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Unreviewed Mixed Matters Article:

Cooperating to Create a Greater Impact - The Case Study of 'DEJIMA Transcending Time Itself'

Persistent Identifier: https://exarc.net/ark:/88735/10587

EXARC Journal Issue 2021/3 | **Publication Date:** 2021-08-26

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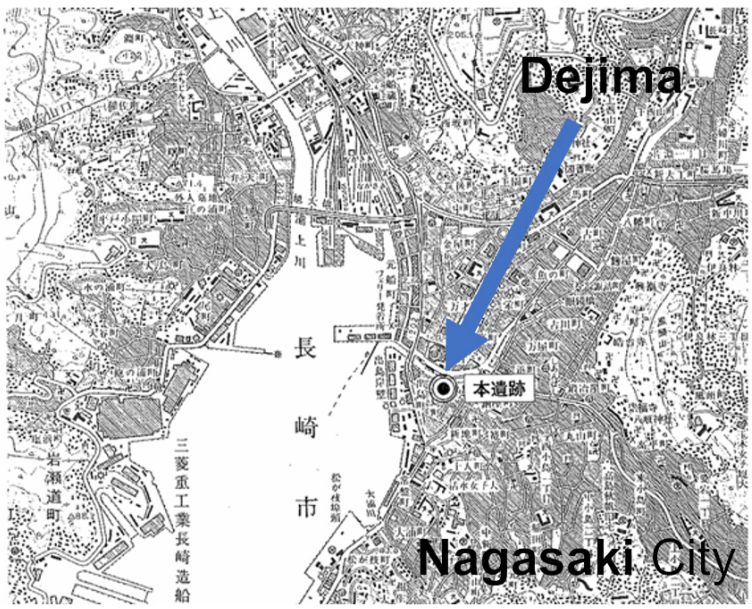
"Cooperating to create a greater impact" was a session during the ICOM General Conference in Kyoto, Japan. It was organized by ICOM NL, ICOM JP, DEMHIST, EXARC and the Japan Museum Sieboldhuis. The session took place on September 4, 2019 at Kyoto International Conference Centre. The session focused on themes of collaboration, cooperation, joint ownership and the possibilities in continued contacts. During this conference I presented a case study on the history of the Dejima restoration project and its current utilization strategy

under the title "Dejima Transcending Time Itself ". In this article I will show the significance of Dejima and how it contributes to improvements in the recognition of National historic sites and facilities.

> The concept for the reconstruction of Dejima was developed in 1982 but full scale planning did not begin until 1996. The aim was to recreate the range of buildings that had existed on the island during the Edo period and to make the shape of the island clear so as to reproduce the shape of the enclosure that turned Dejima into a closed space.

Dejima is located in Nagasaki City, Nagasaki Prefecture, which is situated at the western end of the Japanese island of Kyusyu. In the Edo period this area was called “Hizen”. During the Edo period Dejima was originally an island in the bay of Nagasaki, but has since been connected to the mainland by later reclamation projects.

Dejima was constructed by the merchants of Nagasaki under the orders of the Edo Bakufu, (Japan's feudal government, the Tokugawa government), who wanted to continue trade with the West despite a ban on Christianity. Dejima was built on reclaimed land and was completed in 1636. Initially it was built for the Portuguese, however, it was left empty as they also had been banned from entering Japan. In 1641 the Dutch Trading Post, the headquarters of the Dutch East India Company in Japan, was moved to Dejima from Hirado. From then on it was used for trade, diplomacy, culture and academic exchanges, until 1859. In that year, due to foreign pressure, Japan opened up many more ports and the Dejima trading post was replaced with a consulate in Edo (present-day Tokyo).



Dejima was for the Dutch East India Company one of many trading posts. Their ships sailed from the Netherlands west, via the Cape of Good Hope, to India, Malacca, Indonesia, China and Japan. Their main base was at Batavia in Indonesia, from where the trade in Asia was controlled. In Japan the Dutch traded raw silk, cotton fabric, wool fabric, leather, sugar,

sappan wood, glass, and rare animals including colourful birds for silver, copper, ceramics, lacquerware and later camphor. The Dutch merchants traded these product from one part of Asia to another as part of their transit trade, however their main goal was the production of spice for transport back to Europe.

From the 16th to the 18th century Dejima was part of a wide trade network that connected a larger number of places across the world. As a result products created in Japan spread out around Asia and Europe.

The island of Dejima is crescent shaped and includes an area of about fifteen thousand (15,000) square meters. Access to the island originally was over a bridge, located in the middle of the inner curve of the island, with several large two-storey buildings around the Chief Factor's Residence located to the west of the island. Situated on the shore front were warehouses for trade goods. There was a second gate at the west end used for the import and export of goods. At the east end of the island there were houses for lower-class Dutch officials and a vegetable garden. This area also housed barns for cattle and pigs. The Dutch were forced into an inconvenient lifestyle on Dejima as they could neither bring their family in, nor enter Nagasaki proper without official permission. As such, Dejima had to contain all the necessary functions of a town within a very limited area. By the early 20th century the area around the island had become built up and land reclamation filled in the space around the island so that it became attached to the mainland. The buildings of the Dutch factory also gradually disappeared and the image of past times was lost.

