

Abstract of Dissertation entitled

The Street Signs of Macao

Submitted by
Cheong Cheok Kio

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Since its first formal contacts with the Portuguese in 1557, Macao, a city that has experienced the influences of both Chinese and Western cultures for nearly five hundred years, has offered a striking array of art, customs and other cultural traditions. Such cultural traditions are neither Chinese nor Portuguese, but are a product of the blending of the two, combined with the influence of other countries as well. The result is a culture that is unique in the world.

Since as early as 1976, Macao has begun putting full efforts into the protection of its cultural heritage, especially its built heritage. However, certain objects of a smaller scale, which also reflect the unique culture, are overlooked; especially since Macao's return to China, some of them have been damaged due to changing political ideology a good example of which is the design of street signage, the topic of this dissertation.

As an element of the urban landscape, street signs perform the main function of conveying information. However, history has bestowed it other significances as well. Through street signs, we can see social history, urban concepts, the different social values, the way different ethnic groups coexist and also the exchange of culture, art and technology. In a word, the evolution of street signs is also the profile of Macao's socio-political development.

The exploration of street signs is not an end in itself; the aim is to remind people of the cultural relics that surround us, be it big or small, rare or common, which form vital parts of our heritage. It is only when we conserve them and respect its inherent meanings and significance in its truthful completeness and not politically correct selected parts that the uniqueness of Macao's cultural identity can be sustained.

The Street Signs of Macao

By

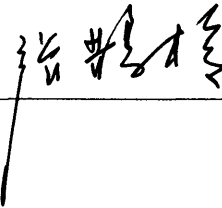
Cheong Cheok Kio

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of Master of Science in Conservation at the University of Hong Kong

September 2003

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation represents my own work, except where due acknowledgement is made, and that it has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this University or to any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualification.

Signed  _____

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Introduction

Historical background

Located on the west coast of the Pearl River in the Guangdong province in China and facing onto the South China Sea, Macao is popularly known as one of the earliest Chinese settlements where “the west meets the east”. Geographically, Macao is made up of 3 districts – the Macao peninsular and the two outlying islands of Taipa and Coloane. (Fig. 1) Not surprisingly, with a total area of 28 square kilometers and a current population of 450 thousand, Macao has the highest density of population in the world. (Fig. 2)

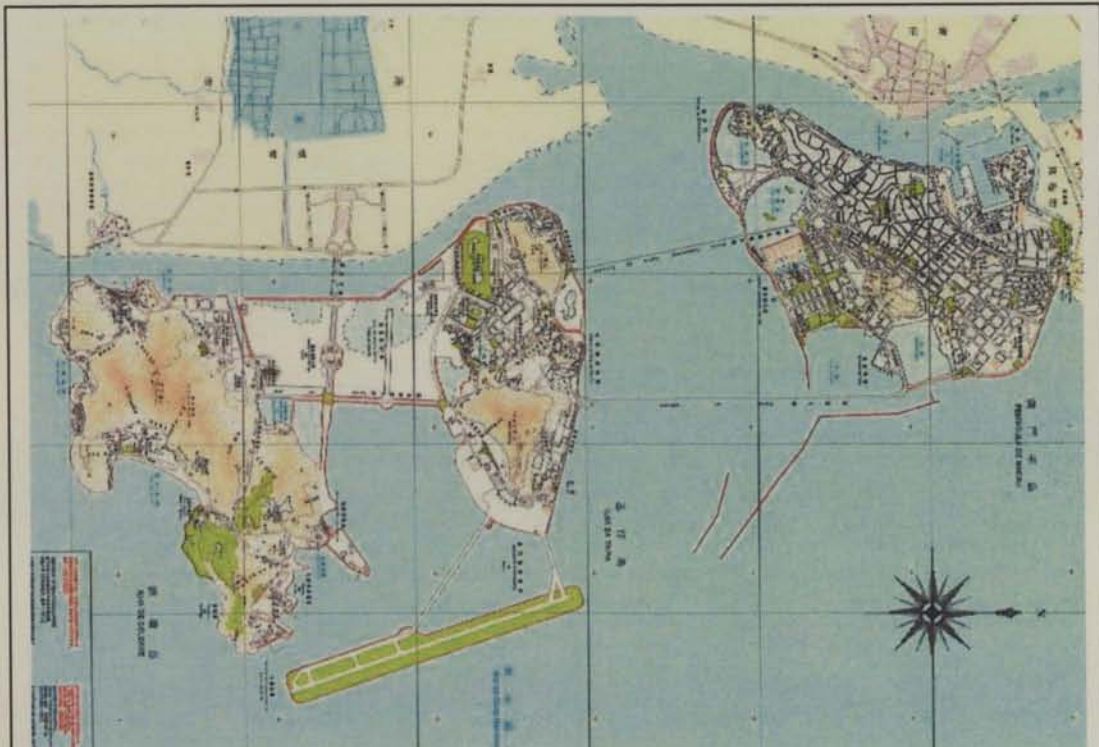


Fig. 1: Map of Macao.



Fig. 2: Aerial view of Macao Peninsula.

At the time of the Jiajing (嘉靖 1522~1566) period of the Ming dynasty, Macao was just a scarcely inhabited fishing village that was under the administration of Xiangshan County (香山縣). After numerous attempts to settle along the coastal areas of China,¹ the Portuguese, finally found a piece of land where the clashes between eastern and western cultures could be somewhat mitigated. In 1553, through bribing local Chinese government officials, the Portuguese were allowed go ashore Macao for drying goods and that was when the Portuguese finally has the excuse to land in Macao. This small area of less than 2.1 square kilometers named HojingAo (濠鏡澳)² is known today as “Macao” where the Portuguese would remain for 450 years. In 1999 Macao was handed back to its motherland, and officially became a Special Administrative Region of the Republic of China. It was the last remaining European colony in Asia.

Since the beginning of the Portuguese settlement in 1557, the Portuguese rigorously developed trading routes between the east and the west. The three main sailing routes: Macao–Goa–Lisbon, Macao–Manila–Mexico and Macao–Nagasaki introduced Macao to the world. Vibrant trading activities attracted a large number of overseas merchants to Macao. By the end of the 16th century, the once obsolete and secluded fishing village of the Ming Dynasty had therefore developed into a fairly established city, a center of various cultures, politics, religions, commerce and trade, and also a gateway through which the western world channeled into the east.

The fellowship between the Chinese and the Portuguese through the past centuries played an important role in shaping the history of Macao. Macao underwent a series of political and social changes. The political power that the Portuguese had over Macao had gradually grew from minimal influence to full participation, before the Portuguese eventually took over as government. In 1587, the Portuguese started paying the Ming government a ground rental fee of 500 Lian (兩) of silver³ for residing in Macao. This landlord and tenant relationship between the two countries signified that Macao was part of Chinese territory from the very beginning. During this era, the Chinese allowed the Portuguese a high degree of autonomy within the city walls of the Macao peninsula. This political situation remained unchanged for many years until 1846 when the Portuguese ceased rent payments and took Macao as a colony. In 1887, via the Treaty of Beijing, Portugal was given legal authority from the Qing emperor to govern Macao. However in 1979, it was mutually agreed with the People's Republic of China that "Macao is the Chinese territory under Portuguese administration, and it will return to PR China on December 20, 1999." In December 1999 Macao became a Special Administrative Region of the PRC after the official handover of political power from the hands of the Portuguese back to the Chinese.

In terms of the urban structure, Macao had gone through phases of urban transformation under the Portuguese government. In the beginning, the Portuguese were only allowed to make temporary dwellings, but urban development began slowly afterwards. By 1557, houses in the Portuguese settlement showed evidence of the usage of timber and brick. Not long afterwards, fortresses and churches were erected. The diffusion of western architecture into Macao gave the cityscape a medieval touch.⁴ Starting in the mid of 19th century, many of Macao's buildings were given a Neo-classical look. As a result building exteriors were highly articulated with western facades, while the interiors showed evident traces of Chinese living concepts. By this time, the Portuguese had already undergone multiple phases of reclamation and occupied two islands, causing Macao's urban boundaries to extend from its initial 2.1 square kilometers to 28 square kilometers. (Fig. 3)

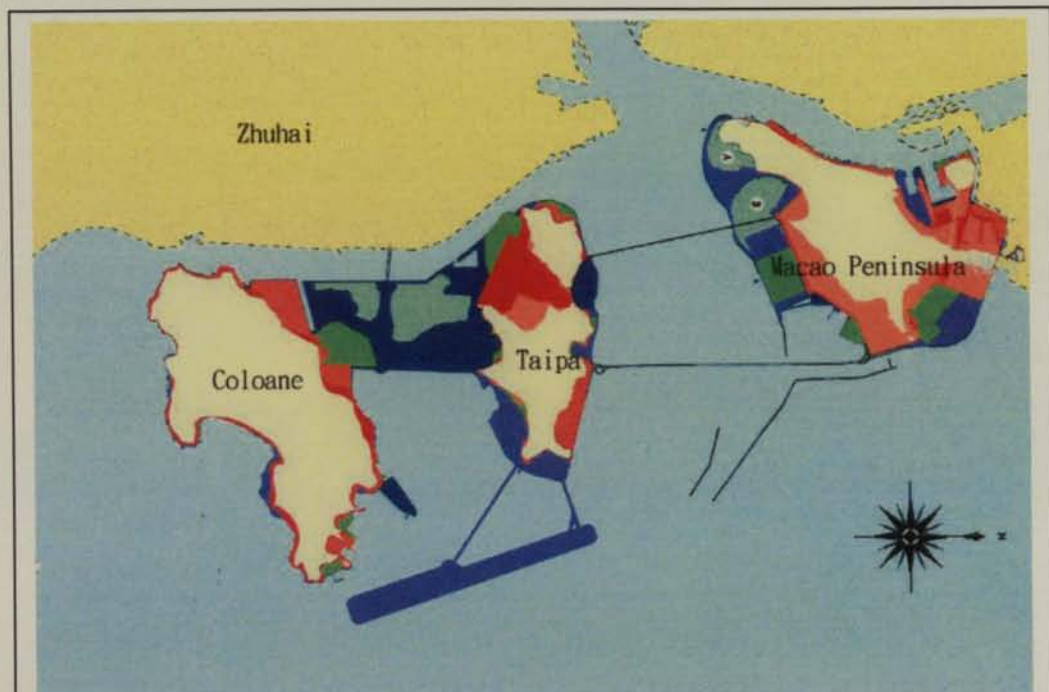


Fig. 3: The expansion of Macao, where the white part showing the original dimension of Macao.

The social infrastructure of Macao had evolved under the shadow of both Portuguese and Chinese. Although the two ethnicities lived in harmony, in reality they were greatly different in their ways of life. Given this socio-cultural complication, Macao's identity has often been cited as having double faces: While the Chinese were building traditional living quarters and burning incense in temples, the Portuguese were building churches in which they gathered for religious services. Two contrasting cultures when placed together under the same "roof" were consequently bound to give birth to a new original mixed culture, for the two cultures, although evolved separately, unavoidably interacted with each other. Those cross-cultural interactions have generated the contemporary Macanese culture, which is exemplified by the world renowned Macanese cuisine and language. The physical representation of this cross-cultural interaction is manifested in the distinctive architecture and urban planning of Macao.

Despite having gone through several periods of minor wars and two World Wars, the city of Macao has managed to escape serious damages and have remained quite intact, owing to its position of neutrality. The urban spaces and many old buildings of Macao are therefore known as the most valuable remaining historical artifacts. In fact, up to the 1940s, the city still possessed the medieval cityscape and a great amount of neo-classic architecture—a landscape that best illustrates the history of Macao. (Figs. 4 & 5)

But between the 1940s and the 1980s, Macao's city structure changed tremendously under the wave of modern development. Facing contemporary perspectives in building design and being pushed by economic hunger for different architectural treatment, the city of Macao launched the heritage conservation program to protect the city's precious cultural heritage.



Fig. 4: The south part of Macao Peninsula in 1940s. (Photo: Macao Historic Archive.)

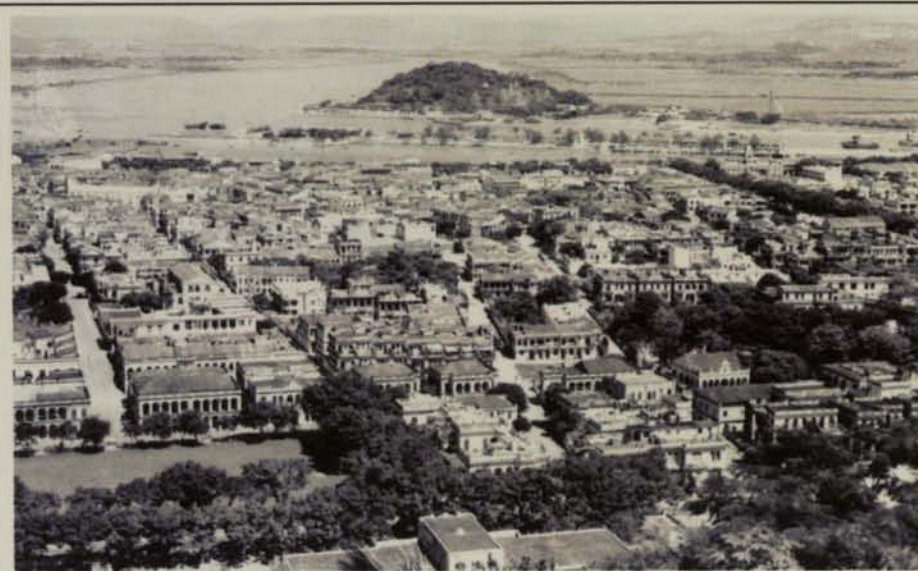
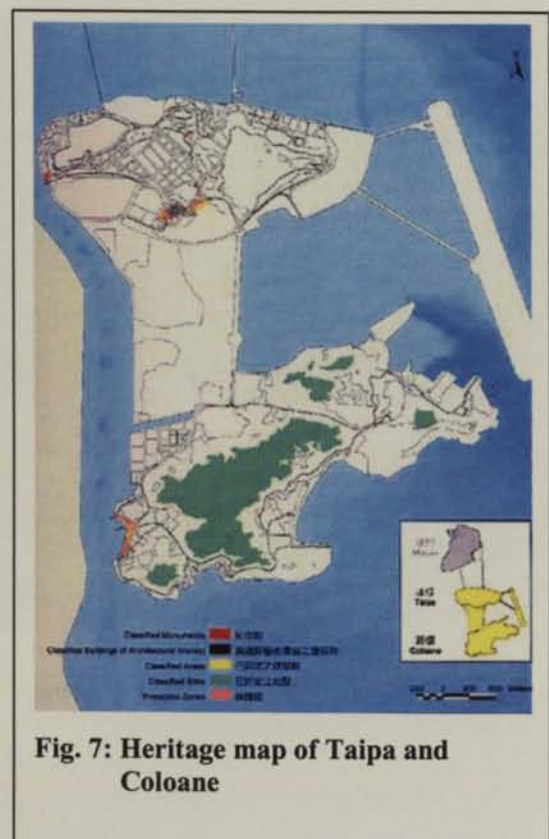


Fig. 5: The middle part of Macao peninsula in 1940s. (Photo: Macao Historic Archive.)

Since 1976, in order to protect its unique legacy, the Government of Macao had legislated for the overall conservation of cultural relics and historical and architectural sites. The Decree no. 56/84/M of 1984 and Decree no. 83/92/M of 1992 on the “Defense of the Architectural, Environmental and Cultural Heritage of Macao” further asserted the protection of Macao’s heritage. Today, 128 buildings are under the protection of the heritage law (Figs. 6 & 7).⁵ More than 25 years of conservation effort has conserved Macao’s ‘double facets of the Sino-Western cultural interflow and assimilation,’ leaving some of Macao’s medieval city spaces and the Neo-classical outlook intact. This differentiates Macao from other cities in China that had western cultural influences.



The result of this conservation effort has also brought Macanese to understand the importance of heritage conservation. Unfortunately, most of their attentions are placed in historic artifacts of a monumental nature, such as religious buildings and fortress; they take little or no interest in cultural artifacts of smaller scales. In contrast to the popular belief of the Macanese, the UNESCO definition of historic artifacts is anything that “pertains the quality to exhibit culture and/ or history of its place of origin for a frame in.” In Macao, these “cultural artifacts” are indeed scattered everywhere. Traditional trademark signs, city landmarks and street signs comprise a great portion of these historic artifacts.

Focus

This dissertation therefore focuses on street signs as an example of significant cultural artifacts, through correlating the history and the development of street signs to draw out its meaning of urban signage and thereafter present its present cultural value.

Before 1999, there were 3 types of street signs in Macao with each type being a reflection of the socio-cultural significance of the period. In Macao’s traditional Chinese residential districts, traditional Chinese street signs--the traditional gateways (Fig. 8), still survive. At the same time, we can see ground-standing Portuguese-style street signs (Fig. 9) in Macao’s public spaces. Moreover, Macao’s emblematic blue-and-white ceramic street signs (Fig. 10) have survived and long existed in harmony with different stages of the city surroundings in which they help manifest the classical beauty of Macao. Above all, the design of this sign is regarded as art, and it is a good example showing the confluence of two different cultures. As a matter of fact, the co-existence of different types of street signs in Macao is not only the result of street and

circulation regulations, but is also the physical reflection of the socio-political transformations of Macao, namely the change in sovereignty from Chinese to Portuguese, and then back to Chinese.



