

# The International (Comintern) and the Macao Harbour Project of 1922-1927

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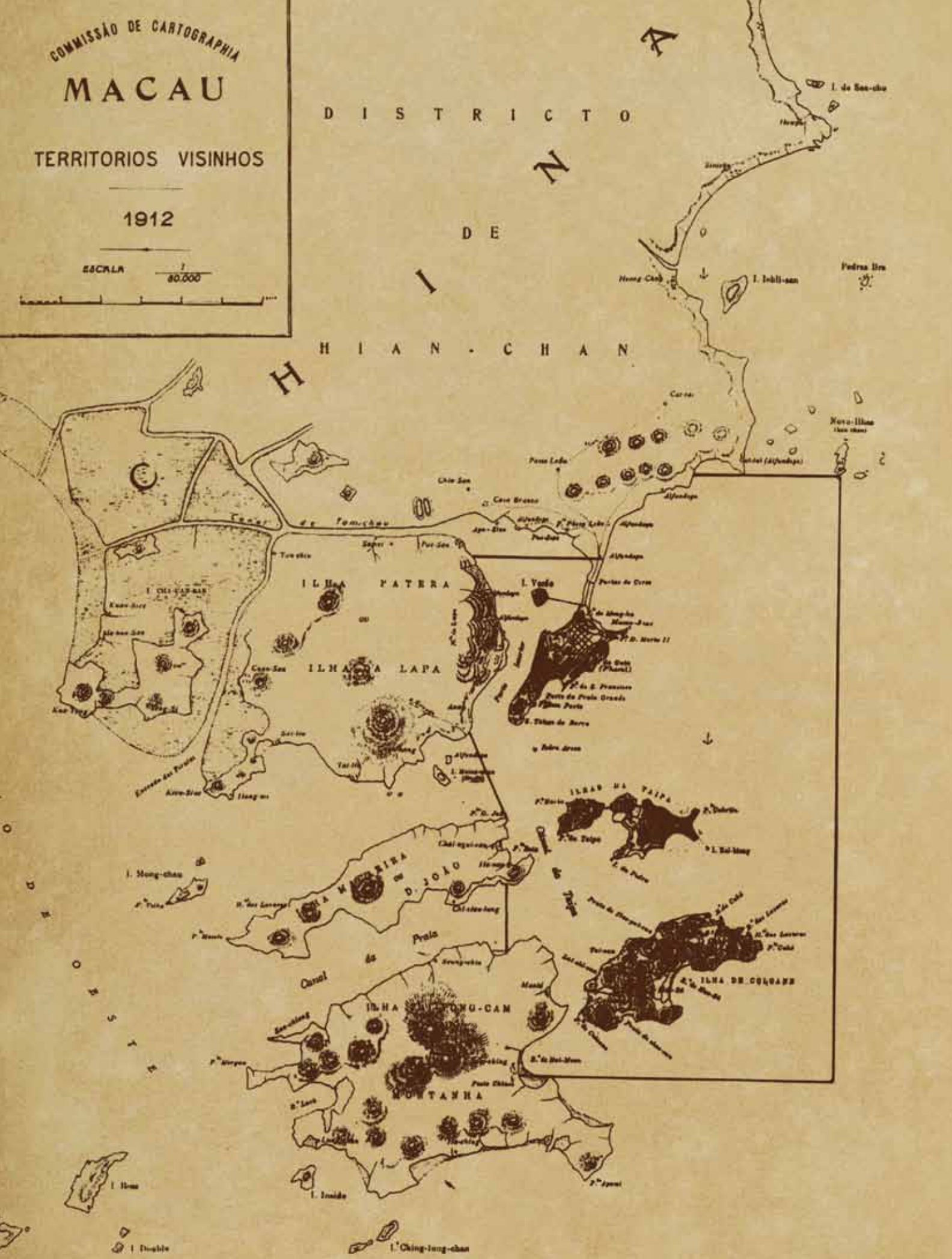
Observing the appearance in Macao between 1922 and 1924 of two of Portugal’s leading political figures of the Portuguese First Republic (1910-1926), provides insight into Macao’s role in the domestic and international struggle to capture control of the Chinese nationalist revolution. Following the foundation of Lenin’s Third International in March 1919, by the autumn Sun Yat Sen 孙逸仙 had re-launched his revolutionary efforts from a Shanghai base. By 1923 Portugal’s General Gomes de Costa and Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues were both in Macao. Their arrival demonstrated a much larger role for Portugal in the global political movements of the 1920s than has heretofore been reported, a role that clearly showed revolutionary change in Portugal could be directly related to similar change in South China.

General Gomes de Costa and Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues represented the opposite ends of the Portuguese political perspective when they were both assigned to Macao from 1922 to 1924. Rodrigues came as a high-level cadre of the left-wing of the Portuguese Republican Party (PRP); Gomes de Costa came as the conservative, right-wing head of a military mission to



Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues, Macao Governor 1923-1925.

the Far East. Dr. Rodrigues arrived as governor on 5 January 1923, exactly three weeks before the 26 January Sun-Joffe manifesto that led to the Comintern funding of Sun Yat Sen and to the creation of the Revolutionary Army in Canton that was to unify China.<sup>1</sup> Rodrigues facilitated the commencement of Macao’s long-overdue and critically important harbour improvement project (‘Outer Harbour Project’), the objective of which was to convert Macao from a silting backwater to a major international port, a project that had been delayed well over half a century.



Map of Macao and neighbouring territories, 1912.

