



## THE STUDY OF THE LANDSCAPE RESTORATION AND REUSE OF FOREIGN COMPANY FACILITIES IN TAMSUI, TAIWAN

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### ABSTRACT

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This paper discusses both the surviving and now-disappeared foreign company facilities in Tamsui. The discussion topics include historical analysis of foreign firms and suggestions for preservation and reconstruction. The methodology of this study combines historical research of architecture with discussion of the cultural landscape, and proposes a discussion of lost landscapes and the preservation of the existing foreign company facilities in Tamsui. The Shell Company and the Douglas Lapraik & Co. warehouses in Tamsui are the witness and the cases of well-preserved with a scarcity value. These cases warrant preservation as a heritage site based on their historical value and for reasons of environmental sustainability. A representation of the foreign company storage and sites should be displayed in the Tamsui eco-museum for inclusion with the other historical heritage areas in Tamsui.

**Contribution/Originality:** This study is one of very few studies which have investigated the surviving and now-disappeared foreign company facilities in Tamsui. The methodology combines historical research of architecture with discussion of the cultural landscape.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Cultural Landscapes have been defined by the World Heritage Committee as distinct geographical regions or properties uniquely. Represent the "combined works of nature and of man" [1]. This concept has been adapted and developed within international heritage arenas (UNESCO) as part of an international effort to reconcile one of the most pervasive dualisms in Western thought - that of nature and culture" [2].

Tamsui, often referred to as "The Venice of the East", played an important role in the history of commercial trade in Taiwan. Beginning in 1860, foreign firms engaged in trade in commodities such as tea, sugar, and camphor. But after the Japanese occupation, many Western companies' warehouses were abandoned or removed.

The foreign company storage and sites in the Piatou, Fonhou, Longgingmu and Potaipu areas were located at the eastern and western ends of Tamsui street during 1860-1945.(Fig.1) But most of the foreign company storage disappeared.

This paper discusses both the surviving and now-disappeared foreign company facilities in Tamsui. The discussion topics include historical analysis of foreign firms and suggestions for preservation and reconstruction.

The importance of this research lies in its analysis of the historical evolution of foreign companies, and makes proposals for the future preservation of a few foreign company facilities and sites left in Tamsui.

## 2. RESEARCH REVIEW

Huang [3] Table 1) discusses residential areas for foreigners and foreign company administrators in Tamsui. Lin [4] listed the foreign companies in Taiwan in the late Ching dynasty. Lee [5] discussed the reuse of the Shell Oil Company Storage. Subsequently, Chang and Chiou [6] and Chang [7] discussed the spatial transformation of these foreign company storage facilities and sites in the Piatou, Fonhou, Longgingmu and Potaipu areas. Chuang [8] discussed the wharf distribution and the port facilities in Tamsui. Huang [9] discussed the base location, land ownership, building of Lapraik Douglas & Co. in Tamsui. Chiou and Ou [10]; Chiou and Ou [11] discussed the formation of the administrative and commercial spatial field of Tamsui Feng-huo Section in the late Qing era and during the Japanese colonial period.

However, those precedent studies focused mostly on the reuse of a single building, but did not discuss the conservation of cultural landscape and other foreign company storage and sites in Tamsui that have disappeared.

## 3. METHOD

The methodology of this study combines historical research of architecture with discussion of the cultural landscape, and proposes a discussion of lost landscapes and the preservation of the existing foreign company facilities in Tamsui.

This paper discusses the conservation of cultural landscapes and other foreign company storage and sites that have disappeared. The paper defines the foreign company's special historical cultural context in Tamsui. While facing today's landscape conditions, the preservation and reuse of the foreign company's heritage must be reexamined.

Based on the above mentioned viewpoint, this study aims to examine the region as an eco-museum and cultural landscape of industrial heritage in Taiwan. The research methods are to collect the foreign companies' historic documents, maps and historical changes in Tamsui. Topics discussed include the landscape change and recommendations for the preservation of the foreign company facilities.

First, we collected fundamental information, such as the sites, maps, the original documents and the original construction dates concerning the foreign company storage and sites. Second, we analyze the conservation and the policy regarding the cultural landscape in Tamsui. Third, we make some suggestions regarding environmental sustainability, the rebirth of the facilities that have disappeared and promote the concept of an Eco-museum.

