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Theme: Rethinking Colonial Heritage


Walk to Global Vision:
Post-colonial Interpretation of
World Heritage Monuments in Macau

Mok Keng Kio

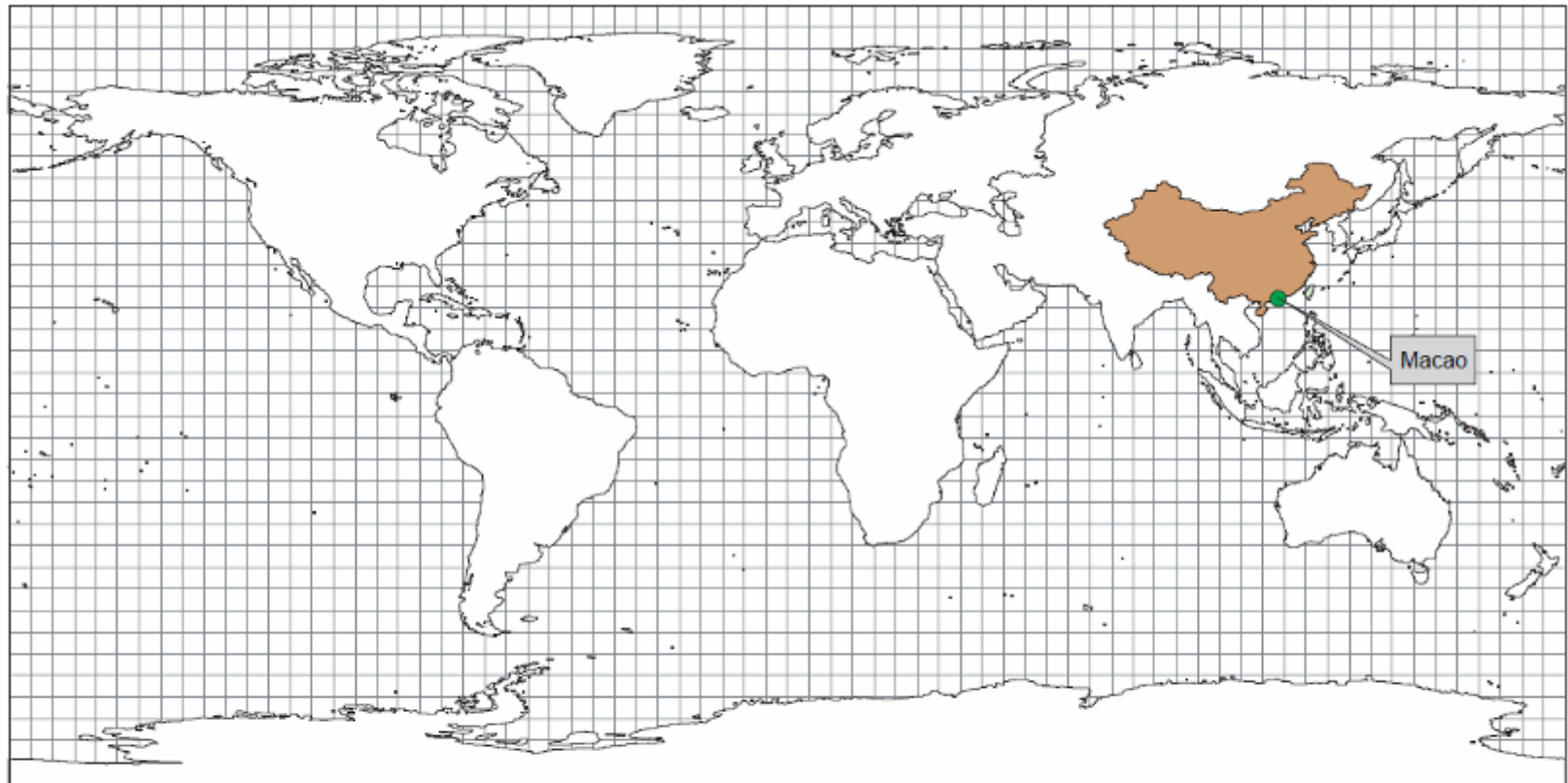
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Walk to Global Vision: Post-colonial Interpretation of World Heritage Monuments in Macau