Fig. 8: A Chinese gateway



Fig. 9: A Portuguese street sign

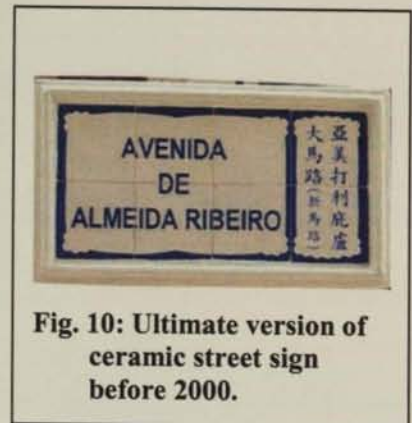


Fig. 10: Ultimate version of ceramic street sign before 2000.

Issues

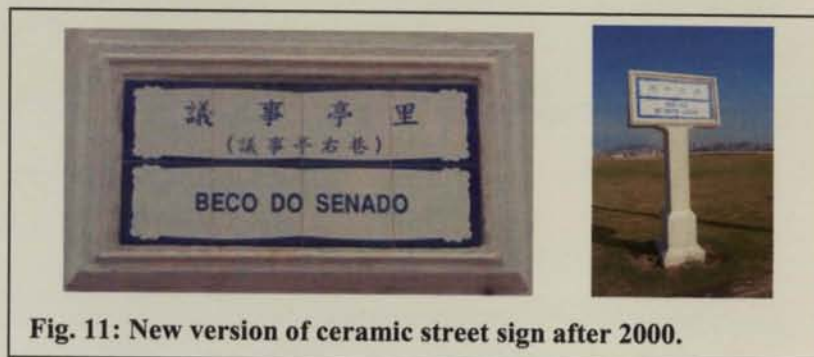


Fig. 11: New version of ceramic street sign after 2000.

However, due to neglect, traditional Chinese street signs, which reflect Chinese residential principles, are being destroyed. At the same time, Portuguese granite street signs are also fast disappearing from public space. Furthermore, as a result of the change in political power in 1999, many elements of the city have

adapted to this change. One of these changes is in the design of Macao's bilingual street signs (Fig. 11), which gives more prominence to Chinese street names. However, this change to an arguably rather less artistic design is however unnecessary if the political intentions behind it could be stripped away.

Theoretical Basis

As stated by Robert Venturi in *Learning from Las Vegas*, "The time has arrived for a scholar to write a doctoral dissertation on signs. He or she would need literary as well as artistic acumen, because the same reason that makes signs Pop Art". And as stated by Philip Davies and Charles Wagner in *Street for All*, "Street name signs make significant contribution to local charm and character. Local variations in design, materials and lettering add richness and variety to the street scenes; where older signs survive, they should usually be retained and restored rather than replaced to maintain a sense of historical continuity." Therefore, the study of street signs, especially street name signs can allow us to understand their value and the importance of leaving them intact so that our old historical and political associations would not be lost. The study of their significance is actually an action of saving the city's memories. Also, through the study, we can gain insights into how new modern street signs can be designed so that they can also be meaningful and make a positive contribution to the urban environment.

Hypothesis

East and west cultural interchange is nevertheless a main characteristic of Macao and there are still numerous historic reminiscences of the Portuguese left in Macao. If all these are removed, the very distinctive characteristics of Macao

will vanish. Perhaps it is only when vision is broadened that the cultural significance, and thus beauty of this city, will be preserved.

Methodology and Structure of Dissertation

As the importance of street signs has long been overlooked, reference material in this subject is therefore limited. This investigation has utilized the existing traditional Chinese and Portuguese street signs as a starting research point. Through references to old photographs and historic documents, the history of street signs is compiled. Prior to the analysis, comparisons are made with development of street signs in China and Portugal, especially through historical comparison and evolution by focusing on the use of materials and forms. Their close historical relationships with Macao allow comparative analysis to be drawn. With the support of the historical research mentioned, the dissertation attempts to explore the effects of Macao's political changes on the design of Macao's street signs.

Macao's cultural landscape is molded by both the Chinese and the Portuguese. Any cultural research on this city must clearly begin with an understanding of the characteristics of these contrasting cultures. The first chapter of this thesis attempts to observe the street sign systems in China and Portugal in order to grasp the basic understanding of the general development of street signs and their influence upon the urban development of Macao.

The second chapter discusses the different stages of the development of street signs in Macao. The discussion is carried out in chronological order, organized into three time frames. The first time frame selected is the period when the Portuguese first settled from 1557 to 1846. Various street signs existed during this period; the Portuguese had their own and so did the Chinese. This

clearly signified the two separate direction of cultural development in Macao. The second timeframe selected for this investigation is the period of colonization, from 1846 to 1999. It is this period during which street signs continuously evolved and could also be divided into three stages: 1) 1846~1920, 2) 1920~1940 and 3) 1940~1999. The third timeframe is the post-1999 period.

The third chapter of this investigation introduces the hardware of street signs and their connotations. The fourth chapter is an analysis of the software—i.e. the artistic facet of street signs and the interpretation of wordings found on the plates of those signs. The last chapter discusses how street signs should respond to changes in society, and also evaluate their functions as the landmarks of the city of Macao.

Definition of Street Sign

Street signs are objects made for the purpose of identifying streets. They can be made of any materials as long as they are able to convey their message, usually through words. Sometimes, other signs are attached to street signs indicate directions and define the size of a space. From a socio-political perspective, the existence of street signs facilitates human life, for street signs provide meaning and recognition to otherwise perplexing street blocks. With the emergence of street names, street signs made information exchange, business transactions, and the lives of urban residents easier and more convenient. Unlike advertisement boards which are exaggeratingly eye-catching, street signs themselves have no commercial purposes, and their features are thus designed for practicality. However, as stated by Aisaku Murakoshi in *Signage Design*, “The sign not only communicates information but also bears the burden of a part of the culture...” Therefore, street signs of various characteristics may be found in

different cultures (Figs. 12~15), and they always reflect the culture and history of the period and place. As most street signs are necessarily made of sturdy material, they are relatively durable, and consequently, the cultural and historical messages they carry often travel far through time and space, spreading their messages and stories of the past to the present and future. Yet, we must also keep in mind that street signs with no specific features maintain their most basic function—that is, to identify the name of the place—and it conveys no message about what the place is like (Figs. 16 & 17).



Fig. 12: Street sign in Paris.



Fig. 13: Street sign in Berlin



Fig. 14: Street sign in the campus of the University of Hong Kong.



Fig. 15: Street sign in Madrid where ceramic is a traditional art.



Fig. 16: A metal sign in Oporto of Portugal, which is not in harmony with the atmosphere of this coastal city.

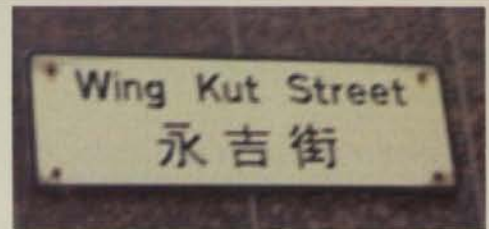


Fig. 17: Typical street sign in Hong Kong.

If we glance at other cities near Macao, we find that, due to the impact of the contemporary global culture, street signs have lost their local distinctiveness, and their designs tend to be homogenous. However, in Macao, street signs are distinct with street nameplates composed of eight pieces of equal sized *Azulejos* (blue and white ceramic tiles) and 2 completely different languages. As this type of street signs is now rarely seen, Macao's street sign is an artistic work with rich connotations. It has inherited the romance of Portuguese culture combined with the Chinese ceramic art of Blue and White. Technically, it blends the scientific and technological achievements of two different cultures, and different stages of its coming to age show how each culture has learned to live and accommodate each other with respect. Not surprisingly, while its present image is profoundly endowed with artistic quality, its hardware also reflects the unique cultural and social environment of Macao by conveying both Chinese and European qualities. Its present appearance should be seen as the result of centuries of socio-cultural development of the Macanese culture. Besides the current used ceramic street sign, there are also some examples of traditional Chinese street signs, such as

those in the gateway building, and Portuguese granite street signs still existing in Macao today.

Note

¹ Before settled in Macao, the Portuguese had tried to set up their settlement along the coast of China, such as Ningbo (寧波), Zhangshou (漳州), Sanchun Island (上川島), Langbaiao (浪白澳). However, due to the conflicts between with the Chinese, they were finally expelled.

² Macao was also called Xiangshan Ao (香山澳) or Haojing (壕鏡) by the Chinese.

³ 1 lian (兩) silver equal to one third of Pound, and US\$1.63.

⁴ Carlos Baracho, 2001. "Finding Medievalism in Macao", in *Review of Culture no.38~39*. Macao: Cultural Institute.

⁵ The heritage law classified Macao's heritage buildings into 4 categories: (1) monument, (2) buildings of architectural interest, (3) building ensembles and (4) classified sites.

Chapter 1

The Root of Macao's Street Signs

Chinese and Portuguese have been living together in Macao for more than four centuries, the original style of living of these two races are therefore the ingredients of Macao's distinctive cultural character. By mixture of different proportion of these two matrixes, Macao has created its uniqueness. Therefore, to understand the street signs of Macao, the study of the street signs of both countries is indispensable.

Street Signs of China

According to the modern English dictionary, a street is defined as an unoccupied space formed between two rows of buildings. In a broader sense, as Cliff Moughtin defined in *Urban Design: Street and Square*, a street is seen as "two lines linking houses or stores".¹ In ancient China, not every street had a name, since residences were usually organized under the Village (*Cun*-村), Neighborhood (*Fang*-坊), and Laneway (*Li*-里). Therefore, in the context of traditional Chinese city layouts, the 'street sign' should really refer to "the residential location sign."

In the Zhou Dynasty (周朝) of ancient China, the Chinese began implementing the Residential and Market system (*Fang-Shi* - 坊市) in city planning in order to control the city's social management and security. *Fang* was the unit of residential area which was formed by a number of *Li* (Laneway) and surrounded by walls; meanwhile all the commercial activities took place in specific markets which were outside the *Fang*. Inside the *Fang*, houses were built in array. Therefore, as Liang Sicheng (梁思成) suggested "concerning the residential address of (ancient Chinese) people, we should refer to *Fang* instead of street." (故言某人居處, 不曰何街, 而曰何坊也).² Usually "there were

two major crossing streets inside the *Fang*. At each end of the street, a gateway called “*Lu*” (閤) was opened for entering and exiting.”³ As Liu Dunzhen (劉敦楨), a famous architectural historian discussed, “each gateway was marked with the name of the *Fang*.”⁴ This leads us to understand that the *Fang* gateway was indeed one of the earliest “street signs” in ancient China.

In ancient China, the *Fang-Shi* system played a very important role in Chinese society especially when the society often encountered political turmoil. The gateway door would be opened in the morning and closed at night, as curfew was enacted. People were not allowed to go out of the *Fang*. Besides the *Fang-Shi* system, and a Street Head was appointed to every *Li* as well as by the government to record the number of people living inside the *Li* and to inspect their behaviors, this kind of system was called *Li-Bao-Jia* (里保甲) or Street Head system.

During the North Song Dynasty (960 ~1126), industrial and commercial development grew rapidly. A great change of lifestyle, multiplied by increasing commercial activities, took place inside the *Fang*, in the bigger street of *Fang*. These eventually caused the curfew to finally be cancelled. The *Fang-Shi* system was no longer necessary; the wall surrounding each *Fang* was then demolished. Gateways no longer served The *Fang*. However, as *Li-Bao-Jia* system still applied, this kind of gateway went to serve those *Li* that was only for residential.

Serving as the “street sign” of the *Li*, the gateway of each *Li* was clearly the mark of social significance. In ancient China, people had their residences built according to their social ranks. The design of the gateway signified the fame and fortune of the neighborhood. In the beginning, the gateway structure was quite simple, but later it became much more elaborate when its design began to imitate traditional timber structures, with the *Dou-Gong* (bracket) system was applied to support the overhanging eave.⁵ According to the materials used, the gateways can be categorized into three main types: brick,

stone and timber gateways. The materials used for the signs on the gateways included stone, wood, plaster, and bamboo. The exquisiteness of the patterns and the richness of the materials generally reflected the social class of the residents. Of the many materials, granite was the most widely adopted material for gateway nameplates since it is the best in withstanding the elements. The plates were usually carved in the form of shallow relief sculpture, and, aside from the characters, traditional ornamental patterns were sometimes added. Characters on nameplates made of wood could be carved or directly hand-painted onto the wood. In addition to wood and stone, there were also nameplates made of brick and plaster but these comparatively costly materials usually appeared only in the residential districts of the nobles. A traditional Chinese-style street sign was usually located in the center of the horizontal hanging placard of the gateway; the text followed the classical Chinese tradition of writing from right to left

During the Ming Dynasty (1368 ~1644), the gateway began to appear in some commercial street.⁶ It had a more complicated form, and was known as a “*Pailou*” (牌樓). *Pailou* kept its original function as a street sign with an additional function as a ceremonial gateway. (Figs. 18 & 19)

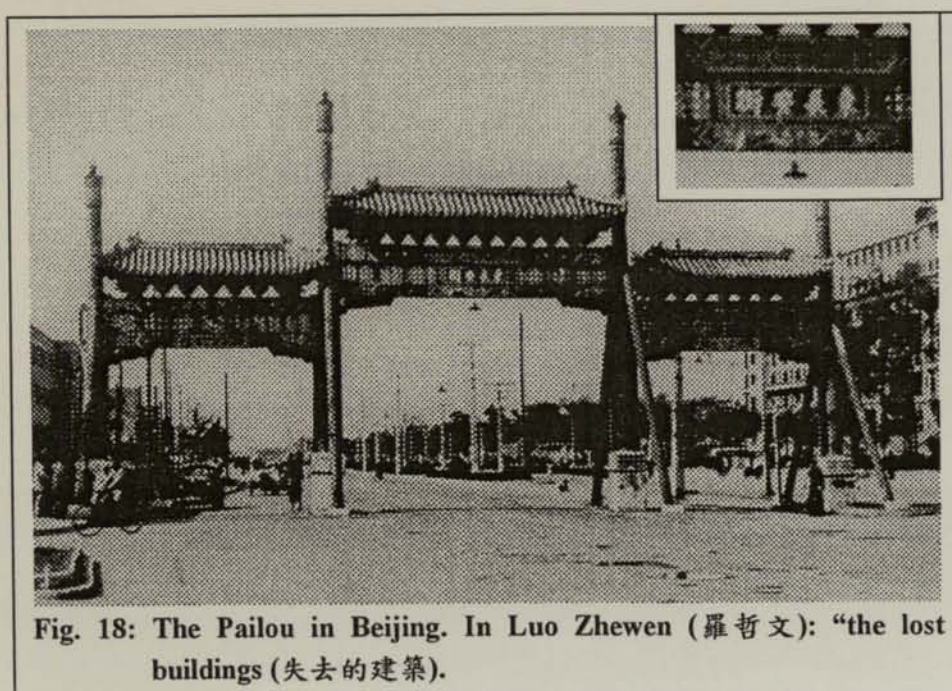


Fig. 18: The Pailou in Beijing. In Luo Zhewen (羅哲文): “the lost buildings (失去的建築).”

As the *Fang-Shi* system was abandoned, streets became the smallest unit of city life, and also because not all the streets and laneways had their gateway. It was necessary to have a name sign to the streets. These new forms of street signs were nameplates that were usually nailed or carved onto the wall or half buried into the ground.



Fig. 19: The Pailou in Guangzhou. In Luo Zhewen (羅哲文): "the lost buildings (失去的建築).

As the *Li-Bao-Jia* system applied everywhere in ancient China, the basic design of gateways remained consistent. In Guangdong and Fujian Provinces, which has closest connection with Macao, the form of traditional gateways, as revealed by extant examples, are particular similar.

Today, the ways in which these types of street signs being erected still remain visible. They are hung independently on iron posts and unattached from the wall. Yet, materials of the signs are now different. They are now made of

metal, plastic sheet or are shown by electrically lit. Nevertheless, surprisingly, ceramic tile has never been adopted for street signs in China, despite the fact that the country has been long famous for its ceramic products.

In terms of text on street signs, the writing system has changed to the modern left-to-right format due to the influence of Western writing style.⁷ Moreover, some street signs have adopted the use of Pinyin, which is the official Chinese Romanization system. According to the PRC government's official announcement "...before 2004, all the cities in China should apply the standard street signs which are made of metal and its background in blue, characters in white".⁸ Under these modern changes, street signs in cities across the country of China will become homogenous and any links to the various local contextual traditions will vanish. (Figs. 20 & 21)



Fig. 20: A common seen street sign in China



Fig. 21: Another street sign in China

Street Signs in Portugal

Portugal is located in the Atlantic coast on the southwestern part of the Iberian Peninsula, making it the westernmost country of southern Europe. This geographical position and the extent of its coastline explain its isolation from the core power centers of Europe. Nonetheless this isolation has encouraged it to discover remote seas and lands between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.⁹ In the years of expedition and conquests, Portugal made enormous profits from

its trade with countries in Eastern Asia. During the sixteenth century, this small European nation controlled the economic power in Europe, and its capital, Lisbon, became the most prosperous European city.

The Portuguese formally entered Macao in 1557 and during the following period of almost 500 years, they gradually gained political control of Macao and finally dominated it. In 1887, the Portuguese government signed a treaty with the government of the Qing dynasty for unlimited jurisdiction over Macao. During the period of Portuguese administration, the Portuguese government in Macao tried to shape Macao according to the living mode of Portugal by emulating every aspect of the civil structure. Not surprisingly, the development of Macao's street signs was greatly influenced by the style of the street signs in Portugal.

Among Portuguese cities, Lisbon had the closest connection with Macao, not only because it is the source of cultural influences, being the capital city of Macao's colonial parent, but also because it shares similar geographical features as Macao: both of them are located on seacoast and have seven small hills;¹⁰ the streets are narrow and winding. Not surprisingly, it has been said that Macao is the Lisbon of the east.

