

The Changing Status of Macau before and after the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between China and Portugal

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Abstract: *In the late 15th and early 16th centuries, the opening of the Indian Ocean shipping lanes led Western colonists to move east and establish colonies in the east. Portugal, located in southwestern Europe, was the first country to begin colonial expansion, occupying East Africa, the Indian Ocean and even Southeast Asia. The Portuguese established a colony in Goa, in western India, in 1510. In 1511, the Portuguese retook Malacca, the commercial centre of the East, and established their maritime supremacy in the East^[1]. The Portuguese then turned their attention to China in an attempt to tap into the Chinese market. Portugal became the first country in Western Europe to have direct links with China.*

Keywords: *Sino-Portuguese Relations; Macau; Changing Status*

1. Introduction

Investigations into China began as early as the Portuguese colonisation of India. When Vasco da Gama returned to Portugal, he gave some Chinese ceramics as gifts to the royal family, which made China a focal point for them. In April 1508, Don Manuel, King of Portugal, sent an instruction to the fleet of Sequeira: "You are to learn everything about the Chinese, where do they come from?" How long was the road? When did they go to Malacca, or to some other place to do business? What did you bring with you? How many boats do they come in a year? What shape and size were their boats? Did they come back the year they came? Did they have agents or trade sites in Malacca or other countries? Are they rich merchants? Were they weak, or were they rigid? Did they have firearms? Were they tall? And all about them. Were they Christians, or were they unbelievers? Was there more than one king in this country? Were there any Moors or any other people who did not follow their laws and religion? And, if they were not Christians, what was their faith? What was worship? What were their customs like? Where did their borders extend to? Which neighbouring country was it?"

After the capture of Malacca, Afonso de Albuquerque's Portuguese viceroy in India wrote to the Portuguese king advocating trade with China, and in August 1512 he also proposed sending a ship to China every year in exchange for silk, gold, porcelain and so on. His next step was to establish trade links with China.

2. Early Sino-Portuguese Relations

In 1513 (the eighth year of Ming Zhengde), Afonso de Albuquerque, the Portuguese viceroy in India, sent his subordinate, Jorge Alvarez (also known as Ovens), from Malacca to China. In June, his ships reached the island of Tuen Mun at the mouth of the Pearl River. Alvarez completed a lucrative sale in 1514 and returned to Malacca laden with Chinese goods. Before he left, he quietly erected a stone tablet with the Portuguese coat of arms on the island to mark the first landing in China^[2].

The great success of Jorge Alvarez's voyage greatly inspired the Portuguese desire for trade between China and Portugal. In the tenth year of Ming Zhengde, Rafael Pérestreiro set sail again for China on board the ship of the Malaccan merchant Prat. He returned to Malacca in August and September of the following year, having sold his goods on the island of Tuen Mun and made a profit of 20 times as much^[3].

Relations between China and Portugal were reversed by the arrival of Simão Andrade. This man was

arrogant and domineering, and in August 1519 he arrived at Tuen Mun with his fleet, following the tradition of the Portuguese around India and Malacca, he built a fortress and set up cannons in Tuen Mun despite Chinese laws and customs, and erected a gallows on a small island near Tuen Mun and hanged one of the crew. They also robbed travellers and ships of other nations and bribed many children. The crimes committed by Simão were so abhorrent to the local authorities and the population that Fernand Pérez, the founder of the Sino-Portuguese Empire, was able to take over. The relationship between Portugal and China that Fernand Pérez had forged was ruined.

Pires and the others left Guangzhou on 23 January 1520 (the first year of Ming Zhengde) and arrived in Nanjing in May, and in January, Wuzong entered the capital. After they arrived in the capital, Pires and the others, under the protection of Jiang Bin, "arrogantly contended for their longevity", to the displeasure of certain ministers in the court. Various evil deeds of the Portuguese had been committed between the central government and the local authorities. Moreover, Muhammad, the son of the exiled king of Malacca, went to Beijing and enumerated the various oppressions of the Portuguese against them and pleaded with them to help him reclaim his land. In March 1521 (the first year of Ming Zhengde), the death of Emperor Wu Zong and the fall of Jiang Bin left Pires without a backer in the court. On 22 May, the delegation was expelled from Beijing and returned to Guangzhou on 22 September, where they were soon imprisoned. This was the end of the first Portuguese delegation to China ^[4].

