

遺産と宗教：アジア社会におけるキリスト教

マカオの聖ポール天主堂跡を事例として

Heritage and Religion: Christianity in Asian Societies
A case study of St. Paul's in Macau

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1. Introduction

Today, wars, crashes and conflicts between different religions are happening everywhere in the world. As one of the most serious consequences, local religious buildings are always the target and because of that, quite a few historical heritages had already been destroyed even disappeared. Religious tolerance and coexistence seems to be a very complicated and difficult problem.

Now, let's see Macau. Today's Macau is one of the two special administrative regions of the People's Republic of China. However, before 1999.12.20, it was a Portuguese colony for over 400 years since 16th Century and also was both the first and last European colony in China. Comprising over 20 ancient monuments and urban squares gathering in the heart of the city, "The Historic Centre of Macau" was listed to become the cultural heritage by UNESCO in 2005,

According to UNESCO, "The Historic Centre of Macau" represents an outstanding example of an architectural ensemble that illustrates the development of the encounter between the Western and Chinese civilization over four and a half centuries, all of which are well protected and in a good condition.

Those churches and temples standing in the one street block and sharing the same piece of land, which make people think that Macau's local communities maybe divided into different communities depending on different faith and beliefs. However, this is not correspondent to the fact, actually, those people with different beliefs, such as Catholic, Muslim, Buddhist, Taoist, live in the same community, even in the same family. The phenomenon of religious coexistence is being very interesting in Macau today.

This makes me interested in what has brought in this kind of coexistence situation between Christianity and Chinese traditional religions. And I am going to look for the

answer from the history.

Portuguese traders came to Macau in 16th Century, and so was the Christianity, brought by the Jesuits, a Christian male order of the Roman Catholic Church. During their mission work in Asia, they took Macau as the stronghold for their mission work in the Far East. The Jesuits also established the famous St. Paul's Church, together with the College of St. Paul's, which is also the first Western-style university in Asia. During the Christian persecution in Japan, the college was also be used as a shelter for the Japanese Christian refugees.

(1) Research background and area

The special meaning about studying Christianity in Asian Societies is on the unique social status and influence of monotheism in multicultural communities, since both cultural and religious issues are largely different from Western societies.

My research area could be summarized as the conservation of Jesuits missionary heritage in East Asia by following the footprints of the Jesuits, which was the first Christian Order came to Asia and made their own revolution around Asian communities, among them, Macau played a very important role in this First Great Cultural Encounter between Asia and Europe.

My master thesis, as the very first step of my study, is trying to define the historical value and significance of Christian heritage in Macau left by the Jesuits according to the missionary history in East Asia, including Japan, mainland China, and local community of Macau.

(2) Purpose of research

The purpose of this study was to solve three questions:

1. Why the Jesuits chose Macau to be the center during their mission activity?
2. How the St. Paul's Church influenced the Jesuits missionary history in Asia
3. Why the remains of Christian religious architecture

are still being regarded as a land mark of the city in Macau, a post-colonial Chinese community?

The third question could explain the religious coexisting situation in today's Macau society. And in order to answer it, the first and second questions related to Macau's role in the Jesuits' missionary history are very crucial. I put Macau into the whole historical background of the Jesuits' mission activity in both China and Japan in 16th -17th Century so that I could get a deeper and comprehensive understanding of Macau's role and influence in the history.

2. Catholic Church and Asia (Society of Jesus)

(1) Historical background of the Jesuits coming to Asia

This part is from the very beginning when Jesuits came to Asia in the Age of Discovery until the initial success they made in Japan and China, and from which Macau's role in this period of history will be explained.

(i) Jesuits in Asia: Japan

One of the founders of Jesuits, St. Francis Xavier came to Japan and landed on Kyushu in 1549 with the other 3 priests and one of them was a Japanese man named Anjiro. At first, because of his limit of language, Xavier used the local religious concepts to explain Christian doctrine. For example, he use the Shinto's word "Dainichi (大日)" for the Christian God. Therefore, although at the very beginning, Jesuits mission work in Japan developed very slowly, begin from Japan, one very important strategy of Jesuits' mission activity was determined, which called "Cross-cultural communication".

Following the steps of Xavier, Gaspar Vilela soon came to Japan in 1556, thanked to his well present in front of the Shogun Ashikaga Yoshiteru, the Jesuits successfully gained the permission for their mission activity in Kyoto in 1559. Two decades after that, in 1580, under the threatening from his neighbor Daimyo's violent attack, the first Christian Daimyo Omura Sumitada donated Nagasaki to Jesuits to gain the force protection. Since then, Jesuits owned a colony on a real meaning waiting for their governing, all the members began to dream about converting the entire Kyushu first, and finally, the whole Japan. By then, Jesuits made their initial success in Japan.