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Two maps of the Macao peninsula illustrate the dramatic changes implemented under the project. A map from 1912 represents the harbour as it looked immediately prior to the Outer Harbour Project in 1922, while that from 1927 shows the projected final 1927 configuration. Not shown is the deep channel dredged from the Outer Harbour into the old Inner Harbour, which had drastically silted up since its days in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century of being one of China’s most active and famous ports.

The Macao Port of 1922 was to be tied into a huge hinterland, which began with the mouth of the West River just to the west of Macao, and extended back into Yunnan Province nearly to the city of Kunming. Early publicity for the new port project from the early 1920s had emphasised its role with respect to the West River Valley and South China Regions. River and rail transport links for the Pearl River Delta for the period show even more clearly the potential function of the port. Not only was the West River directly navigable up to Canton, but the Pearl River Delta region was only served by one significant rail line, the relatively new Hong Kong-Canton railway. As part of the 1922 Macao Harbour Project another planned rail link was to extend from Macao up to a river port not far from Whampoa.

General Gomes de Costa, who had led the two Portuguese divisions in the First World War under command of General Richard Haking of Britain’s 11<sup>th</sup> Corps in France, was Portugal’s most renowned military officer. He was sent on a military tour of Asia by Arthur Tamagnini Barbosa de Sousa, the head of Portugal’s Colonial Administration only months after Tamagnini’s older brother João Tamagnini Barbosa, who had been the second ranking figure in the Sidónio Pais regime of 1917-1918, had narrowly missed being assassinated during a left wing coup of October 1921. This coup had seen the execution of the two ‘fathers of the Portuguese Republic’ the naval officers Machado Santos and Carlos de Maia. Carlos de Maia had been the Macao governor from 1914-1916 who Sun Yat Sen had personally thanked for his support during the ‘third revolution’ against Yuan Shikai 袁世凯 during the same period. He had also been a key figure in the push for the resuscitation of Macao’s harbour beginning in the summer of 1914. General Gomes de Costa would return to Portugal in early May 1924, just weeks before Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues was recalled from Macao; and

within 24 months after returning to Lisbon Gomes de Costa would lead the legendary coup of 28 May 1926 that overthrew the Portuguese First Republic, ushering in 48 years of single party rule that became known as the *Estado Novo*.

Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues, a long-term colleague of the leftist Democratic Party of Afonso Costa, had been head of the Portuguese penal system as the new Portuguese Republican government implemented a vicious anti-clerical and anti-monarchist campaign following its October 1910 *coup d’état* against the 350-year-old Bragança Dynasty. After General Gomes ended the First Republic in May 1926, Rodrigues would be sidelined from any government post and with the advent of Salazar in 1928 would never again hold governmental office. He would, however, continue to publish articles in the Portuguese language newspaper of Macao, *Notícias de Macau*, owned by the Republican Herman Machado Monteiro, until Rodrigues’ own death in January 1963.<sup>2</sup> Notable is the first of a serial article of 5 January 1960 entitled, ‘*Considerações a propósito das posições portuguesas no Oriente*’ (Considerations with respect to the position of the Portuguese in the Orient).<sup>3</sup> Monteiro, a follower of Afonso Costa who had arrived in Macao after the overthrow of the First Republic, took full control of *A Voz de Macau* on the passing of the stalwart Republican Rosa Duque in 1947, converting it to *Notícias de Macau*<sup>4</sup> and publishing it until at least 1963.

It is reasonable to conclude that the Macao Harbour Project of 1922 to 1927 was linked to the creation of the political and military infrastructure that would allow Sun Yat Sen to build a viable military base in South China. Had not the Chinese political structure radically changed with Sun’s death in March 1925, the Harbour Project could have been subsequently used by Sun’s Comintern-financed political organisation to support the unification of China. Hong Kong, of course, was under British control, at a time when Britain had not yet given up hopes on the Northern Government in Beijing, against which Sun Yat Sen was a dedicated opponent. Britain would not pivot towards the KMT (Kuomintang 国民党) government of Sun Yat Sen and Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi 蒋介石) until late 1926 after the KMT seizure of Wuhan.

The commencement of the Harbour Project directly corresponds to the pull-out of Japanese troops

from the Russian Far East Provinces in October 1922, under American pressure, which finally gave Soviet Bolsheviks direct access to Vladivostok, the crucially important port of the former Russian Empire on the Pacific Coast. The finalisation of the new Macao port came in the late fall of 1926 and did not support the launch of Chiang Kai-shek’s Northern Expedition in July of the same summer, but would have been able by the summer of 1927. The Comintern Political and Military advisers to Sun Yat Sen, respectively, Mikhail Gruzenberg (Borodin) and Vasily Bluecher (Galen), had not agreed with the summer-1926 date that Chiang selected for the launch of the Northern Expedition, and wished to delay a year. By that time in 1927 the Macao Harbour Project would have been complete and able to support the Comintern’s unification strategy. But, military coups across the globe that took place in China, Beijing and Lisbon by Generals Chiang Kai-shek on 20 March 1926, Zhang Zuolin 张作霖 on 15 April 1926,<sup>5</sup> and Gomes de Costa on 28 May 1926, effectively eliminated the possibility that the Bolshevik-controlled port of Vladivostok, and the Chinese Eastern Railway that linked it to the Soviet heartland, could also allow the Bolsheviks access to the deepwater port that was being built in South China at Macao.

