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Macao, the former Portuguese colony in southeast China, has a long and very interesting history of cultural interaction between China and the West. Held by the Portuguese from the 1550s until its return to China in 1999, Macao was up to the emergence of Hong Kong in the later nineteenth century the principal point of entry into China for all Westerners - Dutch, British and others, as well as Portuguese. The relatively relaxed nature of Portuguese colonial rule, intermarriage, the mixing of Chinese and Western cultures, and the fact that Macao served as a safe haven for many Chinese reformers at odds with the Chinese authorities, including Sun Yat-sen, all combined to make Macao a very different and special place. This book explores how Macao was formed over the centuries. It puts forward substantial new research findings and new thinking, and covers a wide range of issues. It is a companion volume to *Macao - Cultural Interaction and Literary Representations*.

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