Content

- ◆ Macau – A Colony with East and West Culture
 - ◆ Macau – After Handover
 - ◆ Colonial Interpretation Of UNESCO World Heritage Submission
 - ◆ Post-colonial Award Of UNESCO World Heritage
 - ◆ Re-thinking Colonial Heritage With Global Vision
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Macao – A Colony with East and West Culture



● Macao ■ China

Geographical coordinates: 113°32'47"E, 22°11'52"N

2000 0 2000 4000 6000 8000 10000 12000 14000 16000 Kilometers

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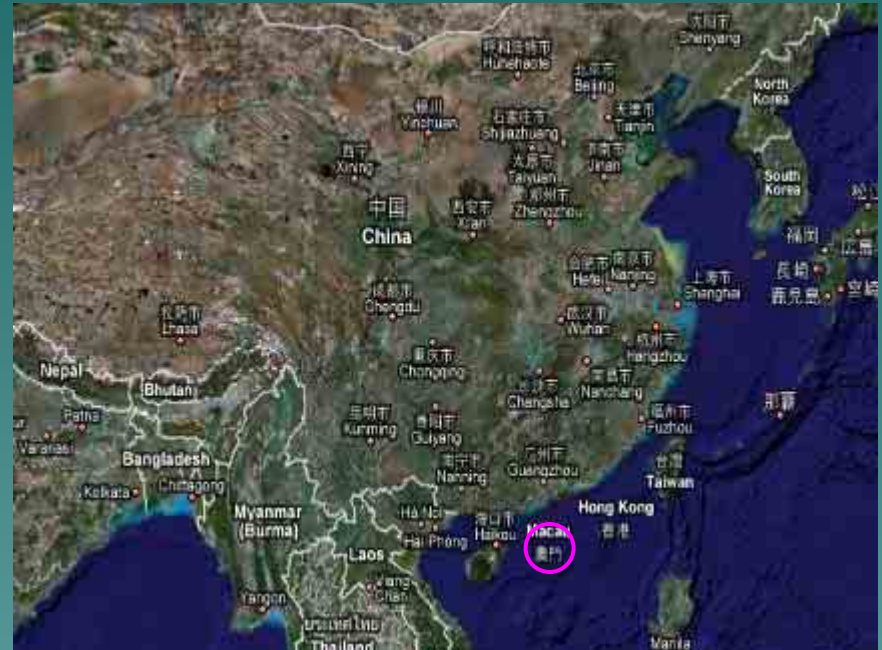
Macau – A Colony with East and West Culture

