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Roderich Ptak

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CHAM – Centro de Humanidades | CHAM – Centre for the Humanities
Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas
Universidade NOVA de Lisboa | Universidade dos Açores
Av.ª de Berna, 26-C | 1069-061 Lisboa, Portugal
<http://www.cham.fcsh.unl.pt>

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CHINA'S MEDIEVAL *FANFANG* – A MODEL FOR MACAU UNDER THE MING?

por

RODERICH PTAK *

Introduction

Macau was the first European settlement on the China coast. If one ignores the fact that it was officially considered Chinese territory under Portuguese administration during the last twenty-five years or so prior to its handover in December 1999, then it was also the last Western colony in the Far East. This unique constellation has always led to many questions, in particular to the question of how Portugal, with comparatively few human and capital resources at its disposal, kept Macau afloat and, more generally, how it maintained *de facto* or quasi sovereignty over this territory for so long.

There can be no doubt, China and Macau benefitted from mutual acceptance. Throughout history, one encounters Chinese scholars and other persons of influence, who proposed to oust the Portuguese from or extinguish their city altogether, but no Chinese army ever moved into Macau. Likewise, we know of some Portuguese, who dreamt of military moves against China, but Portugal never fought any major war against the Middle Kingdom. In the end, diplomacy, economic and perhaps humanitarian considerations always helped to overcome temporary dissent, and Macau continued to sway on along its old lines. Even the last years prior to the turnover were essentially peaceful years with public priority often being assigned to cultural issues and not so much to political questions – in contrast to Hong Kong where «structural features» had begun to stir the public mind just prior to the end of British rule. Hong Kong, one may say, was the product of a violent clash, just as its final days under the old government were accompanied by deep dissent between both sides.

* Do Instituto de Sinologia da Universidade de Munique.

The origins of Macau remain uncertain ¹. Mysterious as they are, the end of Portuguese government was equally unspectacular, with comparatively little squabble over the issue of human rights and democracy – in spite of the British example and pressure of certain Western media, which had tried to push expectations in that direction. The Portuguese never overstressed democracy, human rights and tolerance towards others, but the Macau administration, nearly at all times, was more democratic and tolerant towards its Chinese partners and subjects than the British had been. There was thus no need to underline the obvious, nor was it necessary to copy «last-minute» attempts at installing new rules and regulations. Mainland Chinese leaders, if not blinded by money-making instincts, will certainly respect the quiet way Portugal pulled out of Macau – the «quasi-Confucian» politeness and the skilful flexibility demonstrated by the government in Lisbon. If faithful to themselves and their own traditions, Chinese politicians might also honour the «southern style» with which Portugal governed Macau for so long, and the ways in which accommodation and acculturation were allowed to take place in this former colony.

However, my paper is not concerned with politeness and the last days of Portugal's rule over Macau. It rather wishes to look at a rather «theoretical» issue. Recent Chinese publications, raising the question of how Macau managed to survive against all odds, argued that imperial China had looked upon this city much in the same way as it had dealt with the so-called *fanfang* or «foreign quarters» in Song (and Yuan) times, or earlier. Some scholars even proposed to see in traditional Macau a variant form of the old *fanfang*. They thus suggested comparisons between the foreign quarters in China's medieval ports, especially Guangzhou, and Portuguese Macau. The idea behind such an argument is clear: If Macau was a kind of *fanfang*, i.e., a part of China, there was no real need to annihilate it. At worst, it would be punished in some way, if that was required. This is why Macau survived in Ming and Qing times.

The question to be discussed here is a very straightforward one: Can one really visualize Macau as being a kind of *fanfang*? To find an answer, both Macau and the old *fanfang* have to be looked at anew. Such a comparison can only be of a general nature and is always limited by the sources. As a rule, sources provide information on most aspects of Macau, but only very little on the *fanfang*. One area which remains totally obscure is the economic and

¹ The old story of it being given to Portuguese merchants and mariners in reward for their true or alleged assistance in combat against pirates has recently received fresh support by TANG Kaijian. See his *Aomen kaibu chuqishi yanjiu* (Beijing, Zhonghua shuju, 1999), pp. 104-130. The most recent Portuguese study on the origin of Macau is Rui Manuel LOUREIRO's *Fidalgos, missionários e mandarins. Portugal e a China no século XVI*, Orientalia 1 (Lisbon, Fundação Oriente, 2000), esp. ch. 21. Also see his *Em busca das origens de Macau. Antologia documental* (Macau, Museu Marítimo de Macau, 1997).

financial situation *within* the *fanfang*. The material side of the problem, therefore, cannot serve as *tertium comparationis*. Fortunately, we are better off with other sectors, mainly relating to simple administrative and structural concepts. My notes will deal with these themes under the following headlines: status, leadership, autonomy, jurisdiction, the military, and «multiculturalism». I shall begin by presenting a short survey of China's foreign «establishments» from Song to Ming times, but mainly under the Ming – as a kind of *exercice de mémoire* and also to call attention to a few more methodological questions inevitable associated with a topic such as this.

Foreigners on the South China Coast: A Chronological Survey

The idea of linking Macau to the *fanfang* concept represents one of the very few cases in modern history writing where a distinctly Chinese category is imposed on a terrain not always considered Chinese soil. Fei Chengkang, Huang Wenkuan and others were among those who promoted this initiative during the 1980s². Recently Wu Zhiliang also favoured their proposals in a number of studies³. Tang Kaijian, however, pointed out that there were essential differences between the early *fanfang* and Macau. He also drew attention to the fact that no Ming author had ever proposed to treat Macau as a *fanfang*⁴.

From what is known of Tang, Song and Yuan times, practically all «foreign quarters» were then located in major Chinese cities. Following earlier conventions, the ones in South China's ports are picked here as the most suitable candidates for a comparison with Macau. Before looking at their characteristic features, suffice it to say that all or most of these candidates were «legal» entities. Apparently, the term *fanfang*, in the case of Guangzhou, implied a high degree of acceptance through the imperial authorities. An establishment not officially tolerated rarely would receive the label *fanfang*, *fanrenxiang*, or anything like that⁵.

² HUANG Wenkuan, *Aomen shi gouchen* (Macau, Aomen xingguang chubanshe, 1988), p. 37; FEI Chengkang, *Aomen sibai nian* (Shanghai, Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1988), p. 38.

³ WU Zhiliang, *Segredos de sobrevivência. História política de Macau* (Macau, Associação de Educação de Adultos de Macau, 1999), pp. 71-84; same, *Aomen zhengzhi fazhanshi* (Shanghai, Shanghai shehui kexue chubanshe, 1999), pp. 50-59; same, «Pu ren neibu zizhi shiqi de Aomen», *Aomen yanjiu* (*Boletim de Estudos de Macau, Journal of Macau Studies*), 7 (1998), esp. pp. 63-70, same *Aomen zhengzhi*, *Aomen congshu* 1 (Beijing, Zhongguo youyi chubanshe, 1996), esp. pp. 20 sq. – Recently, general accounts also refer to the *fanfang*; see, for example, Yi Fan, *Xianhua Aomen* (Shanghai, Shanghai sanlian shudian, 1999), pp. 39-41.

⁴ TANG Kaijian, *Aomen kaibu*, pp. 203-204.

⁵ On these terms, see, for example, LIAO Dake, «Tan Quanzhou «fanfang» ji qi youguan wenti», *Haijiaoshi yanjiu*, 1987/2, pp. 79-80. *Fang* in particular was a common term for an urban segment.

Generally, the presence of foreigners in Song and Yuan ports was intimately linked to the existence of maritime supervisorates (*shibosi*), which were in charge of handling China's maritime commerce. Under the Yuan, for example, such offices were found in places like Quanzhou, Shanghai, Ganpu, Wenzhou, Qingyuan, Hangzhou, and Guangzhou. Qingyuan (Mingzhou, Ningbo) thus had a «Bosi *xiang*» – a «Persian Lane», and there were all kinds of foreigners living scattered in its streets. Another area with many foreigners was Hainan. As late as in the Ming period, the term *fanfang* can be found in connection with that island ⁶.

While the picture we can gain from these early periods appears to be, at first sight, a rather clear one, the one applying to Ming times is much more complex and requires detailed explanations. Under the early and mid Ming free trade was not permitted, tribute trade being the only legal way in and out. By and large, there were then no «legal» settlements of *private* foreign traders in China's coastal towns. All one can find in the late fourteenth to mid sixteenth centuries, is small communities mostly considered illegal by the Chinese side, or, presumably as well, small quarters of merchants involved in tribute trade. In contrast to Song and Yuan times, these communities were of a temporary nature, with no special infrastructure of their own, and without any sophisticated administration that might have distinguished them from the environment in which they grew.