## 4. ANALYSIS OF THE FOREIGN COMPANIES IN TAMSUI IN 1860-1945

The foreign companies witnessed the opening of Tamsui port and the external trade development in the Ching dynasty. Taiwan society transformed from the early cultivating society into the civilian rule society in the 1850s and 1860s. In 1858, after being attacked by British-French allied forces, China was forced to open its ports for free trade under the Tienjin Treaty. During the 19th century, Western nations were searching for secure and profitable sites at which to conduct business and trade. Chinese law, however, prohibited the sale of land to foreigners. Westerners were only permitted to rent or buy a house on leased land, referred to as renting in perpetuity, when establishing a company, consulate, club, house or church. According to the survey, these ports included Huwei (Tamsui), Taiwan (Anping), Niuzhuang, Dengzhou, Chaozhou, Qiongzhou, Zhenjiang, Jiujiang, Hankou, and Jiangning. In 1862, a Customs department was set up in Taiwan, and the opening of Tamsui Port ushered in a golden era of commerce for Tamsui, reaching its peak in 1887. After the opening of the port, the foreign companies engaged in trade and commerce in Tamsui, Keelung, Anping, Tainan, Takao, etc. Commodity exchange and circulation patterns in the spatial structure caused a polarization phenomenon in Taiwan regional space. Exports of

goods increasingly centralized on Tamsui and Takao. The foreign companies shipped out goods from Tamsui, Tainan and Takao to the international market through the ports of Mainland China and Hong Kong [12].

During that period, Tamsui became an internationally renowned port, greatly increasing revenue for the Ching government. In 1895 Tamsui replaced Takao and became Taiwan's most important port in output, import and trade. But because of the political policy, the Japanese government constructed Keelung harbor and replaced Tamsui port. Foreign companies gradually exited from Tamsui [13].

The foreign companies in Tamsui were not trafficking places but took the role of agents for the collection and distribution of goods in international trade activities. Most foreign companies' had their own warehouses and leased official and civilian's lands to engage in commercial trade. At that time, most companies were located at the western edge of Tamsui street. In 1876, there are Boyd & Co., Brown, & Co., Dodd, & Co., Elles & Co. and Tait & Co. in Tamsui. Insurance business agents are prevalent as follows: [Hong Kong Daily Press \[14\]](#).

(1) Dodd & Co. served as agent of Lloyd's North China Insurance Company and the Chinese Insurance Co., Limited.

(2) Elles & Co. served as agent of Union Insurance Society of Canton.

(3) Tait & Co. served as agent of Java Sea and Fire Insurance Co.

The important businessmen in Tamsui are as follows: [Hong Kong Daily Press \[14\]](#)

(1) Walter Laidlaw (tea inspector) in Boyd & Co.,

(2) Grant Scott (tea inspector) and A. Francis, in Brown & Co.,

(3) The J. Gratton Cass (agents) and W. Christy in Elles & Co.,

(4) M. Larken (tea inspector), J Moss in Dodd & Co., TE Ludlam (agents) in Tait & Co.,

(5) W. Götz in Elles & Co.

At that time Piatow was located at the eastern edge of Tamsui and few Chinese people lived there before 1870. In the east of Piatow, Jardine Matheson & Co. rented land and built houses there around 1870. Then Milisch & Co. took over as the agent from Jardine Matheson & Co. and finally, Dodd & Co. set up to manage the tea trade [15]. In the west region of Piatow, there were only some Chinese cottages and paddy fields. However, according to historical records, Francis Cass rented the region including the paddy fields, orchards, and cottages from Hua-san Ji in 1894, the rent being 2400 Yuan, annually [16]. Subsequently, important foreign company storage was established in Piatow, including Shell transport and trading company, Lapraik, Cass & Co., Samuel Samuel & Co. and Rising Sun Petroleum Co. Ltd.

The important historical transformations in this region are as follows:

(1) In 1868, John Dodd was the agent of Dent & Co. in Tamsui; in the 1870s, Dodd & Co. moved to Keelung. During this period, Dodd & Co. was located in Piatow region [15, 17].

(2) Milisch & Co. was established in 1865 and ended up in 1870 in Tamsui [15, 17].

