

E. R. de Arantes e Oliveira

**PALAVRAS NA ABERTURA DA CONFERÊNCIA
EPMESC XII, EM HONG KONG**



ACADEMIA DAS CIÊNCIAS
DE LISBOA

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E. R. de Arantes e Oliveira

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am grateful to the organizers of this Conference for having given the floor in its opening session.

I thought that it would be appropriate to remember how much the situation changed in this part of the World since the first EPMESC Conference in 1985.

The EPMESC Project has been associated to the scientific development, not only of Macau, but of the immense Asia-Pacific Region and especially of China. The EPMESC series of conferences is indeed the longest one in this Region dedicated to Computational Methods in Science.

As the situations changed completely since 1985, the past tends to be forgotten. Let us remember, however, that in 1985 there was no scientific production in Macau. Only one PhD from Macau participated in EPMESC I but even this one was not connected to any scientific institution in the Territory.

The buildings of the University of Macau were built while the Conference was being organized. We envisaged to change the venue of the Conference in case the amphitheatres would not be ready in due time.

In what concerns my own feelings, I confess that we felt being pushed by History itself. We couldn't forget what Macau represented in the past, since the XVIth century, as a link between East and West.

I remember the joy of the young Chinese scientists for having been given an opportunity to meet foreign scientists in their home country.

At the beginning, many people, and the authorities of Macau themselves thought that the most that could be expected was to establish scientific links with the Guangzhou Province. But soon we found that many participants came from other provinces of China. One of those coming from a distant province told me: "My father was the first of the family to participate in an EPMESC conference, my mother was the second, and now it's my turn. You cannot imagine how happy I am for it. Thank you". These words went straight to my heart. Many others came to me and I felt their warm

friendship and enthusiasm. I realized that I had never done anything so valuable from the human point of view.

I was helped, practically since the beginning, by two professors of the Department of Civil Engineering of the Technical University of Lisbon, João Bento and Eduardo Pereira, who could not come this time, but helped me in organizing the Portuguese group of participants.

Once the administration of Macau was transferred to China, I was afraid that this change would mean the end of the EPMESC Conferences. There was reason to be afraid of. The EPMESC Conferences were indeed institutionalized, by the approbation of an EPMESC Constitution. An EPMESC Board was created, composed by an Executive Board and a General Assembly.

An EPMESC Office was formed, on the other hand, which became the EPMESC Administrative Center, charged with handling the Executive Board Meetings and General Assembly arrangements, and supporting EPMESC conferences. The University of Macau accepted to be responsible for the operation of the EPMESC Office.

Prof. Vaipan Iu was elected president of the EPMESC Board and Prof. Mok Kaimeng appointed Head of the EPMESC Office.

The EPMESC Constitution kindly registered the names of the founding members of the EPMESC Project: Professors T. Kaway from the University of Tokyo, Y. K. Cheung from the University of Hong Kong, Luo Songfa from the Technical University of Hong Kong and myself.

*(Comunicação apresentada
a 29 de Novembro de 2009)*