

# Anders Ljungstedt and the Swedish East India Company<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

*The article is concerned with the Swedish East India Company and with Sir Anders Ljungstedt (1759-1835), a pioneer historian of Macau of Swedish extraction. It sums up the main points of Ljungstedt's life and work. The article also places his achievement into the context of previous Swedish explorers, traders and scientists to China, paying special attention to the "Letters from China," a collection that has hitherto not been known outside Sweden.*

Key words: Anders Ljungstedt, The Swedish East India Company, Pehr Osbeck, history of Macau

## Introduction

The first history in English of Macau is Anders Ljungstedt's (1759-1835; Chinese name: *Long Si Tai*) *An Historical Sketch* (1832; 1835 second ed.).<sup>2</sup> This pioneering work alone would warrant critical scrutiny. However, the life of the author, Anders Ljungstedt, in Macau is also worthy of inquiry. Ljungstedt arrived in Canton with the Swedish East India Company in 1789. To begin with, he divided his time between Canton and Macau, spending the trading season, six months, in Canton in the Swedish "factory" (trading emporium) and the other half of the year in Macau, where living conditions were better and less regulated by Chinese law. Not least does this come to light in *Breven från Kina* ("Letters from China")<sup>3</sup> – a commented selection of his letters to Sweden, which, due to the language (Swedish) has hitherto escaped the notice of Macau historians. The article sums up the

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<sup>1</sup> The published article, in *Macau Studies* 80 is in Chinese; it is a translation of the English manuscript presented here.

<sup>2</sup> Ljungstedt, Anders, *An Historical Sketch of the Portuguese Settlements in China and the Roman Catholic Church and Mission in China & Description of the City of Canton* (1832), Hong Kong: Viking Hong Kong Publications, 1992. In this article the work is referred to as *An Historical Sketch*.

<sup>3</sup> Hellberg, Harry, *Anders Ljungstedt och breven från Sverige* ["Anders Ljungstedt and the letters from Sweden"], Lingham: Stålgården, 1992.

main points of Ljungstedt's life and work, especially *An Historical Sketch* and puts his achievement into the context of previous Swedish explorers, traders and missionaries to China, paying special attention to the "Letters from China."

In this article, then, I will talk both about the man Anders Ljungstedt, as well as the frame and context of his activities. I shall start with a general background, in which the rise and fall of the Swedish East India Company is sketched.<sup>4</sup> This is followed by an account of Jacob Wallenberg's humorous travelogue of a journey to Canton, *Min son på galejan* ("My Son in the Galleys").<sup>5</sup> I then turn to the writings of the botanist Pehr Osbeck.<sup>6</sup> Finally, Anders Ljungstedt's life and work is discussed, beginning with his early life, his career in the Swedish East India Company and how he stayed on in Macao after the dissolution of the company to become an independent merchant. Ljungstedt's scholarly work in English is mentioned, but the main focus will be on the book "Letters from China," an edited collection which is only available in Swedish, and which sheds light on the life of wealthy westerner in early 19<sup>th</sup> C Macao.

### **The Swedish East India Company and some Notable Swedish China Travelers during this Period**

In the 17<sup>th</sup> C there were several East India companies in Europe vying for trade in the Bengal and the Far East. The earliest ones were the English (1600), the Dutch (1602) and the Danish (1618). Although the East India Companies were primarily economical enterprises, they were also nationally and politically invested (as the names of the companies testify to). For instance, when the Danish East Company was liquidated, the Danish crown took over its possessions in India (sold to England in 1845). In Sweden too, there was interest in establishing a similar venture. A first half-hearted attempt was made in 1621. After many other false starts during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Swedish East India Company was founded in 1731 and was given a first period of trade authorization, a so called "octroi", up until 1745. The reason why it succeeded this time was partly due to the cessation of the Flemish East India Company in 1731. This meant that some of its international investors instead turned – anonymously – to the Swedish company. However, the first expeditions met with resistance from the already established companies/nations: the Dutch captured one ship in the Sunda Straits,

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<sup>4</sup> In the following description of the activities of The Swedish East India Company I draw on the following works: Frängsmyr, Tore, *Ostindiska kompaniet* ["The East India Company"], Höganäs: Bra Böcker, 1976; Lindqvist, Herman, *Historien om ostindiefararna* ["The History of the East India Travellers"], Göteborg: Hansson & Lundvall, 2002.