However the influence of Dejima went beyond just trade. Dejima was the gateway for the exchange of culture and knowledge. For the Japanese this can be exemplified by the famous doctor Siebold, a 19th century German physician. He published studies on Japanese flora and fauna in Europe while helping to spread Western medicine in Japan. He was also the father of Kusumoto Ine one of the first female Japanese practioners of Western medicine. However, for the modern Japanese person the image of Holland is also equally coloured by tourism with images of windmills, clogs and tulips and by the paintings of the Dutch Masters such as Rembrandt, Vermeer and Van Gogh.

Present Dejima

The concept for the reconstruction of Dejima was developed in 1982 but full scale planning did not begin until 1996. The aim was to recreate the range of buildings that had existed on the island during the Edo period and to make the shape of the island clear so as to reproduce the shape of the enclosure that turned Dejima into a closed space. Excavations which took place during reconstruction exposed the original positions of the buildings via their stone foundations and revealed older structures. Among the excavated buildings were the warehouses and the islands embankment wall, which had been buried as the city of Nagasaki

expanded around the site. The embankment walls required repairing as well as recording which ended up being more difficult than expected due to periodic tidal inundations.

In 2017, a new bridge connecting Dejima and the town of Nagasaki was completed. Visitors can now cross this bridge and enter Dejima in the same way they would have done in the Edo period. Once on the island, visitors can visit a series of buildings built on their original foundations. The first five reconstructed buildings of the Edo period were completed in 2000. Five more buildings were reconstructed in 2006, completing a city street of the Edo period. Another six buildings have since been constructed which means there are now a total of sixteen to view. The buildings were reconstruced to the 19th century Edo period, based on the preserved foundations, but also from the large number of documents available providing accurate details on the appearance of the buildings' superstructures. An example is the work done on No.3 warehouse. This building was where imported sugar was stored. For the design of the building, reference was made to similar existing buildings, models, old photographs, drawings, pictures and a wide variety of other document as well as the excavations. The building was reconstructed to resemble the form of the past building using traditional methods of construction and materials as much as possible. The walls of No.3 warehouse were constructed with bamboo poles tied to each other using straw rope and covered in kneaded soil which was then dried. In a similar way, the sea gate was constructed in a traditional Japanese style called "kabuki", where the upper crossbar connects both poles of the gate. The finished gate is now an entrance for guests. The Chief Factor's Residence includes a dining room which is displayed to show how it would have looked when the officials gathered for a banquet. In order to achieve this, knowledge from Dutch researchers about the customs of the time played an important role.

So far, the restoration work on Dejima has cost approximately fifteen billion yen. Over half of this was used for purchasing the land of Dejima. Less than half of this total was covered by the National government, with the remainder provided by the local authority of Nagasaki City.

More than five hundred thousand people visit Dejima each year. The facility of Dejima is utilized by Nagasaki City and citizen's association in a variety of ways. Among the main examples, we have the Dejima Oranje Festival and the Nagasaki Hydrangea "otakusa" Festival. The site is also used as a venue for performing traditional festivals and other events organized by local creators.

Future Dejima

The municipal government of Nagasaki City regards the historic site of Dejima as an important historic site that has been inherited from past and needs to be passed on to the future. In order to do so we must engage in the work of continual restoration and repair of existing buildings. In addition we must pay more attention to the landscape around Dejima.

The overall aim of this long term project is to turn Dejima into an island again – surrounded by water.

The site of Dejima is not an empty shell with static displays, but a site for cultural events. There are however many issues involved when holding a market or a festival. These have often featured the theme of Japan and the Netherlands cooperating academically and culturally in a mutual interchange of shared cultural heritage. In recent years, the global theme of "the sustainable system" has been put into practice when organising these events; addressing how individual museums and cultural organization can cooperate in creating a sustainable system, but also whether these organisations meet social needs? The story and the service needed to attract people and society are necessary.

Prospects of the Future

This article was based on a paper about Dejima presented at the ICOM conference. It set out to confirm a foundation for cooperation and collaboration between the Netherlands and Japan. The aim was to increase consciousness on future cooperation of the museum composition. Or it may be said that we can grasp originality and charm as a strong point for comparison with others. The restoration work and interchange that has been involved in the work on Dejima between Japan and the Netherlands can act as a model around the world. Common enterprise and mutual cooperation between organisations such as ICOM NL. and EXARC can be used as an example to approach magnificent stories that are not confined to single countries. I personally consider the current international interchange as an added value. When different cultures meet it can lead to a positive interchange where people can learn to face common problems creating an historic phenomenon of harmony. I hope we can preserve the original value of Dejima and that it becomes a beloved site for the citizens of Nagasaki that can be inherited by their descendants.

WE THANK JOHN ERTL FOR HIS HELP WITH THE TRANSLATION.

Keywords open-air museum
(re)construction

Country Japan

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