As Ming trading prohibitions remained intact until 1567, China's coastal provinces could not satisfy local demand for trade. During the middle of the sixteenth century this led to unprecedented levels of smuggling activities and banditry, sometimes even coastal warfare, either between different gangs, or between illegal elements and regular government troops. These activities involved both Chinese and foreigners, especially from Japan. Sources commonly refer to such groups as Wokou (Wako) merchants, a lumpsum term not distinguishing between different types of people, neither in functional nor in ethnical terms ⁷.

By then, the number of foreign merchants and seamen frequenting China's coasts had probably grown to several thousand. Although in most

⁶ A special number of the journal *Haijiaoshi yanjiu* (no. 1/1988) carries many articles on the old *shibosi*. – For a general work on Qingyuan or Mingzhou, see, for example, LIN Shimin, *Haishang sichou zhi lu de zhuming haigang – Mingzhou*, Haishang sichou zhi lu congshu (Beijing, Haiyang chubanshe, 1990), pp. 38-39, and chs. 4 and 5. – For the term *fanfang* (*fang* without rad. 32) in connection with Hainan, see *Qiong tai zhi*, comp. by TANG Zhou (pref. 1521), j. 21, 19a-23a (photomechanical rpr. by Shanghai guji shudian, 1964, in ser. Tianyi ge zang Mingdai fangzhi xuankan).

⁷ For the functional side, see, for example, R. P., «Piracy along the Coasts of Southern India and Ming China: Comparative Notes on Two Sixteenth Century Cases», in Artur Teodoro de MATOS and Luís Filipe F. Reis THOMAZ (eds.), *As relações entre a Índia portuguesa, a Ásia do Sueste e o Extremo Oriente. Actas do VI Seminário Internacional de História Indo-Portuguesa (Macau, 22 a 26 de Outubro de 1991)* (Macau, Lisbon, 1993), pp. 255-273. Relevant sources are indicated there.

cases illegal trade was then still confined to China's offshore islands, quasi beyond the reach of the coast guard, Wokou communities did not only flourish in the «dark», but, increasingly as well, on the mainland. Initially, however, they rarely existed in «established» cities – for example Fuzhou – where the central authorities maintained a high degree of control. In the late 1540s or so, a typical Wokou community would thus thrive in a difficult-to-survey site like Shuangyugang, a location on one of the larger islands near Ningbo in Zhejiang⁸. Such a place had a high demographic fluctuation because merchants could never be certain about the future moves of the government. More generally, the constraints put up by imperial policy measures required a good amount of flexibility and mobility on the part of Chinese and foreign Wokou elements. It is unlikely, therefore, that a Wokou settlement in the 1540s was characterized by structures comparable to those found in a legal Song or Yuan port with a clear division between a «foreign area» and a Chinese urban nucleus. The «average» Wokou base during that period, it would seem, was still fundamentally different from a «conventional» Song or Yuan «foreign quarter».

By the mid and late 1550s, Wokou groups had become so powerful that they gained temporary control over large coastal regions and several major ports. It is possible that now structures with a more durable nature began to grow in these ports, including, perhaps, small foreign settlements somewhat reminiscent of those encountered in earlier times. But sources of that period tend to avoid the term *fanfang* (or anything similar) and, above all, nothing points to a possible legalization of these «establishments».

After 1567, when trade prohibitions had already been relaxed, legal private trade centered on Fujian began to expand rapidly. Theoretically conditions for the gradual emergence of foreign settlements were now much better than before, but by then, most foreign groups, including the Portuguese, had pulled out of Fujian and Zhejiang; Fujian's and Zhejiang's external relations were thus left in the hands of the Chinese themselves, the only major exception being the merchants from Ryûkyû. The Fujianese, it may be added, were then closely linked to overseas Chinese groups operating from Thailand and insular Southeast Asia. Although some tribute trade was still carried on as well, notably between China and the Ryûkyû Islands, via Fujian, no sizeable legal *fanfang* appear to have flourished in the ports of that province. Here we may end our brief chronological survey of the Ming period because we have already entered the times when Macau had left behind its founding years.

⁸ On Shuangyugang recently, for example, Xu Mingde, «Lun shiliu shiji Zhejiang Shuangyugang guoji maoyi shichang», *Haijiaoshi yanjiu*, 1/1987, pp. 14-24; JIN Guoping and ZHANG Zhenchun, «Liampó reexaminado à luz de fontes chinesas», in António Vasconcelos de SALDANHA and Jorge Manuel dos Santos ALVES (eds.), *Estudos de história do relacionamento luso-chinês, séculos XVI-XIX*, Memória do Oriente 6 (Macau, Instituto Português do Oriente, 1996), pp. 85-135; TANG Kaijian, *Aomen kaibu*, pp. 27-57.

To sum up: while a number of accepted «foreign quarters» and «lanes» can be encountered in Song and Yuan ports, comparable entities with a legal status will be difficult to find under the Ming, at least in the coastal context of southern China; nor was the term *fanfang* used for Macau.

And yet, one must be careful. There were all kinds of foreign communities in Ming China, as was said, but just how to define and classify them, is a difficult-to-accomplish task. One peculiar example, picked at random here, relates to the town of Dezhou in Shandong. A ruler from the Sulu Islands, who had submitted tribute to the Yongle emperor, was buried there in the early fifteenth century with an imperial stone inscription being set up in his honour. Almost two hundred years later we hear of a small Sulu community in that same location. Its members were the descendents of those who had been put in charge of looking after the royal tomb. Their living expenses, so it goes, were taken from the imperial coffers ⁹.

How should one treat such a legal community? To classify it in a proper way, one might invent a special category, something like a «loyal and filial barbarians' mini diaspora». Other, more familiar cases were those of the Jesuits and the Filipino merchants appearing, in small groups, on the shores of Fujian. Again we may ask how to treat these «mini groups». A decent typology, I am afraid, still has to be invented. This also applies to earlier periods, the Song and Yuan in particular. Strictly speaking, picking the coastal towns with their «foreign quarters» from a bag full of undefined things, is not a very scientific exercise. To be able to see Macau in its own light, and to compare it to other kinds of foreign communities in (or around) China, one should, in theory at least, have an acceptable typology at hand – which is not the case.

Notwithstanding, it is not my intention here to classify the different kinds of foreign communities under the Song, Yuan and Ming, nor do I wish to compare the *fanfang* idea, or the Macau case, with the diaspora model developed by Curtin, or with other general models. This would require a special study – probably a full-length monograph. Instead, I shall continue, somewhat unscientifically, it must be admitted, by looking at those categories, which have been used in the literature to compare the *fanfang* case with Macau. The first category, the most general one, relates to the status question. The last two *tertia comparationis* singled out for these notes, the military component and multiculturalism, are less frequently encountered in recent writing.

⁹ R. P., «Kurze Zusammenfassung der wichtigsten Nachrichten zu den Sulu-Inseln während der Ming-Zeit», *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 136 (1986), pp. 624-625, 627; sources in Zhongshan daxue Dongnaya lishi yanjiusuo (ed.), *Zhongguo guji zhong youguan Feilübin ziliao huibian* (Beijing, Zhonghua shuju, 1980), esp. entries on pp. 76-77, 83-86; Jinian weida hanghaijia Zheng He xia Xiyang 580 zhounian choubai weiyuanhui, Zhongguo hanghaishi yanjiuhui (ed.), *Zheng He shiji wenwu xuan* (Beijing, Renmin jiaotong chubanshe, 1985), pp. 76-77, 81.

Status

Indirectly, the status question has already been addressed in the foregoing paragraphs. We shall look at the *fanfang* case first. In all likelihood Guangzhou's foreign quarter under the Song was neither a fully sovereign (non-Chinese) entity nor an extraterritorial concession area (*zujie*)¹⁰. Sources do not refer to any contract made between a foreign group and the government in Guangzhou or the imperial capital, nor do we hear of any leasing agreement, or anything similar to such an arrangement. In short then, although the precise origin of the Guangzhou *fanfang* is not recorded, it is usually assumed that this area was simply «given» to the foreign merchant community at some point in time, probably under the late Tang. If indeed so, it must of course be asked, why the Chinese had decided to delineate a special area for their foreign trading partners. Again, sources offer no clear insight into this question. All one may say is, the rapidly growing number of Muslim merchants coming to Guangzhou during the ninth century may have made it necessary, for purely practical reasons, to concentrate them in a special «ghetto», where they could live according to their own standards and, at the same time, be surveilled more easily.