(ii) Jesuits in Asia: China

The first Jesuits missionary arrived in China was St. Francis Xavier but died soon in the same year. 2 decades later, the Vistor Alessandro Valignano, who was sent from Vatican to oversee the situation of Jesuits mission from place to place, arrived in Macau in 1578. Immediately after his arrival, Alessandro wrote to the court to ask for the permission, and the answer came to him was NO.

Since China in Ming Dynasty that time carefully guarded the country thus there was no possibility for forceful entry, and since Chinese people felt a strong superiority for their own culture, thus they felt little interest or curiosity on the foreign country, which means there was little possibility for trade. In a word, there was no ready foundation for Jesuits missionaries at the very first beginning.

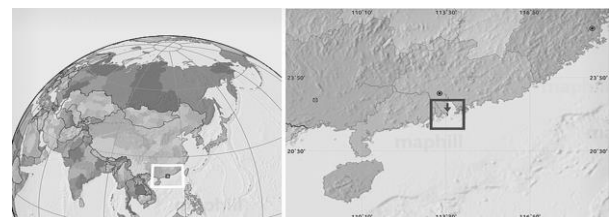
Alessandro realized that the only way to enter into the mainland China to preach is to be a Chinese, since he was not possible to stay in China waiting for the permission forever, he wrote a letter and require Rome to send missionaries who would like to stay long in China to learn the language and culture.

In 1583, an Italian Jesuit priest Matteo Ricci responded the call and came to China.

During his stay, he not only learned the language but also did a deep research on Chinese classics and culture. Also as a linguist, he compiled a Portuguese-Chinese dictionary. In 1584, he drafted a map of world in Chinese using his knowledge of Geography. Because all of these contribution and good reputation, he was invited by Wanli Emperor in 1601. 8 years later, he had already organized a group of his followers in Beijing.

From then on, the number of Chinese Christians rose rapidly and by the beginning of 17th Century, there had already around 300,000 Chinese Christians. The future appeared bright.

(iii) Jesuits in Asia: Macau



The geographical position of Macau

The geographical position of Macau is near to both

mainland China and Japan, since Macau is the first station for every foreigner before entering to the mainland China and it was less influenced by politics, the Jesuits decided to transfer their base from Canton to Macau. However, at first, Macau was nothing more than a place being used to let those foreign missionaries from a long journey get some rest; it was still far from a religious center in the Far East until Portuguese gained the permission from the Emperor to settle in Macau, from then on, Jesuits missionaries built churches and hospital, which made Macau become an experimental base for their mission activity. They tried to attract local community by providing support for orphans, widows, and free medical treatment, which did make great impact in local community. The experimental base developed quickly and finally the Roman Catholic Diocese of Macau was established in 1576. From then on, Macau officially became a stronghold of Jesuits in the Far East.

(2) The failure of missionary, 17th Century

After a short time of Golden age for Jesuits, their mission work soon failed in both China and Japan and their activity was limited in Macau. Here is the reason I summarized which led to the outcome of failure.

Since one of the most important characteristics of Jesuits' mission activity is "From the top", which caused their destiny closely related to the political situation. Therefore, Jesuits missionaries in both Japan and China experienced a difficult beginning, a short golden time, and ended up soon and sad with an unexpected political event.

(i) Failure in Japan

On 1586.5.4, a member of Jesuits named Gaspar Coelho went to meet Toyotomi Hideyoshi to seek support, and the answer was celebrating. Hideyoshi gave the permission and promised the protection for all Kyushu's Christians from the powerful and aggressive local Daimyo, Shimazu. However, on the next year, he suddenly ban the religion and expell all the Jsuit missionaries to Nagasaki. Of course he had his own plan, but the ban still surprised the Jesuits members and their followers. At last, most of them, together with those Japanese Christians who refused to give up their new faith, had to run or to be expelled from Japan to Macau, others were sent to Goa and Malacca. Japan didn't drop the ban until 19th Century.

(ii) Failure in China

The situation in China suddenly turned to worse because the famous debate, "the Rites Controversy".

Matteo Ricci witnessed the greatest time for Jesuits mission work in China, after his death, Niccolo Longobardi, a man who took over the position considered that the action which Chinese Christians took to worship to their ancestors and Confucius is pagan, based on that, the participant and even watching the ceremony was forbidden.