Pires was ordered to return from Beijing to Canton, during which the famous "Battle of Tuen Mun" broke out between Portugal and China. The Portuguese occupied Tuen Mun for four years in 1521, amassing 12 ships and building forts, trenches and other defences, and in 1545 Wang Hong, the pirate vice-ambassador, led an army stationed in Tuen Mun, only a sea away from the town of Nan Tou, and surrounded the town with 50 ships. On 15 June, the Ming army attacked Tuen Mun. As the enemy ships were "large and difficult to move", Wang Hong selected a light boat, filled it with dry firewood, greased it and rode the waves, burning many of the enemy ships, and selected warriors who were good in water to dive into the water and sink the enemy ships. He also sent He Ru to Yang San and Li Ming, Chinese who had lived in Portugal for many years and knew how to make gunpowder, so that they could go ashore, make fire-rope guns and then bombard them with firearms, capturing more than 20 Portuguese muskets. The Portuguese finally gave up their resistance and left Tuen Mun overnight with three boats.

In July 1522 (the first year of the Jiajing reign), the Ming Shilu, Martin Afonso de Melo Coutinho led a party of four merchant ships from Malacca through Chinese waters to the island of Tuen Mun. Martin Afonso asked for an agreement with the Chinese government but was rebuffed by the Chinese government. The Portuguese fleet then withdrew from Tuen Mun and in August encountered Chinese forces at Xiao Bay in Xinhui County, where a fierce battle ensued.

Following the expulsion of the Portuguese, the Ming court issued a ban on the entry of merchants from any country. As a result, merchant fleets from all countries began to move to Fujian and Zhejiang, as they were not strict about the sea ban. Portuguese smuggling activities were dominated by Zhangzhou in Fujian and the port of Shuangyu in Ningbo in Zhejiang.

Portuguese merchant ships began to dive at Zhangzhou in the 1620s to engage in smuggling activities. Smuggling was agreed upon by the local smugglers and the local officials. The Portuguese were also attracted to the port of Shuangyu by the local smugglers. Chinese merchants introduced the Portuguese to Shuangyu for business in 1539. Not only did the Portuguese engage in a lot of smuggling around Fujian and Zhejiang, but they also did a lot of illegal activities. At Zhangzhou Wuyu, they built their own houses in defiance of Chinese sovereignty and privately arranged for officials to promote a Portuguese man, Souza, to be governor of Zhangzhou, in charge of large and small government affairs, and to take children captive. On Shuangyu they joined forces with local unscrupulous merchants and formed an armed gang of smugglers who either did or did not do, or stole, and gathered in crowds to rob. The smuggling and piracy of the Portuguese caused great discontent among the Chinese government and people.

In 1547 (the twenty-sixth year of Jiajing), the Ming court-appointed Zhu Dian as the governor of Zhejiang, presiding over the military affairs of the sea defence of Zhejiang and Fujian. In the spring of 1548, he was able to pacify the pirates of Pudding Mountain and launch an attack on the Portuguese at Shuangyu. Although the Portuguese had the advantage of a "solid wall" of weapons, they were soon caught in encirclement and forced to break through. The Ming army rose to the challenge and won a resounding victory. By now, the bandits' lair had been razed to the ground, hundreds of men had been killed and the Ming army had burned over 20 nests and 27 ships, large and small.

Having suffered setbacks in Fujian and Zhejiang, the Portuguese turned to Guangdong and set up trading ports on Shangchuan Island and Long Bai'ao.

Shangchuan Island, also known as Shangchuan, is situated in the southern part of Xinning County, more than 100 kilometres away from Macau. 1537 saw the arrival of several Portuguese on Shangchuan Island as temporary merchants. As the port of Shuang Yu closed, so did the number of Portuguese on Shang Chuan Island, where they built straw huts and traded seasonally. The Jesuit Francis Xavier moved from Japan to Kamikawa Island in August 1552 (Jiajing 31) to spread Christianity in China. Unexpectedly, in December of that year, he died in his hut and was buried on the island. Since then, the Portuguese have continued to anchor and trade here, and it has replaced the port of Shuangyu as the base for Portuguese trade in China.

It is worth noting that once the Portuguese returned to the waters of Guangdong from around Fujian and Zhejiang, they changed their way of confronting by force and lawlessness gradually diminished; the Guangdong government stopped being prejudiced against the Portuguese and instead acquiesced to them to some extent. In 1554, Shangchuan Island was closed, but they were allowed to moor their ships and trade at Langbai'ao, near Guangzhou.