As already stated above, the origins of Macau remain equally unclear. But what is known beyond any doubt is, that the Portuguese were first allowed to stay on a nearby island called Lampacau or Langbaigang – this was made possible through the famous agreement negotiated between Leonel de Sousa and his Chinese counterpart in 1554 – and then to settle on the southern part of the Macau peninsula. The rest, again, is uncertain¹¹. The Portuguese, we are told, paid annual amounts of five hundred silver *tael* to their Chinese «hosts», but whether the payment of this sum was based on a kind of «leasing agreement», or should be interpreted as an annual gift (or bribe), and when and under what circumstances its functions changed and became more regular, remains a matter of debate. Although Jin Guoping tried to throw fresh light on this question¹², the possibility that Macau was

¹⁰ Some very emotional arguments were brought forth on this point. KUWABARA Jitsuzô, in particular, was heavily attacked. See, for example, Wu Wenliang, «Zai tan Quanzhou «fanfang» wenti», in Zhongguo haiwai jiaotongshi yanjiuhui and Fujian sheng Quanzhou haiwai jiaotongshi bowuguan (eds.), *Quanzhou haiwai jiaotong shiliao huibian* (n. p. [Jingjiang diqu] 1983), p. 303. For KUWABARA, see below, note 26.

¹¹ On Leonel de Sousa, recently, for example, Jin GUOPING, «Lai'aonei'er de Suozha yu Wang Bai», *Aomen yanjiu* 7 (1998), pp. 122-143, LOUREIRO, *Fidalgos, missionários e mandarins*, pp. 493 et seq.

¹² On this payment, see, for example, Benjamin Videira PIRES, «O foro do chão de Macau», *Boletim do Instituto Luís de Camões*, 1.4-5 (1967), pp. 319-334; JIN Guoping, «Aomen dizu shi na niandai ji qi yiyi», *Aomen yanjiu*, 10 (1999), pp. 32-45. In the nineteenth century the *foro do chão* and Macau's status became interesting objects of inquiry and comments. See, for example, António Vasconcelos de SALDANHA, *A «Mémoire sobre o estabelecimento dos portugueses em Macau» do Visconde de Santarém (1845)*, *Memória do Oriente* 5 (Macau, Instituto Português

ceded altogether, either by some local officials or the central authorities in Beijing, without this being recorded in the documents, still lingers on in the mind of many historians.

Recently, Tang Kaijian commented on the second point, convincingly arguing the central government knew about Portuguese activities in the area, and certainly also about (possible) Portuguese assistance in combat against pirates and the subsequent «handover» of Macau. Court authorities, he believes, had agreed in that move before it actually took place¹³. These ideas, one ought perhaps say here, stem from a Chinese scholar – and were brought to paper in a Zhonghua shuju publication, and not a cheap provincial brochure. Clearly, they remind of traditional European views but hitherto have never been voiced in such a manner under the Communist regime. Prudently asking, are we looking at the beginning of a slow reconciliation between mainland Chinese and Portuguese views on this crucial question?

Whichever way applies, the very fact remains that Macau was given to the Portuguese by some kind of mutual arrangement. This arrangement took full account of Portugal's demand to establish a permanent base on the China coast. Since the Portuguese also paid money to the Chinese side, their presence was symbolically conditioned on something. By contrast, the Guangzhou *fanfang* was almost certainly installed on the initiative of the imperial government, and not conditioned on anything – as far as one can tell from the sources.

Furthermore, the existence of Macau has been characterized as an anomaly, in terms of both Ming China's own system of viewing and dealing with the outside world and Portugal's way of dealing with the Asians¹⁴. The

do Oriente, 1995), António Vasconcelos de SALDANHA and JIN Guoping, *Para a visita do imperador. Memoriais da dinastia Qing sobre o estabelecimento dos portugueses em Macau (1808-1887)*, *Memória do Oriente* 15 (Macau, Instituto Português do Oriente, 2000), esp. pp. 10-11 of introduction.

¹³ TANG Kaijian, *Aomen kaibu*, esp. pp. 118-119. Partly different views plus documents – this also includes the Tchang-Si-Lao episode –, for example, in José Maria BRAGA, «The Western Pioneers and their Discovery of Macao», *Boletim do Instituto Português de Hong Kong*, 2 (1949), pp. 129-139, and William R. USELLIS, *As origens de Macau; The Origin of Macao* (Macau, Museu Marítimo de Macau, 1995; bilingual ed. of M. A. thesis, originally written 1958). Recently also LOUREIRO, *Fidalgos, missionários e mandarins*, pp. 563 et seq.; Jorge Manuel FLORES, «Os anos da «gestação»», in A. H. de Oliveira MARQUES (dir.), *História dos Portugueses no Extremo Oriente*, vol. I.2: *De Macau à periferia. Séculos XVI-XVII* (Lisbon, Fundação Oriente, 2000), pp. 167-168; JIN Guoping, «Tchang-Si-Lao, qi ren wenhai gouqi «haidao shuo» suyuan», *Aomen yanjiu* 9 (1998), pp. 70-109.

¹⁴ This can be related to the «Macao formula» by FOK Kai Cheong. See, for example, his «The Ming Debate on How to Accommodate the Portuguese and the Emergence of the Macao Formula», *Review of Culture*, 13/14 (1991), pp. 342-343. Also see FOK's unpublished PhD dissertation, *The Macao Formula. A Study of Chinese Management of Westerners from the Mid-Sixteenth Century to the Opium War Period* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1978), and recently, for a summary statement, Christina Miu Bing CHENG, *Macau, a Cultural Janus* (Hong Kong, Hong Kong Univ. Pr., 1999), pp. 22-23.

same cannot be said with respect to the «foreign quarters» in medieval times. When Macau was born, China deviated from its own norms, when it allowed foreigners to reside in a «special zone» of Guangzhou, this was not contrary to any ideology.

Seen through non-Chinese eyes, the status of mid and late Ming Macau, was thus more «unique» and more privileged than the status of its medieval «counterpart» in China's southern metropolis. Indeed, it was a very special one – by all standards and means. There is no other case, neither under the Ming nor earlier, where a stretch of coastal land had been peacefully «ceded» by the imperial government, in whatever way and form, to a foreign merchant group. As was said, the Wokou settlements of the mid 1550s may have enjoyed a certain amount of freedom and independence, at least for some years, but their status remained illegal throughout. The «foreign quarters» of earlier periods were located in cities – and not in an «empty» terrain, or positively put, in a special strategic position, at a safe distance from a major urban centre, with direct access to international shipping routes. In the late sixteenth century, the Spanish, rivals of the Portuguese as they were, made an attempt to install themselves in a coastal place called Pinhal (El Pinal, etc.), but this effort failed ¹⁵. Thus Macau remained the only specimen of its kind. Even the British, with all their military apparatus, did not succeed in establishing a decent copy. They had to resort to force in order to get what China did not want to give away.

Leadership

Our next point concerns the basic internal structure of the *fanfang* quarters in medieval times and the administrative characteristics of mid and late Ming Macau – as well as the relations of both these installations to their Chinese partners. The *Pingzhou ketan*, a source frequently cited in the context of Song maritime trade, furnishes some relevant details on the issue. Guangzhou's foreign community, we are told, was then led by a *fanzhang*, who administered its affairs (*gong shi*). Among other things, he had to see to it that tribute ships would arrive in large numbers, obviously to increase local revenues by way of taxing import goods. All this had to be handled by foreign officials, presumably appointed by him, the community, or his Chinese counterparts. The robes and insignia carried by these men were the same as those of the Chinese ¹⁶.

¹⁵ See, for example, Manel OLLÉ, *La invención de China: Percepciones y estrategias filipinas respecto a China durante el siglo XVI*, South China and Maritime Asia, 9 (Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz Verlag, 2000), p. 151.

¹⁶ ZHU Yu, *Pingzhou ketan*, Shanshouge congshu (Shanghai, Bogu zhai, 1922), j. 2, 3a-b; TANG Kaijian, *Aomen kaibu*, pp. 204-205; Wu ZHILIANG, *Segredos*, pp. 72-73; Friedrich HIRTH and W. W. ROCKHILL (trans), *Chau Ju-Kua: His Work on the Chinese and Arab Trade in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries, entitled Chu-fan-chi* (rpt. Taibei, Ch'eng-Wen Publishing Company, 1970), p. 17.

The Chinese side, it seems, was in the habit of appointing this *fanzhang*, or «community leader». Liao Dake thinks he was selected from among the most successful and trustworthy merchants in the community. As early as in 850/51 Sulaiman refers to such a man in the context of the Muslim merchants then residing in Guangzhou. Candidates chosen for this important position were probably mostly of Arab or Persian descent ¹⁷.

