao, UNESCO World Heritage¹ Site designation is remiss in not taking sufficiently into account the key role that maritime history has played in the foundation and development of the city and perpetuating its commercial and cultural significance. The tangible evidence can still be



identified not only in the properties and sites dedicated to maritime activities, but in the urban planning of the city to maximise its function as a port. It is argued that the designation of the Historic Centre of Macao as a World Heritage site neglects the importance of the testimony of Portuguese and Chinese maritime history to Macao's economic, social, cultural development, and its contribution to the common heritage of humanity. Today, with the exception of the exhibits contained in the Macao Maritime Museum located on the Inner Harbour, visitors could mistakenly concur that the city's development derives from the casino industry rather than its rich maritime history of trade and once flourishing shipbuilding and fishing industries.

Maritime museums are a key component in portraying the heritage of port cities in both East and West contexts. One recent example is the new Shanghai China Maritime Museum located in Nanhui of the Pudong New Area overlooking Hangzhou Bay—its building shaped like a billowing sail and housing a replica of an ancient junk. Exhibits feature the history and the routes of the famous Chinese navigator, explorer, diplomat, Admiral Zheng He 郑和 (1371-1435), commemorating his voyages to Southeast Asia around 600 years ago. The Maritime and Navy Hall exhibits new technologies and achievements of China's maritime industry. It aims to create an international

maritime exchange platform to enhance international shipping contact. The achievements of Zheng He are also celebrated in the new Singapore Maritime Experiential Museum and Aquarium (MEMA) with a conjectural model of the treasure ship (*baochuan* 宝船) and a real scale replica of an Arabian dhow, 'the Jewel of Muscat', remembering the era when the link between the western seas and China was made by Arabian ships. With more than 400 relics on display, the Maritime Experiential Museum and Aquarium is the first museum to showcase the maritime history of Southeast Asia.

In Malacca (or Melaka) at the turn of the 20th century were discovered Chinese archeological remains of structures from the Ming period (1368-1644). This discovery immediately stimulated interest in the mysterious location of the warehouse—a ten acres site complex or Guang Chang 官厂 or Official Factory by Zheng He (Cheng Ho in Cantonese), mentioned in Ma Huan 马欢's book *Ying-yai sheng-lan* 瀛涯胜览. Convincing evidence was found including relics unearthed in the original house. A detailed description of the evidence that is worth quoting—from the *Ying-yai sheng-lan* of 1433—can be obtained in the book *Cheng Ho and Malacca* written by Tan Ta Sen:²

Whenever the treasure ships of the Middle Kingdom [China] arrived there, they at once erected a line of stockades, like a city wall, and set up towers for the watch drums at four gates. At night they had patrols of guards carrying bells; inside, again they erected an inner stockade, like a small city wall, within which they constructed warehouses and granaries; and all the money and provisions were stored there. The ship which had gone to various countries returned to this place and assembled there. They marshaled the foreign goods and loaded them in the ships; then waited till the south wind was perfectly favourable... and returned home...

Shophouses in the Guang Chan location were converted in Zheng He Museum. Research continues to uncover more details of the Guang Chang location, thus refuting theories that Bukit China (Chinese hill) was the site of Zheng He naval base. Bukit China was used as a burial ground, located in an auspicious place according to Chinese Feng Shui.

This discovery reveals not only the huge size of Zheng He Military base, but also Malacca's strategic

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position in the trade between East and West. The Melaka straits are the hinge position of the monsoon winds of change. The river divides the Chinese Naval Base and the Sultan palace and Malay settlement that grew under its shade. Wade (2004) advocates that Melaka polity was created by the Ming as a new tributary state, which needed military and commercial support to consolidate its recent independence from Thailand and from the declining power of the Java-based Majapahit Empire.

By creating a new polity behind enemy lines, a kingdom in Malacca, as well as a base in Samudera (Java), was a master stroke of the Ming in the complex chess war game theatre of Burma-Tai-Yunan, described in detail by Fernquest (2006). With a Muslim ruler in Malacca, little sympathy could be expected for, or support given to, the dominant Thai, mostly Buddhist polities, struggling with the Ming in the north.

Zheng He favoured the Muslim Arab-Mappilas³ networks, which were key elements in maritime trade from East to West, like a Maritime Silk Road, from the coast of Fujien to Champa (Vietnam), passing the many islands of the Indonesian archipelago, Indian Calicut, Persian Ormuz, and African Malinde (Melinde in Portuguese) in Kenya.

Zheng He's Muslim origins provided a friendly interface for the Arab-controlled sea trade.⁴ The Yuan Mongol rule dynasty brought a large number of military experts from Muslim countries, particularly central Asia, to overcome the extensive military defences, on land and sea, of the Song Dynasty. The armies of the Yuan period were a mix of Mongols, Chinese, Arabs, Turkish and many ethnic minorities (Delgado, 2008). The Yuan government greatly benefited by putting Muslims in high ranking positions (government) to help control the Han Chinese.⁵ Eight out of twelve (66%) of the regional governors were Muslims; in the remaining districts, Muslims were vice-governors.⁶ The Ming rule started as an uprising against Mongol rule, and then continued in a civil war, where feudal warlords' alliances were crucial for survival and to unify the country. Eunuchs surged as an institutional power in the hands of the Emperor to balance the court and administrative power of the traditional Confucianism system.⁷ However, the large Muslim network was still useful for international contacts with Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Europe (part of Spanish territory still under Muslim rule). A powerful Eunuch minister, like many in Muslim countries, was

chosen for not having a family and therefore was not considered a threat to the incumbent dynasty based on family succession.