Langbai'ao, ninety kilometres southwest of Haojing'ao, was an essential stop for merchants travelling to and from Southeast Asia. In 1542, some Portuguese came here by boat to do business; after the exile of Fujian and Zhejiang provinces, the number of Portuguese doing business here increased. In 1549 (the twenty-eighth year of Jiajing), more than thirty Portuguese fled from the Fujian coast to Langbai'ao. In 1553, some Portuguese from Shangchuan Island migrated to Long Bai'ao. The following year, three Portuguese ships set sail from Long Bai'ao, bound for Japan.

The year 1554 is of great significance in the history of Sino-Portuguese relations. In that year, the Portuguese fleet commander Souza and the vice-ambassador of Canton, Wang Pak, signed a verbal agreement, the main points of which were: the vice-ambassador of pirates granted Portugal "tribute"; the Portuguese renamed Franco to Portugal or Malacca; the Portuguese were required to pay 20% tax according to the Siamese (Thai) law; the Portuguese were allowed to enter Chinese ports for commercial activities. After more than 40 years of development and growth since the Portuguese first arrived in China, Sino-Portuguese relations finally reached a major turning point. Since then, Portugal has officially opened up to trade and Sino-Portuguese trade relations have been firmly established. A few years later, the Portuguese settled in the area of Macau, close to Guangzhou, gradually acquiring residency and port management rights, and Sino-Portuguese relations reached unprecedented heights.

3. Macau and Sino-Portuguese Relations

Macau occupies a pivotal position in the history of the development of Sino-Portuguese relations. The relationship between China and Portugal has been shaped and developed during the Portuguese settlement in Macau; many important relations are closely linked to Macau; every historical transformation in the development of Sino-Portuguese relations has been inextricably linked to Macau. To a certain extent, Macau is also a "barometer" of the relationship between China and Portugal. Moreover, in the mid-nineteenth century, when Portugal took advantage of its exclusive dominance over Macau, Macau, or the 'Macau Question', became a frequent tool in Portuguese negotiations with China. Thus, from the early sixteenth century to the end of the twentieth century, the development of Sino-Portuguese relations to the present day has been inextricably linked to Macau and the 'Macau Question'.

Therefore, the gate is neither a "border gate" nor a "Sino-Portuguese border" as misunderstood by the Portuguese and foreigners. The establishment of this institution was not the fundamental solution to all the problems between China and Portugal, but rather a temporary measure that the Ming court and the local government had to come up with to achieve control over the Portuguese in Macau. More than two centuries later, in the twenty-ninth year of the Daoguang era, the Portuguese took advantage of the power of other countries to destroy the gate with heavy artillery and occupy it. In 1874, the Portuguese demolished the gate and built a triumphal arch, north of the original gate, which is today Macau's gate.

After settling in Macau, the Portuguese used the city's connections to conduct direct trade and re-export between East and West, transforming Macau from a small fishing village into the most prosperous international trade centre in Asia. However, with the rapid development of Western capitalism and the rise of the maritime power of Spain, the Netherlands and the Anglo-Jewish countries, the Portuguese monopoly on the maritime trade between East and West was taken over by other countries. Although the port of Macau was able to escape under the protection of the Ming and Qing governments, it lost its importance as a hub of trade between East and West after the mid-seventeenth century and gradually became a gathering place for drug smuggling and labourers for the Portuguese.

4. The Changing Status of Macao

Both the "status of Macao" and the "question of Macao" are related to the "belonging" of Macao. For many reasons, this issue has remained unresolved and has thus become a 'historical issue'. The Portuguese took the opportunity to take up residence in Macau in the 32nd year of the Ming dynasty (1553) and did not relinquish their sovereignty over Macau for over three hundred years until 1887 when they signed an agreement to acquire the right to "reside and govern Macau in perpetuity".

Macao was originally a small fishing island in Xiangshan County, with a small population that made its living by fishing. But it was also an important port at the mouth of the Pearl River. Apart from Macau, there are other seaports: Guanghai, Wangtong and Qian in Xinning (Taishan); Langbai and Cross Gate in Xiangshan; Hutoumen, Tuen Mun, Jijieqi in Dongguan, etc. . Of these countries, Macau is the best. It was the land of China, facing the South China Sea, with the best access to food and water. Therefore, in 1529, Lin Fu, the governor of Guangdong, asked the court to lift the ban on the sea, and the end of the Ming Dynasty transferred merchant ships to Macao in 1535. The Portuguese moved in and settled in Macau in 1553. After the Portuguese occupation, the situation in Macau changed dramatically, and Macau soon became an outpost for Guangzhou's foreign trade, a transit point for East-West trade, and the Lingnan region was gradually integrated into the world trade network, thus creating prosperity unique to Macau. Macao's silk, tea and porcelain were exported to Asia and the world by sea, with an annual turnover of millions of taels. It had a positive impact on all the countries (regions) concerned and contributed to a certain extent to the cultural and economic development of the country. Macau, then a transit point for international trade, was an important trading centre for the export of domestic mainland goods to Asia and the world, as well as a distribution centre for goods from mainland China. Macau made a positive contribution to China's early foreign trade and cultural exchanges between China and the West [5].