The case of Macau was of course different. All members of the city's administration, even the *capitão-mor* (captain-major), were selected and appointed by the Portuguese side, either in Macau itself or in Goa, depending on the rank and kind of office to which they were eligible. No reconfirmation of their offices was required through the provincial authorities in Guangzhou or the central government in Beijing ¹⁸. Chang T'ien-tsê's well-known statement that Macau's *procurador* (procurator), then in charge of inspecting the city's buildings and maintaining contacts with the local administration in nearby Xiangshan, had at one point received «a mandarin of the second grade», was rejected by Tang Kaijian. According to Tang sources do not carry any evidence for such an assumption. Chinese court representatives, he thinks, never became involved in the process of appointing Macau's local officials ¹⁹. Finally, even if Chang T'ien-tsê were right, this would not matter very much, because the *procurador* was not the only and certainly not always the most influential office holder in Macau and thereby not comparable to the Guangzhou *fanzhang*.

Another interesting observation relates to the different duties of the *fanzhang*. The Guangzhou *fanzhang* acted as an intermediate between the Chinese side and the foreign community. He also had administrative functions and assisted the local port authorities, as was already said. At the same time he was a diplomat and, more important, he also represented the Chinese government in exercising jurisdictional powers over the *fanfang*'s residents. In Macau all these functions were assigned to different officials. There was a clear distinction between administrative, «purely» political and jurisdictional

¹⁷ LIAO Dake, «Tan Quanzhou», esp. p. 80. Also, see, for example, GUAN Lūquan, *Songdai Guangzhou de haiwai maoyi* (new ed. Guangzhou, Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 1994), pp. 152-153, 157. For Sulaiman, see, for example, Jean SAUVAGET (trans. and ed.), *Ahbar As-sin Wa L'Hind. Relation de la Chine et de l'Inde, rédigée en 851*, Collection arabe (Paris, Société d'Éditions «Les Belles Lettres», 1948).

¹⁸ On the different offices and government institutions in Macau, see, for example, George B. SOUZA, *The Survival of Empire. Portuguese Trade and Society in China and the South China Sea, 1630-1754* (Cambridge, etc., Cambridge Univ. Pr., 1986), pp. 19-29, and Charles R. BOXER, *O Senado da Câmara de Macau* (Macau, Leal Senado, 1997; originally in English).

¹⁹ CHANG T'ien-tsê, *Sino-Portuguese Trade from 1514 to 1644. A Synthesis of Portuguese and Chinese Sources* (rpt. Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1969) pp. 97, 101; Wu Zhiliang, *Segredos*, p. 75, also quoting an early nineteenth letter (!) included in José Inácio de ANDRADE's *Cartas escritas da Índia e da China...* (Lisbon, 1847), from Manuel TEIXEIRA, *O Leal Senado* (Macau, Edition of the Leal Senado, n.d.), p. 5; TANG Kaijian, *Aomen kaibu*, pp. 206-208.

elements. The Macau administration, from its very early days, was thus much more complex than the *fanfang*'s management which, apparently, largely rested in the hands of one man ²⁰.

But these were not the only differences between both administrative «systems». With respect to the Guangzhou *fanfang*, Huang Wenkuan correctly stated that its leader was appointed in conformity with China's suzerainty over the «domain» of which he was put in charge, and that he owed his «mandate» exclusively to China's will and kindness ²¹. Regarding the Portuguese, the offices they installed in Macau were shaped after the administrative structure found in other Portuguese ports and cities around the Indian Ocean, and even in Portugal itself. No compromise had to be made, the Portuguese selected their own candidates, as if they were the sovereign masters of the port they administered, and they were also able to restructure the city's internal government whenever they wished.

In terms of leadership, Macau was thus much more independent of China than the Guangzhou *fanfang*, and certainly also than any other legal foreign settlement in China's coastal towns.

Autonomy

The way in which Portugal administered Macau under the Ming has been characterized as «autonomous», or, in more traditionally oriented literature, as akin to a colony subject only to the authorities in Goa and Lisbon. Notwithstanding, it is true that China made attempts of intervening in Macau's affairs and that it posted officials in or near Macau. One early example of China's efforts at reglementing life under the Portuguese relates to the construction of houses. During the very early years, Loureiro thinks, Guangdong official insisted on wooden constructions ²². But stone buildings were soon put up as well – with or without Chinese consent.

The Chinese side also showed interest in registering and taxing ships and incoming cargo. Money and profits were involved, something local officials were always eager to collect. Again we do not know how tightly regulations were observed under the Ming, but various kinds of passports and other official documents have survived from later periods which demonstrate that this part of the administration was taken seriously ²³.

²⁰ LIAO Dake, «Tan Quanzhou», pp. 82-83, for the *fanzhang*'s functions.

²¹ HUANG Wenkuan, «Songdai Guangzhou Xicheng yu fanfang kao», in CHEN BOJIAN (ed.), *Guangzhou waimao liangqian nian* (Guangzhou, Guangzhou wenhua chubanshe, 1989), p. 138.

²² LOUREIRO, *Fidalgos, missionários e mandarins*, p. 581.

²³ For a recent publication of a document, see, for example, R. P. (coordinator), *Sinica Lusitana*, vol. 1 (Lisbon, Fundação Oriente, 2000), pp. 77-89. N.b.: The two notes appended to the document deserve careful reading...

Regarding Chinese government officials in the Macau area (not Lampacau!), the earliest Chinese reference to such a post appears in a memorial of 1564. This text, by Pang Shangpeng, refers to a *shou ao guan*, meaning something like «bay master». There were several *ao*, or «anchorages», along the central Guangdong coast and many of these had a «bay master» of their own. The one in charge of the Macau peninsula and the nearby areas probably did not reside on the peninsula itself when the Portuguese first moved in. Tang Kaijian thinks he was stationed on Coloane Island ²⁴.

Later on, the term *shou ao guan* was frequently used in the Macau context and only in that context – the syllable *ao* being related to the Chinese name for Macau, *i.e.*, «Aomen». In the course of time, other officials were sent to that place or entrusted with certain duties to look after in connection with the affairs of the Portuguese, but these details do not need to concern us here. What counts is the simple fact that the Portuguese had come first, while Chinese officials only moved in after the Portuguese had settled on the peninsula. In the case of the Guangzhou *fanfang*, this was different. Foreigners moving to that city settled in a well-established structure with a fully developed local administration. The order was thus reversed: the Chinese officials were there, and the foreign community adjusted to this situation.

If indeed some time elapsed between the settlement of the first few Portuguese on the southern half of the Macau peninsula and the beginning of Chinese administrative activities in the area, then it seems obvious to assume that the initial years of Macau's internal affairs were exclusively handled by the Portuguese. This may have changed in the course of time. When the first Chinese settlers began moving to the Portuguese section of Macau, in search of jobs and a better life, the need arose to look after their affairs as well. Naturally, this required some action on the part of the Guangdong officials. Tang Kaijian has made a good point here: Under the Ming, he concedes in a generalizing way, the Portuguese were «autonomous» (*zizhi*); since the Ming administration did not like this state of affairs, it tried to strengthen its influence in Macau ²⁵, or rather, on its own Chinese subjects in that place.

By contrast, in the Guangzhou case the status of «autonomy» was granted to the *fanfang* structure in an «a priori fashion» and apparently the

²⁴ TANG Kaijian, *Aomen kaibu*, p. 175; PANG Shangpeng in YIN Guangren and ZHANG Rulin (authors), ZHAO Chunchen (ed.), *Aomen jilüe jiaozhu*, Aomen wenhua congshu 4 (Macau, Instituto Cultural de Macau, 1992), p. 66; TCHEONG-Ū-Lâm and IAN-Kuong-Iâm (authors), Luís Gonzaga GOMES (trans.), *Ou-Mun Kei-Leok. Monografia de Macau* (new ed. Lisbon, Quinzena de Macau, 1979), p. 105.

²⁵ TANG Kaijian, *Aomen kaibu*, p. 209. – Several recent studies deal with the issue of «autonomy» from different perspectives. Two examples are DENG Kaisong *et al.* (eds.), *Aomen lishi xinshuo* (Shijiazhuang, Huashan wenyi chubanshe, 1999), pp. 85-90, and the same *et al.* (eds.), *Yue Ao guanxi shi* (Beijing, Zhongguo shudian, 1999), pp. 96-111. Further suggestions may be found in a number of articles published in *Zhongguo bianjiang shidi yanjiu* (numbers dedicated to the Macau handover) and other periodicals.

Song government was in no hurry to change that status. Put differently, in Guangzhou the Chinese side played the active role, in Macau it were the Portuguese who assumed this part.