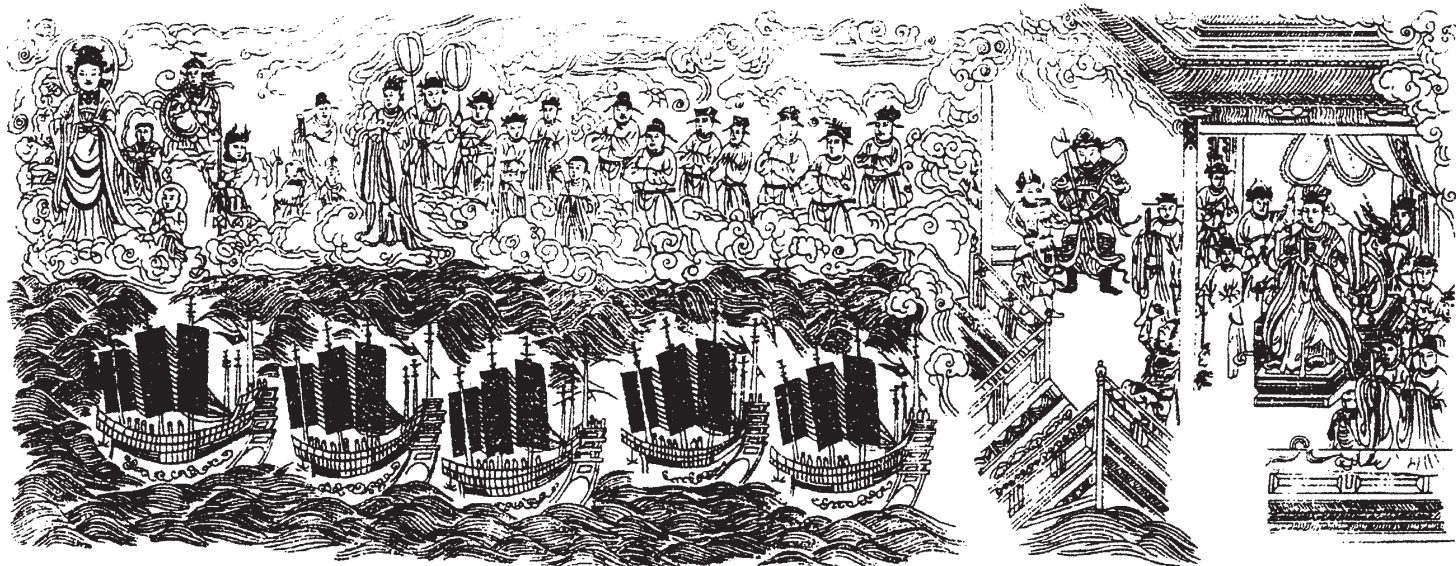
In 1411 the first ruler of Melaka, Parameswara, was escorted by Zheng He to Nanjing to be received and accepted as a tributary by the Emperor Yongle. Then Chinese princesses were sent to Melaka to marry and consolidate with 'blood' the links between the Ming and the new polity, the new state, centred in Melaka. In 1411 the first Melaka ruler converted to Islam and changed the name to Iscandar Xa.⁸ Following a power struggle between the Hindu-Malays and the Tamil-Muslims, Muslims succeeded in dominating the region, but had shown some tolerance and shared many settlements with Indian and Chinese, whom they needed as important contributors to trade, politics, shipbuilding and arts and crafts knowledge. The stone mosque in Melaka, existing at the time of the Portuguese arrival (1510), reveals the work of Chinese masons in its construction.

Widodo (2005) elaborates on this urban and social pattern organisation of separated but neighbouring Chinese and native Malay settlements in Southeast Asia, with market areas for trade and ports.

The Song Dynasty's economic survival depended on sea trade, which was later promoted by the Mongol rule of the Yuan Dynasty that enforced its rule with maritime military expeditions in Southeast Asia, Korea and Japan. This is the precedent for the Ming Maritime voyages. Zheng He voyages were not exploration trips but diplomatic, military and trading endeavours. The treasure ships not only exported gifts, but imported huge quantities of goods to China, supplying large quantities that in some cases resulted in lowering the market prices of some products like cinnamon, spices, ivory, and frankincense, among others. The fleet was ready to subdue by force any local opposition to the diplomatic and trade endeavour of the Ming.

The sudden withdrawing of a Chinese strong presence in the ocean also weakened the land base settlements, which lost prestige, influence and freedom to the growing local communities, particularly to the growing Arab-Mappilas Muslim-controlled trade and politics. In a prevision that became prophetic, the first Ming Emperor, Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋, gave instructions on the future military threats to the Ming, mentioning that the North was dangerous, but the South not. This principle of tolerance to the South

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Zheng He's fleet. This picture was probably engraved by Sheng Hui, a Monk who accompanied Zheng he in his fifth voyage.

may be one of the reasons for allowing the Portuguese to settle peacefully for four centuries. In fact they did not threaten the Empire, but helped protect the South, replacing in many ways the previous Muslim networks of traders.

Jing Guo Ping 金国平 and Wu Zhiliang 吴志良 (2007) are of the opinion that a Portuguese presence in Malacca was one of the failures of the Ming tributary system. However the reason for the Ming withdrawal from the south and the seas was the threats from the North, threats that would concretise in renewed Mongol attacks and the capture of the Zhengtong emperor, a fact that shook the Ming Empire. The consolidating of the capital in Beijing and the reinforcement and extending of the Great Wall are clear signs of the change of focus and priority of the Ming. Voyages and the tributary model maritime style were opposed by the Confucianism administration and the new emperors that mandated several *haijin* forbidden seas policies. On the contrary, the Portuguese presence did not damage Chinese presence or prestige, but helped their economic and cultural survival, offering protection from the absorbing influence of the Muslim communities that dominated the former Majapahit Empire and sea trade networks. Most Chinese Muslims overseas merged in local communities and lost their identity. However, in Portuguese-ruled Malacca and Spanish Manila, their identity and contact with China was preserved.

THE IBERIAN RACE TO ASIA

On the European side of the world, particularly after the 'discovery' of America by Columbus, Portuguese and Spaniards were in the race to Asia and America. Each country was trying to reach first the Spice Islands, at that time not sure if they fell to the Portuguese or Spanish area delimited in the Tordesillas Treaty (1494). The Portuguese spirit of crusade was speeded up by the rivalry with Spain in the discoveries race, competing with Spaniards coming from Mexico. It was not surprising that Magellan (that was in the 1509 expedition to Malacca), a Portuguese at the service of Spain, was considered a traitor.

Chang Tien-Tsê (1997), in his brilliant synthesis on Chinese-Portuguese from the sources of both countries,⁹ describes how during the arrival of the first Portuguese fleets to Malacca, the Malay ruler was in direct conflict with the Chinese community, obliging them against their will to use Chinese ships and crew in a war against the ruler of Daru.

The first Portuguese expedition to Malacca in 1509 was under strict orders of the king to be a diplomatic and trade function and was also instructed to learn about the Chinese race and civilisation. Led by Diogo Lopes de Sequeira, the fate of the expedition followed the same pattern as Da Gama in Calicut. The European newcomers were first well received by the local authorities and

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other communities like the Chinese, but due to the political manoeuvres of the Muslim traders, changed the heart of the Zamorin (Calicut) and Sultan (Malacca) to suppress physically the Portuguese competitors. Warned by friends of the planned annihilation of the Portuguese, Sequeira managed to escape in a hurry, leaving behind some officials and men who were captured or killed on land.

A second expedition was organised to free the Portuguese and establish a factory and fortress in Malacca, without orders to conquer the city, that was large, well-protected and far from any Portuguese allied base of support.

The leader of the new Portuguese expedition to Malacca was not a normal envoy, but one described by the Portuguese and their enemies as the 'Terrible'. He is also described as the Portuguese Cesar, with a small fleet conquering important strongholds like Ormuz (1507), Goa (1510), and Melaka (1511), not by the superiority of Sea Power, but mostly by daring landing operations of men well-armed and dressed in full armour (a medieval Portuguese tradition) that, like commando shock troops, overrode everything in front of them, even armed elephants.

Curiously, the memory of white men dressed in armour coming in large ships was mentioned by the Indians to the Portuguese in Calicut. The Portuguese thought they were referring to Germans or Russians, not imagining this was the fading memory of the Zheng He visits.

The Portuguese Albuquerque strategy fostered, like Zheng He, alliances with friendly partners, Hindu or Muslim, cities or kingdoms like Cochin (India) and Malinde (Africa). This network of alliances made possible the establishment of a network of sea-trading cities and supply posts all the way from the Indian Ocean to Europe.

THE CONQUEST OF MALACCA, OPENING THE GATES TO ASIA

Taking a window of opportunity after submitting Portuguese rebel noblemen, Albuquerque managed to assemble a fleet, going to Malacca during the monsoon winds, with no possibility to withdraw or resupply. His small fleet of 16 ships (two of the previous 18 sank on the way to Malacca) carrying a mixed crew and army of 700 Europeans and 300 local allies from Malabar

India). In July the diplomatic negotiations with the Sultan of Melaka failed to free Portuguese officers and traders captive in the city.