This chronologically supported assessment is strengthened by noting the absence of corroborating data from virtually all secondary sources reporting on Bolshevik military aid to the KMT: lacking is an adequate discussion of the background of the key Soviet military adviser to Chiang Kai-shek, Vasily Bluecher, known during his China assignment as ‘Galen.’ Given his influence it is remarkable that the popular histories of China have not provided an exhaustive biography. Howard Boorman in his thoroughly researched *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China* does not provide a separate entry.<sup>6</sup> Immanuel Hsu’s *The Rise of Modern China* gives him two short entries, referring to him predominantly by his pseudonym in China of ‘Galen.’<sup>7</sup> Jonathan Spence describes Bluecher and his fellow advisors to the Whampoa military academy as ‘highly skilled veterans’ asserting that Bluecher advised Chiang Kai-shek in his defeat of leftist rival Chen Jiongming 陈炯明 in February-March of 1925 as Sun Yat Sen was dying.<sup>8</sup> Leng and Palmer give him only one entry, crediting him with ‘the rise of the new Kuomintang Army, well-trained in both revolutionary principles and military tactics.’<sup>9</sup> Conrad Brandt

provides nothing more than ‘while in China, Blucher went under the pseudonym of Galen. Even Blucher may have been a pseudonym.’<sup>10</sup> Dan Jacobs provides substantially more data with the major disclosure being that while rumors had him as a Frenchman or captured ‘Austrian general of noble birth’ who ‘converted to communism during the revolution,’ but actually he was ‘a Russian peasant who had joined the Bolsheviks in 1916. For his services during the civil war, he was four times awarded the Order of the Red Banner...and came out of the civil war regarded as one of the Red Army’s future leaders.’<sup>11</sup> None of these reports, and others, in the leading secondary literature gets to the core of the man that was central to the creation of the KMT’s National Revolutionary Army. It was this Chiang Kai-shek led army, of course, that successfully conducted the Northern Expedition of 1926, won for the KMT its key Yangtze River Valley bastion that stretched from Wuhan to Shanghai, and was the training ground of China’s most renowned Nationalist and Communist political military leaders, among whom numbered Lin Biao 林彪, Ye Jianying 叶剑英 and Zhou Enlai 周恩来.

Frederick Modlhammer, a German author published in Tokyo in 1939, who is unlikely to be quoted by mainline academic researchers, provided a more pithy report which asserted that Bluecher was one of Five Field Marshals of the Soviet Army, was commander-in-chief of the Soviet Far Eastern Army and had assisted Soviet minister Lev Karakhan in May 1924 to obtain Chinese acquiescence to a permanent Soviet troop presence in Outer Mongolia and Soviet control (not White Russian control) of the Chinese Eastern Railway.<sup>12</sup> Bluecher would arrive in Canton in October 1924,<sup>13</sup> after having successfully acquired his Chinese Eastern Railroad-Vladivostok supply route for the army he was building for the KMT in Canton. Bluecher’s triumph in the Russian Civil War had been to destroy the army of the White Russian head of the Omsk Government, Admiral Kolchak, and win Siberia for the Bolsheviks as the Commander-in-Chief of Soviet forces in the Far East. After these stunning successes, he was dispatched to assist Chiang Kai-shek and direct the KMT armies and the graduates of the Soviet-financed Whampoa Military Academy in October 1924, one year after the arrival in Canton of the head of the Comintern Mission to China, Mikhail Gruzenberg. Known as ‘Borodin’ in China, he was more widely known in his American base in Chicago as ‘Mike Berg’.





Generall Tamagnini de Abreu, Lieutenant General Sir R. Hacking, General Gomes da Costa. (<http://aespeciaria.blogspot.com/2011/06/curiosidades-portuguesas-1926-1930.html>; and [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/da/Generais\\_Tamagnini\\_Hacking\\_e\\_Gomes\\_da\\_Costa.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/da/Generais_Tamagnini_Hacking_e_Gomes_da_Costa.jpg)).

His American-born wife, a Chicago school teacher, Fanny Orluk, accompanied him. The Bluecher (‘Galen’) who Modlhammer had described would certainly have found value in a Macao’s new deep-water port in South China. Not under the direct control of Britain, it could serve as a southern terminus for supplies that were being shipped out of Vladivostok for the revolutionary base that he himself was building in South China.<sup>14</sup>

One of the generals who undoubtedly opposed the potential use of Macao as a base to support Comintern efforts was Portugal’s General Gomes da Costa, who with General’s Chiang Kai-shek and Chang Tso-lin launched military actions in March, April and May of 1926 that effectively forestalled for the next several decades the capture of the Chinese nationalist movement by Bolsheviks. The *Hong Kong Telegraph* on 1 June 1926<sup>15</sup> displayed General Gomes da Costa’s full regalia of honors, including the KCMG Order of St. Michael and St. George. It pointedly noted his assignment to Macao in 1924 and emphasised on his ‘being much entertained’ in Hong Kong.

COMMON INTERESTS OF PORTUGUESE AND CHINESE REPUBLICANS

The major issue faced by the Portuguese authorities who dealt with Macao between 1849 and 1911 was the inability to come to agreement with the Qing Dynasty over the borders of the jurisdiction. Prior to 1849, Portugal had paid a ground-rent to the Qing for the purposes of occupying the Portuguese city on Macao, which did not extend further than halfway up the Peninsula. Faced with a collapsing economic system following the opening of Hong Kong in 1842, the Lisbon Royal government had declared Macao a ‘free port’ on 20 November 1845 and sent an aggressive naval commander to Macao as governor, Captain João Maria Ferreira da Amaral, to ‘assert absolute autonomy of the colony.’<sup>16</sup> His will was evident from the arm he had lost to cannon-shot 22 years before during Portugal’s failing effort to keep Brazil from independence. He forced the Qing representatives from the City, ended the ground rent, and enforced Portuguese jurisdiction to the narrow isthmus that separated the city from the mainland. On 22 August 1849, Amaral was assassinated near the Portos do Cerco at the barrier on the peninsula.