<sup>5</sup> Wallenberg, Jacob, *Min son på galejan* ["My Son in the Galleys"] (1781 [1769]), Stockholm: Biblioteksförlaget, 1960.

<sup>6</sup> Schildt, Göran, *Resenärer i Floras rike: Reseberättelser av Linnés lärjungar* ["Travellers in Flora's Kingdom: Travelogues by the Disciples of Linnaeus"], Stockholm: Biblioteksförlaget.

and the Swedish trading post in Parangipattai (India) was attacked and destroyed by the French and British in “uncommon sweet accord,” to borrow the formulation from an old Swedish history book; the ship *Ulrica Eleonora* was also badly damaged. This ship was subsequently denied harbor for repairs and fresh water in the French, British and Dutch colonies, and only a handful of the original crew survived the return journey. After that ordeal the Swedish East India Company scrupulously avoided the politically charged Bengal and focused on the China trade instead. The troubles were not over, however. During the first octroi the company lost four ships in storms. Nevertheless, despite the initial debacle in India and the loss of ships, goods and men in storms, the first period was profitable enough to allow for a continuation, having yielded an annual 30%-80% profit.

The period 1746-1786 was harvest time for the company, averaging a 300% to 400% in return for the risk capitalists of yore. For the city of Göteborg, second largest in Sweden, the successful China trade also brought about an era of growth and flourishing. The import consisted mainly of tea, spices, silk and porcelain. A ship could take about 500.000 pieces of porcelain and 400.000 kilos of tea. On a ship's return to Göteborg the wares were auctioned out. Most of the goods were then actually re-exported, at least and especially the tea since there was a widespread belief in Sweden that tea was a drug that led to laziness and was bad for your morals. Swedes, incidentally, still tend to favour coffee over tea.

The last period of the company, 1786-1814, although still moderately profitable was not as successful, and eventually the company was dismantled after the China trade monopolies were opened up in 1814, but in practice it was over well before that year; the last ship to do the roundtrip was the *Maria Carolina* in 1806. All in all, the Swedish East India Company made 132 expeditions to the Far East. By then the trade had had an enormous influence, not only in economic terms, but in cultural as well – as can be witnessed in the art, literature, fashion and architecture of the day. Hence it is only fair to say that the East India Company made Sweden a slightly less insular place to be. It worked the other way round too. One of the Hong merchants, Poan Key-qua (1714-1783) actually visited Sweden and stayed with the director of the Swedish East India Company, Niclas Sahlgren during four months.<sup>7</sup>

For better and for worse the East India Companies opened up the world and were instrumental in bringing on modernity and change. Increased trade was only one aspect of this. The ships did not only carry goods and traders. Many of the Swedish ships' priests were also (or mainly) scientists – geographers and botanists – who took the opportunity to expand their respective fields of

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<sup>7</sup> Lindqvist, Herman, *Historien om ostindiefararna* [“The History of the East India Travellers”], Göteborg: Hansson & Lundvall, 2002, pp 94-95.

knowledge. Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778), the Swedish “father of botany,” expressly sent out his disciples to different parts of the world to collect and categorize the flora and fauna.<sup>8</sup> Anders Sparrman followed Capt Cook on his second circumnavigation of the globe and came to Australia, New Zealand and the South Seas, Carl Petter Thunberg travelled to Japan, Pehr Löfling went to South America. And there were many more. In the present context Pehr Osbeck (1723-1805) deserves mentioning. He travelled as chaplain with the ship *Prins Carl* (1750-52). He contributed more than 600 species of plants to Linnaeus’ *Species Plantarum* (1753); Linnaeus named the genus *Osbeckia* after him. In 1757 Osbeck published the journal of his voyage to China, *Dagbok öfwer en ostindisk Resa åren*; it was translated into English by the English Linnean society. Passing Macao 22 August 1751 their Portuguese passengers disembark. Attaj, a Chinese comprador from Macao, approaches with his sampan and sells them watermelon, gujave, limones, bananas: both sweet (pisang), and for cooking (plantains). In Wampo, the anchoring place a few kilometres from Canton, lay 17 ships already: nine under English flag, four Dutch, two French, one Danish and another Swedish ship, the *Göta Lejon*. Osbeck stays four months in Canton. His account is rather dry and “scientific”, recording everything he sees, which makes it useful if not exciting.