In Malacca the Portuguese, even the ones captured and in jail, benefited from the friendly dealings with the Chinese and Indian communities in the city that led them first to a neutral position after the arrival of Albuquerque, then to indirect support of the Portuguese (providing information, ships, and later Indian soldiers led by Nina Chatu). Albuquerque rejected the Chinese help for conquering the city, but accepted the offer of the use of their ships (five junks were present at that time in Malacca). Running out of time and resources, Albuquerque stormed the city, facing the Sultan's army of 20,000 men well-protected by artillery and 20 war elephants. However, he failed to conquer the city due to the lack of proper communication and logistics and human resources between the fleet and the man on the shore, having to withdraw to the ships, with time and monsoon pressing against him. Changing tactics, he decided to conquer the city with the help of a large and tall Chinese Junk that became the bridgehead to storm Melaka Bridge, the key position linking the Malay palace and city with the foreign settlements. The junk had a flat bottom and hull, allowing navigation to the river mouth at high tide. The junk was towed by small rowing boats (*bateis*) armed to destroy the fire rafts sent against them. These boats, like a small version of the Korean turtle ships (*Geobukseon*), were a key tactical factor in many Portuguese maritime expeditions.

From here he could keep a constant overhead bombardment of the two sides of Melaka (separated by the river) and support the marines' landing operation until all resistance ended and the enemy withdrew to southern positions far from the city (waiting for the Portuguese operation was, like the pirates, a temporary one, withdrawing after some time). The conquest of Melaka by the Portuguese could not have been achieved without the help of the Chinese merchants of Melaka, at that time disenchanted with the powerful and arrogant sultan, showing a lowering of the initial status and prestige held by Chinese in previous decades.

Against all odds, Albuquerque gambled and won. However, his successor did not manage to destroy the sultanate or create strong alliances with local powers.

Melaka was a port safe from the monsoon storms, a key position for controlling the spice trade,

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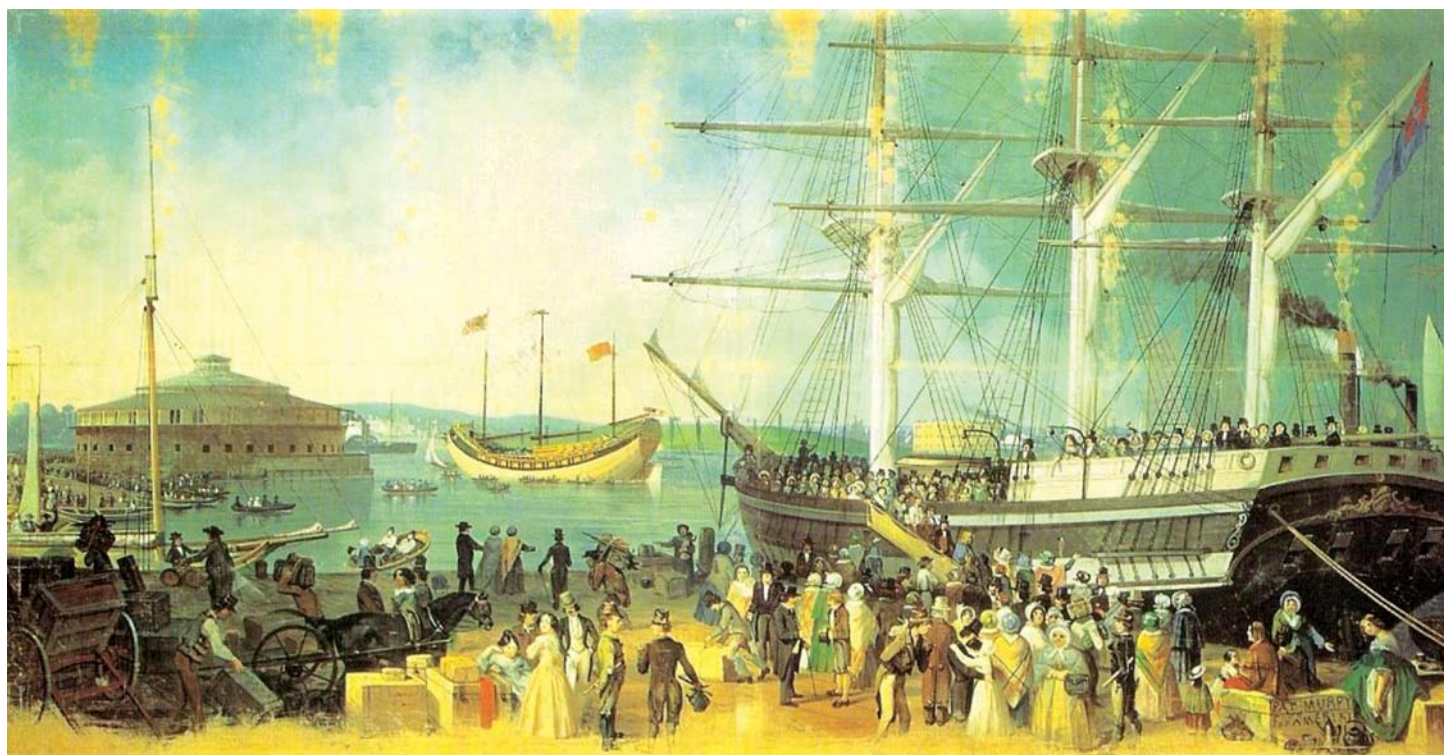
establishing a direct contact with China, without Arab or Venetian middlemen.

From Melaka Albuquerque learned about the Chinese and, following orders of the king, asked first for the Chinese traders to work as emissaries of goodwill for alliance with the Portuguese. These Chinese emissaries reached several ports, with particularly important destinations to Sian and China being the first to report on the newcomers. The former rulers of Malacca also sent emissaries with messages of warning and requesting help in the struggle against the Portuguese. Following the king's order, Portuguese emissaries were sent from Malacca to China. In 1512 Jorge Álvares' ships looked to establish direct contact and friendly relations with the Middle Kingdom. Albuquerque also sent representatives to local kingdoms, Muslims, Hindus or Buddhists announcing the opening of Malacca as a trading port for all. Portugal being a small country surrounded by powerful neighbouring enemies (land or sea powers) always needed allies for trade and war. Being a small nation with little room for withdrawing, each battle was critical for survival, making them thorough warriors on land or sea.

In Albuquerque's time, European and Asian entire communities entered into direct contact for the first time. The conquest of Melaka by Albuquerque represented an historic landmark in Naval History; for the first time European—and Chinese—designed ships were interchanged and used in military and commercial operations, complementing and cooperating with each other. This was also the beginning of 500 years of Chinese-Portuguese friendship, which resulted in the foundation and development of Macao.

Not only were the Portuguese ships very different from the Arab and Chinese ones, but culture, traditions and beliefs were a new experience; a cultural shock with technological interchanges. These memories of the long East and West maritime history are important to preserve, not only in written form but as exhibits in museums. Curiously, Chinese ships, like architecture, are perfect and canonic, changing little throughout centuries. An example of this continuity in tradition is the comparison of the ship drawings by the monk Sheng He, travelling with Zheng He, and the *Keying* junk from Fuzhou that brought an art exhibition from Hong Kong to Boston and England in 1846.