Furthermore, if the above is correct, then the degree of autonomy may have stayed more or less constant in Guangzhou, while it appears to have fluctuated in the Macau case. This presupposes several assumptions. First, there were only foreigners and no Chinese (or only very few Chinese) living in the Guangzhou *fanfang*. If so, we are looking at a clearcut «autonomously» governed complex. The degree of autonomy would then always be the same, irrespective of the number of foreigners living in that complex, provided no major structural shifts would take place in the administration (there is no indication for such changes in the sources). If the number of foreigners grew overproportionally, then the weight (not the autonomy!) of the *fanfang* with respect to the rest of Guangzhou would probably grow as well. In Macau, Portuguese, Chinese and others were living together and not separated from each other by special boundaries. Conceptually, this means we are dealing with a very mixed arena. Both Portuguese and Chinese officials alike exerted influence on the Chinese population of Macau – and on the Portuguese segment (although Chinese influence on the latter was minimal). Differently put, this also implies that the Chinese segment, «located» in the «middle» between Guangdong's officials and the Portuguese, enjoyed a certain degree of independence from China. But, as the percentage of Chinese immigrants grew dramatically under the Ming, while the total number of Portuguese remained rather stable, China's efforts at strengthening its administrative weight in Macau were probably aided by the numerical growth of the Chinese segment. It might thus be that Macau moved from a «totally autonomous» or «independent» system in its initial years to a less «autonomous» stage, even if its «economic weight» with respect to the central Guangdong market increased – and even if there were, hypothetically at least, qualitative improvements within the Portuguese sector, to the effect that this sector became more independent from China than it had been before. In other words, we may be looking here at two opposite developments, which, if balanced against each other, turned out in favour of growing Chinese and lessening Portuguese influence on Macau. Though hypothetical, such a development cannot be detected in medieval Guangzhou or any other similar case, which appear to have been rather static.

Jurisdiction

Several decades ago Kuwabara Jitsuzô collected textual evidence showing that Tang and Song China allowed foreigners to apply their own laws to those who had committed offences. Even in the case of grave crimes the Song government would not necessarily intervene, but send the culprits to the *fanfang* area where they would be subjected to foreign jurisdiction. However,

it is not clear whether this regulation applied throughout. There is a famous passage in the Song annals which can be read in a way that Chinese laws would be used in cases where one foreigner killed another foreigner. But there is also the case of a Japanese who killed a Chinese and was sent back home to be placed under Japanese jurisdiction. Presumably in most cases, if a crime was committed against a Chinese, or if it involved foreigners of different nations, Chinese laws were called upon, although there must have been various exceptions to this rule. Furthermore, in cases of doubt, China certainly had the last word, as if it acted as the court of appeal ²⁶.

Again, all further details do not need to concern us here. Suffice it to say the Guangzhou *fanfang* enjoyed a good amount of jurisdictional autonomy. Obviously, this autonomy was in no conflict with the laws existing under the Song. The same may be said in relation to the Tang period, the laws of which were defined through the Tang code. The Ming code was different. It stated that foreigners committing crimes *had* to be sentenced according to Ming laws – and not according to foreign regulations. Formally, there was no exception to this rule ²⁷.

This situation gave rise to dissent between Chinese officials and the Portuguese administration of Macau. Although Ming officials were unable to monitor Macau's daily affairs to the extent they might have liked to, they did not fail pointing out, at least from time to time, that China's «code of conduct» should be observed by the Portuguese. In practice this probably meant that grave offences involving both a Chinese and a Portuguese party had to be settled in a diplomatic way, not only in compliance with the *Estado da Índia's* regulations, but also in a manner acceptable to the Chinese side. Therefore, some scholars have used the expression «mixed jurisdiction» to characterize Macau's internal situation ²⁸.

The situation prevailing in mid and late Ming Macau thus differed from the case of Guangzhou under the Song. The laws laid down in the Ming code

²⁶ KUWABARA Jitsuzô, «On P'u Shou-kêng, a Man of the Western Regions, who was the Superintendent of the «Trading Ships» Office...», *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko* 2 (1928), part 1, pp. 45-48. Also see, for example, LIAO Dake, «Tan Quanzhou», pp. 81-82; GUAN Lüquan, *Songdai Guangzhou*, pp. 156-158; Paul WHEATLEY, «Geographical Notes on Some Commodities Involved in Sung Maritime Trade», *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 32.2 (1959), pp. 28-29. – The issue of jurisdiction has led to many polemical discussions among Chinese scholars.

²⁷ HUAI Xiaofeng (ed.), *Da Ming lü, fu Da Ming ling wenxing tiaoli* (Shenyang, Liao Shen shushe, 1990), j. 1, p. 20.

²⁸ For relevant quotations, see, for example, TANG Kaijian, *Aomen kaibu*, pp. 216-218. The juridical history of Macau as part of the *Estado da Índia's* juridical history – in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries – is not very well known yet. For some ideas see António Manuel HESPAÑA, *Panorama da história institucional e jurídica de Macau* (Macau, Fundação Macau, 1995), also translated into Chinese; furthermore Francisco Gonçalves PEREIRA, *Portugal, a China e a «Questão de Macau»*, *Memória do Oriente* 4 (Macau, Instituto Português do Oriente, 1995), ch. 1.

compelled Chinese officials to demonstrate interest in Macau's jurisdiction. But cultural and other barriers prevented regular interventions – the Ming code thereby often remaining an empty piece of paper –, although from time to time they did take place. Portuguese payments to the officials in Guangdong and the enormous profits which the local administration in Xiangshan and the city of Guangzhou derived from trade with Macau, made it obligatory for the Chinese side to accept this peculiar state of affairs, the implicit calculation being that material prosperity counted more than the enforcement of China's value system.

But this is not the full story. Guangdong's officials were caught in a strange dilemma. On the one side, they needed Macau for purely economic reasons – and as a kind of counterweight against Fujianese dominance in the maritime trade sector, particularly during the initial years –, on the other side they had to come to terms with the central government, which would not necessarily appreciate these concerns, but rather insist on the strict observance of China's laws. In order to calm the court in frosty Beijing, Guangdong's officials would regularly file complaints about the «bad behaviour» of the Portuguese, directed either to Macau or the north. In extreme situations they would even resort to temporary pressure, for example, by cutting Macau's daily food supplies. Guangdong thus demonstrated its interest in keeping the statutes and being part of the Chinese «world order», although the existence of Macau was (nearly) irreconcilable with that «order». The Portuguese understood the nature of this problem and the tactical manoeuvres of Guangdong's officials. At times Macau would even concede certain points to the Guangdong side, thereby saving China's «face» and contributing a good share to maintaining a stable balance between itself, Guangzhou / Xiangshan and Beijing.

There were of course exceptions to this delicate constellation, but if the above is correct, we are looking at a *menage à trois* – something that cannot really be found in the Guangzhou case.

The Military

Some scholars, who saw in Macau a variant form of the *fanfang*, probably overlooked that the various foreign settlements in Tang, Song and Yuan port cities were not necessarily shaped after one and the same model. The above paragraphs mainly relate to the city of Guangzhou under the Song, as the attentive reader will have remarked. Much less is known about foreigners in other ports, especially Quanzhou, the leading commercial centre of medieval Fujian²⁹. Song sources do not use the term *fanfang* in the context

²⁹ The most recent monograph on Quanzhou under the Song is Angela SCHOTTENHAMMER's *Quanzhou, Fujian, in der Song-Zeit (960-1279): Die Verknüpfung zwischen zentralstaatlicher*

of that place, nor do they tell us whether Quanzhou's foreign community enjoyed a «semi-autonomous» status comparable to that of Guangzhou's foreign quarters³⁰. Under the Yuan, the situation was certainly different. By then, a large number of Muslim merchants had moved to Quanzhou, partly from Southeast Asia, partly also from Guangzhou, which had been destroyed during the Song-Yuan transition. To what extent these foreigners clustered together in one and the same urban zone of Quanzhou, or whether most of them lived scattered in different streets, has caused hot debates among Chinese scholars³¹. Probably the correct answer is that both forms of settlement occurred simultaneously. Considering that foreigners in Quanzhou became so influential that they could afford to equip a special militia of their own, it is very likely, indeed, that many of them were well-organized – and probably lived together in a major urban compound. Later, it may be recalled, this force supported the so-called Isfahan (Ispahan) rebellion³².