For the next 40 years Portuguese authorities attempted to obtain recognition from the Qing for their control of Macao as a colony, which was finally granted grudgingly and incompletely on 1 December 1887. Requirements to control the opium trade forced the British head of the Chinese Imperial Customs Service, Sir Robert Hart, to extract resented concessions from the Qing in order to obtain a customs house for Macao similar to the one provided in Hong Kong at Kowloon. The Qing recognised Portuguese control of ‘Macao and its dependencies’ as any of Portugal’s other overseas territories; and the Portuguese pledged never to surrender Macao to any other power without the approval of the Qing. The actual boundaries of Macao and its dependencies were to be settled at a later date. The Qing and the Portuguese never reached agreement on the boundaries.

Portugal sought a jurisdiction that would allow for control of the waterways and harbours on both sides of the Peninsula, as well as the harbour side of Lappa Island which represented a position relative to the Inner Harbour of Macao similar to that which Kowloon represented to Hong Kong’s harbour. The Qing saw Macao as extending up to the old city gate and without

rights to control the surrounding waterways. By 1898, as Britain gained control over the huge stretch of land in the New Territories and related islands that more than doubled the size of the ceded island of Hong Kong, and as France obtained control over an equally large territory at Guangzhouwan on the Leizhou Peninsula in southern Guangdong, Portuguese negotiators were perplexed over their inability to obtain control over boundaries that would incorporate the needed harbour, water resources and defensive positions for Macao. Perfunctory and unsuccessful negotiations followed the Boxer Rebellion of 1900, and continued up past the deaths of the Empress Dowager Cixi 慈禧太后 and Guangxu 光绪 Emperor in 1908. By 1909 the boundary issues remained unsettled.

At the heart of the boundary question was the economic life-blood of the city, the harbour from

which its origin derived. Without clear authority over the Macao waterways, and with continuing Qing opposition to any harbour maintenance or improvements that would suggest Portuguese sovereignty, the harbour was not only silting up, but it could not be converted into a facility that could handle ocean transport. Shipping in the 19<sup>th</sup> century had of course advanced from smaller sailing craft with less draft to large steam vessels requiring deep water harbours. In the 40 years between 1849 and 1888 Macao had already lost its position as the gateway of China to Hong Kong, Shanghai and a number of other major Chinese cities. The inability for Macao to deploy a modernised harbour would prevent it from forever competing. However, by 1922 Portugal’s previous inability to create a modern harbour in Macao improved dramatically.

Military procession of General Gomes da Costa and his troops after the 28 May 1926 Revolution. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Desfile\\_de\\_tropas\\_28\\_de\\_Maio\\_1926.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Desfile_de_tropas_28_de_Maio_1926.jpg)).



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Before this date, even after the Portuguese and Chinese Republics had been successively established in 1910 and 1911, the historian Montalto de Jesus had reported that ‘as sister-republics Portugal and China have been more than ever at loggerheads so far as Macao is concerned.’ But, he inexplicitly immediately described the fact that after *over a half a century* of problems with China over the delimitation of Macao’s boundaries and contention with Guangdong Authorities over the inner harbour that ‘Macao has, for a wonder, been wide-awake as to devising new plans for utilising the outer harbour.’ Though he recognised that the inner harbour, which had been a source of much conflict, ‘can hardly be made to answer the purpose of being thoroughly adapted to the requirements of modern trade and shipping,’ he did not present a cogent explanation of how the decision to implement the project to create the new Outer Harbour, which also incorporated significant improvements to the Inner Harbour, was undertaken. After decades of Chinese opposition to improvements, he merely stated, ‘Under British auspices an understanding was arrived at, in 1921, for resuming the [inner harbour] reclamation works.’ Other than mentioning Lord Curzon’s issuance of instructions to the British consul in Canton who mediated,<sup>17</sup> he provided no other details.

THE REPUBLICAN GOVERNORS OF MACAO

There have been few, if any, cogent explanations for how the Macao authorities gained the confidence necessary to move forward with the Harbour Project of 1922-1927, the project that would permit the city to survive the Pacific War years, and then prosper in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The commentator Montalto de Jesus recognised the work of only three Governors under whose auspices the harbour project was completed, those being Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues (1923-1925), Colonel Manuel Maia Magalhães (1925-1926),<sup>18</sup> and Sanches de Miranda (1912-1914). He asserted that the latter used ‘several millions of dollars for the new harbour works.’<sup>19</sup> But Montalto did not provide the dates for the governor’s terms, describe their political relationships with Lisbon and Canton, or detail any of their biographic data. Stunningly, he omitted the key period, 1914 and 1923, when the entire project was conceived and launched. Of Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues and his arrival in Macao, which appeared timed to launch

successfully the initial construction of the Harbour Works project Montalto, provided no background. As for Sanches de Miranda, similarly to Rodrigues, he had been a director of one component of the PRP’s prison system (Lisbon) up until 27 October 1911.<sup>20</sup>

Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues arrived in Macao as Governor in early 1923 precisely at the time when Sun Yat Sen was beginning his formal relationship with the Comintern. Like the PRP revolutionary leader and then Portuguese President, José de Almeida, he had been trained in medicine at Coimbra University, and then joined the colonial service as a medical officer, returning to Lisbon in the mid-1900s. When the PRP seized power in October 1910 he rapidly ascended its governing ranks, becoming Civil Governor of Aveiro and then of Oporto, during the time when his fellow colonial doctor and Coimbra graduate, José de Almeida, was Minister of the Interior in the Provisional Republican (‘PRP’) Government and had the power to make such appointments.