The junk *Keying* in New York harbour in 1847. Watercolour on canvas by Samuel Waugh (Museum of the City of New York).



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MUSEUMS' ROLES IN PRESERVING MARITIME HERITAGE

One of the oldest maritime museums is the Naval Museum (*Museu da Marinha*), founded by King Luís of Portugal on 22 June 1863, located next to the Monastery of Jerónimos in Lisbon. It was from Belém, not far from the chapel of Our Lady of Belém, that the famed explorer Vasco da Gama set sail for India. The main exhibits of the Museum are displayed in themed rooms, many of which are themselves architecturally striking and hung with oil paintings of explorers and historical events. In the entrance hall is a huge planisphere depicting the Portuguese Voyages of Discovery from the 15th century onwards.

The research on which this paper is based aims to contribute to the enhancement of the identity of maritime museums as conduits for information exchange between East and West, especially in the historical, cultural, and technological fields. Macao's maritime heritage is unique since it represents the harmonious confluence of Chinese and European seafaring lore and mutual respect for littoral parity. The 500 years of Portuguese presence in East and Southeast Asia should be celebrated with a strategy for invigorating the Macao Maritime Museum, increasing the scope of exhibits, through the restoration of extant properties and sites, and establishing educational programmes with local and international universities for teaching and research in all aspects of the divergent field of maritime study.

Hicks (2001) contends that maritime museums adopting a new museology perspective, are well-positioned to assimilate diverse viewpoints. As an apprehension of the past, maritime heritage is subject to varied interpretations and maritime collections should be based on parameters that represent the identities of maritime communities. Beneki, Delgado, Filippopoliti (2012, p. 347) point out that a number of parameters are usually absent when considering a maritime topic: notions of space (geographical or physical); time as a continuous and completed narrative helping the visitor to understand progress and how facts and social structures are generated; commercial and sea routes; technical conditions (i.e. ship construction, shipbuilders, history of shipbuilding, etc.); manpower as reflected in the ship's hierarchy and the shipping company; material culture related

to maritime heritage (i.e. architectural patterns in the landscape, customs and ways of sociability, etc.) and the urban and cosmopolitan way of living in a maritime centre; education and reproduction of the community; women's voices and benefaction among local community members. These are aspects which should constitute preservation strategies that faithfully portray the multifarious identities of maritime communities in Southeast Asia. The history of the Portuguese in Malacca and Macao is a lasting legacy of the confluence of these identities.

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF MALACCA AND MACAO

The relative merits of Malacca and Macao as ports for East-West trade and economic development are ironically best represented by the covetous designs which rival colonial powers had in seeking to acquire or appropriate the concessions which the Portuguese had already successfully established in Asia. While Spain had relinquished her possessions, apart from the Philippines, it was the Dutch, British, and French imperial powers who contrived strategies to oust the Portuguese from their dominant role in the maritime traffic of valuable commodities. The Portuguese strategy had been to wrest control of the strategic ports of Goa in India and Malacca so as to break the Muslim traders' monopoly over the spice trade. One of the most lucrative trade was the 'Blue Water Trade'—collecting and distributing spices, porcelain, tea and silk to be sent to Europe through the Middle East and Venice. Tomé Pires, a Portuguese apothecary and diplomat who came to Malacca in 1512 wrote, 'whoever is Lord of Malacca has his hand on the throat of Venice'. Being seafarers of origin, the Portuguese were the first Europeans to assert control, but the other European powers were soon to learn that achieving supremacy over the region would bring them riches beyond their dreams and allow them to exert commercial power over rivals: 'The establishment of Dutch and English presence in the region, which was to unleash an intense and inexorable process of competition, resulted in the veritable asphyxiation of the city, which saw itself increasingly isolated and unable to claim its time-honoured role in the face of an emerging hostile power that would surpass it, supplant it, and reduce it to a subaltern position' (Pinto, 2012).

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Afonso Albuquerque was the main protagonist of the Portuguese maritime strategy,¹⁰ convincing King D. Manuel that control of the trade within the Indian Ocean required the construction of a string of fortresses to dominate the Straits with strongpoints at the critical exits and entrances to the Indian Ocean.¹¹ Albuquerque's strategic global vision was the reason for him to change the royal plan when he decided on his own to conquer Goa and Malacca, even against the strong opposition of military staff formed by highly independent members of the nobility who often rebelled and plotted against him. Albuquerque himself was a determined and ruthless leader and there was never any successor with the same qualities for building the Portuguese Empire (Booker, 2012). Although critically short of manpower and thousands of miles away from home, Albuquerque had succeeded in conquering the trade of the Indian Ocean.

The deposed sultanate of Malacca did not disappear but was transferred to Johor, on the doorstep of Malacca, where it soon began to compete with and directly threaten the Portuguese occupation. Closer ties developed between the sultanates of Johor and Aceh in the form of an Islamic league that had the strong support of the Ottoman military superpower, which helped destroy the Hindu empire of Vijayanar. The next target was the Portuguese trading and defensive network. Aceh, the local power with more capability, by siege of Malacca five times from 1537 to 1575, was growing in power and intensity. They attempted three times to conquer Malacca from 1573-1575 until in 1576 an armada commanded by Matias de Albuquerque was sent to defeat Aceh's fleet near Johor on 1 January 1577 and continued to patrol the Straits managing to re-establish some degree of security for Portuguese ships. The enmity between Aceh and the Portuguese was partly the result of the conquest of Malacca by Afonso Albuquerque, which was followed by the flight of the powerful Gujarati community which sought refuge in Aceh, there establishing a commercial network that rivalled the Portuguese.

Following the union of Spain and Portugal in 1580 the Dutch, as Spain's arch rival, were denied entry to Portuguese and Spanish ports. In retaliation, the Dutch through their headquarters in Batavia made exclusive arrangements with Southeast Asia rulers and formed alliances with the enemies of Malacca, Aceh and Johor.

It was not until the arrival of the northern Europeans that alliances with the sultanates proved effective in dislodging the Portuguese presence.¹² After years of flourishing wealth and monopoly, Portugal's hold over Malacca began to erode due to the mounting costs of maintaining a large fleet from the administrative centre in Lisbon. The Portuguese Crown's withdrawal from the direct exploitation of the maritime routes; preferring instead to entrust the trade to private hands, both as a reward for services rendered and also via simple leases, in order to obtain fixed profits paid in advance to the constantly impoverished Royal Treasury (Pinto, 2012). This would lead inexorably to the appropriation, rather than mere leasing, of the *viagens* (voyages) undertaken for the maritime trade and inevitable corruption and exercise of despotic power by the viceroys.