In Lisbon, several types of street signs exist. However, perhaps due to oversight, even the Municipal Department does not have any record of their history.¹¹ Consequently, the design and origin of Portuguese street signs still remain unknown for researches of this subject. Moreover, in 1755, an earthquake took place in Lisbon causing serious damages.¹² This made discovering the characteristics of the earliest street signs in Portugal a difficult task. The few remaining examples from the earthquake of 1755 are the only source of information. The physical conditions of these samples vary considerably depending on their location at the time of the earthquake. Through the observation of the houses of different districts, it is possible to draw out its order of being used.

Firstly, the old Alfama district of Lisbon (Fig. 22), which sustained minimal damage from the earthquake, has the most original historical urban form. The district exhibits an organic growth pattern as there was never any implementation of rigorous city planning. Most of the houses, small in size but colorful, were built to suit the hilly terrain. This led to the complicated street layout in which people can see dramatically different views just by walking a few steps toward different directions; this medieval space is similar to that in Macao.



Fig. 22: Alfama is the historic zone of Lisbon, where the medieval city space is still kept.

Here in the Alfama district, there is one style of street sign which is painted directly on buildings at street corners in black background with white lettering (Fig. 23). The Portuguese street name, in white, is in three lines. Without ornamentation, these signs look simple and straightforward; they were just part of the houses. However, at another corner of the same block, street signs made of ceramic tiles that may also be original signs that survived the earthquake are found (Fig. 24). Being made of 12 pieces of blue-and-white ceramic tiles, they

are especially conspicuous, and, interestingly, they have an outline similar to that of a Chinese seal. The letters and decorating lines are both blue and the size of the street sign is similar to those is painted directly on walls. Clearly, these two street signs were designed with careful thought. Their roles in the streets are no longer confined to the conveying of locations of the place, as they play a part in beautifying the urban scenes.



Fig. 23: A Sign painted on the wall, which might be the oldest sign existed in Portugal.



Fig. 24: Ceramic tiles sign in Alfama of Lisbon.

However, in Chiado, another district of Lisbon (Fig. 25), the houses were laid out in vertical and horizontal directions, showing the adoption of a modern city planning method after the earthquake, to which individual buildings are designed within square city blocks.¹³ Street signs consist of a piece of stone with black or gilded letters (Fig. 26), of roman style, attached to the wall by bronzed metal nails at the four corners. On the whole, these street signs look even more unsophisticated and they were decorated with simple frame, which is less decorative but nonetheless matches the environment in color. Such street signs made after the earthquake were clearly confined by factors such as urgency and funding shortages, so their craftsmanship is simple and pragmatic. However, along ordinary streets, a more simple design probably made in last century is adopted (Fig. 27), it is similar to the street sign mentioned above but without any decorative lines. This is probably due to the prevalence of modernism or the poor Portuguese economy at the time, which was caused partly by the earthquake and partly by the reduced profits from the trade with

the Orient as the Netherlands and England had then taken Portugal's share of the trade-route.¹⁴ It is said that in the late eighteenth century, Portuguese trade began to be unprofitable, and trade did not improve until the start of the Second World War in 1940 owing to Portugal's neutrality during the war.¹⁵ Therefore, street sign designs that ensured long life and required minimum maintenance were adopted. Plastic sheets were even sometimes used at some locations, as metal was rarely used as the nation faces the Atlantic Ocean and erosion resulting from ocean wind is rather severe.



Fig. 25: The streetscape of Chiado rebuilt after the earthquake.



Fig. 26: A sign with a sense of classic.



Fig. 27: A sign with simple design.

The discovery of blue-and-white ceramic tile in the Alfama district indicates that the street signs made of ceramic tile existed before the big earthquake, and during the Portugal's prosperous period. The earliest street signs consisted of multiple colors and their designs were rather complex. The outlines were usually combined of colorful patterns and oriental motifs. The middle part features the Portuguese shield and the letters are in blue. Such relatively a luxurious production could only be possible when the economic environment allowed, just as in the Cascais district (Fig. 28) in suburban Lisbon. These luxurious signs continue to be used because of their contribution to tourism (Fig. 29), as a way to illustrate historical essence.



Fig. 28: Cascais is a very famous tourist's town facing the Atlantic Sea.



Fig. 29: The traditional sign with colorful pattern in Cascais.

Next to the colorful street signs mentioned above were the blue-and-white street signs with simple patterns. In the seventeenth century, the blue-and-white ceramic tiles reached the climax of its popularity and the blue color became more refined due to the assistance of the techniques used in Chinese blue ceramics. Nowadays ceramic tiles are not as commonly used in street signs in Portugal. However in the historic areas the Portuguese keep using ceramic sign, since the Portuguese are very proud of their ceramic art and thus believes that only ceramic signs can match the historic ambience of the historic cities. In Porto, a World Heritage City (Fig. 30), we can easily find such ceramic signs in various colors and patterns in the historic areas (Figs. 31~34), but outside the

old town, plastic street signs with minimal graphic design are used (Fig.34).



Fig. 30: Oporto is one of the World Heritage cities of Portugal.



Fig 31: A street sign in Oporto.



Fig. 32: A street sign in Oporto.



Fig.33: A street sign in Oporto.



Fig. 34: An example of a plastic street sign in Oporto.

Needless to say, the maintaining of tradition is usually supported by state of economy. In one of the large shopping malls in Lisbon today, the modern Portuguese citizens, renowned for their production of ceramic paintings, are compiling a new chapter in the history of street signs. Based on the blue-and-white street sign, they have changed the outlines into various patterns in order to convey the nature of goods originally sold within the mall, adding a historic touch. This is a successful architectural interpretation based on an understanding of history (Figs. 35 ~ 37).



Fig. 35: Variations of contemporary street signs in Lisbon



Fig. 36: Variations of contemporary street signs in Lisbon



Fig. 37: Variations of contemporary street signs in Lisbon.

Aside from the street signs hung on the wall, a street sign mounted on granite posts (Fig. 38) is commonly used at the access points of wider streets where there are no buildings. Such a type of street sign post is also used as tentative signage when a new road is built. This type of sign is actually the model for free-standing street signs in Macao.



Fig. 38: A free-standing street sign in Lisbon

With China and Portugal operating with different systems of urban planning and city management, the formation and development of streets in the respective countries were also very different. The street signs used in the two countries also differ in terms of their development and in their use of materials. In Macao, a society seesawing between two cultures, compromise proved to be

a good choice, and this can explain for the multitudes of types of street signs that have appeared throughout the history of Macao. No matter what, the development of Macao's street signs is a reflection of the Sino-Luso relationship.

Notes

- ¹ Cliff Moughtin, translated by Wang Shule (王淑宜). 1991. *Urban Design – Street and Square* 《都市設計 – 街道與廣場》
- ² Liang Sicheng (梁思成), 2000. *History of Chinese Architecture* (中國建築史), 三聯書店 (香港)有限公司.
- ³ Lao Hing Si (樓慶西), 2001. *20 lectures of traditional Chinese Architecture* (中國古建築二十講), 生活讀書新知三聯書店.
- ⁴ Lao Hing Si (樓慶西), 2001. *20 lectures of traditional Chinese Architecture* (中國古建築二十講), 生活讀書新知三聯書店.
- ⁵ Lao Hing Si (樓慶西), 2001. *20 lectures of traditional Chinese Architecture* (中國古建築二十講) 生活讀書新知三聯書店.
- ⁶ Liang Sicheng (梁思成), 2000. *History of Chinese Architecture* (中國建築史) 三聯書店 (香港)有限公司.
- ⁷ After 1949, the writing order of Chinese character was change to from left to right.
- ⁸ News from the website of HeilongJiang daily.
- ⁹ On 25 July 1415, a fleet of 200 ships and 20,000 men sailed from Lisbon for Africa. On 21 August they took Ceuta. This was the start of the Portuguese maritime expansion.
- ¹⁰ The 7 hills of Macao are: Barra hill, Penha Hill, Monte Hill, Guia Hill, Monha Hill, Russio Hill and D. Mary Hill.
- ¹¹ The Department in charge of street signs in Lisbon does not have any record of their history. However, different district is designated a different sign design that can better reflect the history of the place.
- ¹² The earthquake occurred in 1755 lasted 6 minutes. It was the biggest natural disaster in the history of Lisbon.
- ¹³ Besides in square form, the buildings also show the order in the heights – three or four

storeys – and the uniformity of doors and windows.

- 14 In 1642, the Dutch seized Malacca and cut the trade route of Portuguese; it is the turn of Macao decline.
- 15 Christina Cheng, *Macao – a Cultural Janus*, (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press) 1999.

Chapter 2

Development of Macao's Street Signs

Macao is a city fostered by both the Chinese and Portuguese through a period of more than 450 years. Through this long history, the social and political situation changed gradually, from a city dominated by Chinese to a Portuguese colony. Different concepts of urban planning added the diversity into the history of street signs of Macao. The development of street signs in Macao can be generally divided into three periods:

- 1) From 1553~1849, the period when Chinese dominated the city.
- 2) From 1849~1999, the period when Macao was a colony of Portuguese.
- 3) From 1999 to the present, after Macao's return to China.

The First Period (1553 ~ 1849)

According to the archeological discoveries at Areia Preta, Macao, Chinese had been residing in Macao 4000~5000 years ago,¹ long before the Portuguese arrived in Macao. When the Portuguese formally settled in Macao in 1557, there were only two small villages: Mongha Village and Barra Village (Fig. 39), inhabited by villagers from Fujian Province. The population concentrated around the Barra Temple and the Temple of Kun Iam Tong.² Buildings of that time were simple, mainly built of timber and thatch. There were probably no street signs at that time but only signs that showed the names of residential location. Such signs were posted in the ground or simply hung on a wood post.

From the end of the fifteenth century to the beginning of the sixteenth century, as Westerners arrived and gradually turn Macao into a temporary trading post. In 1553, the Portuguese sought permission to go ashore in Macao on the pretext that their ships had been wrecked and they needed to dry

their water-soaked goods³. The Portuguese's presence in Macao further assured Macao's position as a trading post. In the beginning the Portuguese were only allowed to live in temporary dwellings. Until 1557, through bribing local officers, they were allowed to build stronger and more permanent buildings of brick and timber; this architectural development marked the beginning of Macao's urban development. According to Jose Maria Braga, in as early as 1555, before the Portuguese received permission to settle, they had already started carrying out surveys in preparation for construction of streets and roads.⁴

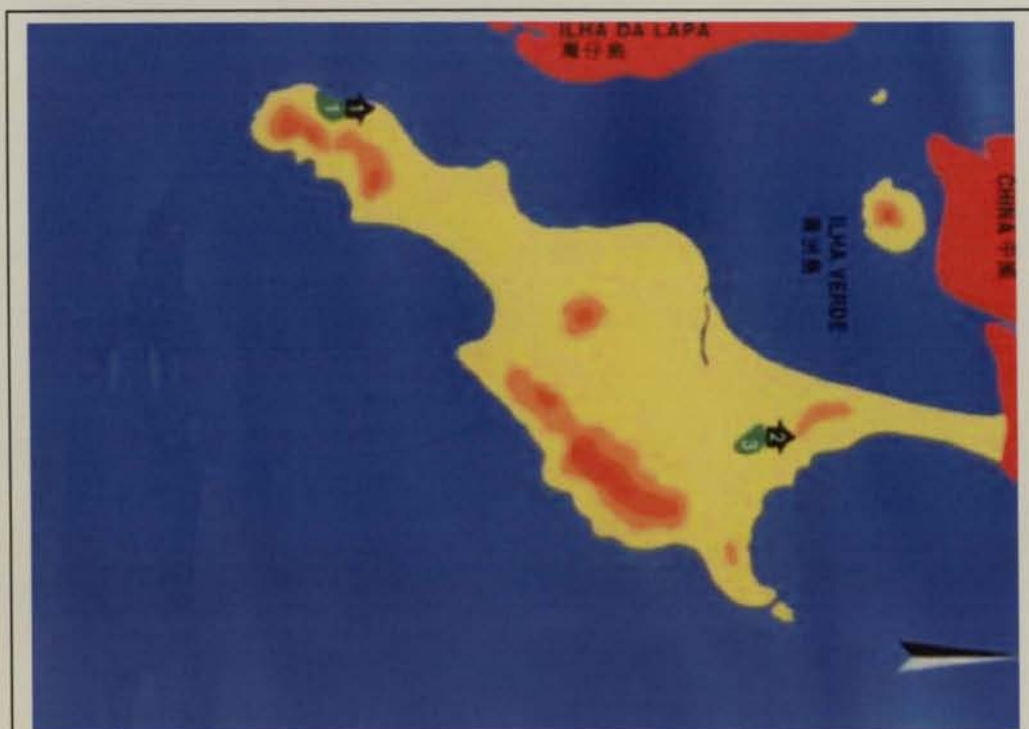


Fig. 39: The green spots were Chinese settlement areas before the arrival of Portuguese

Once settled in Macao, the Portuguese took advantage of the excellent port and engaged in sea trade with the east. Perhaps due to the geographical advantages of Macao's port, the "ocean prohibition" policy of the Ming dynasty,⁵ and, above all, good relations between China and Portugal, the Portuguese more or less monopolized the sea trade between the West and the

East. The opening of the three main shipping routes of Macao–Goa–Lisbon, Macao–Manila–Mexico and Macao–Nagasaki benefited the Portuguese a great deal. The prosperity of Macao not only attracted a lot of foreigners but also Chinese migrants from Guangdong and Fujian Provinces. From the middle of the sixteenth century to the middle of the seventeenth century, the City of Macao developed very rapidly. According to Chinese document, “in 1557, there were less than one hundred buildings,”⁶ but by 1558 the number already increased to several hundred,”⁷ and by 1564, Macao became a city with thousands of buildings.”⁸ By that time, the number of foreigners residing in Macao also had reached 900. Not surprisingly, by then Macao had become “a magnificent town with the assemblage of thousands of foreigners.”⁹ Along with the prosperity of foreign trade, Macao became one of the most well known cities in the Far East.

Inevitably, the prosperity of Macao caused the envy of other European nations. In order to protect the interests and status of the Portuguese in Macao, despite strong opposition from China, the Portuguese secretly fortified the Macao city. In 1622, the Dutch attacked Macao and thus were repulsed by the cannon of Monte Fort.¹⁰ The Portuguese took this opportunity to convince the Chinese Government that their fortification was not aimed at China that they were for the protection of the city against foreign attacks.¹¹ After this incident, the Chinese Government was no longer against the fortification of Macao, leading to the completion of several fortresses and a city wall by 1626. The city wall, which ran from Monte Fort to the Francisco Fort, physically segregated the Chinese settlement from that of the Portuguese. (Fig. 40) To the south of the wall was the settlement for the Portuguese and a few Chinese, while the majority of the Chinese settled to the north of the wall in the Mongha Village. At that time the foreigner and the Portuguese were confined inside the wall and shaped the area later called “the City of the Holy Name of God.”

¹² Along the city wall were three door openings for the use of Chinese who

worked inside the city. It was compulsory for most of the Chinese to leave at night



Fig. 40: Map of Macao in mid-17th century.

The attitude of the Ming emperor regarding the coming of the Portuguese was very contradictory. On one hand, by allowing the foreigners to settle in Macao, the Chinese Government could levy taxes on foreign ships and thus receive a considerable amount of tax revenue. On the other hand, the flocking of foreigners to Macao made the Chinese Government very distrustful and worried. In order to prevent the foreigners from stirring up trouble, in 1573, a border gate-house that came to be known as the Barrier Gate was established by the Ming Emperor in the narrow isthmus that linked Macao to the Chinese mainland (Fig. 41). It was a traditional Chinese-style building and was marked with the three Chinese characters “Guang Zha Men” (關 閘 門 meaning “Barrier Gate”). The gate was opened in the morning and closed at night and was controlled by the Ming Court. Since Macao was not a self-sufficient city and all the materials had to be supplied by the mainland, the control of this gate being in the hands of the Ming Court gave the foreigners a sense of warning.

Actually, before 1849, the Chinese Government had succeeded in suppressing many conflicts by shutting the Barrier Gate.

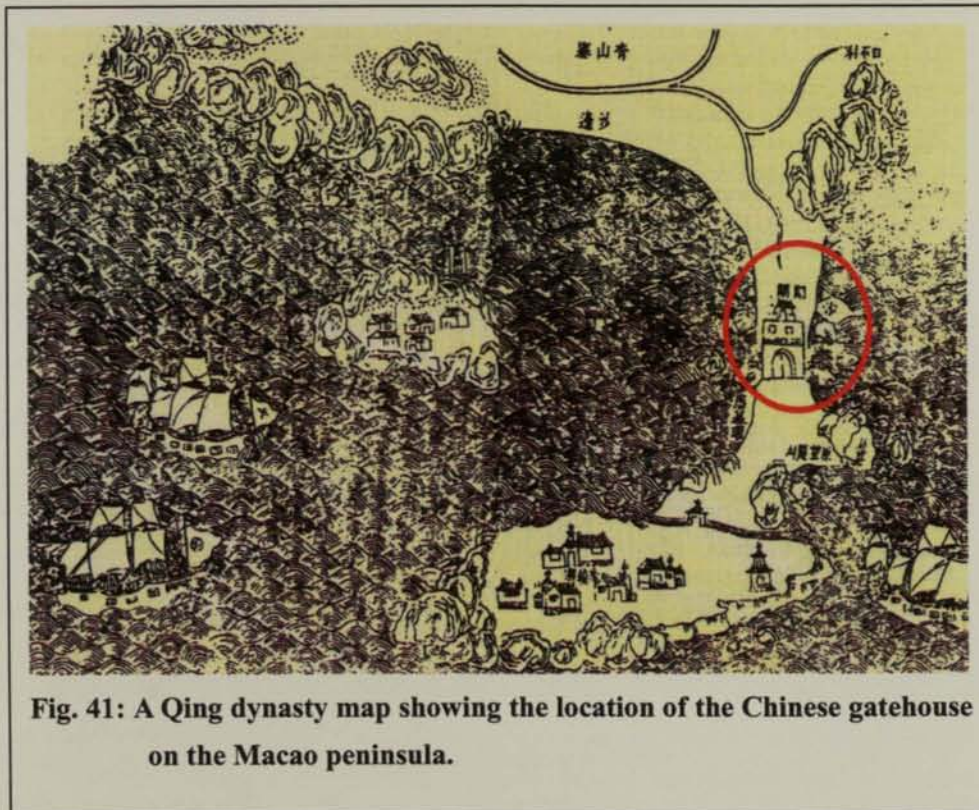


Fig. 41: A Qing dynasty map showing the location of the Chinese gatehouse on the Macao peninsula.