By 1912 he had also been appointed to head the Portuguese penitentiary system while severe repression was ongoing against monarchists and the Roman Catholic clergy. Jesus Pabón in 1961 suggested that his brother, Daniel Rodrigues, had headed the ‘Formiga Branca,’ the vigilante militia that had grown from the Carbonária that operated as the Portuguese Republican secret police and enforcement system.<sup>21</sup> Rui Ramos in 1994 supported Pabón in reporting that the Rodrigues family members were close supporters of Afonso Costa, the dominant personality of the Provisional government. In Afonso Costa’s 1913 elected government, there were, in fact, three Rodrigues who relationship remains to be determined: Rodrigo Rodrigues was Minister of the Interior, Daniel Rodrigues was Civil Governor of Lisbon, and Urbano Rodrigues served as Costa’s secretary.<sup>22</sup> Ramos noted a particularly frigid relationship between Britain and Portugal during this period: Britain had imposed a diplomatic freeze on the new Portuguese Republic in 1913 as a result of the hostility of the British public following continued publication of disparaging news on the treatment of political prisoners. The deposed King of Portugal, Dom Manuel, remained exiled in Britain, while the Marques de Soveral, the former Bragança ambassador to Britain, retained the place at Britain’s court which was denied to the Portuguese Republican ambassador, Teixeira Gomes.<sup>23</sup>

A British Protest Committee under the Chairmanship of the Earl of Lytton had been established to pressure the British government to address the horrendous conditions under which the Portuguese Republican Party kept its political prisoners. It estimated there were at least ‘two thousand helpless victims of political persecution’. These included members of all classes: ‘aristocrats, landowners, military officers, advocates, priests, private soldiers, small trades folk, artisans and peasants united in a common brotherhood of misery.’<sup>24</sup> The PRP leadership responsible for this political repression included Afonso Costa, Álvaro de Castro and Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues. Rodrigues was identified specifically as the ‘ex-Governor of the prison’ which had abusively held a prominent Monarchist, Dom João d’Almeida,<sup>25</sup> who was the ‘chivalrous descendant of a family whose exploits for many hundred years—from the Crusades down to the Peninsular War—figure brilliantly in the history of Portugal.’

In the Portuguese penal system, up until protests during this period ended the practice, prisoners were required to wear a ‘mask-like hood with three small holes for eyes and mouth.’<sup>26</sup> On occasions when the senior PRP leadership visited the Penitentiary for inspection, prisoners ‘were ordered to remove their hoods at the sound of Doctor Rodrigues’ whistle’ while they listened to an oration from the Doctor ‘advising the prisoners to repent their crimes and cultivate a fitting gratitude for their magnanimous rulers.’ Aubrey F.G. Bell, the noted English observer of Portugal, who was acting as a correspondent of the *Morning Post*, on 23 February 1913 wrote,

...except for the fact that the convicts in the Penitenciária—criminals and Royalists alike—now no longer wear the hood, which, by all the laws of civilisation, should never have been inflicted upon political prisoners, the miserable situation of the Royalist prisoners remains unchanged.<sup>27</sup>

High-level protest continued in Britain throughout the early Portuguese Republican period. Adeline ‘Duchess of Bedford’ acted as Vice Chairman for the British protest committee, along with M.P. Aubrey Herbert, while the renowned historian George Trevelyan, the grandson of William Gladstone, and the noted Foreign Office African-expert Sir Harry Johnston, who had worked with Lord Salisbury on the consolidation of the

British position in Southern Africa, also participated. The influential group accused the PRP leadership of Afonso Costa of extra-legal repression of its political opposition through the deployment of 32,000 Carbonários as a secret police and vigilante network. This, of course, may have been run by Dr. Rodrigues’ brother if Pabón is to be believed. Monarchists, clergy and anyone who voiced opposition to the PRP policies ran the risk of a two-year incarceration in the most vile conditions while awaiting trial, with a common subsequent criminal sentence of *six years in solitary confinement* followed by a ten-year banishment to the colonies.

*The Macao Port of 1922 was to be tied into a huge hinterland, which began with the mouth of the West River just to the west of Macao, and extended back into Yunnan Province nearly to the city of Kunming.*

The rationale for Rodrigues’ appointment as Governor of Macao in January 1923 has yet to be definitely determined. But assuredly his appointment was undertaken while his influential medical colleague from Coimbra and the overseas medical service, Dr. José de Almeida, was President of Portugal (5 October 1919 to 5 October 1923). Rodrigues was appointed Governor of Macao without ever having held a previous overseas command position. President José de Almeida had been the leader of the Evolutionists, the middle position party of the three political parties that emerged from the post-1910 coup breakup of the Partido Republicano Português (PRP). Previously, immediately after the German declaration of war on Portugal of 11 March 1916, Almeida had served as both Portuguese premier (15 March 1916 to 25 April 1917) and Minister of the Colonies;<sup>28</sup> significantly, as previously mentioned, he had been Minister of the



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Interior under the unelected and post-coup Provisional Government from 1910 to 1911.