Portugal → 1999 → China

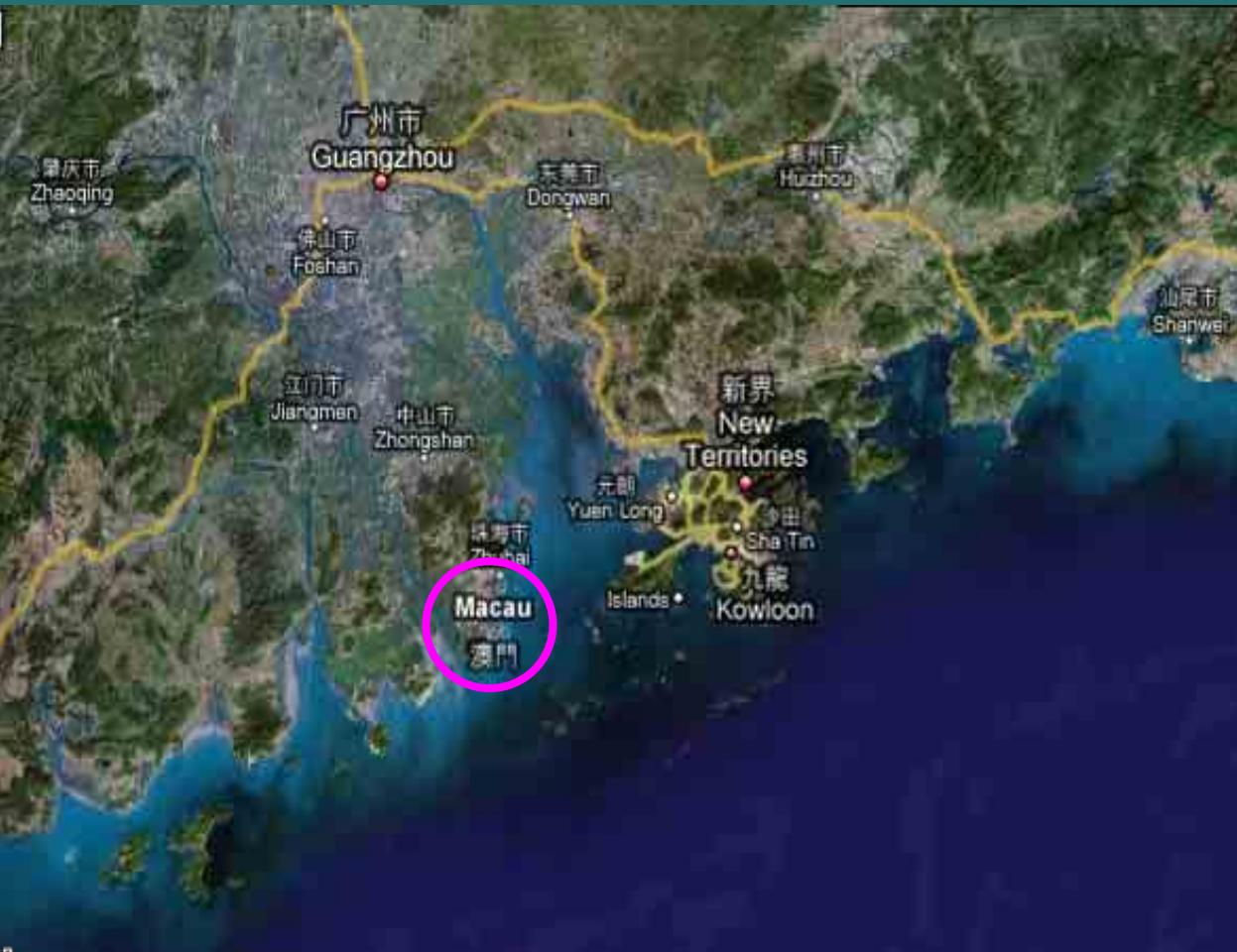


Macao – A Colony with East and West Culture

- ◆ colony of Portugal for over 400 years
- ◆ at the Pearl River Delta along the south-east coast of China
- ◆ handover to the Chinese Government in 1999