As was said, the internal structure of Quanzhou's foreign quarters under the Yuan – this area was also called *fanrenxiang* – is not very well understood yet, but if a special militia could be set up, then some kind of favourable status had certainly been granted to this community. Mongol rule was rather open towards non-Chinese groups and foreigners residing in Quanzhou probably knew well how to take advantage of this tradition. However,

Politik und regionaler wirtschaftlicher Entwicklung und deren Auswirkung auf den maritimen Handel (habil. thesis, Munich 2000). In many aspects, this monograph goes beyond the «classical» works by LI Donghua, *Quanzhou yu woguo zhonggu de haishang jiaotong* (Taipei, Xuesheng shuju, 1986), and Hugh R. CLARK, *Community, Trade, and Networks. Southern Fujian Province from the Third to the Thirteenth Century*, Cambridge Studies in Chinese History, Literature, and Institutions (Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Pr., 1991). Another recent work is Billy K. L. So, *Prosperity, Region, and Institutions in Maritime China: The South Fukien Pattern, 946-1368*, Harvard East Asian Monographs 195 (Cambridge, Ma., Harvard University Press, 2000), esp. pp. 53-55, 114-117, 173-174.

³⁰ LIAO Dake, «Tan Quanzhou», p. 81; SU Jilang, *Tang Song shidai Minnan Quanzhou shidi lungao* (Taipei, Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1991), pp. 114-116. Also see CHEN Dasheng's «Lun fanfang», *Haijiaoshi yanjiu*, 1988/2, pp. 67-74, and SONG Xian, «Gudai Quanzhou yu Dashi shangren», same journal, 1988/1, pp. 215-225, and So, *Prosperity*, pp. 54-55.

³¹ See, for example, Quanzhou haiwai jiaotongshi diaocha, «Quanzhou Song Yuan shidai “fanfang” yizhi de diaocha», in *Quanzhou haiwai jiaotong shiliao huibian*, pp. 91-95; HONG Shaolu, «Quanzhou shifou you «fanfang»», in same, pp. 239-243; Wu Wenliang, «Zai tan Quanzhou», pp. 296-304. The discussion in these studies was taken up in the articles cited in the previous notes.

³² LIAO Dake, «Tan Quanzhou», p. 79. On the rebellion also see, for example, ZHU Weigan, «Yuan mo roulin Xing Quan de Yisifahang pingluan», *Quanzhou wenshi*, 1/1979, and ZHUANG Weiji, «Yuan mo waizu panluan yu Quanzhou gang di shuairuo», *Quanzhou wenshi*, 4/1984. For a general account, see ZHUANG Weiji, ZHUANG Jinghui and WANG Lianmao, *Haishang sichou zhi lu de zhuming gangkou – Quanzhou*, Haishang sichou zhi lu congshu (Beijing, Haiyang chubanshe, 1988), pp. 82-87, and So, *Prosperity*, pp. 122-125. A comprehensive study is MAEJIMA Shinji, «The Muslims in Ch'üan-chou at the End of the Yüan Dynasty», *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko*, 31 (1973) and 32 (1974).

whether they enjoyed the same degree of jurisdicative and administrative freedom as the Guangzhou *fanfang* had enjoyed one or two centuries earlier, remains a matter of debate. The same question can be raised with respect to other Yuan ports with foreign communities, on the internal structure of which even less is known. Probably the answer is very simple: the less foreigners there were in one and the same urban area, the lower the degree of their organisation, and the less the degree of their «freedom» vis-à-vis the Yuan authorities. But such an hypothesis remains to be proven.

Be this as it may, historians comparing Macau to China's ancient foreign quarters, have almost exclusively resorted to the case of Guangzhou under the Song in order to explain how the Portuguese were accommodated into the Ming «system». Probably the Islamic community of Quanzhou under the Yuan would have been a better candidate for certain points of comparison – at least in the military arena. Like the Muslim merchants in that city, the Portuguese maintained a small fighting force which operated independently of the Chinese side. This force had to its disposal the most advanced equipment by the standards of its time and could also be employed in other Portuguese areas outside of Macau, *i.e.*, in areas which did not belong to China. Moreover, in the early seventeenth century, Macau established a series of fortresses to defend itself against the aggressive Dutch and English. Similar efforts were not undertaken in Guangzhou under the Song, nor in Quanzhou under the Yuan – although, as was said, Quanzhou had its own foreign force. In terms of military potential, Quanzhou thus stood somewhere in the middle between the Guangzhou *fanfang* and Macau.

In all likelihood the Quanzhou foreign force had come into existence with the local officials' or even the central government's express consent. That was certainly different with the Portuguese. No one had asked the Chinese side whether stationing troops and arms in Macau would be permitted. The very fact that this was so, shows, once again, how independently Macau could act – quite in contrast to the various foreign settlements under the Song and Yuan. The only other case where one finds a high degree of «military freedom» in decision-taking is the Wokou settlements under the mid Ming. But these were illegal and either wiped out by regular Ming forces or rival Wokou groups, or abandoned altogether after the lifting of trade prohibitions in 1567.

The stationing of soldiers and arms in Macau exemplified the high degree of executive control on the part of the Portuguese. Some scholars would probably be inclined to take this as an expression of full sovereignty. Although these men and arms served defensive purposes, their presence angered many Chinese officials, because stationing foreign military on «Ming soil» went against their expectations – and the Ming «system». And yet, Macau remained fortified and even gained a chance to prove that defense measures were needed when the Dutch tried to conquer the city in 1622. Furthermore, during the Ming-Qing transition, small contingents of artillery were supplied to China, in aid against the Manchus. Similar constellations

are not heard of in connection with the foreign militia of Quanzhou or any other coastal site with a legally installed non-Chinese population. Seen through the eyes of conservative Ming officials, the Portuguese bent China's norms, just as in the case of Macau's civil administration, whereas foreigners in Quanzhou may have acted in conformity with Mongol hopes and wishes, when they began arming themselves.

Two further points may be added. First, under the Song and Yuan, China was certainly more advanced in military technology than its maritime neighbours. By contrast, the Portuguese were qualitatively more advanced than the Ming. Moreover, their ships served both commercial and military purposes. Nearly all seagoing vessels were then equipped with arms and accustomed to fight on the high seas, if necessary. Although fighting on the high seas may not have been totally unfamiliar to the Ming – possibly the early fifteenth century fleets commanded by Zheng He had already used artillery in sea combat ³³ –, it was not the rule, nor was it the rule to employ one and the same vessel for war and commercial ventures. In other words, the «unusual» nature of Portugal's technical outfit confronted China with a new situation, a situation that made it impossible to ask for a clear separation between purely military and purely commercial instruments. It could thus be argued that China had no choice but to accept this state of affairs and that Portugal's military presence, being inseparably linked to its commercial capabilities, should not be seen as an element intentionally set up to underline the high degree of independence which Macau already enjoyed. This might then be a point against the ideas expressed in the foregoing paragraph.

Secondly, in the course of time, China began strengthening its own military posts around Macau. Obviously, it did not trust the Portuguese. The very fact that this was so, can be interpreted in two ways. China increased its pressure on Macau, thereby reducing the degree of Macau's independence or «autonomy», or alternatively, it did not want to «demilitarize» Macau by force, preferring to sit back at a comfortable distance instead, thus respecting or confirming Macau's special status. Clearly, none of this applied to either Guangzhou or Quanzhou. The military scenario in and around these cities must have been a very different one, and the technical side of the problem differed as well.

Multiculturalism

In all three cases, the Guangzhou *fanfang*, the Quanzhou quarters and Macau, next to nothing is known on the «pre-history» of each settlement.

³³ Zheng He is said to have had «fire arms» (*huoqi*), perhaps cannon, perhaps other weapons. See, for example, GONG Zhen (author), XIANG Da (ed.), *Xiyang fanguo zhi*, Zhongwai jiaotong shiji congkan (Beijing, Zhonghua shuju, 1982), p. 10 (orders, no. 3).

Ryûkyûan and Siamese merchants, who are often difficult to distinguish from overseas Chinese traders, partly because their trading networks were closely linked to or supported by the Fujianese, landed in the Xiangshan region prior to the foundation of Macau. Sources refer to their presence in that area, even Tomé Pires mentions the name Houjing (an old name for Macau and the Macau region), but little more than that is recorded³⁴. Regarding Guangzhou and Quanzhou, we know of foreign groups frequenting both places since very early times, but very few details are available concerning the circumstances in which they lived.

Similar uncertainties prevail with respect to different ethnic groups and the demographic side of the problem. Both the Guangzhou *fanfang* and the Quanzhou quarters are normally associated with the presence of Muslim merchants. Apparently it were merchants of Champa, Arab and Persian background, who took the lead in each case. But just how many there were, remains unclear. Nor do we know much about the composition of other trading groups. Inscriptions and texts indicate the presence of merchants from India. There were also small groups of Southeast Asians, Jews, and so on³⁵. The Song annals, the *Song huiyao* and various other sources list a large number of tribute delegation from maritime countries³⁶. Additional information on China's trading partners may be found in such works as the *Lingwai daida*, *Zhufan zhi*, *Dade Nanhai zhi* and *Daoyi zhilüe*³⁷. Clearly, many more groups, besides the ones mentioned here, must have stayed in Guangzhou and Quanzhou, for good or on a temporary basis.

