THE PORTUGUESE IN THE EAST:
A CULTURAL HISTORY OF
A MARITIME TRADING EMPIRE

by
Dr Shihan de Silva Jayasuriya

BOOK LAUNCH

Introduced by Professor Lutz Marten
(Dean, Faculty of Languages & Cultures,
SOAS, University of London)
Speaker: Dr Shihan de Silva Jayasuriya
followed by a Concert of Luso-Asian
Music and a Wine Reception

Wednesday 31 May 2017 from 6-8 pm
Room G22 (Woburn Suite), Senate House,
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Vasco da Gama’s voyage to India in the late fifteenth
century opened up new economic and cultural horizons for
the Portuguese. Undertaken at the height of Portugal’s
maritime influence, it helped to create an oceanic state
ranging from the Cape of Good Hope to China. Shihan de Silva Jayasuriya charts the influences
of the Portuguese in more than 50 Asian tongues. Luso-Asian influence became engrained in
eastern cultures in subtle ways, such as the Portuguese oral traditions in folk literature, embedded
in postcolonial Asian music and song. Portuguese cultural legacies are a lasting reminder of an
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SHIHAN DE SILVA JAYASURIYA is a Senior Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, School of
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Indo-Portuguese Verse, Indo-Portuguese of Ceylon, African Identity in Asia: Cultural Effects of Forced
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