Macao – A Colony with East and West Culture





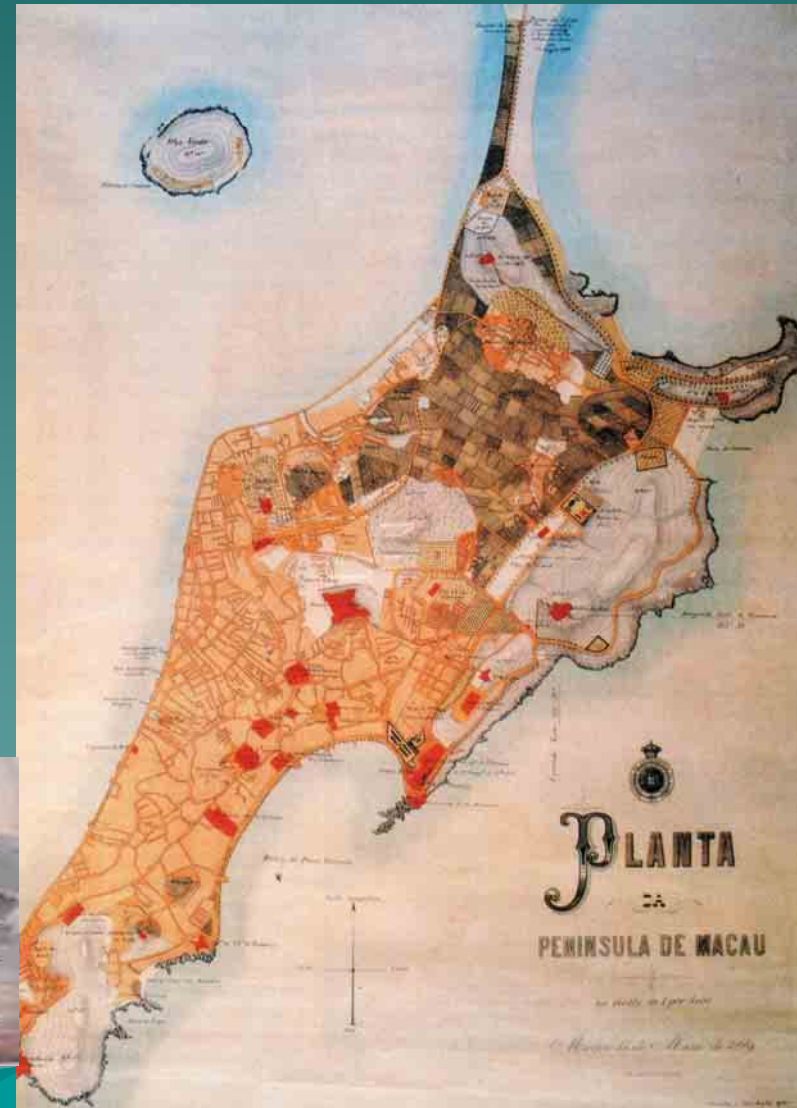


Macau – A Colony with East and West Culture

- ◆ second most compact city on world
 - ◆ small coastal city with an area of 29.2 square kilometers
 - ◆ population of Macau is 549,200 people
 - ◆ records an over 30 million annual visitor count
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Macau – A Colony with East and West Culture

- ◆ 18th century, the seashore of Macau was a beautiful cultural landscape
- ◆ reception of the trading fleets of Sea Silk Road to the first entrance of China
- ◆ mixture of races with Chinese, Portuguese and other western nationalities for over four centuries

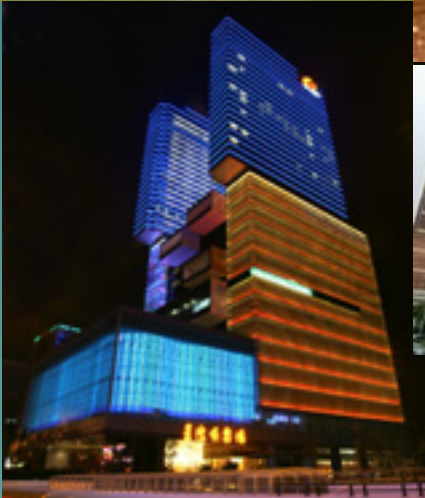


Macau – After Handover

- ◆ the Chinese government and the Portuguese government signed Joint Declaration
- ◆ Chinese and Portuguese were the official languages of Macau to manifest the “One Country, Two Systems” policy
- ◆ rapid development to Macau’s economic, social and environmental setting since handover



Macau – After Handover



- ◆ economy of Macau becomes more diversified as foreign investment increases sharply since the liberalization of gaming licence in 2000
- ◆ The GDP increased from 6.05 billion in 1999 to **US\$19.48 billion in 2007** with an increase of 222%
- ◆ In 2007, Macau yield a gaming revenue of US\$10.7 billion
- ◆ city with **highest gaming return in the world**