Within three weeks of Rodrigues’ 5 January 1923 arrival in Macao,<sup>29</sup> Sun Yat Sen and Adolph Joffe in Shanghai issued their joint declaration on 26 January which would initiate Comintern financial, political and military support for Sun Yat Sen’s KMT. Shortly after arrival in Macao, Rodrigues was negotiating with Sun Yat Sen’s representatives in Canton, Liao Zhongkai 廖仲愷 and C.C. Wu (Wu Chaoshu 伍朝枢) on arrangements to allow the Macao port project to move forward. From Shanghai Sun Yat Sen himself arrived back in Canton on 21 February 1923 one month after Rodrigues’s arrival to set up his third and final Canton Government. In the one instance that has been located confirming the Rodrigues-Canton negotiations, Pe. Régis Gervais (writing under the pseudonym of Eudore de Colombar) and Nascimento Moura in a caption to a photograph stated that:

In 1923 the Governor Dr. R. Rodrigues held a conference in Macao with the Portuguese Consul in Canton, Dr. F. Horta, and the Minister of Finance, Liao Zhong-kai and Foreign Secretary C.C. Wu of the Government of Sun Yat Sen.<sup>30</sup>

Following the negotiations with the Sun regime, Rodrigues was ready to sign a delimitation agreement with the leader of the Canton Government, Sun Yat Sen; but supposedly because of the existence of two governments in China (in Beijing and Canton), the negotiations were not finalised.<sup>31</sup> Yet the Harbour Project moved forward without complication from the Canton government, despite a half-century of antagonism over the issue.

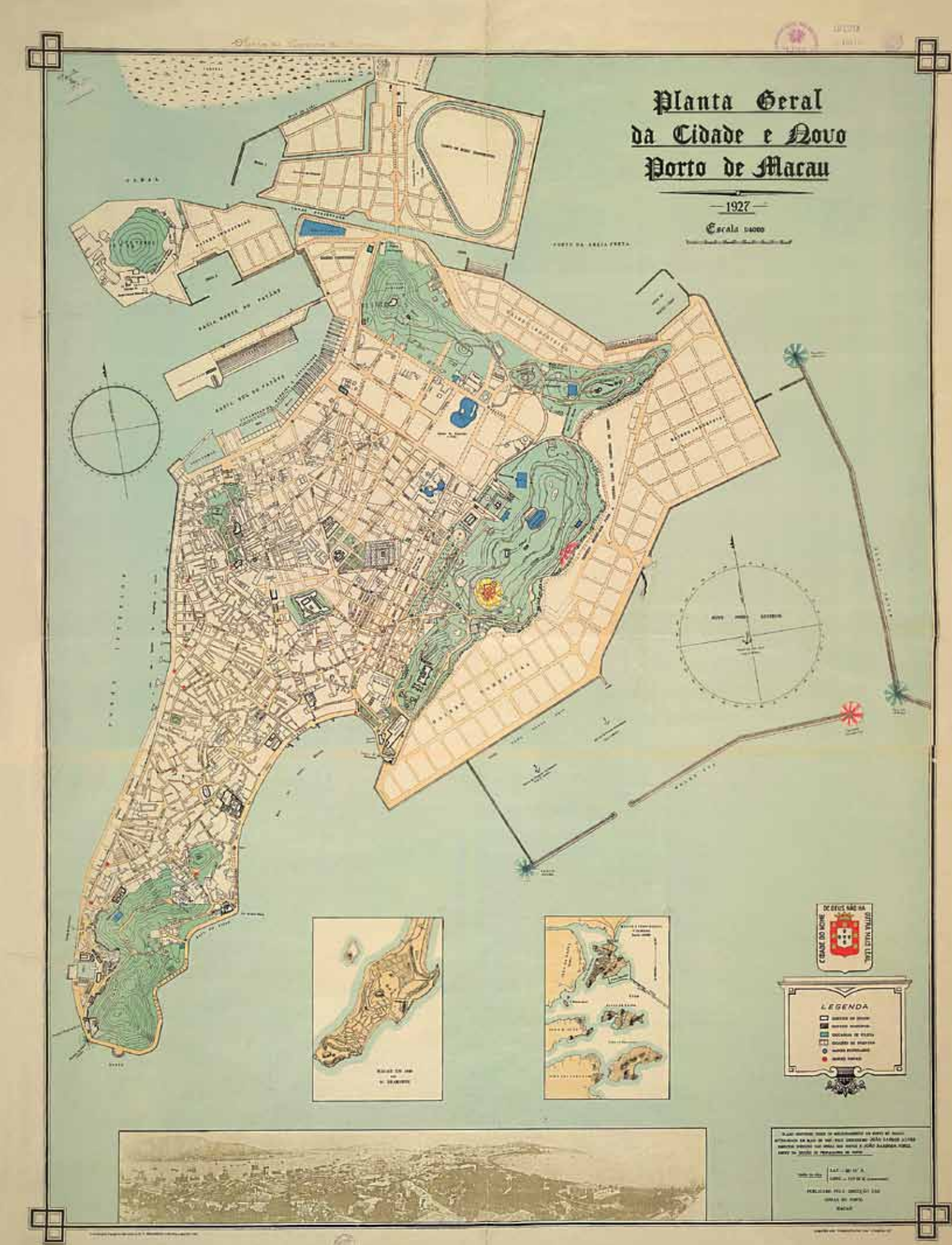
In reality the ‘two government’ issue which supposedly prevented the delimitation treaty seemed specious. The Northern Chinese government in Beijing which Sun Yat Sen hoped to overthrow had an increasingly weak position between 1923 and 1928 while Sun and the KMT’s military strength in Canton grew spectacularly. Moura finalised the Gervais text from which we quote in 1927, and by the next year, in July 1928, China was nominally unified under Sun Yat Sen’s KMT, albeit led by Chiang Kai-shek. The Northern Government at that point no longer existed and the most important components of the Harbour Project were complete. By the end of the year 1928, Portugal had signed a new treaty with China, which mentioned nothing with regard to the Macao border