In order to gain further control and standardize procedure of the relevant commercial and trading activities in Macao, the Ming Government implemented the traditional Chinese urban control system called *Li-Bao-Jia* (里保甲 see details of the *Fang-Shi* system in chapter 1). Under this system, each residential area had doors that closed at night and a “street Head was appointed to each area.”¹³ As recorded in the article “A Monograph of Macao (澳門紀略)” coauthored by two officials of the Qing Dynasty, Yin Guangren (印光任) and Zhang Rulin (張汝霖), the officials applied to the imperial court for consideration:

Governor Chan again submitted a memorial to the Emperor, asking that a crossroads in the residential area, lined with wood railings, be named by four ideograms *Wei, Wei, Huai* and *De* (畏威懷德, submissive to authority and cherish morality), and the houses on

either side be entered into the register separately. The houses which lined the roads were each to be designated one of twenty ideograms from a passage in the Luao, ten ideograms for houses on the east side and ten for houses on the West, so that the residents would maintain order and be free from crime, all the foreigners agreed with this Decree.¹⁴

According to the research, that road is referring to the present Rua do Mercado (Market Road 營地大街) (Fig. 42), whose Chinese meaning denotes official establishments, while the Portuguese meaning is “trading market.” And four streets: Wei Zi Street (畏字街), Wei Zi Street (威字街), Huai Zi Street (懷字街) and De Zi Street (德字街) were not existing. However, on the crossbeam of the first pavilion of the holy hill of A-Ma Temple¹⁵, the text “Constructed with the contributions of De Zi Street in Yiyi year, Wanli period of the Ming Dynasty, reconstructed with the contributions from the residents of Huai Zi Street and De Zi Street in Yiyi year, Wanli period of the Ming Dynasty” (original text in Chinese: 明萬歷乙巳年德字街眾建, 崇禎乙巳年懷德二街重修.) (Fig. 43) are a living testimony to the existence of the streets and their names at that time. According to Tang Kaijian (湯開建), The Market Road was built before 1581.¹⁶ Based on the fact that the material used for the railing was wood, it can be estimated that the street sign hung on the street corners were wooden boards with carved words or words directly handwritten on the wood, and the language used was Chinese.



Fig. 43: Market Road today.



Fig. 43: A-Ma temple and the inscription on the crossbeam.

According to the research of Macao's historian Ieong Ianfei (楊仁飛), the *Li-Bao-Jia* system was applied to both Chinese and Portuguese in Macao. But it did not last long in the Portuguese community, as the Ming Government took account of Macao as a “foreigners’ dwelling area” (蕃坊).¹⁷ The Chinese Government had a magistrate and custom placed in Macao to control foreigners’ activity and collect taxes, but the Portuguese were allowed to set up the Leal Senado (The Senate House) to govern themselves in 1583. As the Senate House was responsible for foreign inhabitants, the *Li-Bao-Jia* system seemed unnecessary, and above all, Portuguese residents were not accustomed to it and the Portuguese merchants used to sail out of the city every year with their ships, which made the system unable to run smoothly. Therefore, the *Li-Bao-Jia* system did not last long in the Portuguese settlement and was finally cancelled, but the system continued to be used in the Chinese settlement.

There is some evidence showing the existence of the *Li-Bao-Jia* in the Portuguese settlement in the illustrated 16th century map (Fig. 44). The illustration reveals that there are walls surrounding some of the Portuguese

living block. On each of the wall enclosures there is a door, which is believed to have carried the name of the block. In this case, we can assume that the traditional gateway with the “street sign” had appeared in Macao by the 16th century. However, due to the small scale of the city and to suit local conditions, the *Li-Bao-Jia* urban control system was slightly different from that as implemented in the Chinese mainland. The number of houses inside the *Li* was not fixed as it depended on the length of the *Li*, which in turn depended on its location. The residential block was small and had only one or two exits.

This system proved to be an effective means in controlling both Portuguese and Chinese living in the same city, as it was effective for population recording and carrying out curfews. Concerning the social situation of the time, Anders Ljungstedt (1759~1835) wrote, “The door of the wall gate will close and the Chinese not living in the city had to leave, and actually all the doors of Chinese living blocks inside the city will also close at night”¹⁸



Fig. 44: Map of Macao in the mid 16th century

On the other hand, as the *Li-Bao-Jia* system was eventually abandoned by the Portuguese community, the Portuguese implemented their own way in urban planning. In the early beginning, the Portuguese were scattered along the west coast of Macao before moving towards the southern side of the peninsula. The construction of houses was rather irregular and lacked planning. There was no concept of making a living block. For security reasons or for the sake of adhering to tradition, the Portuguese, as they did in Portugal, built their houses around churches that were built on the top of the small hills in Macao, forming various parishes that were called as “*Fang*(坊)” by the Chinese.

Portugal was an avowedly Catholic country, as we can see from the dual purposes of the Portuguese exploration of the Orient, as indicated by Vasco da Gama’s (1469~1524) statement, “I seek for Christians and spices.”¹⁹ As a result, once the Portuguese landed in Macao, beside the trade in the east, they also began their missionary activities. In fact, during 1554, the first year of the formal Portuguese establishment in Macao, some Christian priests arrived. After that, priests of various religious orders such as Jesuits, the Dominicans and Augustinians continued to come and the first 3 churches were established between 1558 and 1560: St. Lawrence’s Church, St. Lazarus’ Church and St. Antonio’s Church. These early churches were probably simply

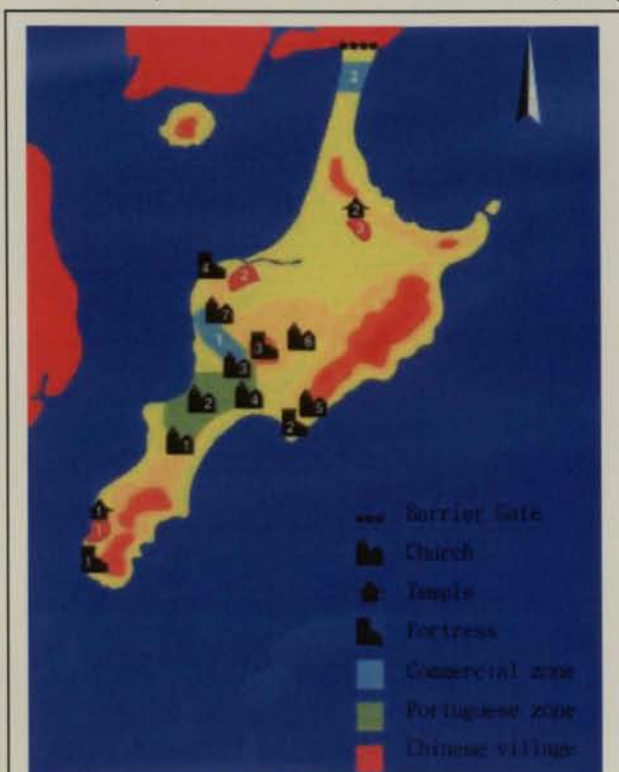


Fig. 45: Map of Macao during the Qing dynasty.

built of timber and straw because even the later Augustine's Church and the St. Domingo's Church were only timber structures.²⁰ It was the churches that provided location references for local residents; as noted by Jose Manuel Flores in *The Portuguese Chromosome*,²¹ "the church was the people's main reference point as they flocked through street that had no fixed names and were known according to whoever lived there or to their position in relation to the church." According to an old map of Macao in 1632, there were 5 parishes inside the city: St. Laurence's, St Antony's, St Lazara's, St. Fatima's and Sé respectively (Fig. 45).

Consequently, there existed two strikingly different residential blocks; the Chinese people gave names to their blocks and dwelling locations and erected tablets according to their traditions. In accordance with the Chinese tradition, some of the street sign of the residential block appeared on the gateways located at the front or rear of the living blocks. With the development of the city and the increase in Chinese population, more and more *Li* were established; they were usually located around Market Road. The building material of the gateway was gradually advanced from mud-brick to fire clay brick, and the street sign was made of granite or plaster. Because the Chinese Government still controlled Macao, the gateways were thus marked with only Chinese, no Portuguese, and the materials for the street signs were usually made of stone or plaster.

In 1644, the Qing dynasty was established and many Chinese moved to Macao in order to escape from war. In 1730 the ban prohibiting fishermen to settle ashore was cancelled, leading to an increase in the Chinese population in Macao. As the policy towards Macao remained unchanged, the *Li-Bao-Jia* system was still enforced in Macao's Chinese areas. The area around the interior harbor was developing very fast, and it became the center of Chinese activities within the city wall, and therefore more *Li* were built there.

At the same time, in Macao's settlement for foreigners which was governed

by the Senate House, there existed street signs in the Portuguese language. These might be made of stone, because whenever the Portuguese made a new road, they used to place granite foundation stone to indicate the name and the date of construction. However, the granite street were not fixed to one design, they depended on the designers (Figs. 46 ~ 49).



Fig. 46: The street sign of Republic Avenue.



Fig. 47: The street sign of Theatre Slope (戲院斜巷).



Fig. 48: The street sign of Horta and Costa Avenue.



Fig. 49: The street signs of 1872 displayed in Macao Museum.

The prosperity of Macao was frustrated when the Dutch captured Malacca in 1644 and cut off the Portuguese sea-trade route. Macao's role was diminishing and the urban development of Macao entered into a stagnant period, which did not end until 1846.²²

The coexistence of two kinds of street signs during this period underscores the existence of two centers of the society. Macao was under two rulers; both were independent of each other, as Reverend Walter Henry Medhurst pointed out: "...the Portuguese had a governor appointed by the Queen of Portugal and a senate chosen from amongst the inhabitants of Macao, the Chinese have had a magistrate placed over them, who holds his court in the native part of the settlement; and a Chinese custom-house is established on the beach...."²³

At that time, the Portuguese and Chinese lived side by side for reasons of mutual benefit only; not surprisingly, different ethnic groups maintained different centers. The existence of bilingual street signs was mainly a matter of convenience in a bi-racial community. Eventually, whether for the sake of trading or facilitating administration, bilingual street signs soon became necessary, although it is virtually impossible to confirm exactly when and how they came into being.

Second Period (1849~1999)

As time passed, the Qing dynasty weakened and foreign countries constantly permeated into the hinterland of China. After the Opium War in 1842, the Qing Government was forced to sign a number of unfair treaties with foreign countries. Seeing that the various foreign nations were cashing in on the Qing dynasty, Portugal, a nation that had hungered for the ownership of Macao for a long time, began challenging the status of the Qing dynasty in Macao and gained control over Macao. In 1842, without the agreement of the

Qing Emperor, Portugal announced Macao as a free port. And in 1846, Macao governor Ferreira Amaral²⁴ assumed his position. As an aggressive colonist, one year after he assumed the position, in order to signify Portuguese ownership of Macao, he ordered that the unnamed streets to be named and decreed that all the street signs must be changed to the design with a black background and white lettering. The color of the signs was exactly the same as those in Alfama of Lisbon. This was the first recorded amendment of street signs, and the amendment itself also manifested Amaral's longing for and loyalty to his motherland. It was also the first step to turn Macao into Portuguese control. Concerning the material used, from the official Bulletin of 1851, it was recorded that "the Senate House was recruiting craftsmen to enliven the discolored street signs." It can be conjectured that the signs were directly painted onto walls as was done in Alfama, Lisbon.

In order to assert sovereignty, Ferreira Amaral also dismantled all the buildings with Chinese official markings in the City of the Name of God, expelled Chinese officials, and expanded its territory outside the City of the Name of God, assigned numbers to the houses outside the city,²⁵ took control of the Barrier Gate and put Portuguese officials in charge of it. Regarding these acts, Amaral claimed: "in order to rule out any possibilities of doubting our governing authority on the land within the barrier gate at any time, I have decreed that a stone tablet with Portuguese be placed above the stone tablet with Chinese; the Portuguese 'Porta de Limite' (Figs. 50 & 51), is the literal translation of the Chinese 'Barrier Gate'."²⁶ And this was the first record of the two languages being put together to identify a building or a location.



Fig. 50: The stone inscribed with the Chinese characters “關門門”

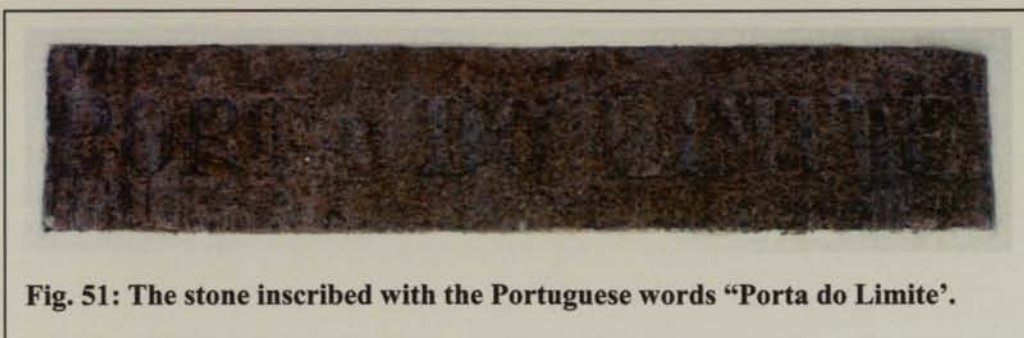


Fig. 51: The stone inscribed with the Portuguese words “Porta do Limite”.

It is still uncertain whether street signs with both Chinese and Portuguese existed at that time. It is conjectured that even if there were bilingual signs, Portuguese words would have been the dominating language, in order to signify Portugal’s control over Macao. Because Amaral’s policies of land expansion involved the area where the Chinese ancestral graves were located, he was assassinated by some villagers of Longtin Village (龍田村) on August 22, 1849, resulting in an incident that ignited clashes between Portugal and the Qing dynasty. This ended up with the compromise of the Qing court, which eventually further secured Portuguese control over Macao.

The colonization of Macao marked the beginning of modern Macao. Whether for convenience of communication or for showing sovereignty, the Portuguese began to rename the streets, especially the streets in the Chinese living zone, and also put up bilingual street signs on the wall. As we can see from the photo of the end of 19th century, there were two boxes inside the signs. The larger left box contained the Portuguese name, while the smaller right box contained the Chinese name. There were also black oval or round patterns inside both boxes. The characters were written from top to bottom. (Figs. 52 & 53) The signs had no strict size specifications, as the sizes appeared to be determined by the length of the street names. Outlines of the boxes were rather simple, but the design with bilingual texts had the ability to balance political and social clashes, as it was not so obvious whether one language was more important than the other, as Portuguese words really need more space,

and Chinese words are written from top to bottom with a higher regard for the left as the more important position. With this design of street sign, the Portuguese succeeded in smoothing the mood of Chinese under their colonial rule.

From these two photos, it is obvious that the background of the street signs is in black and the letterings in white, which correspond with the Amaral's order on the change of the street signs. Regarding the material of the signs, it could be conjectured to be iron by observing the way they were installed. It was not possible that the material was ceramic as it was not customary for the Portuguese to produce ceramics in those colors.

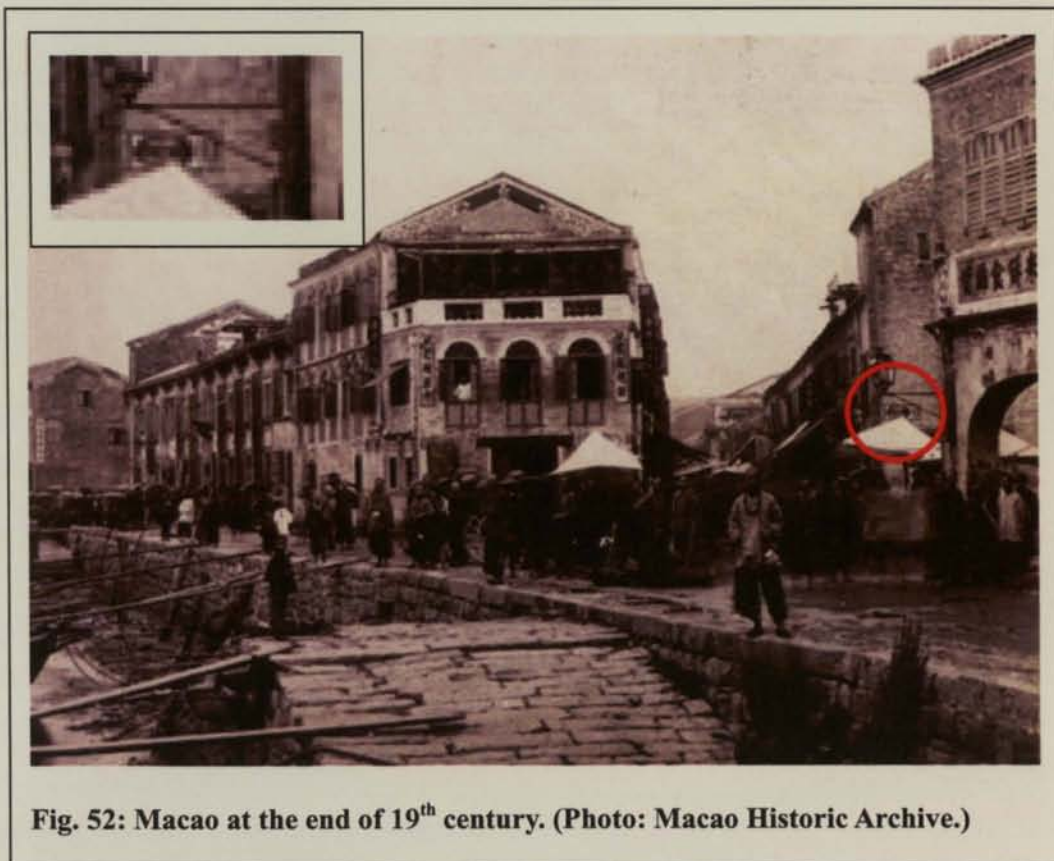


Fig. 52: Macao at the end of 19th century. (Photo: Macao Historic Archive.)