Macau – After Handover



Macau – After Handover



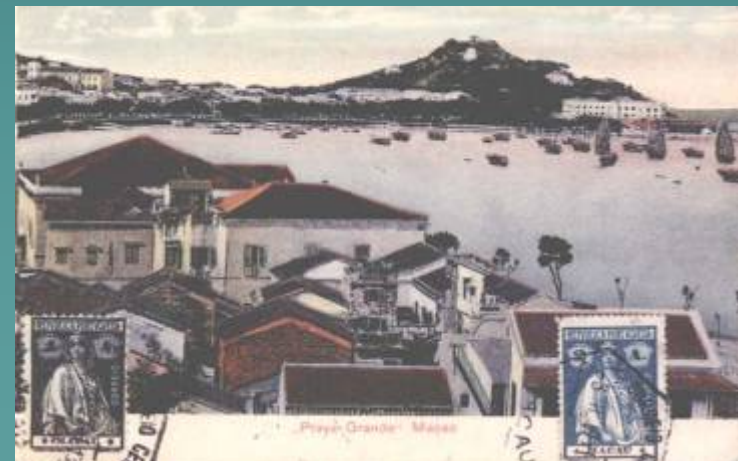
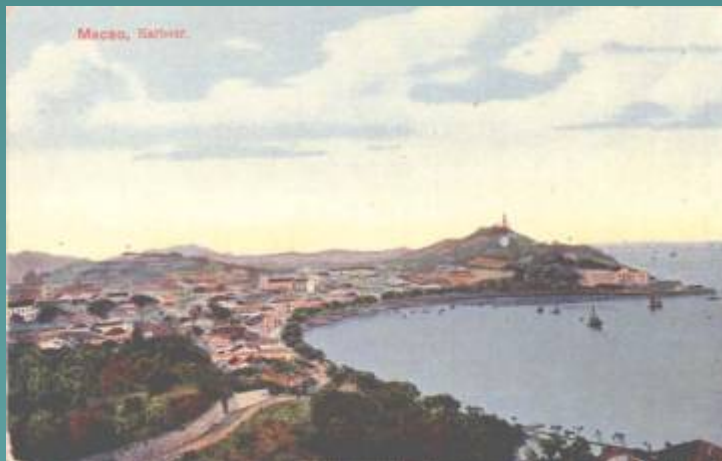
Macau – After Handover

- ◆ environment of Macau is transformed by the new casino icons rapidly developed in recent years
- ◆ social setting become more internationalised as the number of tourists and overseas professional workers grows with the economic expansion



Colonial Interpretation Of UNESCO World Heritage Submission

- ◆ In 1987, Macau – still a colony of Portugueses
- ◆ The city of the Holy Name of God of Macau - the only living testimony of the oldest European presence in China
- ◆ historical achievement of Portuguese in Macau is emphasized , e.g. (1) trading development between Portuguese and China, (2) provision of diplomatic and cultural platform, (3) regional exchange brought by this platform are marked in the urban structures and architecture of Macau



Colonial Interpretation Of UNESCO World Heritage Submission

- ◆ traditional Portuguese City with the union of the Chinese Bazaar displayed the conviviality of two cultural expressions



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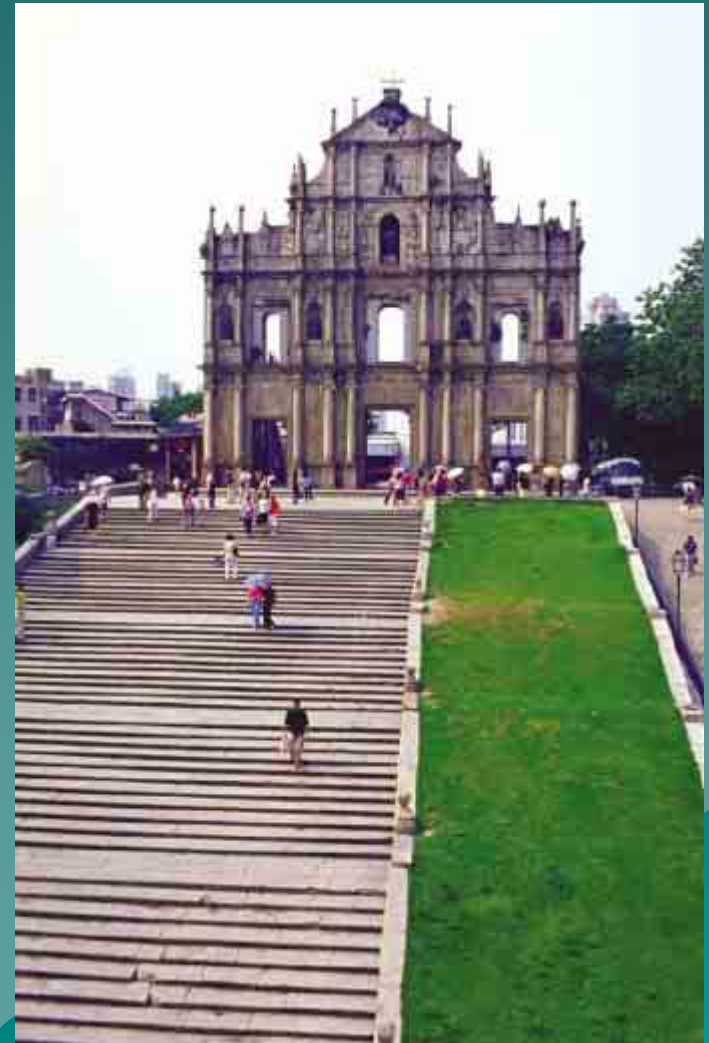
Colonial Interpretation Of UNESCO World Heritage Submission

