

WHERE THE SEA ENDS AND LAND BEGINS

(translation into English to Minoru Kamoto)

No, it's not a mistake. The title of this text is really “Where the sea ends and the land begins” and not “Where the land ends and the sea begins”, as Luís de Camões wrote in one of the stanzas of the *The Lusiads* (In Portuguese) :

*Eis aqui, quase cume da cabeça
De Europa toda, o Reino Lusitano,
Onde a terra se acaba e o mar começa,
E onde Febo repousa no Oceano.
Este quis o Céu justo que floresça
Nas armas contra o torpe Mauritano,
Deitando-o de si fora, e lá na ardente
África estar quieto o não consente*

This text is about what is engraved on a plaque of the monument near Choshi City, next to the Cape Inubo lighthouse, the most eastern site of Chiba Prefecture, Japan: “Inubo Cape and Roca Cape - Monument to friendship - Here... Where the sea ends and the land begins”.

The geographical location of this cape makes it often subject to the action of tropical storms and typhoons.



In the western part of the North Pacific, tropical cyclones (tropical storms and typhoons) generally form on the southern edge of this region's subtropical anticyclone, statistically between the Mariana Islands and the Philippines, moving westward as they intensify, progressing then to the northwest and

north, reaching a point where their trajectories reverse the direction, moving northeastward or eastward, reaching the middle latitudes. As they progress along this path, they often affect Japan, notably its largest island, Honshu, where Inubo Cape is located. It was following a typhoon that caused the wreck of a Japanese warship that killed 13 people, in October 1868, that was decided to build a lighthouse on this cape, which began operating in 1874.

At about the same latitude as Inubo Cape, in the most western site of the Eurasian continent, in the municipality of Sintra, at Colares, there was also a need to erect a lighthouse in Roca Cape, not because of tropical cyclones, but due to the frequency of fog and rough sea caused by frontal systems in winter and strong northerly wind in summer. Before the fourteenth century it was believed in Europe that the cliffs of Roca Cape, almost permanently swept by strong winds, were the end of the world, which inspired Camões to write the famous verse of the stanza of canto III. The Roca Cape lighthouse, one of the oldest in Portugal, was erected during the Marquis of Pombal's lifetime and began operating in 1772, about a hundred years earlier than that of Inubo Cape.

Inubo Cape's name comes from the junction of two Chinese characters, the first of which means dog and the second howl. One of several explanations of this name is that in this region there were concentrations sea lions, whose sound is similar to the howling of dogs, were frequent. There are, however, other versions, namely the one based on the legend that a lost dog howled for seven days and seven nights, there. If it were a vulgar dog it would not be a reason to inspire a legend, but its owner was Minamoto no Yoshitsune (1159-1189), one of the most famous samurais in the history of Japan.

Roca Cape has also been a source of legends, most notably the one in which a boy of about 5 years old was kidnapped by three witches and dropped into a hole near Cabo da Roca. Having heard the child's cry, some shepherds made known the child's cry and the boy was saved by the inhabitants of a nearby village. José Gomes, that was his name, told his mother that during the time he was in the hole he had been fed with carnation soup by a very beautiful lady. His mother, later, to thank the ransom went to pray in a church where was an image of Our Lady, and the child claimed that it was that lady who had fed him.

Similar to the inscription engraved on the plaque near Roca Cape lighthouse, Choshi authorities decided to place a plaque near Inubo Cape lighthouse, with a resembling phrase, in a demonstration of friendship with the Portuguese people. This plate shows the coordinates of both cables.



I learned about this in conversation with Minoro Kamoto, then chairman of the Hydrology Working Group of the Typhoon Committee, which has been based in Macao since 2007, when I told him that I lived in Portugal about 15 km far from Roca Cape, the most western site of continental Europe. It made me curious when he made me aware that he had visited Inubo Cape, referring to the monument with the inscription “Here...Where the sea ends and the land begins”. He also told me about a video on the Internet, titled “Inubousaki and Roca Cape - Friendship Monument” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l3U5iCyeJLs>), where I had the opportunity to learn about the friendly attitude of the Japanese authorities to pay tribute to the Portuguese-Japanese friendship through the inscription next to Inubo Cape lighthouse.

At a time when walls are built among peoples, it is a pleasure to learn that bridges are also built.

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