A much less factual but all the more readable account of a voyage to China can be found in Jacob Wallenberg’s *Min son på galejan* (*My son in the Galleys*), written in 1769-1771 on the ship *Finland*. The text is a humorous travelogue, and a Swedish classic of the 18<sup>th</sup> C. Unfortunately, the bulk of the text concerns the journey itself. Only a few pages are devoted to the end of the journey, Canton. Macao is passed 5 September 1770. In Wampo there were already 23 ships, which salute the newcomer with deafening cannon shots, shrouding the ships in clouds of smoke, and making the whole scene appear as sea battle, while it is actually the opposite. Wallenberg makes the observation that the Europeans who are always fighting back home, here live together as countrymen and try to outdo each other in courtesy. In the final pages he makes some cutting remarks about the Jesuit mission and their estimation of the Chinese population (60 million adults). He simply cannot believe that China could be as populous as all of Europe.

### **The Early Life of Anders Ljungstedt<sup>9</sup>**

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<sup>8</sup> Schildt, Göran, *Resenärer i Floras rike: Reseberättelser av Linnés lärjungar* [“Travellers in Flora’s Kingdom: Travelogues by the Disciples of Linnaeus”], Stockholm: Biblioteksförlaget, pp 99-144.

<sup>9</sup> The account of Anders Ljungstedt’s early life draws on Hellberg Harry *Anders Ljungstedt och breven från Sverige* [“Anders Ljungstedt and the letters from Sweden”], Lingham: Stålgården, 1992.

Anders Ljungstedt in Linköping in the county of Östergötland (south-west of Stockholm) in 1759. His father, Jonas Andersson, died when Anders was three years old, and his mother, Anna, remarried the labourer Petter Johansson, respected and liked by his step-sons. Anders and his brother Henrik later took the name Ljungstedt after the home parish of their stepfather. At that time it was unusual for children of poor families to be sent to school; the Swedish education act of 1842, which made school compulsory, was still far away. However, his mother Anna served in the Deanery, his father had been a sexton, and both Anders and Henrik had highly respectable god-parents. These are probably the reasons why the Ljungstedt brothers received education despite the small means available. As we shall see, the opportunity to study despite his poor background directed Ljungstedt's philanthropic ideas later in life. So, both brothers went to school and showed aptitude. When Anders graduated at 15, he left home and started earning his income by teaching others to read and write. He was even admitted to Uppsala University, but had to give up further studies because of his poverty, going back to private tutoring and interpreting.

It was as an interpreter that Ljungstedt accompanied a Dutch nobleman travelling to Russia through Sweden in 1784. As a consequence Ljungstedt came to St Petersburg where he entertained vague ideas of seeking employment in the Russian Imperial army. Instead he again took up tutoring, but on a new level, one could say. He was first employed in a wealthy Russian family in Jaroslavl 300 km north of Moscow. The children he was supposed to teach were already fluent in French, but Ljungstedt worked round the clock to be well prepared; apparently it worked – he was a much appreciated teacher. When this family, the Zatrapesnovs, moved to Moscow, Ljungstedt decided it was time to part. He returned to St Petersburg where he continued teaching, and where he became acquainted with a circle of influential Swedes, including the ambassador to Russia, von Stedingk. He did other things as well. In a letter written much later one also learns that Ljungstedt had “a natural son” in St Petersburg by the name of Carl Andreievich (the surname meaning “son of Anders” in Russian). Apparently he supported the son and mother over the years. In 1794 Ljungstedt returned to Sweden, and was employed as a state interpreter, this time with Russian as his speciality. He married the widow Carolina Mosander in 1796 and shortly afterwards had to go to Russia on a state mission – to help Prince Gustaf woo the grand duchess Alexandra Pavlovna. The courtship failed, but as so often Ljungstedt formed friendships that were to prove useful later in life.

