

MACAU

A Cultural Janus

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1 Introduction

Macau (澳門)¹ — the ‘gate’ of South China — stands on the Western shore of the Pearl River in Guangdong Province, the southernmost coastal area of China. The total area is 23.5 square kilometres including the Macau peninsula and two small islands — Taipa (氹仔) and Coloane (路環).² Current reclamation projects are to enlarge its size to about 28 square kilometres shortly after 2000. Peninsular Macau is linked to the Chinese mainland by a narrow isthmus at a point called *as Portas do Cerco*, or the Barrier Gate (first built in 1573), which serves as the ‘borderline’ between Macau and China. The official population of Macau is about 450 000.³ The territory therefore has a population density of about 20 000 persons per square kilometre, one of the highest population densities in the world.

Macau was barely inhabited during the Ming dynasty and has been an overseas settlement of the Portuguese Empire since 1557.⁴ It is a unique terrain subsuming the cultures of Cathay⁵ and Lusitânia,⁶ and a meeting point of different civilizations. In its growth from a barren-fishing village to a modern city, Macau has undergone a series of political changes. From 1582 the Portuguese had to pay an annual ground rent of 500 taels of silver to Ming China in exchange for the leasehold and, in 1887, the sovereignty of Macau changed hands: it was agreed that ‘Portugal will forever administer Macau’. In 1979, however, China and Portugal jointly accepted ‘Macau as a Chinese territory under Portuguese administration’. When Macau returns to Chinese rule on 20 December 1999, the People’s Republic of China resumes sovereignty after a lapse of 442 years. At the dawn of 2000, Macau is endowed with a new role as a Special Administrative Region under the novel formula of ‘One Country, Two Systems’.

Macau’s dramatic metamorphoses have had a certain impact on its cultural process, which oscillates between two political entities. Given the

confluence of two great cultural currents — the Sino-Luso cultural flow, this book offers a ‘reading’ of Macau and addresses the role of culture in the construction of a collective life. It attempts to understand Macau’s cultural matrices and its specific role in colonial vicissitudes, which have been shaped and inflected by major shifts in the enclave’s political administrations and socio-economic changes.

Mapping onto the main contours of Macau’s history, this study intends to break with conventional chronological narratives. Instead, a topical and thematic approach is employed in order to examine its culture from interdisciplinary perspectives. In addition to the ‘official’ histories written by the Chinese and Portuguese authorities, I focus on a variety of textual materials and visual arts. As a work of cross-cultural study, the method is clearly different from the approaches of historical sociology and cultural history. Although this study does not follow a linear narrative path, it is self-contained and coherent in its analysis.

The methodology of Cultural Studies is applied here, which cuts across diverse social and political interests in various academic disciplines. Cultural Studies is often regarded as a bricolage, embracing both a broad, anthropological and a more narrowly humanistic conception of culture. In the field of Cultural Studies,⁷ ‘culture is understood *both* as a way of life — encompassing ideas, attitudes, languages, practices, institutions, and structures of power — and a whole range of cultural practices: artistic forms, texts, canons, architecture, mass-produced commodities, and so forth’ (Grossberg et al., 1992: 5). This broad rubric is also ‘about’ popular culture, and concerned with the everyday terrain of people.

Culture is not a unified corpus of symbols and meanings; it is an emergent, temporal and historical entity. In exploring cultural evolution and social transformation, it is useful to look at ‘context’ and ‘text’. One may recall Mikhail M. Bakhtin (1895–1975) who says, ‘Where there is no text, there is no object of study, and no object of thought either.’ (Bakhtin, 1986: 103) He neatly defines the term ‘text’ as ‘any coherent complex of signs’ (Bakhtin, 1986: 103), a definition which broadly encompasses everything from literature to visual (fine arts, films) and aural (music) works of art, as well as everyday action and communication. For Bakhtin, text is the unmediated reality (reality of thought and experience) on which the study of the human sciences and philosophy in general depend. He considers all cultural utterances as text, because text is the aggregate of various kinds of knowledge and a subjective reflection of the objective world. To study text is, in effect, to look at a reflection of a reflection in the realm of culture.

Bakhtin also uses the term ‘discourse’ in its broadest sense as language in its concrete, living totality. Both text and discourse refer to cultural

production rooted in language. Language in turn breaks down the demarcation between text and context. For him, the barrier between text and context, that is, between 'inside' and 'outside', is an artificial one, simply because there is an easy permeability between the two. Just as the text is 'redolent with contexts', that is, it reveals historical process and social events, the context is always already narrated in different textual forms.

On the relationship between literary text and culture, Bakhtin writes:

Literature is an inseparable part of culture and it cannot be understood outside the total context of the entire culture of a given epoch. It must not be severed from the rest of culture, nor, as is frequently done, can it be correlated with socioeconomic factors, as it were, behind culture's back. These factors affect culture as a whole, and only through it and in conjunction with it do they affect literature. (Bakhtin, 1986: 2)

Bakhtin points out that there is a close link between literature and culture, and literature is imbricated with culture. Similarly, a 'cultural' text, says James Clifford, is basically a dialogical and textual production which 'obliges writers to find diverse ways of rendering negotiated realities as multisubjective, power-laden, and incongruent' (Clifford, 1986: 14–15). Culture is not merely relational, entailing intertextual dialogism, it is also ideological and is closely involved with power relations. One could argue, therefore, that culture is a constellation of discursive practices. It is the entire matrix of communicative utterances among which are various kinds of textual examples. In essence, cultural formation and cultural production simultaneously embrace the phenomenology of the textual, the intertextual and the contextual.

When Walter Benjamin argues that history is 'a tool of the ruling classes' (Benjamin, 1968: 257), he is of the opinion that history may not reflect the past objectively as it is only concerned with the triumph of progress and is the unconscious ideology of the ruling party. Instead, literary texts are themselves history because they may in some way reflect a particular place and era from different angles. History is often considered metaphysical and the human past is only accessible through the **textualization** of documents. Texts hence constitute ways to explore and understand socio-cultural contexts, the historical past and discourse of ideology. Quite in the same vein, Hayden White contends that there is no such thing as a specifically 'historical' approach to the study of 'the past'. Literature, however, can help us understand 'history' and the particular ideological spectrum (White, 1987: 302). The approach to literature, history

and culture can be interdisciplinary. Literary texts do not passively reveal an external reality; they are agents themselves in constructing and commenting on a culture's sense of reality. What we consider in this book is Macau's sense of reality.

Macau is 'read' as a Cultural Janus. Janus is a Roman god or numen, guardian of the doorways of dwelling houses and city gateways. He is usually portrayed with two faces looking in opposite directions and is denoted to have two contrasting characteristics. Hence, I would call Macau a Cultural Janus on both near literal and metaphorical planes. It is because Macau is China's 'gate' to the outside world and has two faces: the face of Chinese civilization and the face of Portuguese legacies. Since Macau has been nurtured by two dominant yet contrasting cultures, it is a Janus-like ecumene⁸ having two culturally different aspects. Moreover, just as Janus (for whom January is named) looks back to December (the past) and forward to February (the future), Macau looks back to Portugal and forward to China at this historical moment.

Macau's physical marginality from Mainland China and peripheral relations with Chinese and Western cultures constitute its identity as a cultural 'threshold' and a crossroads of the East and the West. It once enjoyed admirable prosperity, but its harbour was easily silted up by the outflow of the Pearl and West Rivers. Macau was subsequently eclipsed when Britain acquired Hong Kong in 1841 and turned it into an international trading centre partly because of its deep-water harbour. In light of the reunification, Macau is expected to regain some of its aura as the gateway to China.

The colonial relationship between Portugal and China came into existence long before the so-called classic period of imperialism and colonialism during the middle of the nineteenth century. Among other ex-colonizing European powers, such as Britain, France, Holland, Spain, which once occupied Asian countries, Portugal was the first to come to Asia (occupying Goa in 1510) but is the last to leave on 20 December 1999. This date marks the real and symbolic decolonization of Macau, but it also closes a chapter of the receding tide of Western colonialism.