(3) Shell Transport and Trading Co. Ltd. and Lapraik Cass & Co. made an agreement regarding the employment of agents in Tamsui in November 19, 1897. In 1909, the Shell Transport and Trading Co. Ltd. became the agent of Samuel Samuel & Co. The merchant was O. Tobiesen, and the agents included the Asiatic Petroleum Co. Ltd., Rising Sun Petroleum Co. Ltd., and Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co. [18].

(4) W. Christy is the main agent in Lapraik, Douglas & Co. in 1884. There are offices, warehouses, dormitories and a pier in Lapraik, Douglas & Co. site. Lapraik, Douglas & Co. was established in 1884, and changed its name to Lapraik, Cass & Co. in 1893. In 1897, Lapraik, Cass & Co. in Tamsui finally became the agent of the Shell Transport & Trading Co. Ltd for Xiamen [19]. In 1899, the merchant in the company in Tamsui was H.P. White, Francis Ashton. The agents included the Hongkong & Shanghai Banking Corporation, Douglas Steamship Company, Pacific Mail Steamship Company, Occidental & Oriental Steamship Company, Yangtze Insurance Association, Union Insurance Society of Canton, China Fire Insurance Company, South British Insurance Company

of New Zealand, and the Equitable Life Assurance Society of U.S.A. The agent of Francis Ashton was the Board of Underwriters of New York [20].

However, in 1901, the company went into liquidation. The merchants were Francis Ashton and L. Figueired [21].

(5) Samuel Samuel & Co., Ltd. was established in Piatow, Tamsui and was called the Shipping & Coal depot. In 1909, the company became the agent of the Shell Transport and Trading Co. Ltd. The merchants were Orgomanes and O. Tobiesen [18]. The agents included the Hongkong & Shanghai Banking Corporation, Thomas Cook & Sons, Dampschiffs Rederei, Union AG, Douglas Steamship Co., Hamburg-Amerika Linie, Java-China-Japan Lijn, Shire Line of Steamers Ltd., Norddeutscher Lloyd, Ocean Steamship Co., Ltd., China Mutual S. N. Co., Ltd., Chargeurs Réunis, The Great Trans Siberian Route, Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co. Steamers, Union Insurance Society of Canton Ltd., Alliance Assurance Co. Ltd. (Marine depart.), Commercial Union Assurance Co., Law Union and Crown Insurance Co., Liverpool & London & Globe Insurance Co., Ltd., Sun Insurance Office, Manufacturers' Life Insurance Co. of Canada, New York Life Insurance Co., Asiatic Petroleum Co. Ltd., and Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co [18].

(6) Rising Sun Petroleum Co. Ltd was established in Japan in 1900. In 1907, the company in Tamsui became the "Oil Installation and Tin Factory". The local manager was W.H. Coulson, and the installation manager was G. Nissen [22]. In 1912, the manager was O. Tobiesen [23] and then the company became the Rising Sun Petroleum Co. Ltd. The merchant was F. K. Brownrigg [23]. In 1913, the manager was O. Tobiesen [23]. The ramp was designed for steamships. Later, tanks were built on the hillside in order to store the oil. The company rented the site in perpetuity to the Japanese government in April 1, 1945 [5].

(7) In 1909, the number of the leased official and civilian's lands for foreign companies are 7, including 2 of Jardine, Matheson & Co., 1 of Samuel Samuel & Co., 2 of Shell Transport & Trading Co. 9 of Smith, Baker & Co. 2 of Tait & Co. Lee [5]