delineation, but in which there also was no objection raised to the Harbour Works Project, which had just been completed. Given that the Harbour Project did move forward in 1923, using the existence of the Northern Government to report that Sun’s government was unwilling to sign a public agreement on the Macao Harbour delimitation is an unusual assertion. It suggests substantially less antagonism between the two Chinese governments in Beijing and Canton than should have been expected, and implies Sun Yat Sen was supporting the authority of a government he was attempting to overthrow.

What of General Gomes da Costa? He was particularly close to key elements of the British Military. He had commanded both divisions, sequentially, of the Portuguese Expeditionary Corp (‘CEP’) that had fought in France from early 1917 to 1918 in the British Army’s 11<sup>th</sup> Corp under General Richard Haking. Shown below during his time as commander of the Portuguese Second Division he stands with Tamagnini de Abreu, the overall Commander of the Portuguese Expeditionary Corps (CEP) and Lt. General Sir R. Hacking [sic] of the British 11<sup>th</sup> Corps to which the Portuguese Second Division was attached in 1918.<sup>32</sup>

For his efforts on the Western Front he appears to have been awarded the British decoration KCMG<sup>33</sup> in the fall of 1917. The Portuguese CEP had been an instrument of the mutual rapprochement of the Partido Republicano Português (PRP) with Britain. While some articulated the seemingly specious assertion that Portugal needed to keep its African territories from being ‘lost to Germany,’ and therefore joined the Allies, in reality Britain was in need of Portuguese: manpower on the Western Front and the seventy-six German ships sheltering in Portuguese harbours. Britain had the capability to push home its interests: while Germany in 1917 had no capability to remove Portugal’s African colonies from Portuguese jurisdiction, Britain certainly did. Established under the unity government of the key PRP leaders Afonso Costa and Rodrigo Rodrigues’ associate, Antonio José d’Almeida, in 1916, the Portuguese effort in France by 1917-1918 was administratively organised by Norton de Matos as Minister of War. He was a PRP veteran who would later be Grandmaster of the Portuguese Freemasons and a long-time opponent of the Salazar

General plan of the city and the new port of Macao, 1927





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regime; he eventually ran for Portuguese president in 1948 at the age of 81 as part of MUD (Movimento de Unidade Democrática).

While General Gomes de Costa had contact with Mousinho de Albuquerque and other monarchists in Mozambique before World War One, his institutional pedigree as a protégé of leading PRP personalities seemed assured. But in addition to the links to Britain, Gomes de Costa’s subordinate position to General Fernando Tamagnini de Abreu e Silva, who had overall responsibility for the two Portuguese divisions in the field, suggests a link to the other Tamagnini personalities who were tied to Macao, Mozambique’s key port city of Lourenço Marques and Sidónio Pais, the coup leader of December 1917 who had overthrown the leading leftist Republicans Afonso Costa (then Prime Minister) and Bernardino Machado (President).

Despite his links to key PRP leaders, within two years after returning from Macao, Gomes da Costa launched the military coup of 28 May 1926 that overthrew the First Portuguese Republic. That coup not only ended any possibility that the new Macao Outer Harbour could be used to support Bolshevik designs in South China, but it firmly attached Portugal to Britain during a time when both International Socialists on the left and National Socialists on the right were raising substantially more threatening profiles to both nations in Europe.

To recap, Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues’ arrival in Macao in January 1923 had been intriguingly timed to coincide with the creation of Macao’s Outer Harbour as the Soviet Comintern financed and provided the political and military support for SunYat-sen’s Third Canton Government. But by May 1924 Rodrigues’ objectives appear to have been cut short. Following

General Gomes da Costa’s return to Portugal on 7 May 1924 it was just three weeks before Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues was himself permanently recalled from the city on the 29<sup>th</sup>.<sup>34</sup> He was officially removed as Macao governor the following year on 24 May 1925.

Subsequent to Gomes da Costa’s 28 May 1926 coup, Rodrigues never regained his political standing in Portugal, but his legacy lived on in Macao under Salazar’s policy of ‘*Tudo pela a nação, nada contra a nação*’. For those interested in seeing his visage first-hand, his portrait his prominently displayed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor museum of the *Santa Casa da Misericórdia* located on the Leal Senado square. It sits along-side the most famous of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century governors of Macao, who include Artur Tamagnini Barbosa (three-time governor from 1918 to 1940), Gabriel Teixeira (governor during the Pacific War, 1940-1947), and Albano de Oliveira (governor as Macao in Postwar period, 1947-1950) among others.

His memory did not disappear from Macao. Not only did Rodrigues publish articles in newspapers in Macao up until his death in 1963, but one of the most prominent avenues in the NAPE, which he helped to create, bears his name. And, one can see through a common internet search that the *Macao Daily Times* reports: ‘Beijing’s “Central Liaison Office (Macao) is situated in Avenida Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues, which was named after the 109<sup>th</sup> Governor of Macao who ruled the then-Portuguese colony from 1923 to 1925.’<sup>35</sup> The address is certainly is a fitting location. This left-of-center Partido Republicano Português (PRP) governor had arrived in Macao precisely at the time when he could have facilitated whatever role Macao was to play in Sun Yat Sen’s new relationship with Vladimir Lenin’s Comintern and the KMT-CCP United Front that followed. **RC**

7 Immanuel C. Y. Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*, pp. 521, 531. Hsü spells his name ‘Blucher’ and ‘Galen’.