Probably all these groups lived together peacefully, with equal or similar rights, depending on their social status. In principle, it would seem, both Guangzhou and Quanzhou were then open for everyone willing to accept China's terms of trade. Perhaps both ports should thus be classified as «free» emporia, *i.e.*, as ports accessible to everyone, with more or less predictable conditions for trade, investment, and daily affairs.

³⁴ See, for ex., sources quoted in TANG Kaijian, *Ming Qing shidafu yu Aomen*, Hao hai congkan (Macau, Fundação Macau, 1998), pp. 4-6, and his *Aomen kaibu*, pp. 66-68, 72.

³⁵ For different foreigners in Guangzhou and Quanzhou, see, for example, GUAN Lûquan, *Songdai Guangzhou*, pp. 155-156; CLARK, *Community, Trade, and Networks*, pp. 128-129; and the general account in ZHUANG Weiji *et al.*, *Haishang... – Quanzhou*, pp. 64 et seq. On Indians, see, for example, Jan Wisseman CHRISTIE, «The Medieval Tamil-language Inscriptions in Southeast Asia and China», *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 29.2 (1998), pp. 266-268; John GUY, «Tamil Merchant Guilds and the Quanzhou Trade», paper read to an international conference in Leiden, 1997, and to be published in the proceedings (ed. Angela SCHOTTENHAMMER).

³⁶ LIN Tianwei (LIN Tien-Wai), *Songdai xiangyao maoyi shigao* (Hong Kong, Zhongguo xueshe, 1960), table on pp. 174-208; Robert M. HARTWELL, *Tribute Missions to China, 960-1126* (Philadelphia, no publ., 1983).

³⁷ For recent surveys of Song and Yuan maritime trade amply referring to these sources, see, for example, YU Changsen, *Yuandai haiwai maoyi* (Xi'an, Xibei daxue chubanshe, 1994), or CHEN Gaohua and WU Tai, *Song Yuan shiqi de haiwai maoyi* (Tianjin, Tianjin renmin chubanshe, 1981).

Mid and late Ming Macau was not free for everyone. Calvinists and Protestants were disliked, normal trade between Spanish Manila and Macau remained forbidden, although there were exceptions to this rule. Regarding the ethnic side, we are much better informed than in the case of Guangzhou and Quanzhou. Macau's upper echelons were mostly made of Portuguese men and mestizos with a Euro-Asian background. They were outnumbered by their African, Malay and other servants. Macau also had sizeable Japanese and Indian communities. More important, however, were the Chinese, as was already explained. They began moving to Macau soon after its foundation in the mid 1550s. Already towards the end of Ming rule, the Chinese formed the largest group. Numerically, Macau became gradually «sinicized»³⁸.

The process of becoming «multicultural» thus differed under the Portuguese and in the two cases of Guangzhou and Quanzhou. While others, including the Chinese, moved to the Portuguese area in Macau, non-Chinese groups faced a Chinese city when arriving in Guangzhou or Quanzhou, and later on, after the establishment of foreign quarters, mostly settled in foreign residential areas within a predominantly Chinese urban setting. The main direction of acculturation may also have been different: In Macau, others, including the Chinese, would more readily adjust to Portuguese ways of life, in Guangzhou and Quanzhou the non-Chinese population would probably consider Chinese standards.

Admittedly, the last point is vague and open to debate. West Asian merchant groups, one may argue, proudly followed their Muslim traditions. Acculturation certainly had its limits, especially under Mongol rule. In Guangzhou and Quanzhou Islam was probably spread to some local Chinese just as Christianity was spread within Macau. Besides, acculturation is a complex phenomenon and not only marked by religious dimensions. In the absence of detailed data it thus remains difficult to decide which road acculturation really took among the foreign population in China's medieval ports.

The same must be said in regard to possible Chinese reservations against *one* special ethnic or religious group *within* the Guangzhou and Quanzhou communities. No group was singled out for criticism, at least sources do not carry any data that might point to such a move. Presumably, the disasters befalling both places during China's internal wars made no clear distinction between different groups. Regarding Macau, we know, the Chinese did not favour the presence of Japanese sailors there. This had to do with their bad behaviour and certainly also with fears related to the heyday of Wokou activities in the middle of the sixteenth century. It was thus postulated that no one should keep Japanese servants (*nu*: literally «slaves») in Macau – a

³⁸ See, for example, Almerindo LESSA, *A história e os homens da primeira república democrática do Oriente. Biologia e sociologia de uma ilha cívica* (Macau, Imprensa Nacional, 1974), ch. 4; and his *Macau, ensaios de antropologia portuguesa dos trópicos* (Lisbon, Administração de Macau, etc., 1996), book 4.

demand engraved on stone and publicly posted in the Senate's building during the early seventeenth century. This was one of the very few serious initiatives, where the Ming side undertook efforts to influence Macau's jurisdiction. The initiative had come from Yu Anxing, who was in charge of coastal defenses as the *haidao fushi* ³⁹.

Interestingly, the Macau side may not have been completely unhappy with Yu's demands because a few years earlier the Portuguese themselves had encountered difficulties in Japan. Thus if China wished to restrict the presence of Japanese «rowdies» in Macau, the Portuguese, who could not risk any similar moves themselves as they depended on the purchase of Japanese silver in Nagasaki, were probably relieved of a delicate problem.

The last point is of course open to debate. But there were other occasions, in later times, where China's officials tried to intervene in Macau's daily life by telling the Portuguese how to regulate the affairs of local residents. The Portuguese accepted these demands, partly because they themselves would benefit from them. In one such case, the Chinese side also indicated strong sentiments against the black population of Macau ⁴⁰. Although this is not attested for the Ming period, one can see here, as in the case of the Japanese, that China would direct criticism against certain nationalities or ethnic groups, if it felt obliged to do so. As was said, comparable situations are not reported from medieval Guangzhou and Quanzhou, although we cannot exclude the possibility that they had also occurred in both these places.

To sum up: In the case of Guangzhou and Quanzhou we are looking at complex compounds with all kinds of foreigners. As far as one can tell, no group was superior in status than the others, although most merchants were Muslims. Nor were the foreign quarters in Guangzhou and Quanzhou tied to some kind of colonial network. Probably different groups kept their own

³⁹ *Aomen jilüe jiaozhu*, pp. 69-70; *Ou-Mun Kei-Leok*, pp. 109-110; also in other local chronicles. Furthermore, see, for example, Wu Zhiliang, *Segredos*, pp. 77-78, or CHANG T'ien-tsê, *Sino-Portuguese Trade*, p. 121. Also see the recent article by Jorge M. dos Santos ALVES, «Os jesuítas e a «contenda da Ilha Verde». A primeira discussão sobre a legitimidade da presença portuguesa em Macau (1621)», in Nuno da Silva GONÇALVES (coord.), *A Companhia de Jesus e a Missionação no Oriente. Actas do colóquio internacional promovido pela Fundação Oriente e pela Revista Brotéria*, Lisboa, 21 a 23 de Abril de 1997 (Lisbon, Brotéria and Fundação Oriente, 2000), esp. pp. 436-437.

⁴⁰ *Aomen jilüe jiaozhu*, pp. 92-94; *Ou-Mun Kei-Leok*, pp. 144-148; António M. Martins do VALE, *Os portugueses em Macau (1750-1800). Degradados, ignorantes e ambiciosos ou fiéis vassallos d'El Rei?*, Memória do Oriente 9 (Macau, Instituto Português do Oriente), pp. 74-78 and annex 5. Also see, for example, TANG Kaijian, *Ming Qing shidafu yu Aomen*, pp. 230-232; FEI Chengkang, *Aomen sibai nian*, pp. 179-184; Manuel TEIXEIRA, *Macau no séc. XVIII* (Macau, Imprensa Nacional, 1984), pp. 427-428, 441-445; Wu Zhiliang, *Segredos*, pp. 443-445. For documents on the black in this period, also see, LIU Fang (LAU Fang) (comp.), ZHANG Wenqin (rev.), *Putaoiya Dongbota dang'anguan zang Qingdai Aomen Zhongwen dang'an huibian*, 2 vols. (Macau, Fundação Macau, 1999), I, documents 29-36.

identity, with varying degrees of acculturation towards China, or amongst themselves, and perhaps also with leaders of varying ethnic (not religious) background. In Macau, the government was always Portuguese and always Catholic. The social hierarchy was not completely frozen, but probably more stratified than in the cases of the Guangzhou and Quanzhou quarters, although a good degree of social mobility can be observed as well. Furthermore, Macau was tied to a gigantic network, that of the *Estado da Índia*. Finally, acculturation appears to have been, in most cases, a process of adjusting to Portuguese standards, while, in purely numerical terms, the Chinese became more important in the course of time.