The employment as state interpreter was prestigious maybe, but hardly well paid. And neither the Russian grammar book that he had compiled nor the projected, never-to-be-finished Russian-Swedish Dictionary were destined to make him rich. Ljungstedt looked about for more lucrative employment. With the help of the recommendations of several important individuals that Ljungstedt had met in St Petersburg and elsewhere, he eventually got himself a position in the Swedish East

India Company. He went as first assistant with the East Indiaman *Drottningen* ("The Queen") to Canton in 1798. *Drottningen* had been built the year before, in 1797; it had a crew of 150 men and carried 20 cannons. Usually, the Swedish East Indiamen would carry iron and timber and fur to Cadiz, and get paid in silver piasters, the only currency acceptable to the Chinese traders. This time, however, Ljungstedt had been entrusted with transporting 350.000 piasters from Stockholm and Helsingborg to Göteborg – a nerve-wracking mission one should think – and enough to pay for all the goods to be bought in China. This makes it likely that Cadiz was not on the itinerary this time; the "queen" travelled light. The reason for not stopping in Cadiz was probably the ongoing war between England and France. It would have been risky to approach Spanish ports since Spain had sided with France in the conflict and English warships would bring up any suspicious ships in the vicinity. Even when there was no war, Swedish ships regularly took the northern course around the storm-ridden Shetlands rather than going through the English Channel and risk being held. The route taken from there on would go from the north to the south Atlantic to the Cape of Good Hope and then across the Indian Ocean to Java before crossing the South China Seas and reaching Canton, some 8-12 months after departure.

In November 1798 *Drottningen* passed the fortified Bocca Tigris ("mouth of the tiger") on the Pearl River [Humen Pearl River Bridge] and anchored at Wampua outside Canton. It was 20 degrees Celsius/centigrade at the time. Ljungstedt writes: "the climate agrees very well with my bodily constitution". He also writes that he wishes to stay longer in this part of the world. As we shall see his wish was granted. On arrival it turned out that three out of four supercargoes at the Swedish factory in Canton had died during the summer. And as first assistant Ljungstedt was up for promotion.

## **Anders Ljungstedt in Canton and Macao**

### ***Ljungstedt as Supercargo***

The supercargo was a prestigious and well-paid office. Ljungstedt held that position until the dissolution of the Company in 1814. The supercargo was in charge of the buying and selling of goods in the ports where the ship landed. In Canton the supercargo was the one who negotiated with the Chinese authorities, bought the goods, and managed the process of storing and stowing it aboard. One to three supercargoes always remained in Canton between ships to manage the Swedish "factory," that is, the office for trade. In Canton the factories were buildings hired out by Chinese so called "Hong"-merchants. The factory buildings contained storage rooms, offices, kitchen and diner, a church hall and some apartments. The Swedish factory, the so called "Hong Sui," was one of thirteen. All of them were situated near the strand, outside the city proper (which closed to

foreigners). The busiest time of year was the winter months. That was the time when ships arrived, were repaired and stowed with new goods. The other six months were calm due to the unfavourable monsoon winds. During these months, most Europeans, including Ljungstedt, preferred moving to the Portuguese settlement in nearby Macao, where life was not so regulated and circumscribed as in Canton.

### ***The businessman***

Ljungstedt, like many resident Europeans in Canton/Macao also pursued their own private business interests. This is perhaps not especially surprising since they had time in-between ships and most had brought capital or tradable goods with them on the journey, to increase their earnings. Actually most senior company employees would earn considerably more on their own business transactions and/or shares than from their rather generous salaries. For those who stayed between ships, the opportunities increased. Ljungstedt was no exception, and he seems to have been a highly successful businessman. He also had some other advantages over most of the other Europeans in his linguistic skills. Not only did he master English, French, German, Swedish and Portuguese, but he also fairly quickly learnt Cantonese.

In the beginning years of the 19<sup>th</sup> C the activity of the Swedish East Indian Company was beginning to flag. It was not enough for Ljungstedt to do small-time trading on his own. He started looking for bigger things. In 1807 he writes about his plans to a friend. Maybe one could form a Swedish-Russian-American East India Company ("America" here refers to Alaska, which at the time belonged to Russia), he asks in a letter to a friend. The company would essentially cater to the Russian tea market. But the front would have to be Swedish, and cash in on the good reputation of the old Company, since Russia was denied access to China. A personal reason for Ljungstedt to pursue this venture was because of his knowledge of Russian, and, perhaps even more importantly because he wanted to reunite with his "natural son" from the St Petersburg years, Carl Andreievich, who was now 17 and who would be a valuable assistant in this venture. These plans came to nought, however. But in 1808, Ljungstedt was appointed Swedish agent of trade in China, so he was kept busy nevertheless. Presumably, the reason Ljungstedt was made agent was because the Company no longer sent any ships. Yet a trade agent (consul) can still see to it that the trade goes on through other channels. After the dissolution of the Company (1813), this function became even more important for the China-Sweden trade.