From elusive settlement and colonial mastery to mutual accommodation, the Portuguese have expanded the activity of empire-building and hegemonic penetration. Under the ideology of ecumenicalism, the Portuguese carried out a kind of imperial process of colonization by superimposing their religious beliefs and value systems upon Chinese political and social structures. While these structures underwent transformation, the cultural milieu also changed either through processes of internal evolution or political revolution, resulting in a hybrid or creole form of culture. Macau is never just a sum of Lusitanian influences;

rather, it articulates its uniqueness and engenders specific cultural forms. In the interstices of two political systems and dominant cultures, it is a hybridized site showing multifarious cultural manifestations.

At the outset (Chapter 2), I begin with the Age of Discovery and the first encounter of the two empires — China and Portugal — which was marked by the arrival of Jorge Álvares on Tamang Island in 1513. Álvares' arrival also marks the dawn of Portuguese dominance in Macau in 1557. This chapter discusses the dramatically controversial *história* of the problematic sovereignty of Macau written by Anders Ljungstedt (1835) and C.A. Montalo de Jesus (1902). These two historians inadvertently fell into the bind of a hero/traitor paradigm in the Portuguese colonial ideology. Even in advance of the reversion of sovereignty, China has already assumed its resurgent power and influence, notably and symbolically through the architectural gesture of the new monumental Bank of China Building (1991), and Macau is permeated with a kind of 'pre-postcolonial' ambience before decolonization. The removal of the Portuguese colonial icon, the Amaral Equestrian Monument (1992), may perhaps testify to the 'pre-postcolonial'. The questions at issue are: how can this oxymoronic rubric 'pre-postcoloniality' explain the somewhat peculiar situation in Macau prior to 20 December 1999? Also, can Western cultural debates on colonial discourse be neatly mapped onto the specific historical moment in Macau?

Chapter 3 examines the toponymy of Macau, or Ou Mun in Cantonese, and its various religious appellations. The naming and renaming suggested that the Portuguese regarded Macau as their 'city' or 'overseas province'. Macau came to embody the meaning of Portugal and Rome. It valorized 'the imperial centre'. This chapter investigates Lusitânian and Iberian religious zeal, which led to the 'partition of the world' in 1494 and the subsequent Rites Controversy. Out of four distinct occasions for the introduction of Christianity in China, Macau twice played an indispensable role as a bridgehead for Catholicism and Protestantism in the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries respectively. Both the Portuguese and the British ardently advocated missionary activism as a *mission civilisatrice* alongside their colonizing programmes, but were they really concerned with saving heathen souls for Christ? Was the proselytizing of Christianity merely an ideological inducement for colonial domination and subjugation?

Chapter 4 compares the three goddesses in Macau: the Virgin Mary, Tian Hou and Guan Yin, and explores the architectural expression of the Façade of the Church of the Mother of God, Ma Zu Ge, and Guan Yin Tang. These three sites are the 'sacred spaces' of the 'virgin trio'. In view of Portuguese colonial rule and prevailing Catholicism, how can the Taoist Goddess of the Sea and the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy coexist with the

Christian Mother of God and form a balance of power? How are the cults of Tian Hou and Guan Yin standardized and reinforced by Chinese officials to counter the invasion of Christian ideology? The *tête-à-tête* of these three goddesses nevertheless constitutes a Janus complex of having Sino-Luso political forces in religious disguise.

Chapter 5 investigates missionary journals, travel memoirs, traveller's tales, poems and novels in an attempt to exemplify how Macau is 'written' in contested codes and fed into the stereotypes of colonialist representations and imaginations. Reinforced with Orientalist essentialism and exoticism, some colonialist texts tend to posit an obvious binarism. Macau is often constructed either as a tropical Arcadia or a den of iniquity. Are there, however, any 'unofficial' or unconscious voices, which implicitly subvert the colonial ideology of Manichean opposition and shatter familiar stereotypes? This chapter also illustrates how the notion of cultural anthropophagy produces an ambivalent resolution within a situation of cultural asymmetry in line with Bakhtin's carnival aesthetic. Bakhtinian carnivalism militates against the domination/subjugation of Western over Eastern paradigms in colonial discourse.

Chapter 6 discusses contemporary English, Chinese and Portuguese textual materials in relation to the dialectic opposites of 'rootlessness' and 'rootedness'. Macau is dubbed the 'Drifting Island' where people roam around like duckweed, but it is also a haven where people settle with stoicism. How then is Macau portrayed as a stepping-stone for midway sojourners, bohemians, *flâneurs*, and criminals; and as a final stop for refugees and 'returnees'? This chapter also examines the Western metaphysics of the **pharmakon** in connection with the river and the sea in texts, which comes to be the salient constituent in forming story lines. It illustrates how the imagery of the sea embraces a paradoxical effect of nurturing and threatening, how people reveal their different attitudes towards Macau where they confront, adjust and situate themselves under Portuguese administration.

The conclusion addresses the particulars of Portuguese imperialism and colonialism, and the distinctive characteristics of Portuguese colonial practice and ideology, that of panracialism and ecumenicalism. The Portuguese departure from Macau not only marks the end of European global imperialist expansion geopolitically, it also points to the demise of European colonial domination. But does decolonization signal the undoing of Portuguese cultural hegemony and ideological dominance? It is worth examining Macau's cultural situation and its colonial legacy by testing the applicability of such topics (much debated in Western academies) of colonial-discourse analysis: postcolonial theory and its concomitant neocolonial critique. Towards a consensual decolonization, the Macau government has put forward an array of cultural and construction projects.

Such projects provide some insights into the relationship between culture and politics in the crucial years that have led up to the return of Macau to the People's Republic of China.

Notes

- 1 There are two spellings of 'Macao' and 'Macau' for the Cantonese transliteration 'Ou Mun', or in *Putonghua* 'Aomen'. While the former is the English spelling, the latter the Portuguese spelling. In this book, I use the Portuguese spelling, except that in quotations I follow whichever is in the texts.
- 2 According to the Land Registry and Map Department, the peninsula is 9.1 square kilometres including the Nam Van Lakes project, Taipa is 6.33 square kilometres including airport reclamation areas, and Coloane is 8.07 square kilometres including an industrial park. The Portuguese seized Taipa in 1851 and Coloane in 1864. Sovereignty over Macau (including these two islands) was confirmed in 1887 and was ratified as the Luso-Chinese Treatise of Friendship and Trade in 1888.
- 3 It is estimated that the total population is close to 600 000 taking into account the illegal immigrants as well. The majority is Chinese comprising 96%, Portuguese around 3% and other nationalities 1%. On Macau's population, see Zheng Tianxiang et al. (ed.), *População de Macau* (Macau: Macau Foundation, 1994), and J.K.T. Chao, 'Contemporary Population Statistics of Macau', in Rufino Ramos et al. (ed.), *Population and Development in Macau* (Macau: University of Macau and Macau Foundation, 1994).
- 4 Although the Portuguese landed on Macau in 1553 under the pretext of drying out soaked cargo, they only succeeded in settling there in 1557 by paying tribute. So the year 1557 is generally considered to be the foundation year of Macau as a Portuguese settlement. See Elfed Vaughan Roberts et al., *Historical Dictionary of Hong Kong and Macau* (Metuchen: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1992), pp. 277–282.
- 5 China is often referred to as Cathay in Western texts. The term 'Cathay' can be traced back in Marco Polo's travel journal in which it was regarded as the richest geographical signifier.
- 6 Lusitânia, which was given by the Romans, was the old name for Portugal. Legend has it that Lusus, the bosom-companion of Bacchus, was the mythical founder of Lusitânia. The present name, Portugal, is derived and phonetically evolved from the twin cities of Porto and Cale (Portucale) at the mouth of the Douro River in Northern Portugal. The Portuguese are referred to as the 'sons of Lusus' in Camões' *Os Lusíadas*.
- 7 It is the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at Birmingham that adopted, constructed and formalized 'Cultural Studies' as a discipline in 1964. See Lawrence Grossberg et al. (ed.), *Cultural Studies* (New York: Routledge, 1992).
- 8 The term 'ecumene', as defined by Igor Kopytoff, is a 'region of persistent cultural interaction and exchange' in relation to cultural interconnection across the world. See Igor Kopytoff (ed.), *The African Frontier* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), p. 10.