Soon after the ban was put into practice, Chinese scholars strongly argued the issue by writing critical articles to the Emperor which led to the outcome that the Ming Dynasty expelled all the missionaries to Macau in 1616. Soon after the Ming Emperor was defeated by Qing, the prohibition was dropped by the Qing Emperor Kangxi, whom even appreciated the Jesuit missionaries' extensive knowledge and supported them with their work. However, the Rites Controversy did not stop. The argument was not only a debate between cultural issues but also escalating to a political issue which affecting the relationship between Rome and Beijing.

In order to ease the conflict, Emperor Kangxi wrote a letter to the pope trying to explain the cultural issue in China and hope to get a best way to solve the problem. However, the pope didn't choose to believe those words, he issued a bull to insist that no Chiese Catholics are allowed to worship in Confucian temples and to ancestors in their familial temples.

The bull irritated Emperor Kangxi, he finally banned all the religious activities of Christian in 1723 and it was effect for 130 years. By then, the Jesuits mission activity in China was ended up in failure.

Timeline of Jesuit's missionary history in East Asia (1549-1835)

	1549 (Jesuits first came to Asia)	1552 (Jesuits first came to China)	1555 (Jesuits came to Macau)	c.1556-c.1563 (Jesuits' Initial Period in Japan and Macau)	c.1576-c.1586 (Golden Age in Japan and Macau) (Initial Period in China)	c.1587-c.1624 (Failure in Japan) (Golden Age in China)	c.1631-c.1835 (Failure in three places)
Japan	St. Francis Xavier landed on Kyushu			Gaspar Vilela came to Japan, gained the permission from Shogun and converted a first Japanese Daimyo, Sumitada	1580, Sumitada donated Nagasaki to the Jesuits, since then, the Jesuits gained a real colony	Banishment and persecution in the period of Hideyoshi and Tokugawa	1633-1835 Japan's Sakoku
China		St. Francis Xavier arrived in Shangchuan island and died in the same year			1578, Alessandro Valignano asked for the permission but failed 1582, Matteo Ricci arrived	By the beginning of 17 th Century, the number of Chinese Christians was over 300,000 since the great contribution of Matteo Ricci	1643-mid 18 th Century "the Rite Controversy"
Macau			Two Jesuits reached Shangchuan island first and soon transfer the base to Macau	Until 1563, At least 8 Jesuits missionaries stayed and converted about 600 local people	1576, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Macau established, the mission work developed fast and successfully	The St. Paul's College was used as a shelter during the persecution of Japan	From 1762, the College closed and all Jesuits missionaries were arrested and expelled from Macau

I made a timeline of Jesuits' missionary history in East Asia, mainly between the middle of 16th Century to the 18th Century. This timeline demonstrates different period of Jesuits' mission activity in Japan, China and Macau in about the same time. The first time when Jesuits came to Japan is 1549, China is 1552 and Macau is 1555. And the initial period in Japan and Macau started in almost the same time. A decade later, when the development turned quick and well in these two places, Jesuits members came to China. By the beginning of 17th Century, when the golden age came to the Jesuits in China, and the development in Macau was stable, the situation in Japan was urgent and dangerous. And finally, from the middle of 18th century, Jesuits' mission in all the 3 places failed.

3. St. Paul's Church and its influence in the history

In this section, I studied about the St. Paul's Church in the history and in today's Macau society.

(1) A historical review of St. Paul's Church, 1594-1835.1.26

The College of the Church of St. Paul's was established on 1594.12.1 by the Vistor Alessandro Valignano. Many famous scholars taught and learnt at this college, whom became to the first Western sinologists later such as Matteo Ricci, Johann Adam Schall von Bell and Ferdinand Verbiest.

Below is the historical review of the College and the Church of St. Paul's.

1563.7.29, 3 Jesuits came to Macau.

1582, Jesuits in Macau built a new church on the site of the present ruins of St. Paul's

1594.12.1, a College was annexed to the Church, which was being known as the famous St. Paul's Church.

1601, the church was burned down.

1602-1603, the church was rebuilt.

1603.12.24, the church was reopened.

-1640, the façade was rebuilt.

1762, all the Jesuits members in Macau were arrested and expelled and the College of St. Paul's closed.

1835.1.26, the Church and the College of St. Paul's was destroyed in a fire.

Its 200-year-history had a great influence on not only the Jesuits' missionary work in Asian societies but also the cultural communication between West and East.

The historical influence of the College of St. Paul' is summarized as below.