Conclusion

Both the Guangzhou *fanfang* and the foreign quarter of Quanzhou flourished for an estimated four to five hundred years before their golden days were over. During its long existence, the Guangzhou community suffered at least twice from violent interventions, once in 879, when thousands of foreigners were killed by the forces of Huang Chao, and once during the Song-Yuan war, which contributed to the final decline of the community. The one in Quanzhou also came to a violent end during the Yuan-Ming transition, as we had mentioned above. Some foreign merchants continued to stay in both cities after these disasters, but the good old days belonged to the past.

Macau lasted for more or less the same period of time under Portuguese rule, as the foreign communities in Guangzhou and Quanzhou had flourished under China's supremacy. However, Macau was never devastated by any invasion force, not even by the British, who briefly occupied the place in the early nineteenth century but had to pull out due to Portuguese diplomacy and Chinese pressure.

This and other characteristics associated with Macau show how flexible the Portuguese were in handling their city. Survival was essential, in the end it always depended on the balance of giving and taking. This game was so skilfully played that Macau acted fairly independently from Ming China's administration. The local Chinese population which had moved to Macau, in particular, was an asset. If treated well, it would speak up in favour of the Portuguese as often happened in later years, under the Qing. Furthermore, the more time elapsed, the lower the risk of annihilation, because neither the local officials in Xiangshan nor the court in Beijing would want to break with their own tradition of exerting tolerance towards Macau.

Thus Macau even survived the critical years of the Ming-Qing transition period, of Guomindang pressure in the 1920s and late 1940s, and the difficult times after 1949. As it was not a *fanfang*, and probably more flexible than an «ordinary» foreign quarter, it was not annihilated; at the same time, it could lead its own wars, or remain neutral, in accordance with the instruc-

tions coming from Goa or Lisbon. It remained neutral during the Taiping crisis, in contrast to the British, and during the Opium wars. It did not favour Spanish ideas of invading Fujian (late sixteenth century)⁴¹, and its neutral status was also respected during World War II. Even after World War II, when the United States, with the assistance of the United Nations, tried to isolate China, Macau kept some channels open to Beijing.

By contrast, the foreign quarters in Guangzhou and Quanzhou were torn into internal warfare, and in the Quanzhou case the abortive efforts of the foreign community to gain influence over a larger terrain even earned that community the label of being a «rebel» party. No Portuguese was ever classified as a «rebel» in China, not even by such iron rice bowl fanatics as Dai Yixuan.

Certain characteristics of mid and late Ming Macau, I tried to argue in these notes, were distinctly different from those supposedly shaping the foreign communities in medieval Guangzhou and medieval Quanzhou. But, admittedly, whether we take Macau as a European bridgehead, a kind of colony, or an entrepôt – we are far from having gained a clear picture of all factors that might be considered for a «definite» classification of this place. As was already explained, before such a classification can be undertaken, the many different forms of foreign communities within China and perhaps also around the coasts of Southeast Asia, in the ancient ports of Melaka, Bantem, and so on, would have to be considered as well. In the end, then, one might even make a point in establishing certain similarities between China's medieval *fanfang* tradition and the many Southeast Asian ports with their «*fanfang*». That, I should like to add here as a footnote, could be a fine argument for pulling places like Guangzhou and Quanzhou away from continental China and looking at them as part of what has been called «Greater Southeast Asia», or the Southeast Asian *Mediterrannée* – certainly another stimulating exercise⁴².

Perhaps mid and late Ming Macau, tied to Southeast Asia in various ways as well, also belonged to this «Mediterranean» category, yet at the same time, it kept its own characteristics, which distinguished it from both the

⁴¹ On Spanish invasion projects, see OLLÉ, *La invención*, and his tesis doctoral (author's name in that case Ollé RODRÍGUEZ), *Estrategias filipinas respecto a China: Alonso Sánchez y Domingo Salazar en la empresa de China (1581-1593)*, 2 vols. (Barcelona, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, 1998). On Macau's neutrality during the Opium and Taiping crises, see, for example, Alfredo Gomes DIAS, *Macau e a I Guerra do Ópio*, *Memória do Oriente* 2 (Macau, Instituto Português do Oriente, 1993), and António Vasconcelos de SALDANHA [ed.], *Colecção de fontes documentais para a história das relações entre Portugal e a China*, Special Series, vol. 1: *Documentos relativos à neutralidade portuguesa durante a primeira Guerra do Ópio, 1839-1842*, and vol. 2: *Documentos relativos à neutralidade portuguesa durante a Revolta Taiping e as novas Guerras do Ópio, 1850-1860* (Macau, Fundação Macau and Universidade de Macau, 1998).

⁴² Some ideas in R. P., «Quanzhou: At the Northern Edge of a Southeast Asian Mediterranean», to appear in a volume edited by Angela Schottenhammer (same as in n. 35).

free emporia and / or «foreign quarters» of medieval and early modern times *and* the colonial posts established, later on, by other European nations. My thoughts may be going astray, but colonialism, it is sometimes argued, was not really a Portuguese invention, nor can one classify the early *Estado da Índia* as a «typical» colonial system; it was only in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, when other European powers began contending for large territories and exploiting local populations, that Portugal was compelled to follow these bad examples, albeit in very moderate ways, and without the kind of extreme racism encountered elsewhere. This, however, did not touch Macau. Macau remained, somewhat anachronistically, the only Far Eastern specimen of its kind, a liberal and multi-cultural enclave, characterized, at best, by some, but definitely not by all the elements found in the old *fanfang*, nor by those associated with the cases of Hong Kong and other «true» colonies that were born out of unhappy circumstances.

Perhaps it was this in-between status of Macau, not even classifiable in terms of Ming-China's own value categories, as we saw, that contributed most to the city's population being more flexible than other population groups – and perhaps also to the violent rhetorics within China, both against and in favour of Macau, and, in each case, to the ultimate decision of accepting the status quo. That kind of flexibility, in league with a strong sense for the obvious, the power of symbols, the «middle way», and a light load of fine historical luggage, enabled the Portuguese to perform the 1999 handover in an almost *wuwei*-shaped fashion – in contrast to the «law and order» tour chosen by the British.

**Glossary of Chinese Characters: Names of Persons
and Places, Terms (not Titles)**

Aomen 澳門	<i>nu</i> 奴
Bosi 波斯	Pang Shangpeng 龐尙鵬
Bosi <i>xiang</i> 波斯巷	Qingyuan 慶元
Chen Bojian 陳柏堅	Quanzhou 泉州
Chen Dasheng 陳達生	<i>shibosi</i> 市舶司
Chen Gaohua 陳高華	<i>shou ao guan</i> 守澳官
Dai Yixuan 戴裔煊	Shuangyugang 雙嶼港
Dezhou 德州	Song Xian 宋峴
Deng Kaisong 鄧開頌	Su Jilang 蘇基朗
<i>fanfang</i> 蕃坊	Tang Kaijian 唐開建
<i>fanrenxiang</i> 蕃人巷	Tang Zhou 唐胄
<i>fanzhang</i> 蕃長	Wang Lianmao 王連茂
Fei Chengkang 費成康	Wenzhou 溫州
Fuzhou 福州	Wokou 倭寇
Ganpu 澉浦	Wu Tai 吳泰
<i>gong shi</i> 公事	Wu Wenliang 吳文良
Gong Zhen 鞏珍	Wu Zhiliang 吳志良
Guan Lüquan 關履權	<i>wuwei</i> 無爲
Guangzhou 廣州	Xiang Da 向達
<i>haidao fushi</i> 海道副使	Xiangshan 香山
Hangzhou 杭州	Xu Mingde 徐明德
Haojing 濠鏡	Yi Fan 一凡
Hong Shaolu 洪少祿	Yin Guangren 印光任
Huai Xiaofeng 懷效鋒	Yu Anxing 俞安性
Huang Chao 黃巢	Yu Changsen 喻常森
Huang Wenkuan 黃文寬	Zhang Rulin 張汝霖
<i>huoqi</i> 火器	Zhang Wenqin 章文欽
Jin Guoping 金國平	Zhao Chunchen 趙春晨
Langbaigang 浪白港	Zheng He 鄭和
Li Donghua 李東華	Zhu Weigan 朱維干
Liao Dake 廖大珂	Zhu Yu 朱彧
Lin Shimin 林士民	Zhuang Jinghui 莊景輝
Lin Tianwei 林天蔚	Zhuang Weiwei 莊爲璣
Liu Fang 劉芳	<i>zizhi</i> 自治
Mingzhou 明州	<i>zujie</i> 租界
Ningbo 寧波	