7

Conclusion

The cultural matrices of Macau are manifested in the repertoire of shared meanings, ideas, symbols, beliefs, and observable series of events and behaviour. They are constituted in large measure by cultural production and practices of China and Portugal. A 'culture' is never stagnant and immutable. Instead, it interacts with a temporally and spatially changing and changeable set of relationships. Macau's connections with diverse cultures reflect both a continuity and a flexibility with clearly identifiable traits. The 'whole way of life' of Macau is encoded in texts that are in essence agents in constructing and commenting on the culture's sense of reality.

Mikhail Bakhtin, one of the first theorists to formulate the pantextual idea in cultural exegesis, neatly defines text as 'any coherent complex of signs' (Bakhtin, 1986: 103). In effect, everyday discourse and artistic practices are all textual. Cultural production simultaneously reveals the textual, the intertextual and the contextual since the context is already textualized, and the text is at every point inflected by historical processes and shaped by social events. The approach to literature, history and culture must be interdisciplinary. Texts are representations and articulations of specific historical contexts; they are also reflections and commentaries of the whole social process. The study of a variety of texts (including literature, films, visual arts), in a Bakhtinian sense, helps us understand the past and the present of Macau from different perspectives, apart from the 'official' histories written by the two national authorities.

Since Macau's founding in 1557, the cultural flux in its colonial history has been complex and dialogic. Through texts, we can discern how Macau is textualized as a unique colonial space where its cultural production renders negotiated realities as ideological, relational, power-laden, and above all, Janus-faced under the confluence of the two civilizations. Located at the southern doorway of China, Macau was transformed from a sleepy

backwater to undertake a unique role on the world stage during its colonial period. Despite being a small enclave, Macau was significant in the history of China, and Portugal also sought to see it as an aspect of its national glory. Macau has literally functioned as a guardian Janus protecting China by means of the Barrier Gate, and benefiting Portugal by supplying substantial capital revenues.

Given its geographical marginality, Macau was once the 'threshold' for intercultural encounter and the only recognized 'gate' through which the outside world could deal with 'isolated' Ming China. It was the rendezvous for European encounters with the fabulous Kingdom of Cathay. It was also the site where Western power and supremacy were launched. Macau gradually became the outpost for all Europe in China, as well as the centre and fulcrum of foreign relations with China. On the one hand, the Portuguese were constructed as cultural bricoleurs furnishing a conduit between the West and the East and making Macau a zone of contact where the 'twain' meet. On the other hand, less lyrically, they were the harbingers of fully-fledged colonialism engaging in all kinds of economic exploitation, ideologically facilitated and justified by the project of Christian proselytization.

The official Portuguese departure from Macau on 20 December 1999 not only marks a historic reintegration of territory with China, but also brings an end to a particular historical mode of European colonial domination and subjugation in Asia in pursuit of profit and empire. Yet the historical shifts have been massive: cleft from a feudal imperial China in the age of mercantile capitalism, Macau 'returns' to a modernizing nation-state ruled under communism and socialism.

In the history of colonization, Macau was occupied well before the so-called nineteenth-century high age of imperialism; its colonization was markedly different from other Asian societies such as India, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), Burma (now Myanmar), Malacca (now Malaysia), Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Indonesia, Brunei, Singapore and the Philippines. After the 'Partition of the World' in 1494, China fell into Portugal's sphere in missionary activism in which the occupation of Macau served as a stepping-stone for the project of evangelization in China and as an outpost for economic venturing.

Although the Portuguese colonized Macau and attempted to 'civilize' the Chinese through the propagation of Christianity, they could not exercise the kind of violent despotism and brutal absolutism by which they subjugated the natives in Goa and Brazil.¹ Since Macau was held on sufferance and not occupied by conquest, the Chinese state authorities still maintained some ability to 'influence and interfere'. Initially, they were able to modify and negotiate Portuguese control, though Chinese

power in Macau reached a nadir soon after the assassination of João Maria Ferreira do Amaral, the Governor of Macau, in 1849. As such, Macau, being Asia's oldest surviving European 'colony', departs from the totalizing tendency of Homi Bhabha's thesis that describes the discourse of colonialism as 'at once a civilizing mission and a violent subjugating force' (Bhabha, 1986: 148). Bhabha's paradigm fails to provide an all-encompassing framework for the analysis of colonial discourse and its ideological operations. Colonial discourse operates differently not only across all space but also throughout time — a criticism that Robert Young has also made of Bhabha's understanding of hybridity.² Bhabha's notion of 'double duty bound' phenomenon would be an imperfect, peculiarly displaced and decentred image of the Portuguese in Macau whose heterogeneity points to the question of historical difference.

The anomaly of the colonization of Macau curiously foreshadows another anomaly — that of decolonization. These two 'anomalies' totally violate global theorists' canons that colonization is homologous to conquest and decolonization to revolution. In addition, the much debated cultural disciplines of postcolonial theory and its concomitant neocolonial critique are not transcendent and cannot be neatly mapped onto the particular situation of Macau, precisely because Portuguese decolonization in Macau proves to be very different from the hasty and chaotic colonial withdrawal from other colonies. In particular, after the 1987 Sino-Portuguese Joint Declaration, Macau has achieved a sort of 'consensual decolonization',³ a process of transferring the political authority without any direct military conflict between China and Portugal. The outcome of that process is not a territorial independence, but a deferred reunion with the mother country.⁴ The handover of authority from one power to another, moreover, does not imply any recuperation of autonomy by the locally 'subjugated'.

Despite the fact that colonial-discourse analysis is a topic in vogue in Western academies, many of the foremost critics of colonialism have remained silent on Portuguese Macau, or have ignored it altogether. Apparently, Macau is too small to merit attention in the current (post) colonial debates, even though it has undergone a long period of colonial administration. Given that postcolonial theory is often based on a critique of Orientalism or originates from experiences in ex-colonized countries, why does it not work for Macau? The issues of postcolonial politics mostly focus on the disputes of the ownership of a particular geographical area, as well as the recuperation of native cultural traditions that were distorted by the process of colonization. The issue of the economic exploitation in neocolonialism is also emphasized. But these categories are inadequate to be applied to Macau, since it was indisputably the territory of an already constituted historical state before the colonial period. Its

cultural traditions basically remain intact and the peninsula is too small to be Portugal's 'client state' after decolonization. Thus, the cultural disciplines of colonial discourse, postcolonial theory and its synchronizing neocolonial critique are not wholly applicable to a discussion of Macau.

The Portuguese imperial project for territorial and economic expansion predated that of any other European countries. Portuguese colonial practices were also obliquely different from that of the later capitalist colonizing powers. What then is the specificity of Portuguese imperialism and colonialism? After the success of maritime exploration and overseas domination in the early sixteenth century, Portugal was basically an underdeveloped country maintaining a pre-industrial infrastructure that was heavily dependent on agriculture. This metropolitan complex subsequently determined the specific characteristics of Portuguese imperialism and colonialism in Asia (Diu, Goa, Malacca, Timor, Colombo), South America (Brazil), and Africa (Angola, Mozambique), which constituted a pattern of 'ultra-colonialism'. As defined by Perry Anderson, it was 'at once the most *primitive* and the most *extreme* modality of colonialism' (Anderson, 1962: 97). For Anderson, what the Portuguese Empire practised in these places was the basic mode of exploitation from control of *exchange* to control of *extraction*, which differed markedly from the practice of the capitalist colonizers during the peak era of imperialism. In other words, while the former simply enforced an advantageous exchange of primary products and, at best, seized control of actual extraction, the latter exploited the colonial possessions both for raw material supplies and as consumer markets for goods produced at home. Unlike the major vector of the 'new imperialism' of other European polities — the chartered company — Portugal was almost untouched by the commercial and industrial expansion and failed to share in international trade. As a result, the metropolitan economy declined. The stagnation and debt in its economic structure also brought about social disintegration in Portuguese traditional agrarian society. The Portuguese colonial system is thus described as reflex-colonization.