- ◆ Civil building and many religious monuments like convents of Franciscan and Dominican, a new cathedral are key icons of the European style forming the Historic Centre of Macau



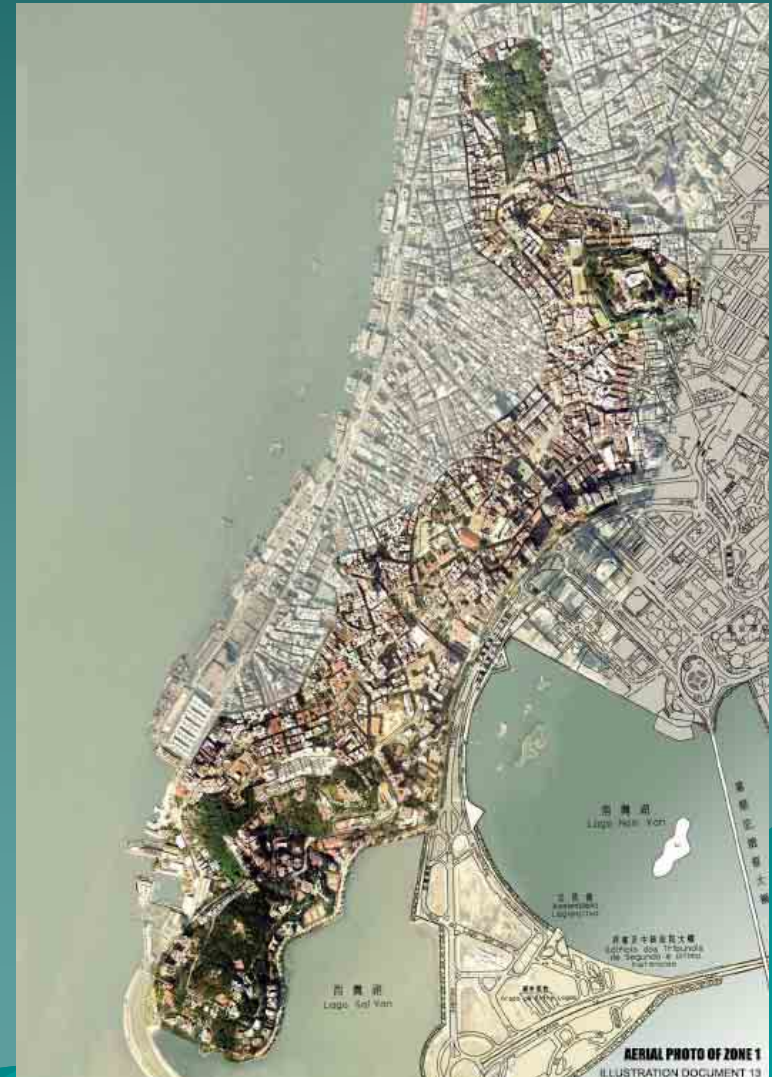
Colonial Interpretation Of UNESCO World Heritage Submission

- ◆ Among all these built heritages, the Ruin of St. Paul is addressed as the most significant monument.
- ◆ Its outstanding architectural decorative façade with oriental images on Western baroque elements is an exotic original synthesis where East and West harmonized.



Post-colonial Award Of UNESCO World Heritage

- ◆ In 2003 during the fourth year Macau was returned to China, submitted the UNESCO World Heritage Award application.
- ◆ With the support of the Chinese Central Government by selecting “The Historic Centre of Macau” as the sole national bid to be assessed by the World Heritage Committee, Macau was granted the World Heritage Award in 2005 by UNESCO.
- ◆ In the UNESCO presentation award ceremony, Macau’s heritage zone was highlighted as the product of cultural exchange between the western world and the Chinese civilization.