*In 1411 the first ruler
of Melaka, Parameswara,
was escorted by Zheng He
to Nanjing to be received
and accepted as a tributary
by the Emperor Yongle.*

To prevent any possible attack from the rival powers and ensure the safety of navigation for the ships from China that passed through the Straits, Malacca needed a strong fleet to patrol the Straits and the surrounding region. The lack of ships, particularly carracks, due to the debilitated finances of the Estado da Índia, was in contrast to the apparently inexhaustible supply of armadas that the Dutch and British had at their disposal. Portuguese fleets in India rarely exceeded three ships.¹³ The port's defences were also poorly equipped and manned. Although a fortress, A Famosa, ordered by Albuquerque, a medieval style keep tower with artillery constructed of stone, had been built around St. Paul's Hill to consolidate power and resist encroachment, there was a manpower shortage due to many colonists dying from the endemic tropical diseases and the harsh weather conditions while working on the fortress. After several sieges from Aceh the medieval tower architecture was replaced by the

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'Italian design' of bastions, strong walls and ramparts, which took a long time to build due to the isolation of Malacca from Goa or Macao. The settlement was thus increasingly vulnerable to threats from the growing naval power of its adversaries. The city's resources were insufficient to supply the armadas that were needed to ward off any protracted siege that might be undertaken by its aggressors. The unfortunate choice of various commanders of the armadas helped Portuguese defeat in sea battles.¹⁴ With aid from Johor, in 1640 the Dutch finally carried out their strategy to wrest control of the Straits and cut off the sea routes on which Malacca depended. They mounted a concerted attack on the port and after a five-month siege captured the city, entering the gates to find that 7,000 people had died of famine, diseases, and the conflict. Many of the inhabitants had left with their wealth and the population had dropped from 20,000 to only 2,150.

Under the Dutch, Malacca was owned and governed by a national trading company, the Dutch East India Company (VOC), which failed to flourish to the same extent as the Portuguese owing to a shortage of basic supplies caused by shipwrecks and piracy. There was also the constant threat from the Minankabau people who had settled north of the settlement. By the 1780s, the port was in abeyance owing to the establishment of a bustling trading centre at Penang to the north, by the British entrepreneur, Sir Francis Light. When the French, under Napoleon Bonaparte, seized Holland in 1795, the exiled Prince William of Orange relinquished possession of Malacca to the British. However, the British were more concerned with their strategy to make Penang the key port for the China trade. The Governor of Penang conspired with Malacca's Governor, William Farquhar, to destroy the settlement in Malacca and have the colonists moved to Penang.¹⁵

The ruins of St Paul's Church are all that remains of the fortifications of Malacca as an enduring testimony to the significance of Portuguese maritime history in the region. However, despite the lack of other tangible evidence of the foundation of Malacca as the most important conduit for East-West trade and commercial activity centred on Southeast Asia, there is a substantial wealth of intangible evidence from which to draw for the commemoration of the Portuguese contribution to the indelible importance of Malacca for the region's historiography.

FROM MALACCA TO MACAO

There is however, a relatively neglected source of information that deserves attention when collating intangible with tangible evidence of Portuguese maritime alliances and achievements. Most notably this involves studies of Sino-Portuguese joint accomplishments in establishing the first sea routes between Southeast Asia, China, and Japan. In this respect, Macao played a historic role in a very different context to that of Malacca. Ironically, compared to the latter, Macao has sustained much of its tangible heritage for empirical study, but is lacking in the dissemination of intangible evidence for maritime history researchers through the medium of internationally recognised sources. The eminent historian Charles Ralph Boxer, without the benefit of knowledge of Portuguese or Chinese, is a notable exception to the dearth of published accounts accessible to international scholars of the contribution Macao has made to the maritime history of Asia.

In Macao the Portuguese reached the same prominence as Malacca, in establishing and sustaining a successful commercial entrepôt for trade that extended its reach from Southeast Asia to China and beyond to Japan. Unlike Malacca, Macao was founded not by territorial conquest but by an agreement that endured up to the end of the 20th century. Its main rival, the British rather than the Dutch, gained supremacy over Macao through aggressive naval strategies designed to wrest control of Chinese territory which, with the appropriation of Hong Kong and the New Territories, led to the abeyance of Macao's prime situation as the key international port on China's southern coast. Before this development Macao, unlike Malacca, was able to resist Dutch designs on acquiring the territory, an ordeal that deserves commemoration in the annals of maritime history. The episode is well documented in various sources, including Boxer (1948) but is not commemorated in the exhibitions contained in the Macao Maritime Museum. It is however celebrated in the form of a monument in Victory Garden in the city. Perhaps this is because the event was not significant in terms of maritime strategy, but nevertheless demonstrated the effective policies which the Portuguese pursued to protect the coveted position of Macao as a springboard for the China trade with Asia. Commemoration of the event is worthwhile because of the unusual circumstances that led to resistance against the Dutch attack on Macao.

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The three-day battle for Macao in 1622 was the only military engagement between two European powers on the Chinese mainland. The Dutch strategy for the capture of Macao was intended to allow them a commercial base in China, depriving the Portuguese of the lucrative Macao-Japan trade.

Under the command of Cornelius Reijersen, a fleet of thirteen Dutch ships containing 1300 men and a landing force of 800 arrived on 21 June 1622, confident they would easily be able to breach the city's defences. The Portuguese defences were in fact severely constrained by the lack of fighting men and armoury.¹⁶ The determined action of soldiers, Dominican friars, Jesuit priests, and African slaves resulted in compelling the Dutch to retreat in a rout. In their panic the Dutch ships had to flee to deeper water to avoid being capsized by the fugitives with the result that many drowned or were shot by the Portuguese.¹⁷

The Dutch defeat was also paramount for the consolidation of Macao as an entity in its own right. The Portuguese central authority in Goa realised the importance of bestowing authority under a governorship for Macao's own affairs independent of the jurisdiction of the Captain-Major of the Japan Voyage, whose authority was limited to the merchant fleet to Japan, losing all privileges he might have had in Macao to the appointed Governor of Macao, the first being Dom Francisco Mascarenhas. The new Governor was successful in negotiating with the Guangdong authorities for the enhancement of Macao's defences to prevent a repetition of the Dutch attack. After the attack Macao also became more dependent from Mainland China.

For centuries Macao's small fleets helped in cooperation with Guangdong, to fight and defeat large pirate fleets, as well to help surveillance on foreign ships and even entire communities, as in the period of the Macao Canton Trade System (1757-1842), when foreigners had to reside in Macao while waiting for the seasonal opening of the Canton trading period.

The Dutch and British, notwithstanding, consolidated their maritime strategies and commercial interests in Southeast Asia: the Dutch through the enterprise of the VOC in the Indonesian archipelago and Taiwan; the British through the development of Penang and Singapore bypassed Malacca, which declined as an international port while Macao continued to achieve success as an entrepôt for the

China trade, even as its importance as a port receded after the foundation of Hong Kong, and Portuguese maritime expansion became history. Portuguese maritime heritage is, however, still the underlying factor in fostering Sino-Portuguese commercial interests through the Portuguese-speaking nations which are the legacy of its maritime expansion.

COMPARING THE PORTUGUESE MARITIME HERITAGE OF MALACCA AND MACAO

Despite the lack of tangible evidence of Portuguese maritime accomplishments in Malacca, their presence endures through the construction of a maritime museum contained within a replica of the *Flor de la Mar* (Sea Flower), the Portuguese ship that sank off the coast of Melaka while on its way to Portugal. Built in 1502, the *Titanic*-sized *Flor de la Mar*¹⁸ was the largest carrack of its time; nearly twice the size of the largest ships that had gone on previous runs. Nevertheless it was smaller than the Chinese junks found by Albuquerque on his expeditions. However, it was dangerously unseaworthy when fully loaded and only completed one full India run, and that not without problems. It served in the conquest of Malacca by Afonso Albuquerque who loaded the hold with treasures for the King and personally took command of the voyage back to Portugal. While sailing along the north-east Sumatran state of Pasé, in the Strait of Malacca, the *Flor de la Mar* was caught in a storm and wrecked on shoals, sinking during the night. Albuquerque narrowly escaped on an improvised raft with his life, but the cargo was irretrievably lost.