1. It was the first Western style college in Asia

It opened courses such as Open courses like mathematics, geography, astronomy, and foreign languages, including Latin, Chinese, and Japanese. It spread not only Christianity but also advanced Western scientific knowledge into China

2. It provided a training ground for foreign missionaries

Foreign missionaries are required to learn Chinese language and culture for 2 years first in the College of St. Paul's before they were able to gain the permission to enter into the mainland China.

In my opinion, it is the College of St. Paul's which made Macau become the connecting point between East and West.

3. It provided a shelter and the last resting place for Japanese Christian refugees during the persecution.

(2) The first Western-style University in the Far East

(i) Alessandro's original intention to establish a college and opposition from place to place

In this section, I explained the reason why the establishment of St. Paul's college was necessary, including the founder, Alessandro's considering and the following opposition from Goa, Japan and Macau, and Alessandro's defense for his decision.

Alessandro's original intention:

1. Jesuits' foundation in Macau was still very undeveloped.

2. Political situation in Japan became dangerous and

urgent; a shelter should be prepared as soon as possible to be able to receive the refugees.

3. Compared to Goa and Malacca, the geographical position and political situation of Macau was the best.

However, strong opposition came from Goa, Japan even Macau came to him.

1. Goa: Since Macau belonged to the Archdiocese of Goa, the action Valignano took to write to Rome was exceeding his power and level.
2. Japan: The principle of Japanese missionary area also suggested that it is better for Japanese Christian to stay in local instead of taking a long journey to a new country.
3. Macau: Since Japan and China was in a state of war at that time, a lot of Japanese coming to Macau may lead to suspicion and conflicts.

Soon after, Valignano responded to this matter by sending a report to Goa as his defense for himself.

1. The growing number of Christians and a limited number of priests in Japan made it necessary to establish a seminary to train a group of professional priests.
2. Missionaries from India and Europe could communicate with Japanese in Macau in order to prepare for going to Japan.
3. Once the missionary activity in Japan turns to unable to maintain, the location of the new base should be in the neighbor country.

Just in a few years, what happened to Japanese Christians also provides strong evidence to Valignano's great vision.

(ii) Museum of Sacred Art and Crypt

Today's St. Paul's: Museum of Sacred Art and Crypt: Macau government established a Catholic Museum at the location which belongs to yesterday's St. Paul's Church and college. In the center of the Crypt, on the granite rock, lie the remains of a tomb, which might have belonged to the founder of the St. Paul's College, Father Alessandro Valignano. Along the sidewalls, there are relics of Japanese and Vietnamese martyrs

In the room adjacent to the Crypt there is a Museum of Sacred Art, which includes objects of high historical and artistic value from different churches and convents of Macao.

Today's façade has already lost its function as a religious construction.

(iii) Religious culture in today's Macau

The religious culture in today's Macau could answer the third question I wrote at the beginning.



Na Tcha Temple and the ruins of St. Paul's

This picture is very famous by showing the religious harmony in Macau. However, after the St. Paul's Church burned out in 1835, the façade no longer function as a religious construction, instead, it has already turned into the historical monument, on the other hand, and the Na Tcha Temple is still functioned as a traditional Taoist Temple. Why the center in Jesuits missionary age is still be the center in today's Macau? Because the façade also stands for 400 years' colonial history and always reminds Macau's people of their identity including whom they are and where they came from.

4. Conclusion

In the conclusion, I tried to give the answer to the three questions at the very beginning and give a brief introduction and explanation to the conservation situation of heritage properties in Macau today.

1. Why the Jesuits chose Macau to be the center during their mission activity?

It is because of Macau's geographical position, and its relatively stable political condition, it was chosen as a base for the Jesuits at first, and finally developed into the Roman Catholic Diocese in the Far East.

2. How the St. Paul's Church influenced the Jesuits

missionary history in Asia

The St. Paul's College spread the advanced scientific knowledge to China and educated a lot of missionaries who knew well about both East and West; also many of them did a great contribution to the cultural communication. It also protected many Japanese Christian refugees from the persecution and provided the last resting place after their death. Because of these, the St. Paul's College did a great effort on Jesuits missionary history in Asia.

3. Why the remains of Christian religious architecture are still being regarded as a land mark of the city in Macau, a post-colonial Chinese community?

Also, in today's Macau, as the most important historical monument in Macau, the façade of yesterday's St. Paul's Church is the symbol of Jesuits mission activity in 16th-17th Century which full of ups and downs. It also represents Macau's over 400 years' colonial history.

To people of today's Macau, it reminds them of their identity including who they are and where they came from.

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