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The Manila Chinese Cemetery: A Repository of Tsinoy Culture and Identity

Le cimetière chinois de Manille : un réceptacle de la culture et de l'identité tsinoy

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Association Archipel

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The Manila Chinese Cemetery: A Repository of Tsinoy Culture and Identity

Introduction

Cemeteries are fascinating places. Reflections of the society which created them, they signify its identity, its secular values and worldviews, spiritual and religious beliefs, and not least its wealth and technical and artistic achievements. They make visible a society's evolution, its history and past achievements, but also its social stratification, contradictions, and class and/or ethnic divide. It is no coincidence that most of what we know about long vanished civilizations such as the old Egyptians and Mayas, or ancient China, we know from their vast necropolises.

Cemeteries are also like art museums; showcases of a society's artistic prowess, skills and tastes and their evolution over time. In remembering departed loved ones, humankind at all times spared no costs and efforts to honor them and hold up their memory and remembrance. It is such devotion that explains masterpieces of human creativity and vision such as the Taj Mahal in India, embodiment of a great love chiseled into white marble over decades. Elaborate tombs also serve to showcase the deceased or his/her family's social status during earthly life, or, in some religions, to carry it over into the afterlife. In short, the cemeteries of the past have a lot to tell us who live in the present, if only we care to know and to listen. Especially in the fast developing megacities of Asia-Pacific, where history, art and beauty are all too readily sacrificed in the name of rapid "development" and unreflected "progress," cemeteries, now rare oases of quiet and greenery, have become precious repositories of the past, be it history, art, or architecture.

1. Ateneo de Manila University, Manila.

This applies in particular to Manila, where a destructive tropical climate, war and overcrowding, but especially massive re-development, has since 1945 erased much of its built heritage. As the frenzy to demolish and rebuilt “bigger and better” (and more profitable) continues unabated, Manila’s vast necropolis in the north of the Sta. Cruz district has become a veritable museum of the artistic and architectural styles that shaped the face of the surrounding city over the past 150 years. It spans from the Spanish colonial period (until 1898), the American interlude (1899-1946), and the post-colonial era (since 1946) until the present.

This article, after a general introduction of the cemetery, its Tsinoy mausoleum patrons, and their architects and builders, will give an overview of the architectural evolution of the often elaborate mausoleums that can be found throughout the Chinese Cemetery. It will explore the different art styles, Western and Chinese, that inspired their architecture over the course of time, and will show that the builders of these tombs did not merely copy Western or Eastern models, but in an eclectic way often combined both, and sometimes merged various traditions into one. Many of these mausoleums are a synthesis of East and West, reflective of the *Tsinoy* (Filipino with Chinese roots) community.

Overview

The vast necropolis in the north of Manila actually consists of three distinct and separate cemeteries, namely the Cementerio del Norte (North Cemetery), the La Loma Cemetery, and the Chinese Cemetery. While superficially the three may look similar to the casual observer, there are important differences in origin, layout, and above all, cultural and religious characteristics.

The North Cemetery is the youngest among them, having been founded in 1905 by the new US-American administration to provide a modern, healthy and sanitary burial ground laid out to the latest trends in cemetery design then en vogue in Europe and North America. Non-sectarian in nature and municipal-owned, its generous park-like layout, complete with carefully planted sumptuous vegetation and shade trees quickly made it the resting place of choice for the Manila elite.²

In contrast, the Catholic La Loma Cemetery dates back to the late Spanish era. In 1882 the Cementerio General de La Loma, built in old-fashioned Spanish-Mediterranean style, was laid out to accommodate victims of the devastating cholera epidemic of the same year. It later merged with the new Cementerio de Binondo (originally founded around 1850, but rebuilt in 1884) immediately adjacent to it.³ Here, too, can be found the tombs of many leading families, politicians and businessmen of their time.

2. See Paulo Alcazaren, “Cities of Remembrance,” *Philippine Star*, October 30, 1999.

3. See Lorelei de Viana, “The World of the Necropolis: Public Sanitation and Cemeteries in 19th Century Manila”. *Unitas* vol. 77, no. 1 (2004), Manila: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, p. 117.