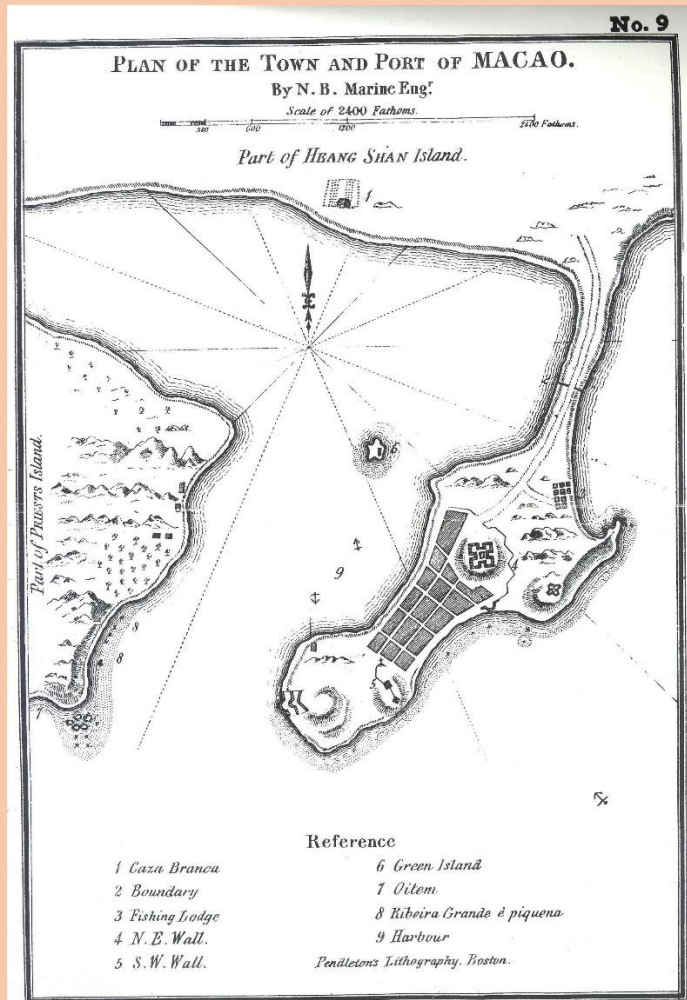
### ***Ljungstedt in Macao***

In 1815 Ljungstedt moved permanently to Macao – before this he had lived half the year in Canton – buying a house on the Praia Grande. He lived in style appropriate to his station with a cook, a manservant and a few maids. Without the backing of a Company, Ljungstedt's status as a business partner or business facilitator was still precarious, however. This is the main reason why he writes to his friend Archbishop Lindblom and some other influential acquaintances that he expresses his wish to be knighted. He admits to Lindblom that another reason is his vanity, from "which it is so hard to be free." Still, the main reason is that a knighthood would impress Europeans and Americans as well as the Chinese, and be good for business. But it had to be performed according to protocol, or it would not be taken seriously in either Macao or Canton. So, when the Swedish king promptly granted him the order of Wasa, the next step was that the Swedish court contacted the court in Rio de Janeiro and humbly asked that the ritual be undertaken (instructions about the ceremony were supplied in Portuguese and French); the prince regent in Rio de Janeiro then enjoined the governor in Macao to dub Anders Ljungstedt Knight of the Order of Wasa. This is no doubt an intricate way of winning respect in the world, but apparently it worked for "Sir Andrew," as he was subsequently called by his English and Americans friends.

In 1815 Macao had ca 35.000 inhabitants. The majority was Chinese, with a population of some 30.000; the Portuguese/Macanese were about 3500; there were also ca 1000 slaves. Add to that the European and American group of about 200, and among these, 8-10 Swedes. Among the latter Ljungstedt's closest friend from the Company days was without doubt Jacob Gabriel Ullman. Ullman arranged Ljungstedt's affairs after his death and is in all likelihood "the mourning friend" mentioned on Ljungstedt's tomb in the Protestant Cemetery. Ullman was a Catholic and married to a Portuguese woman. It seems likely that he could have acted as a link to the Catholic Portuguese community in Macao for Ljungstedt. In any case Ljungstedt was also a friend of the Catholic bishop. This stood him in good stead when compiling his research into Macao history, which draws extensively on Portuguese documents in the archives of the Catholic Church. But his main circle of friends and associates was Anglo-American; they were, among others, Alexander Pearson and Dr Thomas Richardson of the College of the Ophthalmic Institution (which Ljungstedt wrote a short book about), Robert Bennet Forbes (Boston businessman), Dr Robert Morrison (priest) and George Chinnery (painter – he made three paintings of Ljungstedt). Presumably it was these friendships, paired, perhaps, with the realization that English was beginning to eclipse Portuguese in the area that made him choose English as the medium for his history of Macao.