Fig. 53: Macao at the end of 19th century. (Photo: Macao Historic Archive.)

From the 1840s to 1900s, China was in turmoil, especially in Guangdong Province. A number of Chinese moved to Macao with their assets and money. They usually gathered at the newly reclaimed area near the interior harbor. As the number of Chinese increased rapidly and began to dominate many industries, the social position of the Chinese became increasingly higher. The policy of the Macao government towards the Chinese began to change in 1880. The Governor of Macao issued a decree stating “in order to respect the Chinese, they can continue their customs in their convenience.” Therefore, within the Chinese settlement, the use of the traditional urban planning system continued. That is why traditional gateways were able to survive and continue. The gateway doors were still close at night for security reasons even though curfews were no longer enacted. Actually, public security at that time was so bad that the Chinese were asked to carry a lantern whenever they went out at night.²⁷

In 1862, the Portuguese demolished the city wall and expanded their area up to the Barrier Gate. A few years later they occupied Taipa and Coloane Islands. In 1869, the Public Work Department was established to carry out reclamation projects. The physical boundaries of Macao were growing bigger. In the same year, the Senate House conducted a renumbering and re-registration of the streets in Macao, including the peninsula and the islands of Taipa and Coloane. According to those records, there were a total of 529 streets, 175 of which lay within the City of Name of God, 89 inside Bazar(大馬路), 48 inside Patane (沙梨頭), 48 inside Mongha (望廈村), 24 inside Longtin Village (龍田村), and 22 inside Barra Village (媽閣村). By this time Macao had become a city of considerable scale.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, the material of street signs was changed to ceramic. Although the exact date of its being used is unknown, a 1925 document of the Senate House recorded that “the Senate House adjudged a Portuguese to provide 400 pieces of blue and white ceramic street signs, which is similar to the currently used signs.” It is thus confirmed that the ceramic signs had been used for a certain time prior to 1925.

Nevertheless, during the period between 1930 and 1945, the speed of urban construction was quickened and new streets were constantly being formed. In 1920, the first cement plant was established in Ilha Verde (the Green Island) and in 1924 cement was used to pave streets. As the use of cement as a construction material became popular, street signs consisting of engraved street names on cement plates began to appear (Figs. 54~57). This change might have been due to the influence of Portugal, or to practical considerations, since Macao is in a typhoon-prone location where buildings were easily destroyed in a storm. Concerning the change of the design, the street signs selected were the simple version used in ordinary areas in Lisbon. The simplification of the outline might be due to the aesthetic trend of modernism. The position of the two languages, with the Portuguese above the

Chinese, was symbolic of the absoluteness of Portuguese rule over Macao. Although there was no document about the significance of this change, from the record of an Official Bulletin in 1932, "... in order to respect and defend the use of Portuguese, it is necessary to standardize the design of advertisement boards, advertisements, and commercial signs." At that time the Chinese dominated Macao's economy with 90 percent of Macao citizen being Chinese. As there were no regulation governing advertisements and the Portuguese language was not popular, especially within the Chinese community, it was not surprising that advertisements had only Chinese words.



Fig. 54: A cement street sign.



Fig. 55: The last cement street Sign in Macao's street.



Fig. 56: Na Tchai Temple during 1930s. (Photo: Macao Historic Archive.)



Fig. 57: A cement street sign on the wall of a temple. (Photo: Macao Historic Archive.)

Before cement street signs were changed again, Chinese characters that were originally written from right to left was changed to left to right due to westernization of Chinese writing order (Fig. 58). Around 1945, cement was adopted as a new material for street signs. Moreover, the design was switched to that of the old street signs used at the end of the eighteenth century (Fig. 59), while the oval and/or round shape basal patterns were abandoned. However, the cement signs existed for a very short period, for they were soon replaced by the ceramic tile street signs.



Fig. 58: Pre-1945 street sign with Chinese text written from left to right.



Fig. 59: Pre-1945 cements street sign.

Taking the cement sign as the basic design, the new design of the ceramic-tile signs differs mainly in a more refined sign outline and dividing line. The new outline was no longer a simple line but a kind of floral or wave pattern which was similar to the outline of signs in Cascais of Portugal, while the dividing line between the two boxes was given arrowheads at both ends. (Figs. 60 & 61)



Fig. 60: Street sign with arrowhead as dividing line.



Fig. 61: Fig. 60: Street sign with arrowhead as dividing line.

However, since the arrowheads looked conspicuous in relation to the whole configuration, it soon the dividing line became integrated with the floral or wave pattern of the two frames. The Chinese characters were originally placed in the right frame (Fig. 62), which was not politically correct for the Chinese as it gave emphasis on the Portuguese language by the Chinese's left-to-right reading tradition. Finally, after moving the Chinese characters to the left, the street sign of Macao settled on the version similar to that found today, with Portuguese on the right and Chinese on the left. (Fig. 63) This kind of street sign looks more balanced and its political underline tends to be more neutral as the arrangement satisfies the order of reading for both cultures.



Fig. 62: A Street sign with Chinese text on the left and Portuguese on the right. (Photo: Macao Historic Archive.)

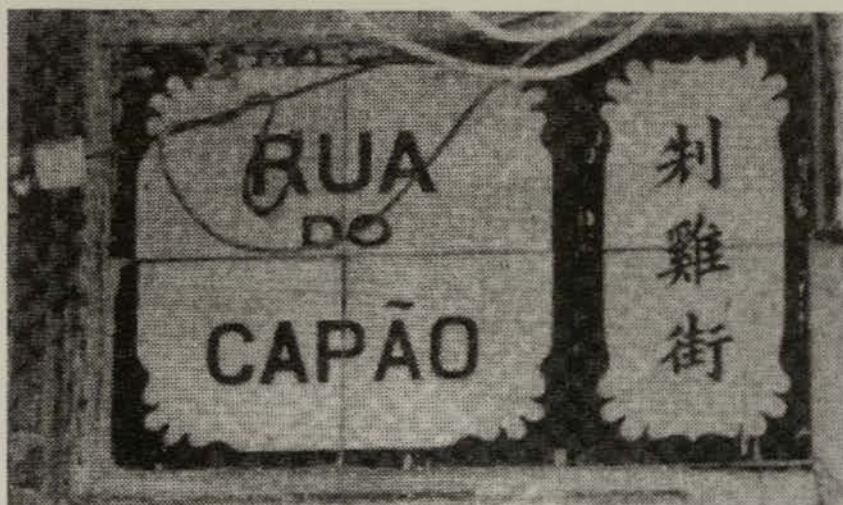


Fig. 63: A Street sign with Chinese text on the right and Portuguese on the left.

Third Period: 2000 ~ Current

On December 20, 1999, Macao was officially returned to China. According to the Basic Law, Macao is entitled to an unchanged political system for 50 years. But to emphasize the changing times and the Chinese sovereignty in Macao, in 2000 the Macao Temporary Civil Service Bureau (now the Institute of Civil and Municipal Affairs) began replacing old street signs with new street signs.²⁸ (Fig. 64) The new sign has Chinese characters appearing above Portuguese. Although the original outline patterns were retained for the boxes, the artistic quality was greatly reduced. This change led to some criticisms, which halted further replacements. At the end, it was decided that only new streets and replacement of damaged signs would use the new version. Consequently, there exists two different versions of street signs in Macao's urban space, this leaves us ponder about the issue of the conflict between the urban traditions and political ideology in a post-colonial city such as Macao.

The development of street signs in Macao reflects the ups-and-downs of relationship between the people of two cultures over a period of 450 years.

These signs are also the outcome of complementary efforts in science, technology, and the pursuit of artistic beauty of the Chinese and Portuguese.



Fig. 64: In 2000, old street signs in Macao were replaced with new signs that have Chinese characters appearing above Portuguese.

The development of Macao's street signs is also the reflection of Macao's political scene. The formation of the first two phases of street signs is the result of the change in Macao's sovereignty from the Chinese to the Portuguese. During these two phases, a relatively impartial street sign became an appropriate reflection of the large Chinese population and their strong financial power at the time. The third and current phase of Macao's street signs is again a reflection of political change, but this time from Portuguese rule back to Chinese sovereignty. The street signs of this phase are formed with the Chinese characters purposefully occupying a superior position over Portuguese words. In this harmonious society, such a purposeful treatment is both unnecessary and disadvantageous to the protection and continuity of urban character.

Notes

- ¹ Yand Shiting, 1998. “Archeological Evidence for the Relationship of Macanese History,” in *Review of Culture* no. 36~37. Macao: Cultural Institute
- ² The villagers of Mongha lived on agriculture while the villagers of Barra liven on fishing.
- ³ Yin Guangren (印光任) – Zhang Rulin (張汝霖), op.cit., *Monograph of Macao* 《澳門記略》, part 1, chap.: Guanshou Pian 《官守篇》.
- ⁴ Braga, Jose Maria. 1949. *The Western Pionners and Their Discovery of Macao*, Macao: Impresesa Nacional .
- ⁵ The Ming Dynasty enacted the “Ocean Prohibition” in order to cut off the contact between Chinese and foreigners.
- ⁶ Tang Kaijian (湯開建), 1998. op.cit, “An investigation of the Construction of the City of Macao During the Ming Dynasty 《明代澳門城市建置考》”, in *Review of Culture* no.36-37, pp 81-110., Macao: Cultural Institute.
- ⁷ Tang Kaijian (湯開建), 1998. op.cit, “An investigation of the Construction of the City of Macao During the Ming Dynasty 《明代澳門城市建置考》”, in *Review of Culture* no.36-37, pp 81-110., Macao: Cultural Institute.
- ⁸ Tang Kaijian (湯開建), 1998. op.cit, “An investigation of the Construction of the City of Macao During the Ming Dynasty 《明代澳門城市建置考》”, in *Review of Culture* no.36-37, pp 81-110, Macao: Cultural Institute.
- ⁹ Tang Kaijian (湯開建), 1998. op.cit, “An investigation of the Construction of the City of Macao During the Ming Dynasty 《明代澳門城市建置考》”, “in *Review of Culture* , no.36-37, pp 81-110 Macao: Cultural Institute.
- ¹⁰ According to the Portuguese record, there were very few soldiers in Macao when the Dutch attacked. However they luckily hit the Dutch’s ammunition depot.
- ¹¹ Before 1622, once the construction of fortress was found, the Chinese immediately forced the Portuguese to demolish it otherwise they would send troops to do so.

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- ¹² The name was given by the Queen of Portugal.
- ¹³ Jorge Manuel Flores, 2002. "The Portuguese Chromosome", in *Review of Culture*, International Edition 3, Macao: Cultural Institute.
- ¹⁴ Yin Guangren (印光任) – Zhang Rulin (張汝霖), op.cit., Aomen jilue 《澳門記略》 (Monograph of Macao part.1, chap.: Guanshou Pian《官守篇》) "...將其聚廬中有大街，中貫四維，各樹高棚，榜以"畏威懷德". 分左右，定其門籍 "...二十字分東西為號，東十號，西十號，使互相維繫，毋得容奸，諸夷亦唯唯聽命....."
- ¹⁵ A-Ma temple had already existed before the Portuguese settled in Macao, it is said the name of Macao also derived from it.
- ¹⁶ Tang Kaijian (湯開建), 1998. op.cit, "An investigation of the Construction of the City of Macao During the Ming Dynasty 《明代澳門城市建置考》", in *Review of Culture* no.36-37, pp 81-110, Macao: Cultural Institute.
- ¹⁷ Ug Chi-Leong (吳志良), 1999. "The way to live" 《生存之道》.Macao: Macao foundation.
- ¹⁸ Anders Ljungstedt, *Macao History*.
- ¹⁹ Vasco da Gama, sailing from Lisbon for India, arrived in Calcutta on 20 May 1498. This voyage established the so-called Cape Route opening up the Asian continent to European navigation.
- ²⁰ Augustine's church had a Chinese name called "龍鬚廟, translated in English: The temple of dragon's beard," it was because the roof of the church was made of straw which was like the dragon beard when the wind blew. And the St. Domingo Church had a Chinese name called "板樟廟, translated in English: the church built of timber".
- ²¹ Jorge Manuel Flores, 2002. "The Portuguese Chromosome", in *Cultural Review* (International Edition 3), Macao: Cultural Institute.
- ²² From 1846, Portugal claimed Macao as its colony. Being a free port, many foreign companies were set up in Macao to do business with Chinese, which stimulated the

development of Macao's economy. On the other hand, many Chinese moved to Macao in order to evade the turmoil that was happening in China at the time. Facing the increase of population, the Portuguese carried out the project of reclamation in 1850, which was the beginning of urban construction in Macao.

- ²³ Cheng, Christina, 1999. *Macao – a Cultural Janus*, Hong Kong University Press.
- ²⁴ Ferreira do Amaral was a captain in the Portuguese navy in South Africa. As Governor of Macao (18XX ~ 1849), his confrontational policies towards the Imperial Chinese Government led to his assassination by Chinese agents in 1849.
- ²⁵ The number plate was also in black and white.
- ²⁶ The Chinese Barrier Gate was demolished in 1874 and two stones from the demolished structure were placed in the wall the Senate House.
- ²⁷ In 1852, the law that required Chinese to carry lanterns at night when they went out was cancelled, but due the reason of socio-security, it was reenacted in 1853.
- ²⁸ As what the Institute for Civic and Administration said: the new street sign, in which the Chinese and Portuguese occupy a same portion, is a kind of equalities manifestation. And according to the Basic law, the Chinese should be on the top.

Chapter 3

The Making of Street Signs in Macao

As we conclude from Chapter 2, Macao has three kinds of street signs remaining. Regardless of whether they are still being used or not, the materials and the making of the signs can reveal to us some aspects of the city.

The Significance of the Style and Materials of Gateways

Existing historical gateways in Macao were mostly built on the reclamation area along the Interior Harbor between the 1850's and the end of the nineteenth century. Generally, they are small in scale and humble in style. They were the gateways of Chinese residential areas, while traditional Chinese timber gateway, the *Pailau* which usually stood at the exits of main streets was rarely found in Macao, since the streets in Macao were too narrow and winding to accommodate such big structures as the *Pailou*. The gateways were usually made of brick and granite, and their style can be categorized into 3 types:

1. A simple gateway without roof (Fig. 65)
2. A gateway with a tile roof (Fig. 66)
3. A gateway with an upper storey and a tile roof (Fig. 67)



Fig. 65: A gateway without eaves.



Fig. 66: A gateway with eaves.



Fig. 67: A gateway with eaves and an upper storey.

The design of Macao's gateways was quite simple as they reflected the socio-economic hierarchy of the Chinese settlers who were generally humble commoners. Among them, the first type of gateways was for people in the lowest social class who lived in blocks along narrow streets. The second and third type of gateways usually had a street sign made of granite, and the houses inside the *Li* were well-constructed, which reflected the socio-economy status of their owners.

The Making of Street Signs in Macao

Apart from the different styles of street signs in China and Portugal, street signs also vary in terms of the use of materials. For instance, street signs of the Chinese style are made of granite, wooden board, plaster (Fig. 68), or are directly written onto the walls. Street signs of the Portuguese style are made of granite and cement, as well as ceramic tile that combined the quality of the two. Former materials in being resistant to weather erosion, easy to make and economical. Granite and wood boards could be carved with relatively ease by skilled craftsmen; the materials were also easily available. However, plaster was a typical Chinese material that was applied to make nameplate of shops and gateways and advertising signs. It is usually made in the traditional way as follows:



Fig. 68: A traditional plaster street sign on a gateway.

1. Outline the Chinese characters with steel nails on a flat surface.
2. Mix high quality lime plaster and the ash of rice straw together. The ash of rice straw is a kind of Chinese plaster made of gypsums and rice straw which is highly durable. There are 3 steps in its making:
 - a. Dig a pit on the ground and cut the straw into 2-inch portions.
 - b. Put the straw in the pit and fill it with water.
 - c. Put the lime in the pit and mix it with the straw.
 - d. When the lime is saturated, cover the pit with sand and let the lime ferment for at least one year before use.
3. The mixture of plaster and ash of rice straw is applied layer by layer within the outline of the Chinese characters, with each layer not exceeding a thickness of 1cm. When one layer becomes solidified, another layer is then added. Repeat these steps until the characters are in relief.
4. Then remove the water left on the surface of the characters with a dry cloth until the character completely dry. Then paint them with hydrated lime.
5. Finally, mix pure Chinese ink with black color paint and paint the characters in three coats, as the Chinese characters are traditionally written in black.
(Figs. 69 & 70)



Fig. 69:
A broken nameplate of
a pawnshop.