The Chinese Cemetery, finally, is multi-denominational and includes Christian, Buddhist and Taoist burials. Its history dates back to 1843, when the Governor General authorized the Chinese to establish a cemetery in La Loma.⁴ It was founded or enlarged on the present site in 1863 when Lim Ong, *gobernadorcillo* (mayor) of the Chinese community in Binondo bought land in La Loma to provide a decent burial ground for Catholic and non-Catholic Chinese.⁵

The layout of the cemetery, a vaguely trapezoidal area of about 54 hectares with an extension at the southern tip, is rather irregular, especially its old pre-war part along Rizal Avenue Extension, reflecting its gradual evolution and expansion. Its post-war portions show more regularity, with a network of three major roads more or less parallel from NW to SE and bisected by a series of minor roads at right angles. Street names honor the founders of the cemetery (Lim Ong), a number of former Chinese Consuls-General, such as Clarence Kwangson Young (murdered in April 1942 inside the neighboring North Cemetery by the Japanese), prominent Chinese businessmen and philanthropists (Kong Lim, Suy Chiok), and heroes of the Philippine Revolution (1896-1902)⁶ such as Apolinario Mabini (initially buried here) and Melchora Aquino de Ramos (also known as Tandang Sora, “Elder Sora”). The main road today is Matandang Sora, which leads from the main entrance to the Chong Hock Temple, where the Administration Building, a columbarium, and the crematory can be found. Nearby and along Consul-General Young Road can be found various memorials and a museum dedicated to Chinese martyrs who lost their life during the Japanese occupation from 1942 to 1945.

The evolution of funerary architecture also visualizes how the cemetery itself has expanded over the past 150 years. What started out in the mid-19th century as today’s Chinese Cemetery was initially much smaller than the vast necropolis which we see today. The first extension already took place in 1878, when additional land was purchased from the adjacent Dominican Hacienda de Loma and the Chong Hock Tong Temple was built.⁷ Before the Pacific War the two main entrances faced Avenida Rizal, which connects Manila with the fertile plains of Bulacan and Pampanga to the north. This northwestern portion of the cemetery between Rizal Avenue and Lim Ong Street, north of the Chong Hock Tong, is the oldest and historically most significant part of the cemetery. Here in the vicinity of the old main gate can be found in a somewhat

4. See Richard T. Chu and Teresita Ang See, “Towards a History of Chinese Burial Grounds in Manila during the Spanish Rule”, in this issue.

5. See Edgar Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life, 1850-1898*, Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2000, p. 185.

6. Including the Philippine-American War of 1898-1902.

7. See Lorelei de Viana, *Three Centuries of Binondo Architecture, 1594-1898*, Manila: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, 2001, p. 158.

irregular fashion the oldest and grandest pre-war mausoleums in the Art Deco and Revivalist styles of the 1920s to 1940s.

Another extension of the cemetery in the 1950s saw the main entrance relegated towards the south along F. Huertas Street, where it remains today. Construction likewise spread southwards, into the vicinity of the Chong Hock Temple, where modernist and space-age designs of the 1950s and 1960s now dominate. In recent decades building activity spread further south- and eastwards, as illustrated by postmodern forms and elements which characterize these portions of the cemetery. Remarkably, Chinese-style mausoleums can be found almost equally distributed over all portions of the cemetery, old and new. More recent designs, of course, also exist in the older parts, as happens, for example, when aged mausoleums are rebuilt in more contemporary styles or when old leases expire and are sold to a new owner. However, the vast majority of tombs are of rather ordinary and simple design, and form the backdrop of the more elaborate ones.

The most elaborate postwar and contemporary mausoleums of the “Rich and Famous” face the main streets, such as Tandang Sora, Lim Ong, Young, and Tan Bun Yao. Inside those thus defined inner blocks can be found neatly arranged row-mausoleums of more modest means, or even unroofed open-air tombs. On the peripheral blocks can be found smaller, albeit more individualistically built “middle-class” mausoleums and open-air tombs, while some areas at the extreme periphery are reserved for low-income concrete burial niches, as well as simple terrace-style open-air tombs. (see Map)

The erection of grand mausoleums continues to this day, although apparently on a much lesser scale than in previous decades: With stiff competition from newly-opened, space-saving columbaria in the inner cities and sprawling memorial parks in the new suburbs, and everless available space in the old sites, the days of grand mausoleums may ultimately be numbered. Worse, with the continuing out-migration of Manila’s elite to the new posh subdivisions in the south and east (Forbes Park, Makati; Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa; La Vista, Quezon City) since the 1960s, together with their departed ancestors, many old mausoleums have been abandoned and fallen into decay. Luckily, the Manila Chinese Cemetery has so far escaped the fate that has befallen large sections of its neighbors, whose perimeters are now overrun by informal settlers, while many of their mausoleums are deteriorating or have been taken over by the homeless after their original “inhabitants” have been exhumed and transferred to new cemeteries in the suburbs, in proximity to their descendants’ new residences.