After the industrial revolutions of the mid-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries, the industrializing capitalist colonizing countries (such as Britain and France) made huge profits in their colonies in the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries. But Portugal was utterly unable to effect the conversion from an extractive to a transformer imperialism. In the words of Perry Anderson:

Portuguese imperialism is *not* the classic capitalist imperialism. This is not because of moral advance, but because of economic and social retardation. Portuguese colonialism is a failure to

achieve the normal imperial pattern, not an option which surpasses it. In the distorting mirror of ideology, the singularity dissolves and reforms in a shape that is transformed out of all recognition. (Anderson, 1962: 113)

Portuguese Macau is perhaps 'out of all recognition' when considered in the context of the usual instances of colonization addressed by the so-called 'Third-World' intellectuals such as Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, Gayatri C. Spivak (the Holy Trinity of colonial-discourse analysis), Trinh T. Minh-ha, Abdul R. JanMohamed and Ranajit Guha. They only pursue the 'normal imperial pattern' of colonial subjugation and exploitation which relates to their actual experience. Most of these critics emigrate and work in 'First World' academies and mobilize their own colonized past in the East as cultural studies in the West. The 'transposition' of their haunting memories from the East to the West may explain why colonial discourse, postcolonial theory and the question of neocolonialism circulate in Western academies both for analysis and for resistance. Their debates become a cultural task to reveal a dark chapter of European pillage in Asia.

The Portuguese Empire is distinctive in its colonial ideology. In the wake of Portugal's maritime modernity, the obsessions with economic adventure (the spice trade) and ideological mission (the promulgation of Christianity) were the motive forces behind the Portuguese colonization of the Indian Ocean and their subsequent occupation of Macau. What is remarkable in Portuguese enterprises of exploration and conquest is the accompanying 'missionary colonialism', which is at once a transcendent campaign of sharing spiritual values and of universal brotherhood.²⁷ In their eastward expansion, the seafaring Portuguese were basking in the 'Pax Lusitânia' ideology of ecumenicalism to 'win souls for Christ'. Under the veneer of the *mission civilisatrice*, however, there was an imperialist project to construct a non-dialectical religious order and to inculcate a Eurocentric worldview into the subject people.

The 'City of the Name of God' was once a Christian Janus where Roman Catholics and Lutheran Protestants were rivals in spreading the word of God. It was also the place where they vied for the lead in their common objective of introducing Western universalism and positivism behind the banner of saving souls. Under the patronage of Portugal and Britain, Macau twice played an incomparable role as the bridgehead for Christianity in China. On these two occasions, Macau was the West's 'Eastern stage' for the reconfiguration of Christianity because of religious crises in the wake of the Counter-Reformation in the sixteenth century and the Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth century. It seemed obvious that the underlying commonality of the two rival states was their concern

with economic exploitation rather than converting the heathens. Macau eventually became a contested arena where the valorization of Western civilization was in fact a mask for pillage and greed, let alone it was transformed into a spiritual and secular site of power struggle.

While the two forces of spiritual invasion attempted to acculturate the heathen Chinese into Christianity, the Chinese state authorities spared no effort in countering the Western 'orthodoxy' through the manipulation of the Chinese national myth-symbol complex. China intriguingly enculturated its people by means of standardizing and ritualizing regional and popular deities in order to assure religious allegiances, political alliances and cultural identity. The harmonious coexistence of a myriad of churches and temples readily points to the balance of power relations in different religions, and announces an unusual religious compromise. The notable landmarks of the Façade of the Church of the Mother of God, Ma Zu Ge and Guan Yin Tang are 'sacred' places which constitute a Janus complex of a two-faced religious culture: Judeo-Christian and Buddhist-Taoist beliefs. Moreover, the virgin trio — the Mother of God, the Empress of Heaven and the Goddess of Mercy — coalesce into a unique 'trinitarian' relationship to exemplify the common religious ideology of extreme compassion and mercy. Macau is a peculiar, if not a miraculous, site of religious propagation and toleration. Portuguese colonialism and the colonial ideology of ecumenicalism failed to impose the imperial paradigm in Macau. In particular, Portugal failed to convert the Chinese in Macau (and in China) while Spain successfully made Catholicism a 'national' and nationalizing credo in the Philippines.

Apart from the ideology of ecumenicalism, there is another highly distinctive colonial practice that fostered an assimilationist policy and officially encouraged miscegenation. Other European colonizing powers often introduced a type of human relations based on racial segregation in which the superior dominating race was contrasted with the inferior dominated race.⁵ Portugal celebrated mixed unions of different races and miscegenation was considered the benign consummation of Portuguese panracialism. However, the Portuguese ideological toleration of racial fusion through mixed marriage directly reflected a shortage of Portuguese women abroad. In the words of a historian of Portuguese Africa, the mystique of interracialism was merely an 'erotic expediency' rather than the advocacy of racial egalitarianism. In fact, as Robert Young has demonstrated in *Colonial Desire*, where racial amalgamation was tolerated or promoted, it was with the aim of improving the 'racial stock' of the colonized and creating a more enlightened race suitable for tropical labour (Young, 1995: 142–146). In addition, the encouragement of mixed unions may fetishistically reflect a covert form of fantasy centred on the Other

and a clandestine form of colonial desire for what is perceived as 'the uncontrollable sexual drive of the non-white races and their limitless fertility' (Young, 1995: 181).

Although the Portuguese showed an unrelenting attempt to assert inalienable differences between races, the ideological panracial vision only projected a phantasmagoria of diverse hybrid progeny as one aspect of the colonial legacies. The confluence of different cultural flows and the Portuguese ideological toleration of miscegenation have helped Macau evolve into a Eurasian ecumene in procreating an 'emergent' minority called the Macanese. The coming into being of this creole class was largely due to the fact that since the founding of Macau there had been very few Portuguese women there,⁶ and 'wives ranked as a significant item in the list of imports' (Coates, 1987: 34). Early settlers then sought wives primarily from Malaysia, Japan and India. Later, some abandoned Chinese infant girls were brought up as Christians and became candidates for mixed marriages.

However, not everyone born in Macau is identified as Macanese. Only those who are born of cross-ethnic couples are principally of Portuguese-Asian ancestry. Some Macanese refer to themselves as 'pure Macanese' because they are born in Macau of original Portuguese parentage. Very often, they call themselves '*Filhos da Terra*', which literally means 'sons of the earth' (implicitly denoting a rootless class). The Cantonese call them '土生仔', literally meaning 'locally born children'. They are, in Bhabha's phrase, 'white, but not quite', and constitute another level of identity in colonial representation.

In the situation of cross-ethnic interaction, the Macanese constantly meet with prejudice not only from the Chinese, but also from the 'pure' Portuguese. Such racial discrimination eventually leads to a certain kind of anxiety among them, who are ambivalent towards their personal identity. As João de Pina-Cabral writes:

At one time when the capital of Portugueseness was the major source of security and survival, the negotiation of Portugueseness was central to Macanese everyday life. Discrimination operated strongly, to the point where, for example, a member of a traditional family [a family retaining the greatest capital of Portugueseness] preferred his daughter to remain single rather than marry a Macanese whose claims to Portugueseness were slighter. (Pina-Cabral, 1994: 122)

Due to the overlapping of cultural references and mixed social situations, a process of 'self-alienation' gradually develops as a new social stratification, characterized by a small and relatively closed Macanese community.

Towards the imminent change of sovereignty, some Macanese have become very apprehensive about their new habitat. They waver in whether to identify themselves with the Portuguese or the Chinese. Subsequently, an association called *Macau Sempre*, or Roots in Aomen (根在澳門), was formed on 26 October 1996 with an aim to emphasize their 'roots' in Macau and to create a sense of belonging (*Macao Daily News*, 27 October 1996). Obviously, *Macau Sempre* was organized in order to unite the Macanese who, at this critical stage, may feel somewhat estranged, rootless, lost and stressed because of their 'in-betweenness'. This organization is an outlet revealing their wish to attach to Macau after the transition and to assert their hybrid identity in a Chinese dominated society. Although there are roughly 7000 to 10 000 Macanese, they reflect a certain ethnic force — some of them hold government posts while some are lawyers and architects by profession.