8 Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (Hutchinson: London, 1990), p. 339. Spence spells his name ‘Blyukher’.

9 Shao Chuan Leng and Norman D. Palmer, *Sun Yat-sen and Communism*, ed. University of Pennsylvania Foreign Policy Research Institute (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1976), p. 77. Leng spells his name ‘Bluecher’.

10 Conrad Brandt, *Stalin’s Failure in China, 1924-1927* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 111.

11 Dan N. Jacobs, *Borodin: Stalin’s man in China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), p. 164. Jacobs spells his name ‘Blyuckher’.

12 F. Modlhammer, *Moscow’s Hand in the Far East* (Tokyo: Nippon Dempo Tsushinsha, 1939), pp. 50-51.

13 Howard Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen, Reluctant Revolutionary* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1980), p. 259.

14 Bluecher appears to have arrived in October 1924, while Rodrigues had been recalled in May.

15 ‘Portuguese Revolution’. *Hong Kong Telegraph*, 1 June 1926.

16 Montalto de Jesus, *Historic Macao* (Hong Kong/New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 318.

17 Ibid., p. 448.

18 Rodrigues was officially governor from 5 January 1923 to 17 October 1925, although he left Macao on 16 July 1924, while Maia Magalhães was governor from 18 October 1925 to 8 December 1926. For the Rodrigues departure date see *A Pátria*, 19 July 1924, p. 10.

19 Montalto de Jesus, *Historic Macao*, p. 483.

20 <http://www.dre.pt/pdf1s%5C1911%5C11%5C27400%5C46784678.pdf>.

21 Jesus Pabón, *A Revolução Portuguesa*. Manuel Emídio and Ricardo Tavares trans. (Porto: Aster, 1961), p. 171.

22 Rui Ramos, *A Segunda Fundação (1890-1926)*. In José Mattoso (dir.), *História de Portugal*, vol. 6 (Lisbon: Estampa, 1994), p. 466.

23 Ibid., p. 495.

24 Earl of Lytton, Adeline Duchess of Bedford, and Aubrey Herbert, *Portuguese Political Prisoners, a British National Protest*, 5<sup>th</sup> and enlarged ed. (London: Committee of the British National Protest: L. Upcott Gill and son, 1913), p. 35.

25 Ibid., p. 53.

26 Ibid., p. 47.

27 Ibid., p. 54.

28 Manuel Ferreira da Rocha, ‘Parte Oficial, Secretaria Geral do Governo da Província de Macau’. *Boletim Oficial do Governo da Província de Macau* (17 March 1916).

29 *Anuário de Macau. Ano de 1927* (Macao: Imprensa Nacional), p. 57.

30 Eudore de Colomban and Jacinto José do Nascimento Moura, *Resumo da História de Macau* (Macao, Tip. do Orfanato, 1927), p. 134. The original text, which is shown as a caption in the photo reads, ‘O Governador Dr. R. Rodrigues em 1923, conferenciando em Macau, com o Consul em Cantão Dr. F. Horta, com o Ministro das Finanças Liau-Chung-Hoi e o Secretário dos Estrangeiros (C.-C-Vu) do Govêrno de San-Iat-Sin’.

31 Ibid. Moura wrote ‘Em 1923, o Governador Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues, igualmente, esteve prestes a ver assinada a delimitação pelo grande caudilho da República chinesa, Dr. San-Iat-Sin. Porém essas negociações não puderam ter solução, devido à existência de dois governos na China.’

32 General Gomes da Costa, *O Corpo de Exército Português na Grande Guerra A Batalha do Lys, 9 de Abril de 1918* (Porto: Renascença Portuguesa), pp. 17, 33, 41

33 Knight Commander of the Order of St. Michael and St. George.

34 Rosa Duque, *O Combate*, 1 May 1924, p. 1.

35 Sum Choi, ‘Our Desk: Rodrigo Rodrigues rules Macau?’, <http://www.macaudailytimes.com.mo/opinion/40580-our-desk-rodrigo-rodrigues-rules-macau.html>, 19 June 2012.

NOTES

1 Immanuel C. Y. Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Oxford: Oxford University Press 1995), p. 521.

2 P. Manuel Teixeira, *Toponímia de Macau* (Macao: Instituto Cultural de Macau, 1997), vol. II, p. 157.

3 P. Manuel Teixeira, *Imprensa Periódica Portuguesa no Extremo Oriente* (Macao: Notícias de Macau, 1995), p. 210.

4 João Guedes, *Laboratório Constitucional* (Macao: Instituto Português do Oriente, 1995), pp. 191-192.

5 Zhang Zuolin 张作霖 drove Soviet-backed Feng Yuxiang 冯玉祥 from Beijing in April 1926 (Van Dorn, *Twenty Years of the Chinese Republic, Two Decades of Progress*, New York: A. A. Knopf, 1932, p. 21). It was the following year in April 1927 that he sacked the Soviet embassy, seizing and executing Li Dazhao 李大钊 on 28 April 1927.

6 Howard Lyon Boorman, Richard C. Howard, and Janet Krompart, *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), vol. 5, p. 2. Boorman spells his name ‘Bluecher’.