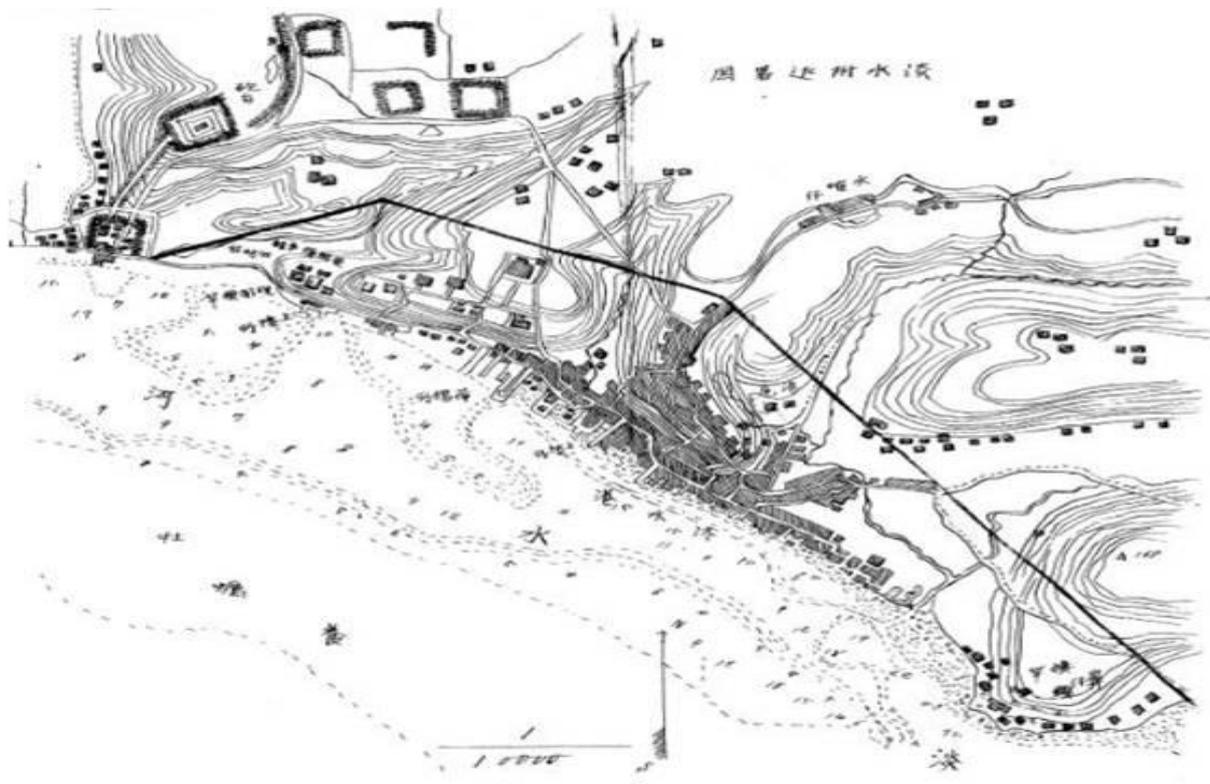


Fig-1. The area of foreign settlement in Tamsui in 1897.

Source: Foreign Historical Museum of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan [24]

## 5. SUGGESTIONS FOR CONCEPTS AND STRATEGY: ECO-MUSEUM, PRESERVATION AND RECONSTRUCTION

In the second half of the 1990s, sustainable management became popular topics, and people were more positive about making spatial changes in reuse projects. Many projects had both new and old spatial overlapping phenomena, which created “the combination of the new and old era.” During that period, people took the concept of reuse in city construction strategies, and applied it to cultural and tourism projects. Many reuse projects are now famous tourist destinations in Taiwan.

The concepts include the three dimensions of heritage, museum, and participation. And a well-defined reuse method can not only bring new spatial experiences to people but also make an old building into a new spot for cultural tourism. The essential characteristics and inherent values of cultural heritage are the centrality of historic statement and scarcity.

Cultural heritage gives rise to the identity of culture and life, and leads to the mobilization of forces and awakening and self-reflection. Cultural heritage should be in its historical cultural context in the assessment, so there will be no fixed criteria for the judgment of their authenticity, but through heritage specificity, context and the diversity of sources of information as reference value judgments. The history of life of the industrial cultural heritage is a dynamic evolution.

The best-preserved of the Shell Company (Fig. 2) and the Douglas Lapraik & Co. (Fig. 3) warehouses have scarcity value. The warehouse and the dock cooperate with the characteristics of the oil. A circular oil tank is built on the base, and the oil pipeline is set up. The Tamsui railway branch line goes deep into the base to facilitate the transportation of oil through the railway network. Today, the oil pipeline, oil tank facility and railway remain on the base. The land of Douglas Lapraik & Co. was used as the foreign company’s dock area and business office. The characteristics of the foreign company are divided into the north and south districts. The north district is dominated by residential areas and warehouses. The southern district is offices, unloading areas and vessel repairing facilities. In order to facilitate the transportation and storage of foreign goods, the southern district light rail was used to penetrate the north district company buildings. Such features need to be specially saved and replied.