Work on the replica of the ship began in 1990 and it was opened to the public in June 1994 by the incumbent Prime Minister Dato Seri Dr Mohamad. The museum celebrates the importance of Malacca as a regional and international business centre from the period of formation as a Sultanate right through the Portuguese, Dutch, and British occupations. Exhibits, artefacts and documents highlight the Port's golden era as the Emporium of Southeast Asia and reveal how strategic and political control of Malacca was vital in securing maritime supremacy in the region. Trading links from earliest times through the colonial era are illustrated, emphasising the commercial success of the port through the region. Exhibits include models of



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the various ships of the time with explanations of their functions. The upper level features a diorama of the cabin in which the Portuguese captain was entrusted with the mission of the king and the ship owner, unfortunately in this case without success.

In comparison, the Macao Maritime Museum is a purpose-built facility, its architecture having no realistic representation of Portuguese or Chinese naval shipbuilding technology. Only on the first floor is a realistic model of a *nau do trato* (a merchant frigate) which made the commercial voyages between Macao and Japan. The top floor features exhibits demonstrating Portuguese and Chinese expertise in designing, fabricating, and using various navigation instruments.

Given that Macao was the first port established on Chinese territory to facilitate trade between East and West, there is little in the way of exhibits to commemorate the Portuguese maritime contribution to the development of the port as a unique confluence of East-West enterprise. As is the case with many museums, a wealth of information is contained, with restricted access, within library archives on various topics: Maritime Technology, Maritime Ethnology, Portuguese and Chinese Maritime History, the History of the Discoveries, the History of Macao, and Naval Construction and Design, which are especially well represented. The Museum curators have also done extensive anthropological research on the fishing community of Macao which seems to have hitherto been neglected in the Malacca context.

There is no doubt that the Portuguese relied on abundant supplies of fresh fish and developed a distinctive Malaccan and Macanese complementary cuisine which continues to be enjoyed by visitors to the enclaves.

Compared to the only vestige of the tangible evidence of Portuguese command of the Malacca Straits, the Ruins of St Paul's (Melaka), Macao excels in the preservation of fortresses built to defend the enclave and support its maritime strategies: The Monte Fortress which now contains the Macao Museum; The Fortress of São Tiago (St. James) restored to feature a boutique hotel; The Mong Ha Fort now the site for the Tourism Institute, and of course the Guia Fortress with its unique lighthouse still functioning as a beacon

for incoming vessels. Other key properties and sites include the São Francisco Barracks which once marked the boundary of the Outer Harbour, and the Quartel dos Mouros with its distinctive Moorish architecture. However, the Fortress of São Tiago, Mong Ha Fort, and the São Francisco Barracks are not included in the UNESCO list of protected properties or as manifestations of the importance of the Portuguese maritime contribution to the development of Macao. Since 1999 Macao is an important jewel and relic of Chinese heritage, representing five centuries of Chinese-Portuguese friendship, religious tolerance, and cultural interchange.

*From Melaka Albuquerque
learned about the Chinese
and, following orders of the
king, asked first for the Chinese
traders to work as emissaries
of goodwill for alliance
with the Portuguese.*

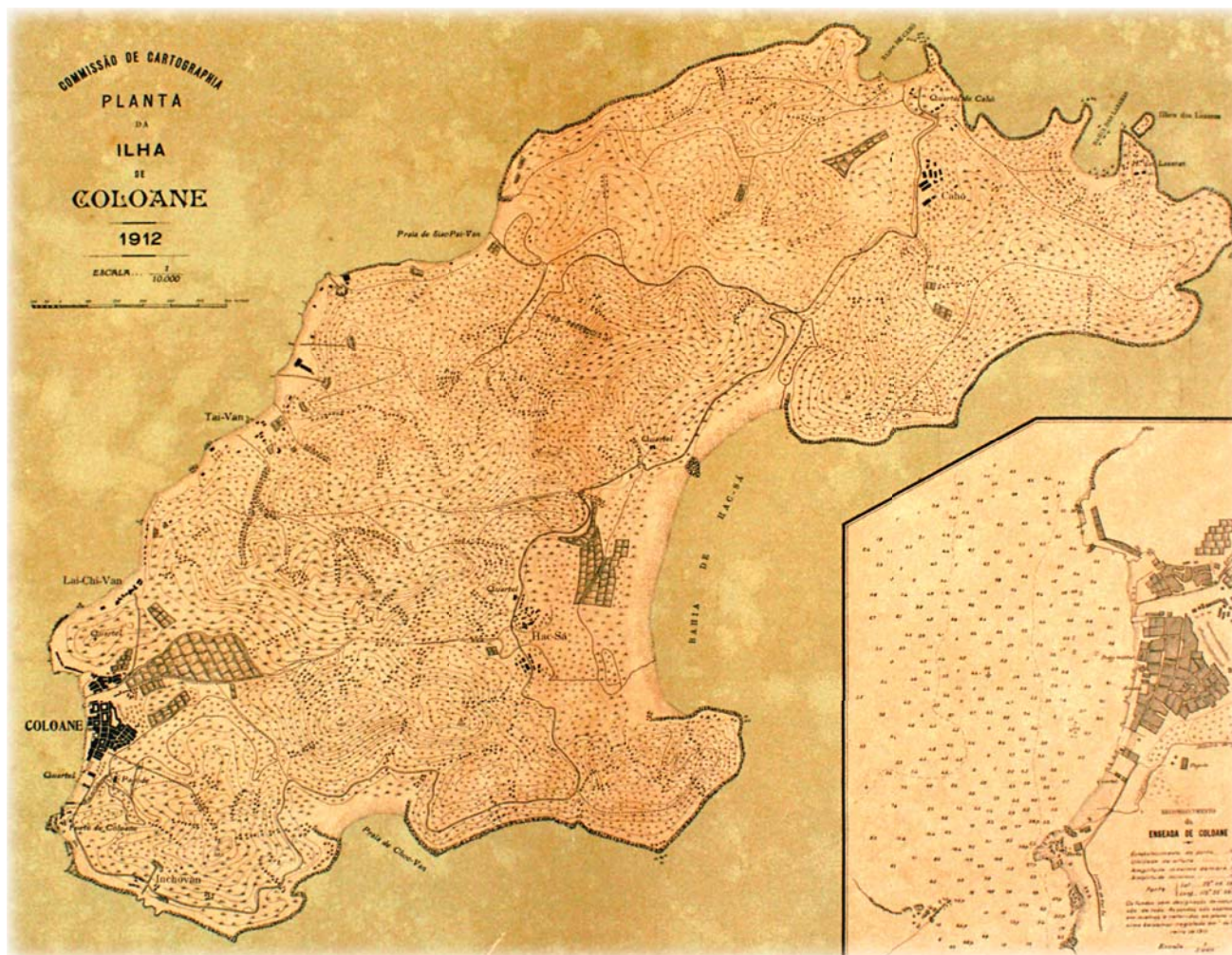
Although the Inner Harbour retains much of its character compared to the Outer Harbour, with the exception of the facility known as Ponte 16, other properties have yet to be identified as being worthy of preservation. Various plans have been proposed for the restoration of the Inner Harbour including a complete transformation of the area by developers to cater to the burgeoning casino tourism market rather than to cultural tourism. With the large economic resources available in Macao and the enormous amount of visitors, reaching approximately 32 million in 2012,¹⁹ Macao deserves a bigger and more extensive Maritime Museum.