Besides pursuing business as usual when opportunities showed themselves and otherwise employing his considerable social and linguistic skills on a daily basis (with his Swedish, English, Cantonese and Portuguese acquaintances), Ljungstedt also developed an interest in the history of the region. This

resulted in the seminal work *An Historical Sketch of the Portuguese Settlements in China and of the Roman Catholic Church and Mission in China & Description of the City of Canton* (1832, second ed. 1835). This is not the place to summarize its contents or analyze its arguments, but I cannot resist the opportunity to dwell on the maps that are reprinted in the book.



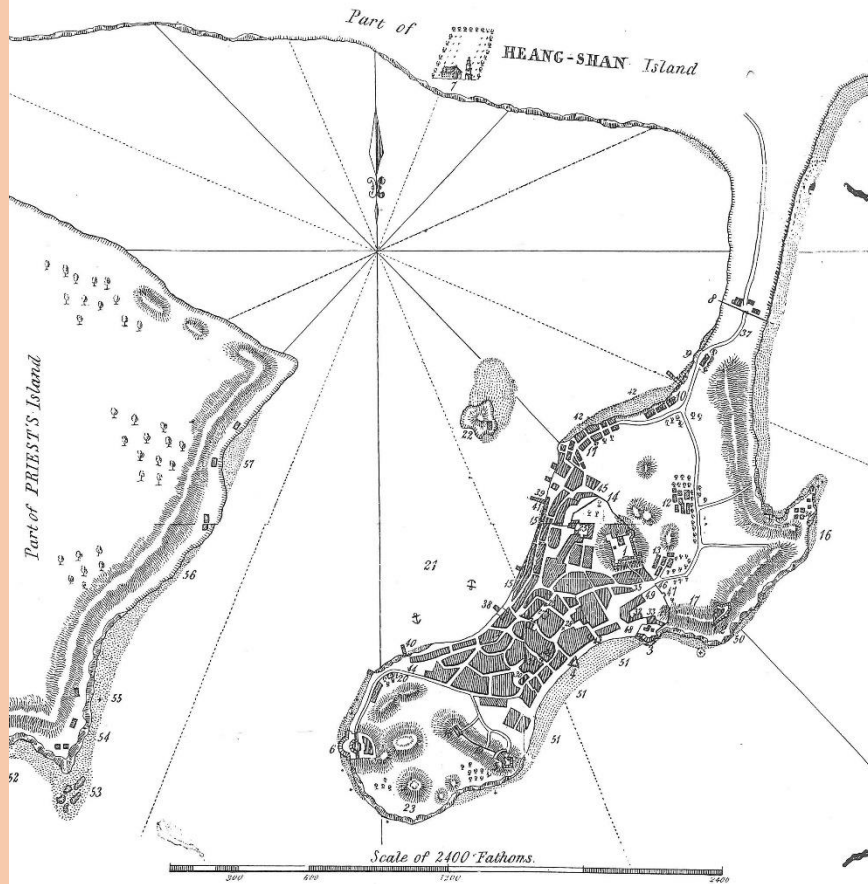
The first one is Ljungstedt's copy from a Dutch publication from 1749, but originally from 1655. Ljungstedt writes that it is "apparently the most ancient in existence" and continues: "[t]hat the engineer who undertook to produce the outlines of the place, and its environs never put his foot on shore is evident from his having drawn the streets at right angles, whereas by the configuration of the soil itself, they must necessarily run in crooked and distorted directions" (107). He is also skeptical to the way in which the city wall is shown to traverse "hillock and dale."

The second map is contemporary with Ljungstedt's 1834 text, and delineated by Ljungstedt's "young friend" Mr. W. Bramston. But it is unfortunate that neither Taipa Pequena nor Taipa Grande nor Coloane are included in the maps. Finally, Ljungstedt includes a sketch of Canton, which afford "a tolerable idea of the general plan and outline of the city" (186), the letter "b" indicates the location of the foreign factories.