Fig-2. The Shell Company warehouse.



Fig-3. The Douglas Lapraik & Co. warehouse.

The challenge now is how to authentically represent the history and ecology and determine how these fit in with the other cultural heritage sites in Tamsui and the concept concerns how the livable city and sustainable city be finished. For example, The Shell Oil Company Storage is a special heritage sites due to the following: (1) the sites have their own unique identity. (2) The buildings have a complex history. (3) There are some viable remains and a good environment to work with.

The strategic principles can be broken down into five functions: (1) Sustainability. (2) Integration. (3) Participation. (4) Process. (5) Viability.

The rules of design should take into account the whole geographical setting of the region.

(1) The site planning should incorporate the remains of the landscaping and architecture.

(2) The public spaces should enable experience of activities connected with the history of the sites, while at the same time contributing to their upkeep.

(3) The wildlife in the region must be protected.

To the above suggestions, we should add locations for expositions, such as the historical remains of the Shell Oil Company Storage, as well as recover and preserve the remains of any machines, and turn the site into a heritage museum. The now-disappeared landing stage of the port, the embankment, the oil line should have monuments reflecting the images of the past.

The now-disappeared foreign companies in Tamsui don't mean the memories of the past are gone, but we should be thinking about how to reconstruct them. The suggestions are as follows.

(1) Monuments, historic buildings, space relics should be preserved and recovered. Delineating a clear regional conservation and recovery area is important. The ruins in Piatou in Tamsui deserve rethinking of individual space preservation, maintenance and improvement, not only as the reuse of the different functions. The sites of foreign companies that have disappeared should retain their location, open space or landmark boundaries. None can be designated as historic buildings but with historical value of the external facade and pavement, traces should be preserved to present the changes. (Fig. 4)

(2) Assessed on cultural tourism and cultural activities carefully.

(3) Strengthen the integration of urban planning, architectural and cultural administration interface. Think about how to deal with the land acquisition, land use, specific area, urban design control zone and the demolition of illegal buildings.

(4) Designate Specific area of the cultural landscape. Control regional land use zoning from urban planning map and instructions. Require the coordination of building management in the content of main plan and detailed plans.



Fig-4. The disappeared riparian of foreign companies in Tamsui.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Industrial and cultural heritages include substances, space, buildings, factories, machinery, equipment, and its surrounding landscape. Space preservation in addition to involving the preservation of the material surface, also includes the preservation of the spiritual, whether it is a single monuments, buildings, settlements or cultural landscape. Industry heritage is an aspect of cultural heritage dealing specifically with the buildings and artifacts of industry which are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed to future generations

for their benefit, often forming a significant attraction for tourism. In Taiwan, the policy and process of industrial heritage preservation are full of conflict.

The famous foreign firms are located at both ends of Tamsui street. The Shell Company and the Douglas Lapraik & Co. warehouses in Tamsui are the witness and the cases of well-preserved with a scarcity value. These cases warrant preservation as a heritage site based on their historical value and for reasons of environmental sustainability. The design strategy must support the historical preservation of the foreign company storage and sites and this endeavor should incorporate as much of the previous landscaping and buildings as possible. A representation of the foreign company storage and sites should be displayed in the Tamsui eco-museum for inclusion with the other historical heritage areas in Tamsui. The foreign companies in Tamsui were not selling places, but played the role of an international cargo distribution agent. In addition, due to international commercial trade, there will be mutual agency relationship between the foreign companies. Tamsui companies are closely related to Xiamen companies. The content of Tamsui companies' agency business was diverse.

The cultural landscape and historical remains and the sites that have already disappeared should be combined as naturally as possible. The sustainability of the design must include not only the conservation of the cultural and historical relics but should also enhance the environment and the sites that have disappeared. The design strategy must support the historical preservation of the foreign company storage and sites and the rebirth of this endeavor should incorporate as much of the previous landscapes and buildings as possible. A representation of the foreign company storage and sites should be displayed in Tamsui eco-museum for inclusion with the other historical heritage areas in Tamsui.

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