LAI CHI VUN SHIPYARDS, PRESERVING AND PROMOTING MACAO MARITIME HERITAGE

To endorse the imperative for the preservation of maritime cultural heritage, especially in Macao, the following section cites recommendations made by students of architectural heritage who conducted

Replica of the *Flor de la Mar* in Malacca.

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Coloane Island in 1912.

research on the assets and attributes of the port city in terms of the utilisation of urban space and development of facilities for the community and visitors interested in experiencing the city's rich cultural links between Europe and Asia. Being the traditional shipyards of Macao occupied by land fields for urban development, the only survival site where it is possible to preserve, in full size, the maritime heritage of Macao is in Coloane Island, on the foothills of Lai Chi Vun, near Coloane Village.

Based on academic research by multidisciplinary teams, a detailed SWOT analysis on the site was elaborated. Different sectors of considerations are identified for revitalisation of Lai Chi Vun shipyard area, as follows:

- Government: protection of the traditional industrial heritage; culture industrial promotion;

economic development different from Casino and real estate oriented;

- Promote tourists: thorough experience of Coloane history and the shipbuilding industry;

- Provide Macao residents: with a place for leisure, entertainment, and enjoyment of natural and cultural environment;

- Work with the local community: on the improvement of the living environment and community facilities.

The significant remnants of Lai Chi Vun Shipyard industrial heritage must be protected, not only for the role they play in Macao's maritime history but as important parts of the social and environmental values. The final proposal mainly focuses on the transformation of Lai Chi Vun Shipyard site into a multi-functional resort area to serve as a maritime museum, an open

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park, a public tourist spot with moderate commercial value, and a good location to promote culture industry.

In meeting challenges of preservation and revitalisation of this area, the initial focus is centred on urban memory and culture identity for residents and tourists. The design process follows the partial repair and renewal principle, namely preserving the traditional flavour of its principal buildings and changing the original shipbuilding production space into a place for the exhibition of relics relevant to local history and culture, while through renovation improving the local community facilities, promoting a healthier way of life, and creating a new tourist destination for visitors to enjoy natural experiences and cultural activities.

The proposed design strategies are:

Step 1: To protect the Lai Chi Vun shipyard industrial heritage, reflecting the history and culture of the former shipbuilding industry. This could be done by adaptive reuse—by converting it into a maritime museum through reorganisation and expansion. It could help to create a local landmark in this district, contributing preserved memories and cultural identity reinforcement in this area. The huge internal spaces could not only provide informative exhibitions to visitors and tourists from the region, but also hold civic cultural activities.

The old shipyard building structures are to be preserved and repaired, while applying other methods to satisfy the requirements of ventilation energy saving. Plain concrete is used in the façade, combined with a glass curtain wall to provide natural day lighting and good seaside views.

Step 2: Selectively rebuilding some dilapidated and empty buildings for cultural and tourism facilities. Some rooms could even be rented out to use as workshops for creative artistic displays by local artists and designers.

Step 3: To design a sequence of landscape facilities by the seashore linking buildings with walking corridors and bridges. At the roadside, to demolish part of empty space for public squares and parking lots.

Step 4: Improve the connections between Lai Chi Vun shipyards with Coloane Village through the Rua dos Navegantes, connecting with the other end of the village at Taipa artillery fort above Tam Kung Miu Temple, thus fostering the regeneration for the whole place creating an approximate area of 37,000 sqm that would contribute to the increase of Macao's carrying capacity for tourists, plus offering alternatives to the casino oriented tourism.

Lai Chi Vun Shipyards rehabilitation study, prepared at Jiangnan University, providing a historical circuit connection with Coloane Village.



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Another view of the Lai Chi Vun Shipyards rehabilitation study prepared at Jiangnan University.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper, elaborated in three sections, has compared the historical context of the maritime heritage of Malacca to Macao with the aim of addressing the issue of preservation of the tangible and intangible assets and attributes of the latter. It is argued that these represent the core identity of this historic port city, perhaps more so than the current properties and sites designated as World Heritage, and are a vital link to the heritage of other maritime port cities in the Asia region. One recurrent issue is the difference in treatment of presentation of sites and monuments that have lost their original uses, and buildings and places with continuing uses. Are these differences inevitable, or are they exacerbated by inherited sets of legislative procedures and interpretive practices (Chitty and Baker, 1999) Malacca managed to recover and preserve its Dutch and Portuguese maritime history, but Macao has too little and is too small to display its centenary history.

Although they have iconic status, the properties and sites listed under the Historic Centre of Macao do

not represent the maritime reciprocal interests of the Chinese and Portuguese communities of the historic port city. These interests were nurtured in a spirit of cooperation towards the goal of making Macao, a diminutive part of Chinese maritime enterprise, a centre for East-West trade. Far from losing its significance, the small-scale maritime enterprise of Macao continues to flourish, keeping pace with the development of the major port cities along the China coast.

It was been demonstrated that the historic link between China and Southeast Asia was actuated by strategies to advance Chinese and Portuguese maritime, commercial, and political interests in the region. Alliances were fostered and developed in a spirit of mutual respect for the achievements leading to the supreme position which the Portuguese held in Europe by opening up the maritime routes which had previously been the exclusive prerogative of Muslim traders and Venetian exploitation.

The voyages of Zheng He and his successors were instrumental in achieving the maritime supremacy of China in the region which, far from being challenged

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by the Portuguese, was recognised as essential to complementing their trading activities in the region. Macao represents the longest and most faithful partnership between a European nation and China; five centuries of cooperation and interchange.

The current research provides a practical reference, a clue for putting Macao on the map of maritime history, by revitalising the shipyards in Lai Chi Vun as a cultural tourism area, thus diversifying from gambling activities and increasing the tourism carrying capacity.

It is conceivable that in the future Macao as a port city will play a vital role in China's strategy for

expanding its commercial interests in Southeast Asia and beyond. Perhaps more importantly, the legacy of Chinese and Portuguese maritime culture—if sustained—will provide, like the Guia lighthouse, a beacon for peaceful cross-cultural engagements with the seafaring nations of the Asia-Pacific region. **RC**

Editor's note: Paper presented at the International Conference on 'Portugal and South East Asia: 500 Years of History', organised by the Department of Portuguese of the University of Macau (Macao, 30 October–1 November 2012).