As a result of centuries of hybridity, the Macanese have evolved their own arts of daily life including a special cooking called Macanese cuisine.⁷ It mainly contains the spices and flavours of Goan and Malay cooking and a little Chinese influence. Given the eclectic ingredients, Macanese cuisine directly refers to its diverse ethnic and geographical origins and represents a now 'indigenous' culinary culture. 'The invocation of a specific food', says Anne Goldman, 'speaks on behalf of cultural nationalism . . . The elaboration of cooking techniques may also provide a means of articulating an ethnic subject.' (Goldman, 1992: 173) Through the introduction of Macanese food, the 'hybrid Portuguese of Macau' try to encode an affirmation of ethnic specificity. This cultural affirmation in food preparation, in effect, parallels changes in 'civilization' to a creolization of Portuguese, Goan, Malay, African and Chinese practices in the wake of colonialism.

Macanese cuisine hence reveals a cultural appropriation through the culinary. It can be hailed as a concrete instance to exemplify the rhetoric of cultural assimilation. Food is not just invested with a cultural register of a unique form; it may also reproduce cultural practices and values that provide the Macanese community with a means of self-definition and survival. Mediating between two dominant cultures, Macanese cuisine stands as a metonym for a creole ethnic identity and self-assertion in the cultural sphere. It also reveals the internal processes of a creolizing continuum. Macanese food no doubt exemplifies a real 'transgression of boundaries', and exhibits a palatable hybridization of originally different culinary specialties. The popularity of Macanese food among Chinese people in Macau and Hong Kong steadfastly speaks for the continued fluidity of cultural boundaries. Today, Macanese cuisine is promoted as one of Macau's irresistible tourist attractions and a commodity of

consumption. It also turns out to be a mediating practice, which elides ethnic tensions and antagonism, even though ethnic boundaries otherwise remain material and conspicuous.

Macanese cuisine has become a specialty that never loses its fascination and allure to both Chinese and foreign gourmets. While particular Hong Kong eating practices do show the traces of the British colonialist 'heritage' (such as 'milky tea'), Macanese food, being a distinctive cultural invention and having a status as 'cuisine', is what Hong Kong's hybrid food and beverages failed to attain during its 150-year colonial history. The important position of the culture of food helps us reconsider the fixed model of oppressor/oppressed power relations under Portuguese imperialism and colonialism.

Besides hybridized Macanese food, there is the Portuguese creole dialect used in Macau, i.e. the *Patois* (or *Makista*).⁸ It is a mixture of Chinese syntax with Portuguese and Malay vocabularies, and was once widely spoken by women and servants during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. However, schools started to teach both Portuguese and Chinese languages around 1850. As a result, the local *Patois* gradually disappeared except in songs and jokes.

The *Patois* dialect and Macanese food are 'emergent' cultural practices under Portuguese colonial rule. They form another layer of representation behind the mask of a Cultural Janus looking towards Cathay and Lusitânia. The Portuguese ideology of panracialism does not merely produce hybridization, it also effects a transformation of the 'repressed knowledge' of the Other into cultural specificity. These hybrid practices are, in Bhabha's words, 'a strategic reversal of the process of domination' (Bhabha, 1985: 154).

While the ideology of racial amalgamation produces different aspects of hybridity including new forms of cultural production, the ideology of ecumenicalism was later displaced by secular economic exploitation — the engagement in opium-trafficking, the coolie-slave trade and gambling. Although the former two activities were eventually outlawed in Macau, the gambling business has flourished and still furnishes tax revenues to Portugal. Portugal thus continues to enjoy the early colonialist pattern of 'extraction' of capital from Asia's last outpost. In line with the Portuguese strategy of 'extractive colonialism', no business is so well developed in Macau as gambling which requires little technology or expertise.

The metamorphosis of Macau from a Catholic bishopric to Asia's foremost modern 'city of gambling' is not without irony. The nine licensed casinos which are run by a single licensee — the gambling magnate, Stanley Ho — generate a substantial amount of tax revenue. The casino *taipan* gained the gambling monopoly in 1962 and formed the *Sociedade*

de Turismo e Diversões de Macau, or the Macau Tourism and Entertainment Company.⁹ He is perhaps the very living emblem of the paradoxical image in the City of the Name of God. Since 1962, he has operated the legalized gambling and entertainment business under the banner of a self-proclaimed philanthropic mission. In an interview he said:

The view that our enterprise is merely one of a gambling character is a misconception. Our purpose is to develop tourism and the entertainment business and bring a new prosperity to Macao and improve the welfare and living standard of its citizens . . . [and] to promote the erection of more schools and hospitals. (*South China Morning Post*: 2 January 1962)

As a gambling entrepreneur, Ho is also one of the chief patrons and benefactors in Macau and Hong Kong. He fervently alternates between the gambling business and charity. His charitable contributions even won papal approval. The Pope in the Vatican City conferred on him the Papal Insignia of 'Knight Commander of the Equestrian Order of Saint Gregory the Great' in 1989 in appreciation and recognition of the 'magnanimity and humanitarian gestures of the Macau and Hong Kong Impresario towards the Catholic Church' (*Lusa*: 7 July 1989). The Pope's ecclesiastical endorsement, however, only blurs the boundary between churches and casinos, and financial contributions may enhance one's chances of papal recognition.

The juxtaposition of churches and casinos appears to be an indispensable cliché in colonialist literary genres when describing Macau. It is concomitant with the disjunctive nomenclature of the 'Eastern Vatican' (the religious city) and the 'Eastern Monte Carlo' (the gambling city). Macau has often been represented through Oriental exoticism and is textualized as an atrium of 'wheat' and 'chaff', that is, it mingles the Chosen and the condemned. It was once denounced as the 'Wickedest City', despite being blessed as the 'Holy City'. As Macau was extolled as the 'Gem of the Orient' by Sir John Bowring and praised like an Arcadia on earth by some travellers, W. H. Auden, however, described it as the 'city of indulgence'. C. A. Montalto de Jesus even poignantly called it a 'den of vice'. This is the ambivalence of Macau — it simultaneously oscillates between the profane and the sublime.

Peninsular Macau is inseparable from the sea and the port mentality. This also patently generates an insular phenomenon of drifting and anchoring — a metaphor of people leaving and staying. It is a site of the liminal sojourn and a permanent shelter as different texts illustrate. Apart from being a recreational locale for colonials, it is represented as a

receptacle for China's 'human refuse' and Portugal's banished criminals. As the Portuguese desired to trade and evangelize, they willy-nilly created a haven of refuge — a subtle geopolitical sanctuary for European missionaries and Japanese Christians fleeing religious persecution. It was also an outlet to the world for millions of desperate Chinese. Not the least of its functions in this category was its once being a revolutionary base where Dr Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925) and his party found asylum while trying to overthrow the Qing government at the turn of the twentieth century.

Macau was fast changing in the last few decades of the twentieth century. Like most modern cities, it has its own problems. Since the 1980s, illegal money started pouring in from China and there was also an overdevelopment in real estate. When China's austerity measures were announced in 1993, the property market sharply declined and the housing market was severely hit. Due to the economic recession there had been spiralling crime rates, notably the triad gang warfare linked to profits from casino loan-sharking, as well as the flourishing prostitution business and burgeoning violence. Amid such deteriorating social conditions, the gambling haven also brings with it a lot of murders, kidnaps, bombings and stabbings. It is now dubbed the 'Eastern Chicago' (the crime city).¹⁰ Only when Macau implements new measures to sustain prosperity and stability and embarks upon a tough policy to stamp out the surging crime wave, will it be ruled by law and order. Macau should try to end the problems and realistically vindicate the description of being the 'fragile city' and the 'abandoned city' as pessimistically projected in Western eyes after 1999 (Porter 1996: 3, 193).

As a celebration of a 'new' era between the Portuguese and the Chinese, Macau has rushed forward with the project of monument building in public places since 1993. Each year, new monuments are to be built in the run-up to Macau's return to China in 1999. These monuments, on the one hand, symbolize the renewed intimacy and friendship of the two national authorities while on the other, exorcise a kind of (post)colonial complex. In a subtle way of self-fashioning, the Portuguese attempt to play the part of the benign 'settler'. The construction of such monuments speaks for the fervent Portuguese attempt to stake their cultural legacies, as well as significantly ushers in a period of 'monument-mania'.