Fig. 70: Restoration of the nameplate of a pawnshop.

The Importation of Ceramic Products and Technology from China to Portugal.

Archeological research shows that Chinese people made the first pottery products 10,000 years ago. During the middle of the Shang Dynasty (商代) (ca. 1766~ca.1122 B.C.), the first celadon was created. Although technology was not mature at that time, it entered the early stages of chinaware during the Han Dynasty (漢代) (206 B.C. ~ 220 A.D.). It approached the peak by the end of the Han Dynasty, and by that time *Ding Kiln*, *Ru Kiln*, *Guan Kiln* and *Jingdezhen Kiln*, for example, were all able to turn out products in their own unique styles. By the time of the Yuan Dynasty (元朝) (1279~1368), flower celadon, *Youlihong* (under glaze blue and red), white porcelain and black porcelain were produced to rather high artistic levels. Unfortunately, during the Ming Dynasty, the various grand china kiln systems in various locations gradually declined and were replaced by small workshops.¹

At that time, the arrival of foreign merchant ships greatly increased the demand for chinaware. Guangdong (Canton) was a major center of foreign exchange and the chinaware of the Cantonese style became the major chinaware for export, bringing prosperity to the china kilns in Guangdong, especially those in Shiwan. Benefiting from the “ocean ban” the banning of ocean travel by imperial edict during the Ming and Qing dynasties (明清朝) (1644~1912), Macao became the chief port for foreign trade in China, and large amounts of chinaware were shipped to Europe from Macao. In the history of the export of Chinese porcelain to Europe, the Portuguese played an important role. The Chinese fired the first batch of chinaware bound for Europe, among which the most renowned one was a china globe with longitudes and latitudes and a badge of Manuel I of Portugal². In Europe, the word “Porcelana” originated from Portuguese. It can be traced back to a Portuguese named Odoardo Barbosa who, upon returning to Portugal in 1516, mentioned this word in his explanation of the making of chinaware and the materials used in the process³.

Porcelain technology was first introduced to Europe by the Arabs. Portugal learned the technique of making ceramic tiles from the Seville district of Spain. During the reign of Christianity in the 15th century, ceramic tile pictures were used to replace the conventional Spanish mosaic of Islamic style used for wall decoration. The Portuguese gave every effort to develop a local ceramic tile industry from the 1550s, and by the mid 1570s, Portugal began producing its own of ceramic tiles.

During this period, the technique of making and painting ceramic tiles in Portugal was highly delicate and refined, and they boasted high artistic and ornamental values. But due to dispersed production, their output was very low; thus they were only used in palaces and churches. In the 17th century, fundamental changes took place in Portugal's ceramic tile industry as mass production was introduced. As a result, colorful ceramic tiles and various kinds of ceramic framing covered large areas of religious buildings. The visual effect is almost as though the decoration had been knitted onto the walls. After the mid seventeenth century, the colors of ceramic tiles were gaudier and more varied. However, from 1670 to 1680, the colorful ceramic paintings suddenly all disappeared and the ceramic tiles became blue and white in color. This was obviously the result of the influence of contemporary China's blue and white celadon. However, they were inferior to the celadon in terms of the color brightness.

The influence of China's blue and white ceramic on Portuguese dated back to 1513, the Portuguese navigator Jorge Alvares, who was the first Portuguese to set foot on Chinese land, conducted business with Chinese ceramic makers.⁴ He ordered some chinaware with his name on it from Canton, even though he had never been there, and one piece engraved with Chinese characters that translate to mean "Ordered by Jorge Alvares" and "Made in the Great Ming Dynasty." An example of this chinaware is still preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.⁵ Through these trading transactions, the Chinese

porcelain culture asserted far-reaching impact on the development of chinaware and ceramic tiles in Portugal. As P. Benjamin Videira Pires observed, “among the impacts on Portuguese culture brought about by Oriental cultures, the Chinese influences on the Portuguese chinaware and ceramic tiles of the Seventeenth Century were the most significant.” In Lisbon, some porcelain factories had begun producing chinaware “according to the Chinese custom.” This was reflected in the blue-and-white chinaware, vases, ornaments of religious rituals and other daily articles with Portuguese figures that were produced in Macao” (Figs. 71 & 72.)⁶ And what is worth mentioning is that during the period from 1725 to 1750, Chinese figures or Chinese motifs were subjects of many of the refined and outstanding frescoes of Portugal.”⁷ Through the years of contact with China, the Portuguese finally learned how to make the blue and white colors dazzle, and many of the building in the country began to be covered by blue and white tiles. (Fig. 73)

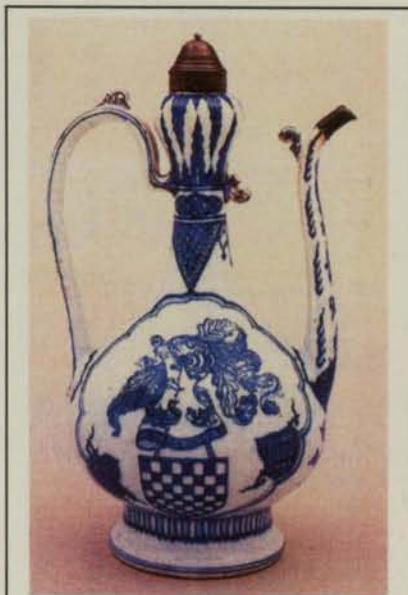


Fig. 71: A kettle with Portuguese symbol.



Fig. 72: A bowl with Portuguese shield.



Fig. 73: A church covered by blue and white ceramic tile, which is a common scene in Portugal.

Though being regarded as the most advanced nation in porcelain production, China had never tried to make ceramic tiles for use in covering walls. Portugal, a nation that had the most contact with China, did not try to further develop porcelain but rather concentrated on the production of ceramic tiles. Perhaps this was due to the abundance of superior quality porcelain imported from China, or perhaps it was because Portugal faces the ocean and therefore gave more importance to the production of the ceramic tiles that could provide protection for its buildings. Nevertheless, with its devotion to ceramic tiles and by drawing from the shapes and concepts of the patterns on the Chinese chinaware, Portugal was able to improve the quality of ceramic tiles to perfection. By the nineteenth century, Portugal had become a nation “covered” with ceramic tiles. However, the use of ceramic to decorate building exteriors was not so popular in Macao. Instead they were often used in the interior of buildings to create a Portuguese ambience. (Figs. 74 & 75)



Fig. 74: The interior wall decorated with blue and white ceramic in Senate House



Fig. 75: The interior wall decorated with blue and white ceramic in Governor Palaces.

However, ceramic tiles do appear on the exterior walls of Macao's building in the form of street signs. There is a practical reason for using ceramic street signs: Macao is a city near the sea and it is often hit by typhoons: the salt carried in the wind can easily cause iron signs to rust and discolor, white ceramics can withstand such elements. However, the use of ceramics in Macao's street signage began with the introduction of ceramic tiles to Portugal as an imported product from China via Macao, which evolved into a locally manufactured product that was exported to Macao as street signs. Macao's "Portuguese" ceramic tile street signs are therefore a product of cross-cultural exchange in trade, art & technology between China and Portugal.

The Making of Ceramic Tile Street Signs

In Portugal, the traditional method of making ceramic tiles has four steps. First, the proper sort of clay is cut into squares and then fired in high temperature ovens. After firing, a glaze is added to the clay. The third step is painting the tiles with a brush or a cloth wrapped in a carbon point fabric. Finally, the tiles are fired in a kiln fueled by wood. Wood-fueled fire is chosen for its ease of control of the heat intensity.

In Macao nowadays, the common street signs are fired in kilns in the Guangdong Province. However, in earlier times, before W.W.II, some were

firing was carried out in Macao using the under-glazed technique employed in the making of Chinese blue and white porcelain.⁸ The under-glaze technique refers to the style of porcelain that was given a direct application of pigments on the biscuit before glazing and firing. Using this method, the blue color will last a long time, but the process is much more complex and the quality of the color is not easy to control. Before 1999, there were no strict requirements on the styles of the outline and the characters; therefore the effects varied depending on the officer in charge, the contractor, the kiln and the calligraphy master employed. This was especially reflected in the great variety of calligraphic styles of Chinese characters, as the hand writing of the master was different. (Figs. 76~79)



Fig. 76: Ceramic street sign in Macao Peninsula. (Dating to around 1950s)



Fig. 77: Ceramic street sign in Macao Peninsula. (Dating to around 1980s)



Fig. 78: Ceramic street sign in Macao Peninsula. (Dating to around 1990s)



Fig. 79: Ceramic street sign currently used in Taipa Island

Today, due to the affordable cost of the glazed biscuit, people prefer to paint the pattern and the words of the street sign directly on the top of the glazes, and this is called the over-glazed decoration technique.

The Institute of Civic & Municipal Affairs of Macao has also conducted research on the styles and outlined boxes of the street sign and therefore has stipulated uniform standards. With the help of the computer, all street signs are now standardized: they are composed of eight blue and white tiles, and divided into two rows; each of tiles is a square of 15cm by 15cm. The Portuguese letters are written in the “Arial narrow style,” while the Chinese characters are in regular script (全真楷書) (Fig. 80). The sizes of the characters and letters and the design of the framing boxes are specified by the government standards. The manufactured street signs are therefore uniform in design. Unfortunately, the overall appearance of the new street sign is less artistic than historical ones. Even though the basic pattern of historical street signs is maintained, the feeling of the two rows is not balance, and the blue color is too dominating in contrast, providing less harmony in overall design.



Fig. 80: The computer graphic design of street sign.

The making of plaster street signs that appear on Macao's Chinese gateways is a traditional craft. In the 1950s, the craft of plaster signage was commonly used to produce shop signs and advertisements, which form an important part of the urban scene. With the advent of modern signage materials such as stainless steel, aluminum and plastic, this craft gradually became obsolete. Furthermore, with the vanishing of older buildings, plaster signage is now rarely found. It is only with the timely protection of Macao's Chinese gateways that this traditional craft may be able to live on. The formation and development of Macao's ceramic street signs have witnessed the exchange between the arts and crafts of the Chinese and Portuguese. Their existence in Macao, a city where two ethnic populations coexist in harmony, is especially meaningful.



Fig. 81: Plaster commercial signs on columns.

Note:

1. Xianming, Feng. 1997. *The History of Chinese Ceramic*, Heritage Publishing co.
2. Antonio Pedro Pires, 1997. "From Ceramic to Ceramic, Shiwan and Caldas da Rainha", in *Review of Culture* no.11, pp 63-90. Macao: Cultural Institute.
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Chapter 4

Cultural Identity of Macao through Its Street Signs

As discussed in the previous chapter, both ceramic tile street signs and traditional Chinese street signs are rich in historical information. They reflect the changing socio-cultural aspects of Macao permits the colonial past to the post-colonial present.

As Macao is a city where the Chinese meet the Western, some traditional Chinese gateway buildings were designed with western influences, and this witnessed the convergence of two different concepts of architecture. For instance, the Palm Patio (Fig. 82), in which the Chinese who made incense resided, has a gateway that was built totally according to western architectural principles, as manifested in the pediment, the columns and the ornamentation. Another example which features western architectural influences is Travessa das Galinholas (Fig. 83). Its Baroque pediment, neo-classic arch and ornamentation show more extensive western influences. The only sign of the gateway being a Chinese gateway is the Chinese characters, although they have already disappeared.

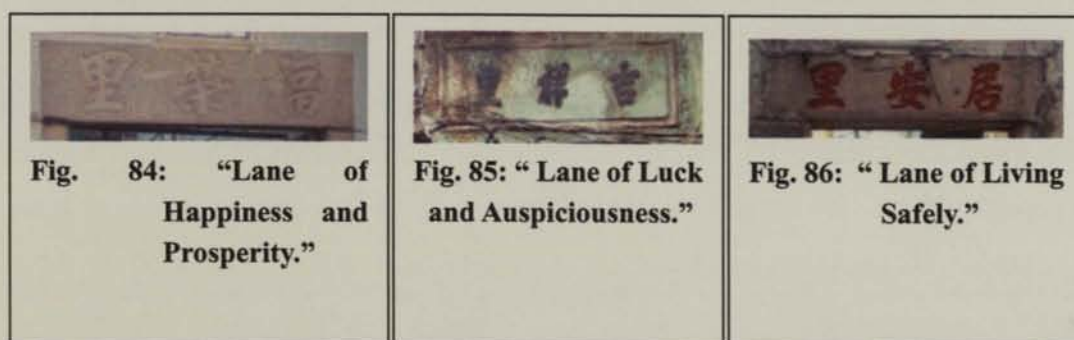


Fig. 82: Palm Patio: a Neo-classical gateway building.



Fig. 83: Travessa das Galinholas: a Baroque style gateway building.

As a brief note, the general principle of Chinese place-names is reflected on Macao's traditional gateways to living blocks in the Chinese areas. These names almost always express Confucian moral values and, in particular, the desire of attaining physical, psychological and economic well-being. (Figs. 84~86)



In a way, ceramic tiles as street signs have become an issue of artistic style. As we can see from the street signs of blue-and-white ceramic tiles in the Alfama district of Lisbon that date back to before the 1755 earthquake, their design was endowed with strong Chinese influences. This should not be surprising. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Chinese art was very fashionable in Europe (Fig. 87), and Portugal, as a nation that had close contact with China, was bound to be affected. As a matter of fact, the design concept of these street signs are similar to Chinese seals (Fig. 88) which usually appear on such Chinese art works as calligraphy, paintings and porcelain to identify the artists and production dates. The outlines of Chinese seals are made up of single lines, very much in the manner of the old street signs of Alfama. In Macao, street sign outlines are the combination of those on the signs from Cascais and Alfama. Its effect is really a reflection of Sino-Luso culture. However, the wave pattern on the four corners of each frame is the manifestation of Macao's close links with the sea. The blue-and-white color combination contrasting the colorful buildings of the city has the effect of enhancing the environment in the sunny sub-tropical climate (Fig. 89).



Fig. 87: A Portuguese ceramic painting with Chinese figures, it is decorated with a floral outline



Fig. 88: A Chinese seal with a simple but artistic outline.



Fig. 89: The contrast of colours between a street sign and a building in Macao.

The Naming of Streets in Macao

The design of Macao street signs not only conveys strong historic and cultural messages, but the main contents of these street signs, namely the street names, are closely related to daily lives, commercial enterprises and socio-political activities of both the local Chinese and Portuguese communities. At the same time, they also reveal different interpretations of one location by the Chinese and Portuguese peoples, representing the differences in their respective viewpoints.

In 1869, Macao began formally erecting common signs for the streets. Prior to this, Portuguese and the Chinese communities had their own names for streets in their quarters. These street signs were confined to one single language; either Portuguese or Chinese, for the two cultures had their own interpretations of their own areas. After the streets were formally standardized and renamed in 1869 by the Portuguese Government of Macao, bilingual street signs began to appear.¹ Generally speaking, for streets that already had original Portuguese names, the phonetic translation was adopted for Chinese names, so there is usually no contradiction between the meaning of the Portuguese and the Chinese names. For streets that originally had names in Chinese, the situation was usually different. Chinese street names were developed out of mutual

agreement among local inhabitants, who tended to adopt names that represented their living habits. While the Portuguese did literally translate some of the Chinese street names into Portuguese, they also had their own ideas about the renaming of a large number of the Chinese streets. As a result, on many street signs, the Portuguese and Chinese meanings do not match.

Of course, such differences in meaning of Macao's bilingual street names are less significant than the contradictions in meanings that fully represented the cultural pluralism of Macao society. One example is the street whose Portuguese name is "Beco da Cule" and Chinese name is 聚龍里 (Fig. 90). The Chinese name means "the gathering place of dragons" and dragons are highly respected by the Chinese. However, the Portuguese name means "Pig Lane," and "Pig" was a nickname the Chinese gave to the coolies sold abroad. From 1851 to 1873, Macao was the collection and distribution center for the trafficking of Chinese laborers to overseas, and these oppressed laborers were sold like pigs to far-away places, and they were thus given the nickname.² Many coolies dwelt in Beco da Cule, and the Chinese name euphemistically expressed these low social ranking laborers' hope for a better future by referring to themselves as dragons awaiting discovery (from the Chinese proverb "crouching tigers and the hidden dragons, "卧虎藏龍", meaning people of great skills whose talents are yet to be revealed.), but the Portuguese name represented the bitter reality.

Another example is the street whose Portuguese name is Rua da Ferreira Amaral, and Chinese name is 東望洋斜路 (translated in English as "The Guia Hill Slope"). The Portuguese name refers to Governor Ferreira Amaral who is considered a hero by the Portuguese. The Chinese name, on the other hand, is derived from the street's geographical location. This is because the Chinese regard Amaral as a ruthless invader. Therefore, the existence of such a type of street names reflects a compromise in establishing political correctness between the two races.



Fig. 90: The gateway of “Pig Lane”.

Generally speaking, summarized below are the several ways of naming streets in Macao:

1. Named After Commercial Activities

Prior to 1869, the various kinds of economic activities related to daily living were usually concentrated in the Chinese communities. This was mainly because the Chinese dominated the supplying of daily commodities and these goods had to be supplied from the mainland. The Portuguese, on the other hand, concentrated on large-scale commerce. In order to facilitate trading activities and for the sake of the convenience of the local residents, specific trade concentrated on specific streets. In time, people began to refer to the streets by their associated commercial activities. As time passes, some of these streets are no longer home to the traditional commercial activities, and their street signs become a reminder of their past. Examples of such streets are given in the table below.