# MAP OF THE TOWN AND HARBOUR OF MACAO.

By *N.B.* CORRECTED & IMPROVED BY *W.B.*

*Pendletons Lithography, Boston.*



- |  |  |                                       |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| N <sup>o</sup> 1 Fort of St. Paul or Monte.        | N <sup>o</sup> 23 Mato de bom JESUS                  | N <sup>o</sup> 45 Gate of S. Antonio. |
| 2 . . . Guia                                       | 24 Church of S. Antonio.                             | 46 Gate of S. Lazarus or Campo.       |
| 3 . . . S. Francis.                                | 25 . . . S. Paul.                                    | 47 Battery of S. John.                |
| 4 . . . S. Peter. front of Gov <sup>n</sup> house. | * 26 . . . S. Domingos.                              | 48 Campo of S. Francis.               |
| 5 . . . Bomparto                                   | 27 . . . S <sup>ta</sup> Casa de Misericordia.       | 49 Bishop Garden.                     |
| 6 . . . Bar.                                       | + 28 . . . S. Peter or S <sup>a</sup> the Cathedral. | 50 Praya of Guia.                     |
| 7 Casa Branca, residence of a Mandarin.            | † 29 . . . S. Augustin.                              | 51 Grande.                            |
| 8 Boundary.  | 30 . . . S. Lawrence.                                | 52 Otem.                              |
| 9 Pegoda Nova.                                     | 31 . . . S. Joseph.                                  | 53 Monkey Isles.                      |
| 10 Chinese Village of Monchion.                    | 32 . . . S <sup>ta</sup> Clara.                      | 54 Ribeira Grande.                    |
| 11 . . . Palains.                                  | 33 . . . S. Francis.                                 | 55 Piquena.                           |
| 12 . . . Mongha.                                   | 34 Senate House.                                     | 56 Tappa.                             |
| 13 Village of S. Lazarus.                          | 35 Hospital.   |                                       |
| 14 N.E. wall.                                      | 36 Fishing lodge.                                    |                                       |
| 15 Bazaar.   | 37 Racing Ground.                                    |                                       |
| 16 Bay of Cassilha                                 | 38 Custom House.                                     |                                       |
| 17 Cricket Ground                                  | 39 Chinese Custom House.                             |                                       |
| 18 Penha Hill & Church.                            | 40 Praya Manduco.                                    |                                       |
| 19 S. W. Wall.                                     | 41 . . . Piquena.                                    |                                       |
| 20 Bar Pegoda.                                     | 42 . . . Palases.                                    |                                       |
| 21 Inner Harbour.                                  | 43 Judges House                                      |                                       |
| 22 Green Island.                                   | 44 Road of the Bar.                                  |                                       |

1834. Artillery Pieces.

	Bronze	Iron
1. On the Monte.....	13	34
2. . . Guia.....	5	15
3. . . S. Francis.....	7	11
4. . . S. Peter.....	2	3
3. . . Bomparto.....	6	1
6 . . . Bar.....	13	16
	<u>46</u>	<u>80</u>

By *W.B.* Macao, China 1834.

I have accounted for Ljungstedt's life and work, his friendships, his "earthly remains" to borrow the wording on his tombstone. I have related the curious incidents leading up to his becoming a "Knight of Wasa"; I have touched on his scholarly work. But the tombstone also mentions that he was a "philanthropist." Most of the letters by Ljungstedt that have been preserved are actually concerned with his philanthropic endeavours. As we could see from his biography, Ljungstedt was from a poor

family and was exceptionally lucky to get an education that in the end would make him rich and take him across the world. In 1805, when he was established as a supercargo in Canton and Macao he soon started thinking about establishing an institution that would allow other poor boys and girls to study. People, such as bishop Lindblom, helped him to buy property, to build a school and set up a foundation which would pay for teachers' salaries for perpetuity. The correspondence bears witness to the complexity of managing the project from Macao: transferring funds, dealing with legal issues and just simply the slow mode of communication. In Ljungstedt's days a letter could take a year to deliver and another in which to get a response – two years for a simple exchange! One problem was that the first farm that he bought, didn't yield as much revenue as expected; another was that Ljungstedt's wife (who remained in Sweden) battled for every penny. Here it should be added that Caroline Ljungstedt was well off, owning two houses in central Stockholm. In the end Ljungstedt had to give his money in trust to three friends who then established and managed the school. To this day, there is an Anders Ljungstedt school in his old home town of Linköping.