The first multi-million-dollar monument, a *Porta do Entendimento*, or the Gate of Understanding (融和門) (Plate 32), stands 40 metres high on an artificial island outside the Inner Harbour. This colossal monument was inaugurated on Portugal's National Day, 10 June 1993. It commemorates Macau's 1987 agreement with China on future sovereignty and marks the 'harmonious relationship between Portugal and China' in



Plate 32 *The Gate of Understanding*

the transition period (Lee, *South China Morning Post*: 1 February 1993). The 'Understanding' monument was designed by the Portuguese sculptor Charters de Almeida. It is comprised of two rather monotonous blocks made of reinforced concrete and coated with polished granite. The rigid form and monumental size immediately dwarf the spectator and create an unbridgeable gap to physical communion. Moreover, it is non-functional; unlike similar monuments, the Statue of Liberty for instance, people cannot go up to its roof to enjoy the scenic view. The monument may make one recall Richard Serra's words when he argues, 'To deprive art of its uselessness is to make other than art. I am interested in sculpture which is non-utilitarian, non-functional. Any use is a misuse.' (Serra, 1985: 13) Redolent of Serra's rhetoric is Almeida's illustration of the modernist aesthetic sensibility in the two monumental blocks.

Cultural modernism's insistence on the distinct consciousness of art for art's sake and on aestheticist notions of the self-sufficiency of high culture has already been challenged by postmodernism — a cultural phenomenon emerged in America and Europe in the 1970s. (Fredric Jameson has argued that postmodernism is 'the cultural dominant of the logic of late capitalism.')11 But Almeida simply shows no interest in the

culture of everyday life and persists in the maintenance of a Eurocentric cultural tendency. He appears to 're-inscribe' the modernist penchant for art by means of maintaining an esoteric distance between the art object and the spectator. The aesthetic distance is not merely a key marker that separates culture from the social and economic conditions of the everyday life, it is also a distance from the bodily sensations for it is our bodies that bind us to the historical and social specificities. The Gate of Understanding is simply a demonstration of abstract principles and an artistic expression of esoteric self-assertions.

This extravagant work is inscribed with a political statement. It can be interpreted as a 'pre-postcolonial' chic, which pre-celebrates the closure of a colonial chapter through architectural gestures. The amicable relationship between Beijing and Lisbon brings to mind the different colonial histories of Macau and Hong Kong. Britain took Hong Kong by conquest and imposed upon China unequal treaties. Macau, on the other hand, was acquired by Portugal on sufferance. China was not involved in a humiliating confrontation. In 1982 Britain was trying to persuade the Chinese government at the beginning of the Sino-British negotiations to exchange sovereignty over Hong Kong for the right to continued British administration. Portugal in fact twice wanted to retreat, first at the climax of China's Cultural Revolution during 1966–1967, and subsequently, shortly after Portugal's 1974 'Carnation Revolution'. This cultural landmark is not just a sign of friendship between the Chinese and the Portuguese authorities, it also serves as a vicarious gesture to show the British that Sino-Portuguese relations outshine Sino-British confrontation.

Following the theme of *amizade*, the second new Macau-Taipa bridge, Ponte de Amizade, or the Bridge of Friendship, was inaugurated on 17 April 1994.¹² The friendly Sino-Luso relationship was again reminiscent of the political scenario at that specific moment. While Hong Kong was caught in a frustrating tug-of-war between London and Beijing over transition issues, Macau was marching much more smoothly towards its reunification with China, and Portugal was more accommodating to China than Britain.

The towering Gate of Understanding and the Bridge of Friendship are politicized to reveal different histories and contrasting political situations of the two colonies. They are ideological constructs suggesting a certain degree of **complicity** between power politics and culture. They also evince a symbiotic relationship through artistic creation and architectural expression. They tellingly embrace political complexity in the crucial years that have led up to the return of Hong Kong and Macau to China before the end of the twentieth century.

Since the pulling down of the colonial icons of the statue of Mesquita

in 1966 and the Amaral equestrian monument in 1992, the projects of 'understanding' and 'friendship' are signs of the renewed intimacy of the two national authorities. The good relations between the two states ushered in a period of economic cooperation and helped boost a very big project — the construction of an international airport (costing 9 billion *patacas*, approximately US\$1.1 billion) off Taipa Island. The new Macau International Airport¹³ was initiated in 1989 and by far the largest project ever undertaken in Macau. It was meant to cope with the ever-increasing demand for international flights. It was also permeated with a vicarious intention as being the alternative of the highly controversial airport at Chek Lap Kok in Hong Kong.¹⁴ Peter Fredenburg writes:

While Hong Kong's Chek Lap Kok airport project has been the focus of seemingly endless wrangling between the British territory and China, Macau's projects have been a model of accommodation. Foreign businessmen and Macanese government officials alike point to more than four centuries of cooperation between Portugal and China, in contrast to the British seizure of Hong Kong as a spoil of the Opium War. They cite characteristics often attributed to each — the 'easy amiability' of the Portuguese, as opposed to the 'arrogance' of the British. (Fredenburg, 1994: 14)

The building of the Macau airport was considered a 'fine example' of cooperation between China and Portugal by Lu Ping (魯平), the Director of the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office. As he praised the spirit of compromise on the Macau airport issue, he warned Britain at the same time not to adopt a confrontational approach towards China, but Hong Kong should learn from Macau in achieving a smooth transition to Chinese rule (No, *South China Morning Post*: 25 May 1995). In the wake of a number of political quarrels, China treated Christopher Patten, the last Governor of Hong Kong, like a leper. He was blasted as 'a prostitute' and 'a man condemned in history', but General Vasco Rocha Vieira, the Governor of Macau, was entrusted as a friend.

The new airport was inaugurated by Portuguese President, Mario Soares, and Chinese Vice-President, Rong Yiren (榮毅仁), on 8 December 1995, a date considered to be auspicious both by the Portuguese and the Chinese (Plate 33). During the opening ceremony, while Soares described the new airport as an 'enormous step' towards strengthening the enclave's autonomy and identity, Rong said it would 'stimulate' the territory's economic and social development (Bruning, *Hongkong Standard*: 9 December 1995). Macau's new airport is thus seen as a symbol of 'good understanding', 'profound friendship' and 'fruitful cooperation' between



Plate 33 *The Inauguration of the Macau International Airport*

China and Portugal over Macau, and 'will set the seal on the territory's ambitions to become a travel and business hub on the South China coast' (*Macau Travel Talk*, December 1995).

Not only does the new airport render political and economic significance, it also reveals cultural specificity. The opening ceremony was marked by the eye-dotting of a 138-metre long 'golden' dragon, supported by 500 people for a dance. The dragon dance is considered an auspicious ritual in Chinese culture and the dragon is looked upon as a beneficent deity. However, in Christian culture it is a symbol of Satan and a malevolent being. In this particular event, a total of 10 traditional Chinese dragons and 50 lions performed ritualistic dances. It is clear that the dragon dance becomes a Chinese cultural accoutrement whose symbolic disjuncture Christians in Macau have come to accept.

Another big construction project was the Cultural Centre, venue for Macau's handover ceremony. Located on reclaimed land in the Outer Harbour, the Cultural Centre (costing 960 million *patacas*, approximately US\$120 million) was inaugurated by Portuguese President, Jorge Sampaio, and Chinese Vice-Premier, Qian Qichen (錢其琛), on 19 March 1999. As part of the inaugural ceremonies, Macau's Catholic Bishop and Buddhist Abbot were simultaneously invited to carry out religious rites on the tarmac, giving the new building complex a 'double blessing' (Plate 34). The co-presence of two different groups of religious dignitaries readily testifies to unusual religious toleration and exemplifies the Janus-like dimension of Macau. Their participation also indicates a negotiated accommodation of East-West religious power relations. Macau is indeed a unique urban



Plate 34 *The Co-Presence of Catholic and Buddhist Dignitaries at the Opening of the Cultural Centre*

receptacle being able to celebrate its religious differences and cultural infusions. The harmonious coexistence of disparate religious beliefs can perhaps serve as a vicarious model to some places where destructive religious clashes and ethnic conflicts are a matter of daily reality.