Chinese Name	Portuguese Name	English Translation	Illustrated in
養豬巷	Travessa do Porqueiro	Pig-raising Alley	Fig. 91
賣魚巷	Travessa do Alpendre	Fish-vending Alley	
賣果街	Rua do Estrela	Fruit-vending Street	
咸魚街	Rua do Peixe Salgado	Salted-fish Street	
爐巷	Travessa do Fogão	Stove Alley	Fig 92
鞋里	Beco do Sapato	Shoe Lane	
眼鏡里	Beco dos Oculos	Eye Glasses Lane	
蛋巷	Travessa. dos Ovos	Egg Alley	
魚網里	Beco da Rede	Fishing Net Lane	
轎夫巷	Travessa do Cules	Sedan-chair Bearer Alley	
造繩巷	Travessa do Cordeiro	Rope-making Alley	
鹽里	Beco do Sal	Salt Lane	
工匠街	Rua dos Colonos	Craftsmen Lane	
水手東街	Rua das Alabardas	Sailors East Road	
染布巷	Travessa dos Tingidores	Cloth-dying Alley	
風爐匠巷	Travessa do Fogueiro	Furnace Makers Alley	
洗衣匠巷	Patio do Mainato	Launderers Lane	
酒罈巷	Travessa da Dorna	Wine Urn Alley	



Fig. 91: Travessa do Porqueiro or “Pig-raising Alley.”



Fig. 92: Travessa do Fogão or “Stove Alley.”

2. Named After Historical or Religious Buildings

This type of streets was usually named after important buildings located in vicinities. However, many of these buildings have vanished from their sites and only these street signs remain to testify their former existence. Streets such as Rua do Ervanários (關前正街 “Main Street in Front of the Customs”) (Fig. 93), Calçado do Amparo (大關斜巷 “Sloping Lane of the Big Customs”), and Rua da Alfindega (紅窗門街 “Red Window Panels Street”, a reference to the windows of the Customs building) have names that indicate the street’s relative locations to the Chinese Customs set up during the Qing dynasty (1685)³. Their names testified sovereignty of the Qing Government in Macao, but the customs building was dismantled in 1849, and this incident signified the beginning of the Portuguese overall dominance of Macao. Other examples are Beco dos Cotovelos (左堂欄尾), which was the location of the official agency of the Qing Government in Macao, and Largo do Senado (議事亭前地), which was once the site of the official administrative establishment of the Qing Government in Macao (Fig. 94.) On the site of present Leal Senado (Senate House), there had been a pavilion used for negotiations between Chinese and Portuguese officials. It was later purchased by the Portuguese Government and

the Leal Senado was built on this location.⁴ Another example was Rua do Pato (“醫院後街Back Street of the Hospital”) which was the first western hospital in the Far East, and which was later remodeled and turned into the Consulate of Portugal.⁵



Fig. 93: Rua do Ervanários

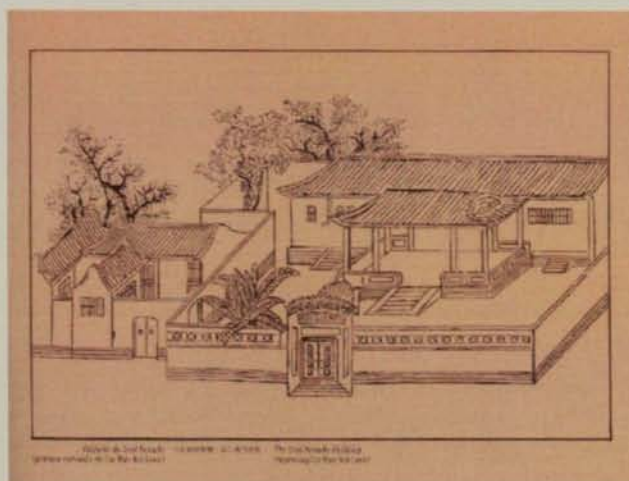


Fig. 94: A drawing depicting the official agency of the Qing Government in Macao, which was located on today's Senate House.

3. Named After Surnames of Residing Families

During the Ming and Qing dynasties, the ravages of war forced many Chinese to flee to Macao, where they settled and gradually formed communities of various ethnic groups. Research of street names in these communities will facilitate our understanding of the development of Macao and the Chinese immigration history of Macao. These streets include Beco da Boa Mina (李家圍 “Enclosed Neighborhood Block of the Li Family”), Beco de Caixa (鍾家圍 “Enclosed Neighborhood Block of the Chung Family”) (Fig. 95), Travessa da Porta (趙家圍 “Enclosed Neighborhood Block of the Chiu Family”) (Fig. 96), and Beco do Abridor (吳家圍 “Enclosed Neighborhood Block of the Ng Family”). On some traditional gateways, we can also find inscriptions that specified the name of the family which lived there (Fig. 97).



Fig. 95: Beco de caixa, originally the “Walled village of the Chung Family.”



Fig. 96: Travessa da Porta, originally the “Walled village of the Chiu Family.”



Fig. 97: The inscription “朱家自街” saying this lane belonged exclusively to the Zhu Family.

4. Named After Geographical Locations

Such streets include Rua do Praia Grande (南灣街), Rua da Praia do Bom Parto (燒灰爐街), Rua da Praia do Manduco (下環街), Rua do Almirante Sergio (河邊新街), Rua da Ferreira do Amara, Rua do Lin Fong (蓮峰街), Rua de Luis de Camões (白鴿巢街) and Travessa do Ma Kau Seak (馬交石里).

5. Named After Import Local Personalities

It is common for cities worldwide to name some of their streets after people in their respective societies. This naming practice not only expresses praise and gratitude to these individuals, but also encourages the public to see these individuals as role models. Examples of such streets in Macao include as Travessa de Chan Lok Hong (陳樂巷), Rua do Lu Cao (盧九街), and Travessa Ho Cong Loi (何光來巷). These are named after Chinese who had made major contributions to Macao, particularly, in its economic development. Portuguese individuals so honored were usually presidents or public figures, such as Rua da Camilo Pessanha (庇山耶街), Estrada Engenheiro Trigo (地厘古工程師馬路), Rua de Silva Mendes (文第士街) and Rua da Arlur Tanagnini Barbosa (巴坡沙馬路). As an interesting note, almost all the streets that are named after Portuguese are more important streets than those named after Chinese.

The above is a brief summary of the street-naming methods in Macao. There are also some streets which were named after dates of important political events, such as Rua de Cinco de Outubro (十月初五街); trees, such as Travessa do S. João (水榕樹巷); and emotions, such as Rua da surpresa (愕街). There are also strange streets names, such as Beco da Malva and Beco da Oculos (倒裝二街), which means in Chinese “Second Street of Up-side-Down Mounting.” These street names add richness and interest to the history of the city of Macao. It is no wonder that some people regard street names as the embodiment of the city’s autobiography.

Street Signs as Expression of the Cantonese Culture

During the dominance of Macao by the Portuguese, the Portuguese language, surprisingly, did not become the daily language in Macao. Equally peculiar, the Chinese language was never officially promoted in Macao either. Therefore, for a long time, there existed numerous problems in the translation between Chinese and Portuguese. As scholar Sun Chengao suggests, “the

enormous differences between the languages of Chinese and Portuguese have undoubtedly increased the difficulties for the Chinese and Portuguese to learn the language of their counterpart, and thus leading to problems in the translation between the two languages, undeniably causing adverse effects to the direct exchanges between Chinese and Portuguese cultures.”⁶ This phenomenon is obviously shown in the translation of some streets named after celebrities, such as Avenida da Almeida Ribeiro (亞美打利庇盧大馬路), Rua de Francisco Xavier Pereira (啤利喇街), Rua de Abreu Nunes (亞卑察奴你士街), Avenida do Almirante Lacerda (罈些喇提督大馬路), and Rua de Tome Pires (道咩卑利士街). These are lengthy names, which are hard to remember, and which definitely resulted in great inconvenience for the Chinese in Macao, as well as affecting communications and understanding between the two people. However, seen from another angle, the Chinese characters, which are mostly from the Cantonese language, are not common words found in Chinese dictionaries. In the Post-World War II period, newly coined Cantonese characters were added to the “traditional” characters. Such an active use of the Cantonese vernacular rather than the standard Chinese language in street signage is probably a unique phenomenon in the whole of China. (Figs. 98 & 99)



Fig. 98: An example of a street sign whose Chinese text is based on the Cantonese language rather than standard Chinese.



Fig. 99: Another example showing the use of the Cantonese language in Macao's street sign.

Street Sign as Memory of the past

As Macao is a city shaped by both Chinese and Portuguese cultures, it is not strange that streets have two names. Streets with three names would be strange, but yet they do exist in Macao. According to statistics of 1993, there are 112 streets in Macao that have three names. The existence of the streets with three names is a consequence of complicated historical circumstances.

When the Portuguese colonized Macao, they named the streets as they liked, and the corresponding street names were phonetically translated from Portuguese. As some Chinese street names that were phonetically based on the Portuguese were too difficult to remember and pronounce, the Chinese continued to use the original Chinese street names that they had devised. Since the majority of the residents were Chinese, hence for their convenience, the Portuguese accepted this third street name and allowed its existence on street signs. Therefore, such street signs serve not only for the simple purpose of orientation, but also as a memory of activities that had occurred in the area. For instance, Merchant Alley (商人巷 Travessa dos Mercadores) (Fig. 100) is a narrow lane near Market Road that was the focus of local trade activities when the Portuguese first arrived. Its third name is “Eighteen Houses” (十八間) which was the original Chinese street name that can be found on the maps of Macao. As the name indicates there were eighteen trading houses along the street and their scale must have been sufficient sizable to have the locality name after them. Another example is the Conselheiro Ferreira da Almeida Avenue, whose third name is “Dutch Garden” (荷蘭園), which was derived from an important historical event. In 1622, with the failure of the Dutch attack on Macao, a lot of Dutch soldiers were captured and imprisoned on this avenue. Therefore, this street name is an euphemistic commemoration of the Dutch defeat.

As this chapter has shown, Macao's street signs, besides their functional importance, carry important interpretations of history, art, linguistics,

anthropology and technology. Further investigation will undoubtedly uncover more interesting information.

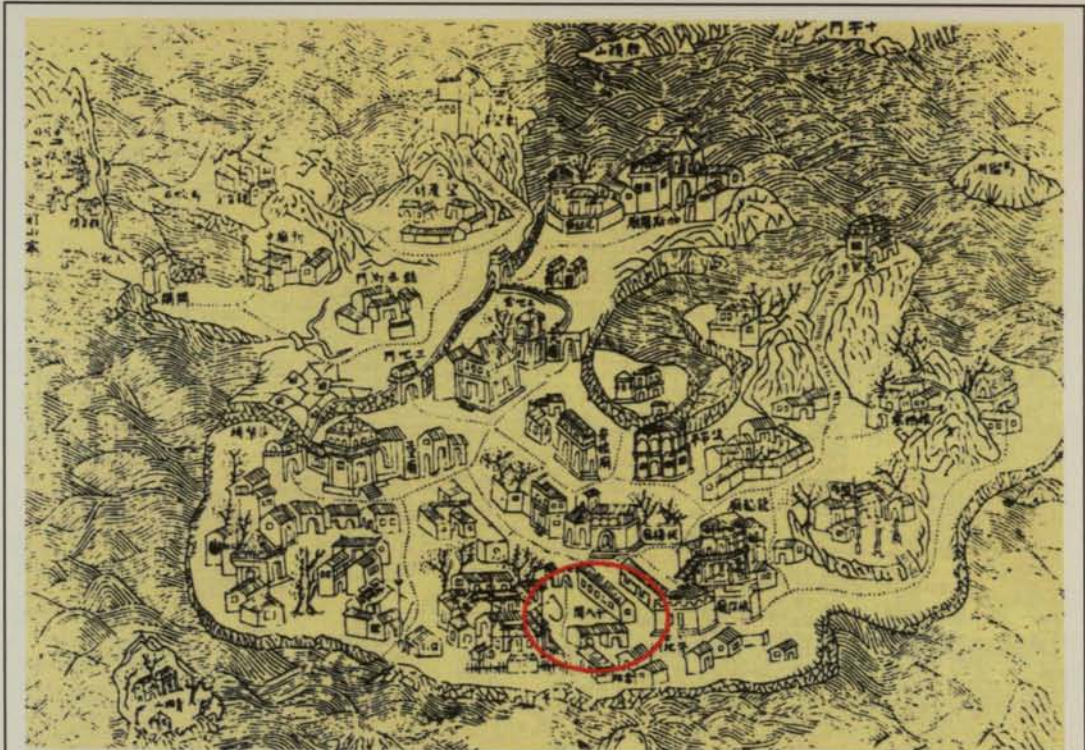


Fig. 100: Travessa dos Mercadores (Merchant Alley), depicted in a Qing dynasty showing as “Eighteen House “(十八間).

Note

1. In 1869, a commission was appointed by the Governor of Macao to study the street name of Macao City.
2. In the 1850s, Macao became the centre of the “Coolie trade”. In 1873 there were 300 barracoons (Coolie trade houses) operating in Macao.
3. In 1685, the Chinese government set up a customs building in Macao to collect taxes; it was demolished by the Macao Governor Ferreira do Amaral in 1849.
4. The present Leal Senado building was built in 1784.
5. It was the first Western hospital in China, and it was built by D. Belchior Carneiro in 1569.
6. Sun Chengao (孫成教), 1994, The Cultural exchange between the East and the West. Macao: Macao foundation.

Chapter 5

A Critical Review of Macao's Street Signs

The street signs of Macao are the memory of Macao differentiating the city from others. However, due to neglect, traditional Chinese signs are disappearing from the city, and the design of the pre-Handover bilingual ceramic sign has been revised for the political reasons to downplay the Portuguese cultural legacy. If this situation continues, the urban identity of Macao will be undermined gradually. To sustain Macao's unique Chinese-Portuguese cultural heritage, in depth studies must be encouraged, otherwise Macao's history will be full of contradictions and people will be confused. Therefore some actions and guidelines should be considered:

1. Restore Chinese Gateways



Fig. 101: An example of a dilapidated Chinese Gateway in Macao.



Fig. 102: Another example of a dilapidated Chinese Gateway.

Chinese gateways have existed in Macao for hundreds of years. As many of them are outside the heritage protection areas, they are generally uncared for and are left in a dilapidated state (Figs. 101 & 102). If they are not restored in time, another part of Macao's urban heritage will vanish. Besides restoration,

research on their history must be carried out in order to increase public awareness of their value and significance.

2. Understanding of the Design Evolution of Macao's Bilingual Ceramic Street Signs

As the design of Macao's bilingual ceramic street signs has gradually undergone changes through individual interpretations of respective craftsmen, a full understanding of their original designs will be important for passing on the tradition. Otherwise, the meaning and significance of these street signs will be lost. For instance, on the Macao peninsula and Taipa Island, there exists several variation of street signs of similar design. However, compared with the original design dating to the 1940s (Fig. 103), their differences are revealing (Figs.104~106), besides the inconsistency in design, the manufacturing quality of these ceramic street signs are inconsistent as well. It is therefore most important to thoroughly research and document the historical design changes, the variations and the manufacturing process in order to be able to make decisions that will achieve a street signage for Macao that will not only be of consistent design and quality, but also retain authenticity and significance. Furthermore, a detailed survey of graphics and colours as well as the meanings of the street names in both Chinese and Portuguese must also be undertaken.

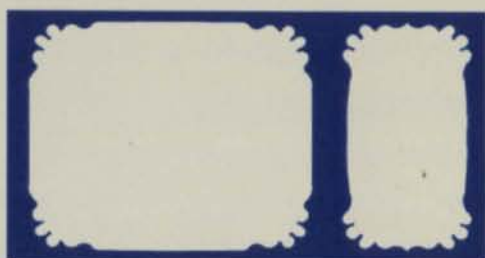


Fig. 103: The original street sign design in the 1940s.

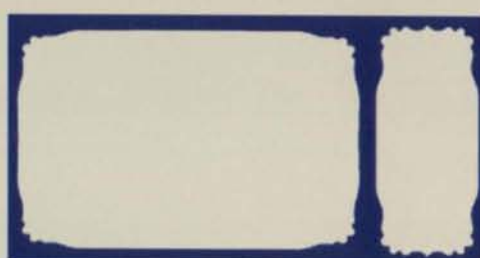


Fig. 104: A street sign design dating to 1970s

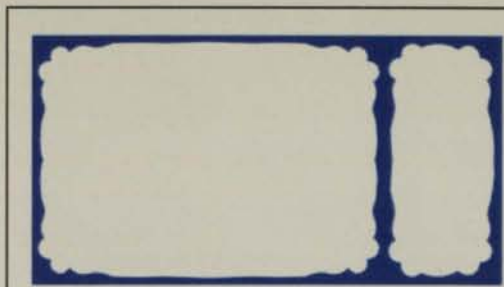


Fig. 105: A street sign design dating to 1950s

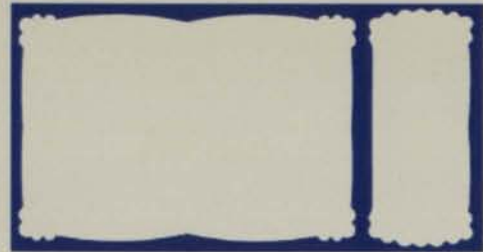


Fig. 106: A street sign design dating to 1990s

3. The basic function of street signs must be given attention

The basic function of street sign is to acknowledge people of their location. However, in Macao, some street signs are not so visible, as they are either obscured by advertisement boards or are put in such inconspicuous locations that they are out of public sight. Therefore, for the convenience of residents and visitors, a review of sign locations and control of advertisement boards must be carried out.