With squatters and “caretakers” proliferating, many public cemeteries have started to resemble the metropolis around them, including advancing ‘cobwebs’ of electric cables and wires, piles of uncollected waste and refuse, up to the opening of small-scale businesses, including the offering of rather questionable “services” to visitors and tourists. Overcrowding of cemeteries

Map of the Manila Chinese Cemetery. (Adapted from C. Guéguen, "Le rôle des morts dans la localisation et les actes sociaux des Chinois aux Philippines," *Les espaces de la mort et les morts dans l'espace, Cahiers de l'ADES*, Bordeaux III, 2010, pp. 117-130.)

with dead and alive has given rise to veritable “condominiums of the dead” to accommodate the not-so-wealthy deceased, where row upon row of concrete burial niches is piled on top of each other just like the condominium high-rises for the living that now mushroom all over Metro Manila. For financially better-situated middle-class families, as in “real life,” more spacious row/town houses or mausoleums, respectively, can be leased. And for those very wealthy Chinese who still bury their dead here, new and fully-air-conditioned mansions of mausoleums in the latest domestic architectural fashion guided by *fengshui* or geomantic principles are still being built on large sprawling lots. At the extreme other end of the scale, in many urban cemeteries (albeit not in the Chinese Cemetery) lack of space has necessitated the burial of the extremely poor below the walkways of the cemetery, where they continue “living on the streets” even in the afterlife.⁸ (Plates 1-3)

The Chinese cemetery is owned and managed by the Philippine-Chinese Charitable Association, the *Comunidad de Chinos* (which also operates the adjacent Chinese General Hospital) founded in the 1870s by Lim Ong and Tan Quien Sien, better known under his Christian name Carlos Palanca.⁹ The association leases out lots (and row mausoleums developed by it) for a span of 25 years, with the option of renewal for another 25 years, although members of the community who significantly contributed to its welfare may be granted a burial plot for free. In case of failure of lease renewal, no eviction will take place, but maintenance works on the mausoleums and tombs will no longer be permitted.

Sino-Filipinos or Tsinoyas as Mausoleum Patrons

Intermarriages of Chinese migrants with local Malay women gave birth to a new class of Chinese *mestizos* in the mid-18th century who would dominate the economic life of the country in the following 19th century. With the opening of the Philippines to international trade in 1834 a thriving plantation economy developed based on the export of cash crops such as abaca (Manila hemp), sugar, tobacco, indigo, coffee and copra. Soon the owners or lessees of these agricultural estates, mainly wealthy *mestizos* of mixed Filipino, Chinese, and Spanish ancestry, grew immensely rich and formed a new elite known as *ilustrados* (the “educated ones”).¹⁰ Towards the end of the 19th century they would merge with wealthy *Indios* and Spanish *mestizos* into *Filipinos*, defined by a common Hispanic culture and cosmopolitan outlook, rather than ethnic origin.¹¹ This wealthy elite, together with rich Chinese, would form the

8. Jerome Aning, “Cemeteries are a Time Capsule of RP History, Culture,” *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, November 01, 2005.

9. Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, p. 200.

10. Wickberg, *Op. cit.*, pp. 25-30.

11. Wickberg, *Op. cit.*, pp. 131-133, 141.

social, political and economic elite of the Philippines until today. Wickberg notes the high degree of Hispanization of this (usually land-owning) mestizo class, who were devout Catholics, and their near-complete adoption of a highly sophisticated Filipino-Hispanic material culture, including an apparent tendency towards ostentatious display of wealth and loyalty towards Spain.¹² Apparently social status played an important role for many of its members, and the need to affirm their elevated status and prestige vis-à-vis the *indios* as well as the *Chinos*.¹³ However, despite their newfound wealth, their social status in the colonial hierarchy, and especially their political influence remained curtailed, as described in the writings of the Propaganda Movement and of Jose Rizal, which ultimately led to the Philippine Revolution of 1896.

At the time the Americans took over from the Spaniards, a wave of cultural and technological innovations introduced by the new colonizers swept the country. These innovations were quickly adopted by Filipinos in general, and by the mestizo elite and the nascent middle-class in particular, as it allowed them to manifest and demonstrate their new-found economic, social and political status, as from their ranks were chosen candidates for political positions of (albeit limited) power and influence. It was thus only logical that this immensely wealthy class would seek to assert itself as the new leading caste and to legitimize its elevated societal status and political power. This found expression in built form, ranging from impressive mansions to often no less ostentatious funerary architecture and—sculpture, as the newly-minted politicians, statesmen, lawyers, professionals and businessmen sought visible validation of their success. Thoroughly Hispanized and Westernized in culture and outlook, they were open-minded towards Western concepts, in dress as much as in architecture.¹⁴ Thus, especially during the 1920s and 1930s new expensive mausoleums proliferated in all three cemeteries of the northern necropolis.