Post-colonial Award Of UNESCO World Heritage

- ◆ In the submission of World Heritage Award, Macau is regarded as a lucrative port of strategic importance in the development of international trade, was under Portuguese administration from the mid 16th century until 1999, when it came under Chinese sovereignty.
- ◆ Its historic street, residential, religious and public Portuguese and Chinese buildings, the historic centre of Macao provides **a unique testimony to the meeting of aesthetic, cultural, architectural and technological influences from East and West**. The site also contains a fortress and a lighthouse, which is the oldest in China. The site bears testimony to one of the earliest and longest-lasting encounters between China and the West based on the vibrancy of international trade.

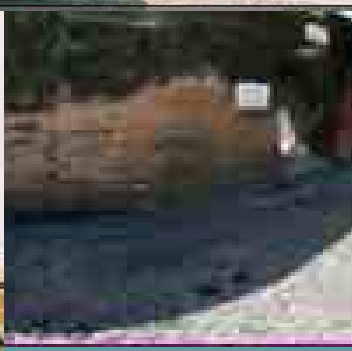


Post-colonial Award Of UNESCO World Heritage

- ◆ There are **22 monuments** in this World Heritage Award submission. In the proposed monument list, the Chinese temples and traditional Chinese vernacular houses, namely A-Ma Temple, Mandarin's House, Sam Kai Vui Kun (Kuan Tai Temple), Lou Kau Mansion and Na Tcha Temple are included. These five Chinese heritage icons are essential representatives of Macau's Chinese cultural origin in the World Heritage zone. The traditional temples display how local Macau people perform religious worship in their daily life while the traditional vernacular houses recall the typical family life of local Chinese.



Post-colonial Award Of UNESCO World Heritage



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Post-colonial Award Of UNESCO World Heritage

- ◆ Equal emphasis are put on the newly listed Chinese architecture with the European heritage to highlight the harmony of East and West cultures.
 - ◆ For instance, the **Na Tcha Temple next to the Ruins of St. Paul's** are an outstanding example to illustrate the harmony of both cultures. The two heritage monuments are very close in their physical distance. Although they are originated from two very different religions of different cultures, their architectural design indicates respect to each other. They show respect to its neighbour's physical setting while maintaining their uniqueness. All along, both heritage monuments are popular worship places in their own religion with equal cultural attractiveness to visitors. They have been a friendly neighbour to each other for over 100 years to witness the cultural harmony of Macau.
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Post-colonial Award Of UNESCO World Heritage



Re-thinking Colonial Heritage With Global Vision

- ◆ In re-thinking the colonial heritage during the handover age of Macau, the colonial heritage is not limited to the identity of representing past colony history but the new definition with **global vision** which promotes the harmony of both colonial history and post-colonial development.




Re-thinking Colonial Heritage With Global Vision

- ◆ The successful inscription on the World Heritage List in 2005 featured not just the achievement brought by colonial government in historical, social, economical, religious and cultural aspects. The key message illustrated by the Historic Centre of Macau is the **harmony of East and West**. The built heritage and cultural landscape included in the World Heritage zone represents an universal value which placed equal emphasis on both cultures.



Re-thinking Colonial Heritage With Global Vision

- ◆ The **directive recognition** highlighted in the World Heritage Award has laid a solid foundation in both the tangible and intangible cultural setting of Macau for future sustainable growth of this cultural harmony.
 - ◆ On one hand, genuine input from local Macau citizen with participation of overseas experts and visitors can be easily guaranteed by the intangible recognition given by this UNESCO World Heritage Award.
 - ◆ On the other hand, international support and global attention for the benefit of Macau's future development is further secured by the inscription of World Heritage List.
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Re-thinking Colonial Heritage With Global Vision

- ◆ The new post-colonial interpretation of Macau's traditional Chinese heritage and colonial European heritage forms a vision statement for future transformation of Macau.



Re-thinking Colonial Heritage With Global Vision

It is a **proactive achievement** for the young Macau Special Administrative Government to form this global vision so boldly and authentically with the whole world as witness right after the post-colonial period.



Re-thinking Colonial Heritage With Global Vision

- ◆ The new Macau government and all Macau citizens are responsible for maintaining and generating the authenticity of their heritage which processes universal value with world recognition in future.



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Thank you very much!

Mok Keng Kio

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