NOTES

- 1 Historical Centre of Macao (HCM) that was designated in 2005 by UNESCO as part of the World Heritage, a classification that ought to help to preserve and improve surviving historical monuments, under the criterion (iv) of Macao World Heritage List's inscription, 'represented in the historical route, with a series of urban spaces and architectural ensembles, that links the ancient Chinese port with the Portuguese city'.
- 2 <http://www.chengho.org/news/news8.1.php>. In 2003, Tan Ta Sen, is the President of the International Zheng He Society. In 2003 he discovered the Guang Chang 官厂 at the ancient site located at the present Melaka River bank opposite the Dutch Stadthuys, in the old Portuguese Rua Direita. The present Museum dedicated to Zheng He is believed to be situated on the original Guan Chang site, by the Ming Grand eunuch, about 600 years ago. Historical records reveal Zheng He visited Melaka at least five times during his famous seven voyages to the Western Ocean (Southeast Asia, Indian Ocean, Middle East and Africa). His formidable fleet of several hundred ships sailed seven times to the Western Ocean from China from 1405 to 1433.
- 3 Mappilas designated the Indian communities that converted to Islam, and with the passing of time become dominant in the sea trade as well as supporters of the new Islamic powers challenging and overthrowing Hindus or other dominant powers.
- 4 The Indonesian archipelago was prone, like in ancient Greece, to Talocratic powers, like the Srivijaya (9th to 12th centuries) controlled by Buddhist rulers, and then replaced by the Majapahit Empire (1293–1527) inspired in a violent Hindu revival. The Majapahit Empire was undermined by civil wars and progressively supplanted by the Muslims Arab-Mappilas seaside cities networks, which benefit politically from the conversion of many Mongols to Islam.
- 5 It is estimated that in the 14th century, the total population of Muslims was four million. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islam_during_the_Yuan_Dynasty). Dadu (Beijing) Mongol capital was designed by Amir al Din, a Muslim architect, but following some Confucianism ritual (rites of Zhou, 'Zhouli') meaning was designed as the capital of the Chinese.
- 6 Muslim Admiral Omar (O Ma Nhi in Vietnamese sources) led the Mongol Navy of 500 ships in the third attack on Vietnam in 1287.
- 7 Ming progressively reduced Muslim influence and the Qing progressively quell Muslim revolts and treat them as a minority to control in order to preserve Chinese culture and traditions. Although many Muslim leaders supported the Ming rebels against the Yuan Dynasty, the power of Islam progressively dwindled in Ming China, replaced by Confucianism and Buddhist values.
- 8 Chinese chronicles mention that in 1414, the son of the first ruler of Malacca visited Ming court to inform them that his father had died.
- 9 Tien-Tsê Chang is the Cantonese pronunciation of Zhang Tianze. His book was published first in 1934.
- 10 During the initial decades of the 15th century, the Portuguese had established by means of conquests alliances with local authorities and the transfer of territories, important bases throughout Maritime Asia which led to the formation of a maritime entity known as the Estado de Índia 'a multi-polar network linked through an economic, political and military structure aimed at controlling and exploiting trade routes and commerce' (Pinto, 2012). One of the most important routes was through the Straits of Malacca, thus it was an imperative for the Portuguese to gain control of the city and develop its potential as a port which would attract mercantile communities.
- 11 Malacca was the major port at the eastern entrance to the Ocean being the intersection between Indian, Chinese, and Indonesian trade. The Portuguese knew that Malacca was a rich entrepôt and, significantly, was en route to China.
- 12 From the 1570s onwards, the Portuguese gradually lost control over the routes and mercantile traffic of the Eastern Archipelago, Banda, the Moluccas and even of Sunda where the Dutch opened up a route through the Sunda Straits supported by superior naval power. Meanwhile the British and the Dutch devised a strategy whereby they formed alliances with the rivals of the Portuguese; especially Aceh, but also Johor and Banten. The Dutch adopted an aggressive naval policy as a strategy for gaining supremacy over the trade routes and mercantile traffic which the Portuguese were unable to challenge.
- 13 At the beginning of the 17th century, the king made a contract to build three vessels annually in the shipyards of Lisbon for the fleet of André Furtado de Mendonça, but in 1604 the entire process was running behind schedule (Pinto, 2012: 47). The freight-carrying carracks (*naus*), although ideal for sailing on the high seas, were slow and vulnerable and unsuitable for defending the treacherous channels and sandbanks of the Straits. They were badly equipped and badly prepared, from a military point of view, when they encountered

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northern European ships. The Portuguese adopted a defensive approach through the deployment of oared ships (gallies) but had little in the way of artillery and a limited capacity for conflict. To exacerbate the situation further, rules of navigation were imposed on ships and carracks were prohibited from navigating unless they sailed along with armadas sent by the viceroy in convoy. After the Dutch capture of a galleon sent to China, the Portuguese ceased to use high-tonnage vessels in the South and the gallee (the Portuguese patacho) became the vessel of choice for defense. The Dutch counteracted by developing their own small vessels and the gallies were unable to navigate with impunity. Malacca was no longer a place preferred by the Portuguese, which changed their preference for safer and nearer ports of Brazil and Africa.

- 14 Especially Lourenço de Brito, was also a factor in preventing the Portuguese from securing the support of the Sultan of Banten in refusing to entertain the overtures of the Dutch and English. More significant was the ignominious defeat of the armada of Viceroy Dom Martin Afonso de Castro, the greatest armada ever prepared by the Portuguese in Asia and the greatest failure of the age (Pinto, 2012: 109). This was due to the factors including the Viceroy's lack of experience as a commander, rivalry between the Viceroy and the Captain of Malacca, and a series of elementary errors that transformed what could have been a comfortable victory into an impressive disaster (Pinto, 2012: 111).
- 15 Although this was not supported by the authorities of the British East India Company based in Calcutta, the malicious Farquhar determined to eradicate all traces of the Portuguese and Dutch fortifications. Finding it impossible to dismantle the walls, which were 4.5m thick and 18m high, he personally supervised the destruction. According to a contemporary source, Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir: 'Then he touched off the fuse and at once spurred his horse away. After about

ten minutes the gunpowder exploded with a noise like thunder, and pieces of the Fort as large as elephants and even some as large as houses, were blown into the air and cascaded into the sea.'

- 16 The commander of the Macao force, Lopo Sarmiento de Carvalho, spent the night before the impending attack attempting to strengthen the fortifications while rallying his men to fight to the last. In the initial onslaught Cornelius Rejersen was wounded and replaced by Captain Hans Ruffijn who was successful in overcoming 150 Portuguese musketeers, entrenched at the beach under the command of António Rodrigues Cavalinho, and entered the city but found themselves within artillery range of the Monte Fort where they suffered heavy bombardment. From the ramparts, a Jesuit priest Padre Jerónimo Rho fired a cannon which landed on a barrel of gunpowder in the midst of the Dutch formation causing chaos and the death of many. An alternative strategy to capture Guia Hill was frustrated by the resistance of 30 Macanese and African slaves whose ferocity and effective use of terrain forced the Dutch to abandon their efforts. A counter-attack was mounted using the 50 men of the São Tiago garrison supported by other Portuguese defenders.
- 17 The Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies Company, Jan Pieterszoon Coen, attributed the Portuguese victory ostensibly to the deployment of African slaves, many of whom were granted their freedom following the battle. Chinese officials carried the heads of the slain Dutchmen to Canton as proof of Portuguese service in defending Chinese territory and apparently relayed an account of the African slaves' bravery as well, causing the impressed Provincial Admiral (*haidaofushi* 海道副使) to send a gift of 200 piculs of rice to be distributed among them
- 18 Sometimes is mentioned as *Frol de la Mar*.
- 19 <http://www.macaubusiness.com/news/macau-to-reach-up-to-32-million-visitors-in-2012/15121/>.

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