3. Reconsider Placement on Heritage buildings and Structures

Street signs of Macao are usually fixed on walls. A street sign's position on the walls of a building or structure should be complementary; otherwise, the sign will only serve to undermine the character of the host building or structure, especially when the host is of heritage or historic importance. For instance, on the staircase of St. Paul's Ruin, two street signs are installed within a short distance from each other. They look like poultices and undermine the monument's integrity (Fig.107). Another example is in the remaining section of 17th century city wall which is built of rammed earth (Fig. 108). Due to erosion, the rammed earth is tearing off. The biggest damage, however, is the installation of two street signs upon the eroding wall surface. Therefore, if possible, it is better not to put any street signs on the walls of any historic building or structure. In such cases, free standing street signs would be more suitable.



Fig. 107: Overly provided street signage on the parapet wall of staircase leading to St. Paul's Ruins.

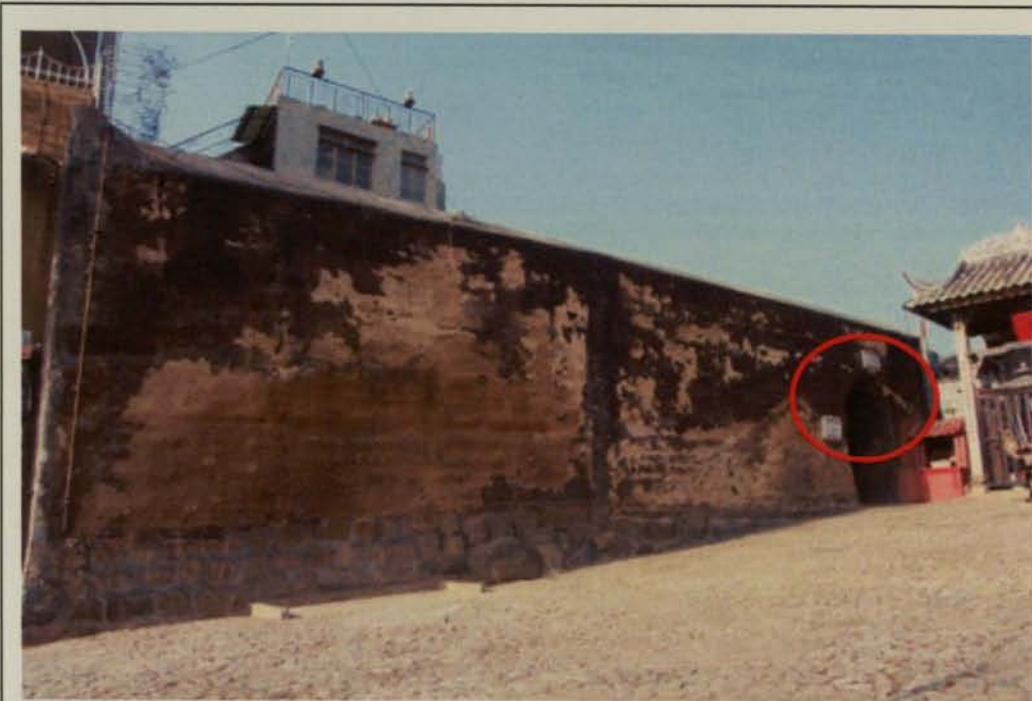


Fig. 108: Street signs fixed on the rammed earth wall of the old city wall, which add to the damage caused by weather erosion.

On streets where there are already traditional Chinese street signs, ceramic signs have been installed directly over or next to the original Chinese plaster

signs (Figs. 109 & 110) thus destroying the integrity of the gateway. The best solution is to simply leave the gateway intact and install the ceramic sign elsewhere, such as on the wall of an adjacent building.



Fig. 109: An example of insensitive street signage placement.



Fig. 110: Another example of insensitive street signage placement.

Tourism Potential of Macao's Street Signs

In Macao, popular interest in the artistic design of local ceramic Street signs have led to their adaptation as souvenirs for tourists (Fig. 111), in some ways, provide a useful identifiable symbol for Macao. However, this kind of souvenir can be more interesting if information on the history of the streets is included. However, as many of them are made in a rough and slipshod way, they may do more harm than good to Macao's image as a tourists destination.



Fig. 111: Street signs adapted as tourist souvenirs.

Traditional Chinese gateways featuring Chinese street signs possess bigger tourism potentials because they can be a means to illustrate the urban history of Chinese in Macao. In Macao, more than 20 gateways have survived. If all of them can be properly conserved, they will definitely become part of our precious urban heritage, as this kind of structure is seldom found in other parts of China.

Interestingly, all of the gateways are located in the Interior Harbor area. With further research, an attractive tourism route covering these gateways can be easily drawn out. (Fig. 112)

- street with traditional Chinese gateways
- Possible heritage trail.

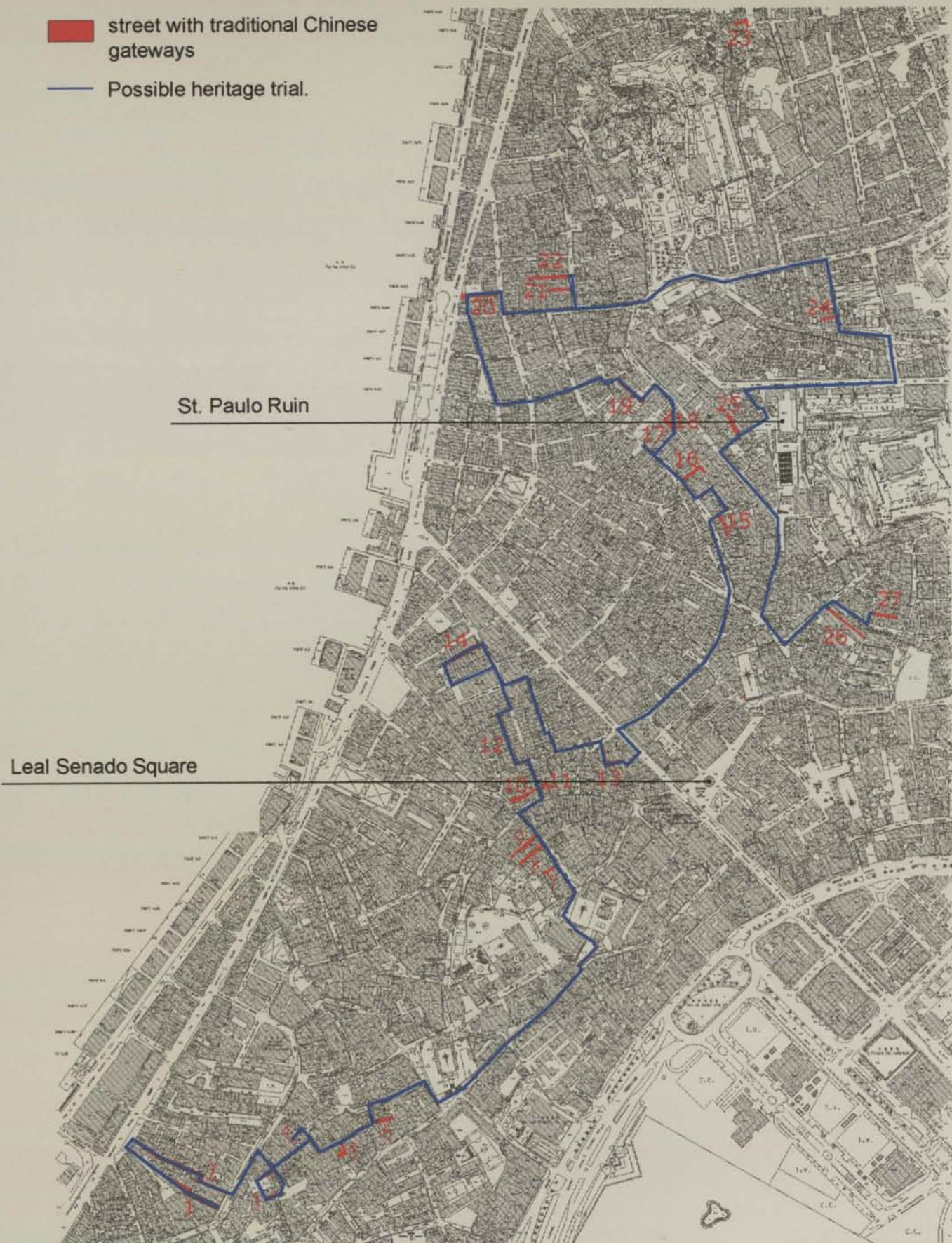

















Fig. 112: Location of traditional Chinese gateways in the Interior Harbour area.





Fig. 113: Existing Traditional Chinese Gateways in Macao





	Description of the Gateways
	<p>Name : Pátio do Mungo (綠豆圍)</p> <p>Materials : Brick and stone</p> <p>Style : A gateway without a tile roof, the street sign is of plaster.</p> <p>Condition : It is a small urban neighborhood with houses still remaining intact. The gateway needs to be repaired and protected as it is under redevelopment pressure.</p>
	<p>Name : Pátio da Esteira (草蓆圍)</p> <p>Materials : Brick and stone</p> <p>Style : A gateway without a tile roof, nameplate was of plaster but already disappeared.</p> <p>Condition : It is a gateway of unusual width. Its condition is good but its street sign, which has disappeared, should be restored.</p>
 	<p>Name : Pátio do Bonzo: (南巫圍)</p> <p>Materials : Brick and stone</p> <p>Style : A gateway without a tile roof but has ceramic bottle-like roof balusters; its street sign was of plaster but has already disappeared.</p> <p>Condition : This living area is a rare example that has two gateways remaining. The condition of the gateways is good.</p>





	<p>Name : Pátio do Sal (致和里)</p> <p>Materials : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway with a tile roof.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway has Chinese painting on the wall, which is partially damaged by a modern ceramic street sign. It is better to remove the street sign and repair the painting. The condition of the gateway is good, and the houses inside the neighborhood block are of three storeys high.</p>
	<p>Name : Pátio das Seis Casas (六屋圍)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway with no tile roof but a canopy-style eaves.</p> <p>Condition : The vegetation has grown on the gateway which should be removed.</p>
	<p>Name : Patio da Ilusão (幻覺圍)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway that has an upper storey and a tile roof.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is in good condition but the power cables on the facade should be inconspicuously re-routed.</p>

	<p>Name : Pátio da Capieira (社福圍, 吉祥里)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway with small eaves.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is in good condition but the power cables on the facade should be inconspicuously re-routed.</p>
	<p>Name : Pátio da Mainato (青雲里)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway with a tile roof. Its street sign is made of plaster.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is in good condition.</p>
	<p>Name : Pátio da Cule (聚龍里)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway with a tile roof. Its street sign is made of plaster.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is in good condition.</p>
	<p>Name : Beco do Galinhholas (福隆里)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway with a tile roof. Its street sign is made of plaster.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is in good condition but the modern street sign should be removed.</p>

	<p>Name : Pátio do Ídolo (福隆社)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway with a small tile roof. Its street sign is made of plaster.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is in good condition but the modern street sign should be removed.</p>
	<p>Name : Beco do Felicidade (福榮里)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway with tile roof. Its street sign is made of stone.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is in good condition.</p>
	<p>Name : Travessa das Venturas (福寧里)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway without eaves or roof.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is in good condition.</p>
	<p>Name : Rua da Nova (福德大街)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway with a tile roof.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is in good condition and it is the only example of a gateway to commercial street.</p>

	<p>Name : Pátio do Vaz (華士圍, 蓋善里)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway with cantilevered eaves.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is of very simple and humble design; it is in fair condition.</p>
	<p>Name : Pátio do Arco (廣富里)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway with a tile roof and decorated with Chinese wall painting.</p> <p>Condition: The gateway is in fair condition. The characters on the wall show that it was once a Fujianese living block.</p>
	<p>Name : Pátio do Amparo (顯榮里)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway with projecting eaves.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is in poor condition. Urgent repair must be carried out</p>
	<p>Name : Pátio da Calhandras (人和里)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway with a tile roof.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is in good condition but the facade wall painting under the roof eaves needs to be restored and the power cables in front of it should be re-routed rearranged.</p>

	<p>Name : Pátio da Eterna Felicidade (永慶里)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway with an upper storey and a tile roof.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is in good condition but the facade wall painting under the roof eaves needs to be restored and the power cables in front of it should be re-routed .</p>
	<p>Name : Travessa das Galinholas (水鴨巷)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway with Western architectural influence.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is in poor condition. Its plaster street sign no longer exist.</p>
	<p>Name : Beco do Bambu (海田里)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway without roof or eaves.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is in poor condition. Urgent repair must be carried out.</p>
	<p>Name : Pátio do Socorro (居安里)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway without roof or eaves.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is in poor condition. Urgent repair must be carried out.</p>

	<p>Name : Pátio da Águia (順成里)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway without roof or eaves.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is in poor condition. Urgent repair must be carried out.</p>
	<p>Name : Beco da Agulha (銀針里)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Condition : This gateway is in state of ruin.</p>
	<p>Name : Pátio das Palmas (敦善里)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway of Western architectural influence.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is in poor condition. The modern ceramic street sign over the old Chinese street sign should be relocated.</p>
	<p>Name : Pátio do Manto (元亨里)</p> <p>Material : Brick and stone.</p> <p>Style : A gateway without roof or eaves.</p> <p>Condition : The gateway is in poor condition.</p>



Name : Pátio do Balachão (咸魚圍)

Material : Brick and stone.

Condition : This gateway is in a state of near-complete ruin.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

When we look back to the times when Macao was a charming city of picturesque scenery, and with romantic architectural and inspiring spaces, we cannot help but feel a sense of loss. Yet, in comparison with other cities that have been almost completely redeveloped with modern buildings, leaving no place for the continuity of history, Macao seems fortunate to have at least its historic plaza, historic neighborhood blocks and buildings. However, to our dismay, the constantly sprouting new buildings in the old neighborhood blocks and the construction of new buildings inside the protected zones are undermining the integrity of the historic character of Macao. We cannot help but wonder whether future generations will be lived in as rich a collection of historic elements in their urban fabric as we have now. As such, we must not take for granted the urban heritage we now possess, as it is testimonial to Macao's unique Chinese-Portuguese cultural identity that is a product of more than 400 years of exchanges and interactions between the East and the West. The saddest thing for a city, in my opinion, is when its experience of history is limited to a virtual tour through old photos.

The Macao government is vigorously promoting the development of cultural tourism in order to change the image of Macao as the City of Casino—the image that has long been mistaken as the solely distinguishing feature of this historic city. While many projects devoted to the improvement of the city's historic fabric are being undertaken, the uniqueness of Macao should not be derived solely from the conservation of a plaza, a street or several buildings. Culture is multifaceted, and therefore, in dealing with cultural heritage, we must include not only the familiar but also the neglected. We may appreciate a rare piece of archeological artifact as cultural significance, but should a common artifact that is still in active use, such as street sign, not be recognized for its cultural value? In Macao, heritage elements both big and

small, from historic monuments to historical street signs, combine to express the essence of the city.

Macao's street signs, from the plaster ones bearing names of Chinese neighborhood blocks to ceramic tiles signs bearing street names, are one of the most basic elements in urban landscape; they contribute significantly to local charm and character. Local variations in design, material and lettering add to the richness and diversity of Macao's streetscape. Therefore, where old street signs survive, they should be retained and conserved rather than replaced so as to maintain a sense of historical continuity. Unfortunately, Macao's street signs are usually neglected instead of being appreciated for their social and cultural values. Furthermore, Macao's heritage law does not protect traditional Chinese gateways on which bear some of Macao's oldest street signs. If we consider old street signs as part of Macao's cultural heritage, we should keep them intact instead of replacing them with more "politically correct" versions, as has been carried out since 2000. At the very least, they should be maintained in historic districts as practiced in historic cities in Portugal. Only in new developing zones should new designs be applied to correspond with contemporary social and political circumstance. Doing so will not only protect the historic memory of the city but also contribute to Macao's evolving urban culture.

Before 1999, Macao's street signs were one of the tools for showing Portuguese sovereignty. After Macao was returned to rightful Chinese rule, there is really no longer the need to use street signs as a tool for showing sovereignty. The more important thing to do now is to promote awareness of Macao's identity among Macao's residents, so that what differentiates Macao from other Chinese cities is known. Moreover, the enhancement of Macao's cultural identity is more important to the development of its economy than the construction of new tourist attractions.

The only way to reveal the uniqueness of Macao's cultural identity is to emphasize the different cultural influences that have come together to compose

Macao's identity. Regardless of political correctness, the presentation of a city's history, history should be complete and not selective. As what Macao historian Christina Cheng has said regarding the dismantling of the Amaral statue (Fig. 114):

If the Amaral statue had been retained, it would have served as a lesson for future generations to learn from a tangible colonial iconography. It would have been the locus proper for school children to gather around for an outdoor lesson on imperialism, colonialism and hegemony. It would prove more interesting than the dry textbooks in classroom; moreover, it would have become a historic witness to the irretrievable past when the Portuguese overly engaged in the project of colonial subjugation in the era of height imperialism.”¹



Fig. 114: The statue of Governor Amaral was erected in 1940 and removed for political reasons in 1992 prior to Macao's return to Chinese sovereignty.

The protection of a city's cultural heritage should be the continual responsibility of all generations because a city needs to have its memories. As Richard England said, "to understand a place one must know its memories."² However, in the modern era, artifacts that hold important cultural memories are rapidly disappearing. In other words, if a city's cultural heritage resources are not properly protected, in the future they might only be seen in museums. If Macao's decision-makers can be more politically tolerant and culturally far-sighted, the historic elements of the city will become more familiar to its people and more embedded in Macao society.

Note:

1. Christina Cheng, 1999. *Macao – a Cultural Janus*, (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press) .
2. David Lung, 2001. “Macao: What Time Is This Place?” in *Culture of Metropolis in Macao*. Macao: Cultural Institute.

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