The Vision and Actions for Promoting the Construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road were jointly released by the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Commerce. The Vision and Action provide a clearer framework for the development of the Belt and Road: "The main objectives of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road are: from the South China Sea to Chinese coastal ports, through the Indian Ocean and on to Europe; across the South China Sea to Chinese coastal ports in the South Pacific. " and "the main maritime hub is the hub, together to build a smooth, safe and efficient transport channel. "The "coastal port" of Macau covers a lot of information, but there is no doubt that it should include the international city of Macau, which is a key node of the "Belt and Road". In addition, the document "Vision and Action for Promoting the Construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road" also clearly defines Macau's role in the construction of the Belt and Road, and proposes three aspects: "coastal, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan". We should give full play to the characteristics of the Yangtze River Delta, the Pearl River Delta, the West Coast of the Strait and the Bohai Rim, which have a high degree of openness, economic strength and strong radiation. Qianhai, Shenzhen; Nansha, Guangzhou; Hengqin, Zhuhai; Pingtan, Fujian; and the Greater Bay Area of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao. "and" make full use of the special advantages of overseas Chinese, the Hong Kong SAR and Macao SAR to actively participate in the construction of the 'One Belt, One Road' [6]. To prepare Taiwan for the construction of the 'One Belt, One Road'. "Therefore, no matter the logic of historical development or the actual situation, Macao should actively participate in the construction of "One Belt, One Road" in order to promote a new round of development of Macao and make a new contribution to the development of the motherland.

5. Conclusion

Macao today, the fruit of centuries of exchanges between China and Portugal, is uniquely placed to bridge the two sides. As a platform for economic and trade exchanges between China and Portuguese-speaking countries, Macau is at its heart a "China Special Administrative Region", as well as a linguistic, cultural and human link to Portugal. Macau scholar Professor Ng Chi Leung said, "Macao is a platform for economic and cultural exchanges between China and Portuguese-speaking countries." Macau was the first place where China interacted with Portuguese-speaking countries and was the only way for China to "go global"[7]. "Macao has five major advantages: firstly, it has linguistic and cultural advantages. Macau is a product of the fusion of the two cultures, and it is bilingual in both Chinese and Portuguese. Secondly, it is because of its geographical location. Located in the bustling heart of the Pearl River Delta, Macau is closely connected to ASEAN, Asia Pacific, the European Union and Portuguese-speaking

countries, making it easily accessible and convenient. Thirdly, the tax benefits. Macau is the cheapest free trade port in the world and it has a high tax burden. Fourthly, there is a greater degree of internationalization^[8]. Macau is a traditional society with a high degree of freedom and fairness, a high degree of freedom and fairness, a harmonious and tolerant society where different ideas and views can be accommodated and complement each other and co-exist peacefully, and a high level of internationalisation. Fifthly, institutional superiority^[9]. "One country, two systems" has provided Macau with institutional advantages, ensuring its solid backing and full autonomy, and forming a long-term protection mechanism.

With the establishment of the Sino-Portuguese Forum in 2003, cultural and economic ties between Macau and Portuguese-speaking countries have been strengthened^[10]. "Macau has signed various memorandums of cooperation with many Portuguese-speaking countries, and Macau companies are also operating in Portuguese-speaking countries, and Macau products are entering Europe, South America and Africa through Portuguese-speaking countries^[11]. Some companies from Portuguese-speaking countries have invested in factories in Macau, importing coffee from Brazil and Timor-Leste, taking advantage of the CE-PA concessions and selling it in mainland China, which has been very profitable"^[12]. The Macau SAR Government has been very supportive of the Sino-Portuguese Forum and has been actively training professionals from Portuguese-speaking countries in finance and tourism management, as well as continuing to expand scholarships to Portuguese countries, which have been very well received by them^[13].

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