### ***Ljungstedt and the Pirates***

Ljungstedt's letters are usually not very personal. They are mainly about business matters, about the school project and similar things. It is a pity too that he does not describe everyday life in Macao in any detail. An interesting exception is when he writes about the pirates that plagued the region. I will end on a swashbuckling note by quoting the letter in which this is described in extenso. It is dated 25 February 1811 and addressed to Archbishop Lindblom in Sweden; Ljungstedt writes:

*In my letter 20 January 1810 I related how a mighty band of pirates continued to worry, plunder and ravage the south-east coast of the Chinese Realm. It began due to the negligence of the administrators, increased because of its violent success, and acquired in just two-score years a strength that seemed to threaten the entire country. It became necessary to counter this menace, yes, to exterminate it. However, the means and actions available to the provincial government in Quangtung proved to be either inadequate or ill-used; or how else should one understand the effrontery of some of the boldest of these "Vikings", who dared to pass under the nose of the residential capital of Canton, shooting and burning, looting on its way, and taking goods and captives in some of the less populated and well-defended parts? Yet it was not in Sunto's (the viceroy) power to punish these audacious misdeeds. He knew that the Tai-to (the provincial admiral) and many of the officers were in league with the mightiest of the pirates, A-pu-tiaj. Sunto feared that if the fleets would meet in combat, the imperial fleet would be captured or forced to flee.*

*Therefore it was decided to seek foreign help. Members of the Canton Hong (the merchant company) and governors of the city first turned to the residing Americans, then to private Englishmen, and*

*finally to the English Company, but without coming to an agreement. This was not reached until the Senate in Macao convened 23 November 1809. Miguel de Arriaga da Silveira, who was then, and is now again, Dezembargador, or Supreme Judge, imparted the need to cooperate with the viceroy, why this would be useful for the colony, and the honor to be had by vanquishing these vandals with Portuguese Arms.*

*As a consequence six merchant ships were armed despite the lack of ammunition, sailors and officers, which seemed to threaten the enterprise at every turn. This little squadron joined forces with sixty Chinese war ships, whereof one was under the command of one of the enemy's friends. Thus, the Portuguese had to defeat both this treason and the fleet of A-pu-tiaj, which consisted of about 300 armed ships, carrying 12 to 20 guns and 50 to 200 men. But the enemy host, pursued in every direction and utterly vanquished by superior European tactics, was soon forced to capitulate and seek grace in the magnanimity of the victor.*

*The rebel leader parleyed with Miguel de Arriaga in whom the viceroy had full confidence. As mediator de Arriaga succeeded in placating both parties, thereby restoring the peace. The report sent to the emperor led to the pardon of all the rebels. Moreover, A-pu-tiaj with command over 30 ships, was subordinated to a Mandarin, aiding him in destroying a less powerful pirate leader. The rest of A-pu-tiaj's fleet, consisting of some 270 boats, more than 16.000 men, 5000 women, 1200 guns and an uncounted quantity of lesser weapons was the rich bounty had by the Chinese government by the end of April 1810 at Hiang-san, between Macao and Canton. (My translation)*

Here we hear the voice of the amateur historian Anders Ljungstedt writing home to Sweden about exciting events. He joins a long line of botanists, priests, sailors and captains, assistants and supercargoes who went out with the Swedish East India Company to bring not only goods and capital from the Orient back to Sweden, but ideas and impulses and stories too. But Anders Ljungstedt himself remained in Macau. His magnificent epitaph can still be seen in the Protestant Cemetery, with inscriptions both in Swedish and English.



## Conclusion

In this article I have considered the role of the Swedish East India Company and some of the Swedish travelers who visited China during this period – botanists like Pehr Osbeck and Priests and authors like Jacob Wallenberg. I have focused in particular on Sir Anders Ljungstedt (1759-1835), supercargo and consul, who lived in Macau in the early 19<sup>th</sup> C and was its first English-language historian with his *A Historical Sketch*. In the present article I have endeavoured to shed light on Ljungstedt's life and work by introducing some of the contents of his "Letters from China" (written in Swedish). These letters are largely concerned with economic matters, but Ljungstedt also gives a colorful account of how Macau decisively contributed to the defeat of a fleet of pirates in 1810.