Macau is in full swing with a number of projects which include an oil terminal, two sewage-treatment plants and the reclamation of 130 hectares of land and embankments to enclose the Praia Grande Bay, forming two lakes called Nam Van Lakes. Besides, numerous embryonic plans, such as a double-track railway and super-highways linking China, are in the offing. These meticulous processes of modernization are expected to transform Macau into a major economic force in the Pearl River Delta area.¹⁵ Macau is being constructed as strategically important and forms a contiguous part with Hong Kong, Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Zhuhai. It is scheduled to reassert its historic role as an entrepôt for international trade and a 'Gateway to China', but under clear-cut Chinese sovereignty as the dawn of the third millennium approaches.

Heritage preservation has become a vital issue and is passionately pursued and widely supported since the government passed a new Heritage Law in June 1984 with the aim of preserving Macau's heritage as a tourist asset (Bastos, 1986: 98–104). The heritage projects certainly help retain yet another Lusitânian trace even as colonial rule fades away. For the sake of tourist promotion, the Macau Marine Park on Taipa (costing 1.2 billion *patacas*, approximately US\$150 million) is under construction and the 138-metre Macau Tower is equipped with a revolving platform looking out to the South China Sea. Given a variety of cultural embellishments,

A Direcção dos Serviços de Turismo de Macau, or the Macau Government Tourist Office, has bestowed Macau a new identity — City of Culture. This rubric is perhaps meant to exorcise the negative colonial images of Macau being at the boundary of civilization, and all the cultural developments readily reveal the Portuguese attempt to reiterate their role as ‘cultural benefactors’.

Apart from the Taipa House Museum on Taipa and the Museum of Nature and Agriculture on Coloane, peninsular Macau is also consciously engaged in museum projects. The Maritime Museum, opened in 1987, was removed in 1990 to the present spot near the Temple of Tian Hou, where the Portuguese were believed to have first landed in the early sixteenth century. The Grand Prix Museum was inaugurated in November 1993 in *o Centro de Actividades Turísticas*, or the Tourist Activities Centre (completed in 1985), celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Macau Grand Prix. In the same venue, the Museum of Wine was opened in December 1995, exhibiting and promoting some 800 different brands of Portuguese wine. The Sacred Art Museum, installed in the excavated crypt of the Church of the Mother of God, was opened in May 1996. The Macau Museum, slotted into the hillside where the historic Monte Fort stands, was inaugurated in April 1998. It is the largest and the most comprehensive museum ever built in the enclave — costing 130 million *patacas* (approximately US\$16 million). Above all, the Museum of Art of Macau was opened at the new Cultural Centre in March 1999, displaying more than 3000 works of art. These museum projects are cannily designed to make Macau a City of Museums and a culturally dynamic part of modern China.

All the cultural endeavours, to some extent, effect a continuing Portuguese presence in Macau, lending to the ‘last emporium’ of Portuguese colonialism a neocolonized cultural identity. Macau is groomed to be a distinctive city resplendent with rich Lusitânian charm that can hardly be found in other former colonial outposts in Asia. Unlike Britain which is interested in economic ventures in postcolonial Hong Kong, Portugal is more concerned with ensuring its cultural legacy in postcolonial Macau. It is probably part of a strategy to maintain power and influence in their former *cidade* and in China itself.

Despite some promising big projects that have been proposed after the 1987 Joint Declaration, the foreseeable political and legal changes have had a crucial impact upon some people in Macau and caused anxiety and uncertainty about the future. Under these circumstances, Deng Xiaoping (鄧小平), the Chinese patriarch, put forward the novel political idea of ‘one country, two systems’, which enabled Macau to become an ‘autonomous’ Special Administrative Region (SAR) of the People’s Republic of China. Obviously, the assurance still seemed inadequate and the Chinese

government spared no effort in guaranteeing greater political autonomy by making yet another concession. In March 1993 a provisional draft of the Macau Basic Law was promulgated, in which the promise of 'remaining unchanged for 50 years' was ensured. In this spirit, Macau is *de jure* decolonized in 1999 but is *de facto* 'self-neocolonized' for another 50 years. It is again an anomaly in a sense that after decolonization is achieved, the communist sovereign country states its intention not to implement Chinese 'socialist' policies in Macau but rather to preserve the existing capitalist system, economic order and life-style. In particular, the Portuguese language¹⁶ remains as an official language. This stated intention to politically tolerate the colonial culture and administrative institutions immediately signals a recognition of the continuation of the Portuguese cultural legacy. The decolonization in 1999 is thus represented as only symbolically beckoning the undoing of the direct remnants of Portuguese colonial ideology, while its legacy lives on. Given the People's Republic of China's stated position, the situation in Macau after 1999 can be described as a peculiarly authorized neocolonial period. Needless to say, the concretization of this narrative is contingent upon political and legal rhetoric being transformed into practice.

How could this future be imagined? Neocolonialism is concerned with the legacy of colonialism and is a kind of continuity within discontinuity. As Robert Young points out, 'Much of the attraction of the study of colonialism lies in the safety of its politics of the past. Neocolonialism, on the other hand, is concerned with the more awkward effects of colonialism in the present.' (Young, 1991: 2) Neocolonialism not only comprises the half-hidden narratives of colonialism's success in its continuing operations, it is also the story of a West haunted by the excess of its own history. But Young's thesis is only partially applicable in the case of Macau, simply because it is not Portugal that forces its way to maintain '50 years unchanged' but it is China that prefers to be 'haunted' by the Portuguese legacy. The continuing effect of cultural colonialism is not imposed by the colonial power, but China itself constitutionally invites the continuity of 'the white man's burden'. In fact, on a symbolic level, modern China itself is a neocolonialist product of a larger, meta-colonialist project of Western epistemic hegemony, even though Mainland China managed to remain nominally integral during nineteenth-century territorial colonization by the West.

In light of the territorial decolonization in 1999, Macau situates itself in an eccentric historical moment — from the epochal road of colonialism to neocolonialism through a somewhat anomalous process of decolonization. The 'unchanged for 50 years' policy does not merely complicate contemporary Western practices in delineating cultural

phenomena into a linear epochal succession, it also confounds those paradigms in colonial discourse of discreet periodization.

Despite the unprecedented introduction of ‘one country, two systems’ and the promise of ‘remaining unchanged for 50 years’ for both Hong Kong and Macau, some people are not overjoyed about going back to the motherland. The political ambivalence is reminiscent of two poems on Hong Kong and Macau (the latter having been discussed in Chapter 2) by Wen Yiduo in 1925 in which he earnestly expresses a poetic desire for decolonization and reunification with China. These two poems can be seen as a yardstick to observe the change of nationalistic sentiments in regard to territorial integrity and national solidarity between a May Fourth poet of the 1920s and the populace of Hong Kong and Macau at the end of the twentieth century:

‘Hong Kong’

Like the yellow panther guarding the gates of the imperial palace
 Oh, Mother! my post is a strategic one, yet my status so humble.
 The ferocious Sea Lion¹⁷ presses upon my body,
 Devouring my flesh and bones and warming itself on my blood.
 Oh, Mother! I wail and cry, yet you hear me not.
 Oh, Mother! quick! let me hide in your embrace!
 Mother! I want to come back, Mother!

(Trans. by Zhu Zhiyu, quoted in *Renditions*, 1988: 65)

‘Ou Mun’ (Macau)

Do you know ‘Ma Gang’ is not my real name? . . .
 I have left your tutelage for too long already, Mother!
 But what they kidnapped is only my body,
 My soul is still under your safe-keeping.
 Oh! the Mother I have not forgotten in a dream that has survived
 300 years!
 Please call my pet name, call me ‘Ou Mun’!
 Mother, I want to come back, Mother!

In the 1980s, China exerted strenuous efforts to regain the sovereignty of Hong Kong and Macau. These two places were wrested away in defeats that have ever since stood as shameful reminders of China’s semi-colonization by the major nineteenth- and twentieth-century modern nation-states. The 1984 Sino-British and the 1987 Sino-Portuguese Joint Declarations are, therefore, of paramount symbolic effect in the history of twentieth-century China because they mark the official demise of foreign imperialism and colonial domination of Chinese soil.

China's efforts to reclaim the two places have directly reflected a steady diet of nationalistic themes and rhetoric since the May Fourth Movement and also speak for an aversion to foreign imperialism. As such, the two Joint Declarations are wrapped in good intentions to 'liberate' the colonial subjects from the grip of European usurpers/aggressors. The advent of decolonization has led instead to stress and misgivings about the future and has also triggered an emigration-mania, specifically the exodus that reached its climax soon after the Tiananmen Square suppression of pro-democracy demonstrations in 1989. The ambivalence reminds us of Rey Chow's argument that decolonization in Hong Kong and Macau constitutes a forced return to, and a recolonization by, the mother country, which is itself as imperialistic and authoritarian as the previous colonizers (Chow, 1992: 151–170). It is indeed a uniquely ironic historic inversion of a colonial relationship in a sense that the colonized do not welcome decolonization and liberation, but rather prefer foreign rule and the 'surrogate mother'.

The surfacing of anxiety precisely reflects the relative indifference not only to communism, but also to nationalism, even though nationalism still persists by reinscribing itself in traditional forms. As the force of Chinese communist ideology gradually weakens in the eyes of the populace of Hong Kong and Macau, Chinese nationalism becomes an elusive, if not an unpredictable, phenomenon.¹⁸ It is ironic that the nationalist reunification for which the Chinese intelligentsia of the May Fourth era campaigned so idealistically should at its final realization be met by a 'phobia' of reunification. What was once considered a national desire for territorial integrity and sovereignty has now become an ambivalent issue. The grandiloquent mission of historical recuperation from Western colonialism and imperialism is strangely displaced as a possible threat to economic prosperity and social stability. Wen's two poems read seventy years later are not without irony given the current lack of anti-colonial nationalistic sentiment of the 'kidnapped children' in these two colonies.

During its 442-year history under Portuguese rule, Macau has thrived, grown, prospered, faltered, revived, survived, and above all, evolved into a Janus-like cultural space under imperialism, colonialism, ecumenicalism, communism and capitalism. Being one of the oldest colonial zones of contact in Asia, Macau has, to some extent, been influenced by the cultural processes of creolization. However, it also maintains two distinct cultural heritages without being conquered by either cultural force. This is the uniqueness of Macau — while it reveals its superimposed 'way of life', it retains its indigenous 'meanings and values'. Moreover, there is basically no centre/periphery relationship between China and Portugal or vice versa in ordering cultural forms; rather Chinese and Portuguese cultures involve fusion as well as differentiation in the colonial context.

Portugal was the first European polity to set up colonies and trading posts in the Far East. The Portuguese occupation of Goa in 1510 marked their initial colonial domination in Asia, and they are due to leave the last Asian outpost — Macau — in 1999. Portugal was the first to arrive but is the last to depart. Portuguese colonialism thus comes to a real and symbolic demise after a time span of 489 years in Asia. The colonial impact on Macau was not just confined to making it an outpost of Portugal in the East, it also reoriented Macau from a barren-fishing enclave to a unique Sino-Luso stage in the world theatre. It is an interface of ruptures and thresholds, as well as contestation and compromise. What is most special about the place, and what it has always been, is the sense that its culture alternates between a Janus scenario of having both Chinese and Portuguese cultural identities. The two cultures engage in a kind of dialogue which transcends the closedness and one-sidedness of its shared meanings. They reveal to us some new aspects and new semantic depths in its hybridized cultural production. At one level, the dialogic encounter of Chinese and Portuguese cultures has not resulted in the loss of specificity of each culture, with each retaining its own identity within the space of Macau. Nevertheless at another level, the Sino-Luso Janus face masks a history of materially real and culturally substantial Macanese hybridization.

Notes

- 1 Portuguese overseas domination was often enforced by means of violence, brutality and technologically superior artillery. On the colonial conquest of Goa and Brazil, see M. N. Pearson, *The Portuguese in India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) and John Hemming, *Red Gold: The Conquest of the Brazilian Indians* (London: Papermac, 1978) respectively.
- 2 See Robert Young, *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* (London: Routledge, 1990), Chapter 8 'The Ambivalence of Bhabha.'
- 3 On the characteristics of consensual decolonization, see G. Wasserman, *Politics of Decolonization: Kenya Europeans and the Land Issue 1960–1965* (London: Cambridge University, 1976), pp. 5–6.
- 4 The return of Macau to China is a 'deferred reunion' simply because China wished Macau to remain as it was when Portugal was ready to retreat during the climax of the Cultural Revolution (1966–1967) in China and after the Carnation Revolution (1974) in Portugal.
- 5 The threatening idea of racial and cultural degeneration as a result of mixed unions in nineteenth- and twentieth-century European cultures has been well documented. Particularly, in late nineteenth-century Britain, the Colonial Office's Crewe Circular attempted to curb 'racial deterioration' and 'racial anarchy' by forbidding liaisons between colonists and native women. See Robert Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London: Routledge, 1995), 'Sex and Inequality: The Cultural Construction of Race.'

- 6 Peter Mundy wrote in 1637 that there was only one woman in Macau who was born in Portugal. See Peter Mundy, *The Travels of Peter Mundy, in Europe and Asia, 1608–1667* (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1919), Vol. III, Part 1, p. 263.
- 7 The uniquely Macanese cuisine are *tasho* — a potpourri of different meats, and *capella* which contains pork and almonds. See R.A. Zepp, 'Interface of Chinese and Portuguese Cultures,' in R.D. Cremer, *Macau: City of Commerce and Culture* (Hong Kong: API Press Ltd., 1991), p. 157. See also Annabel Doling, *Macau on a Plate: A Culinary Journey* (Hong Kong: Roundhouse Publications (Asia) Ltd., 1994).
- 8 On the creole dialect in Macau, see Isabel Tomás, 'Makista Creole', *Review of Culture*, No. 5, 1988, pp. 33–46.
- 9 The company is the enclave's leading private employer, providing jobs to more than 10 000 people. It also runs the Macau Jockey Club and Yat Yuen Greyhound Canidrome. See Harald Bruning, 'Monaco of the Orient Bets on a Sound Future,' *Hongkong Standard*, 23 April 1995.
- 10 In view of the seemingly never-ending crime wave, Vice-Premier Qian Qichen (錢其琛) announced on 18 September 1998 that Beijing would station a garrison after the handover, though the stationing of PLA troops was not stated in the Macau Basic Law. See Niall Fraser, 'Beijing U-turn Puts Troops in Macau after Handover,' *South China Morning Post*, 19 September 1998. On 19 March 1999, however, Qian said advance troops of the PLA would be sent to Macau before the handover. See Harald Bruning, 'Advance PLA Guard for Macau,' *South China Morning Post*, 20 March 1999.
- 11 See Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1991), Chapter 1 'The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism.'
- 12 The first Macau-Taipa bridge, called Ponte Governador Nobre de Carvalho, was inaugurated in July 1974.
- 13 The new airport was fully operational on 9 November 1995. It has a 3.4-kilometre runway, capable of handling the largest aircraft on long distance flights and is designed for all weather and 24-hour operations in order to meet full-scale international standards. Established in March 1995, Air Macau is the territory's official airline.
- 14 The Hong Kong International Airport at Chek Lap Kok, costing HK\$155 billion, was eventually inaugurated on 6 July 1998.
- 15 On Macau's economic development in the 1990s, see Peter Fredenburg, 'Delta Pearl: Macau dresses for China's sovereignty,' *AmCham*, Vol. 26, No. 2, March 1994 and Alejandro Reyes, 'Macau', *Asiaweek*, 5 October 1994.
- 16 The official boost of the Portuguese language was belatedly carried out in secondary schools and in the University of Macau after the government took over the former University of East Asia in 1988. It is estimated that only between 3% to 5% of the people in Macau can speak Portuguese.
- 17 A reference to the British.
- 18 In Hong Kong, an indication of the general antipathy towards the ideology of Chinese communism could be suggested by the sweeping victory of the Democratic Party in the eleventh-hour Legislative Council (Legco) elections on 17 September 1995. The Party is led by party chairman, Martin Lee Chu-ming, Hong Kong's most outspoken democrat. Lee's pro-democracy politicians won 19 out of 60 seats and emerged as the dominant force in the Legco. But the pro-Beijing Democratic Alliance for the Betterment of Hong Kong (DAB) only won 6 seats. Tsang Yok-sing, high profile leader of the DAB, failed by a large margin to take a place in the Legco seats.

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