Unlike the Chinese *mestizos* in the Philippines, as Wickberg points out, the *Baba Nyonya* in Malaya, and the *Peranakan* of Java, although ethically and culturally likewise hybrid, were not considered natives by the colonial authorities, but Chinese, thus hindering their assimilation into the host culture.¹⁵ And unlike nationalism in the Philippines, which culturally was solidly oriented towards Spanish and Western culture, in the Dutch Indies (Indonesia) nationalism sought “a refurbished version of their own, emotionally valued indigenous tradition.”¹⁶ Hence, even though there developed a kind of mestizo culture in the Dutch Indies, it failed to break inter-group barriers: “Though

12. Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, pp. 33-34, 128-129, 136.

13. Wickberg, *Op. cit.*, pp. 34-36.

14. Wickberg, *Op. cit.*, p. 131.

15. Wickberg, *Op. cit.*, p. 31.

16. Wickberg, *Op. cit.*, p. 132.

Indo-Europeans, Indonesian Chinese and modern urban Indonesians were all of them equally imbued with the mestizo culture, they saw themselves as bearers par excellence of European, Chinese, and Indonesian cultural values.”¹⁷ That is because, while in the Philippines the Spanish successfully and thoroughly Hispanized the country with a single, all-encompassing religion and relatively uniform Hispanic culture, the Dutch in their colonies tried as much as possible not to intervene into the local cultures.¹⁸ This in turn may have made the Peranakan Chinese more conservative and less receptive to the religious culture of their host communities, although since the 14th-15th centuries there already existed small communities of Muslim Chinese in different cities of Java.¹⁹

Mausoleum Architects and Builders

Not much is known about the architects and builders of most of these tombs and mausoleums; this awaits further research. During the Spanish era, ecclesiastical structures were usually designed by (mostly European) parish priests, and in the 19th century increasingly by Spanish military and civil engineers. The execution of such projects typically lay in the hands of “maestro de obras,” that is, local master masons and master carpenters, while larger projects were often entrusted to Chinese contractors. In the second half of the 19th century the first professionally-trained Filipino architects such as Felix Roxas y Arroyo (born ca. 1820, called the “first Filipino architect”) and Arcadio Arellano (1872-1920) began to leave their mark, the latter designing the “Mausoleum for the Heroes of the Revolution” in neighboring North Cemetery in 1915. With the American take-over in 1898 US-American architects and engineers entered the scene, such as William Parsons, Francis Mandelbaum, William James Odom, and Welton Becket. It thus stands to reason that many of the first Western-style mausoleums and tombs may have been designed by Spanish or American practitioners or companies, following western models. However, over time they were increasingly replaced by first- and second-generation Filipino architects, such as Pablo Antonio and Juan Nakpil, who alone designed more than a dozen pre-war mausoleums, tombs, and monuments in neighboring La Loma Cemetery and North Cemetery, as well as in the provinces, among them Art Deco masterpieces such as the 1927 Nakpil-Bautista pylon. Meanwhile, Andres Luna de San Pedro designed the Chinese-style Sy Cong Bieng Mausoleum in North Cemetery. With

17. W. F. Wertheim, *Indonesian Society in Transition. A Study of Social Change*, The Hague and Bandung: W. van Hoeve, 1956, as cited by Wickberg, *Op. cit.*, p. 133.

18. Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, p. 241.

19. See inter alia Denys Lombard and Claudine Salmon, “Islam and Chineseness,” in Alijah Gordon (ed.), *The Propagation of Islam in the Indonesian-Malay Archipelago*, Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Sociological Research Institute (MSRI), 2001, pp. 181-208.

the *jiannian* 剪黏 technique (literally “shear and paste,” see below) rather uncommon in the Philippines it is very likely that many artisans for Chinese-style tombs may have come from Fujian and Guangdong where this technique developed at the end of the Ming or early Qing dynasty. Here were situated local ceramics kilns where huge quantities of shards could be found, which were especially used to decorate temple roofs.

Mausoleums in Western Architectural Styles

The development of this Western-style mausoleum culture emerged with and as a result of a new revolutionary type of cemetery, which originated in post-revolutionary France in the early 19th century in response to the overcrowding of the old medieval cemeteries in the midst of densely-populated urban centers.²⁰ These new cemeteries, carefully planned and laid out far away from the city centers, were landscaped and planted with lush vegetation along the lines of a public park or garden, and carefully maintained. They thus not only served as places of mourning, but in themselves invited promenades and recreation and ultimately gave rise to the emergence of much-needed public parks in the now fast-growing cities of the nascent age of industrialization.²¹ Importantly, the new cemeteries were non-denominational and municipal-owned, thus considerably reducing the influence and role of the church in funerary culture and making burials more secular in nature. Most significant for the development of a mausoleum culture, however, was the fact that the land within these new cemeteries could now be bought or leased long-term, thus enabling the erection of elaborate tombs and sepulchers of commemoration at the discretion of the owners. This in turn allowed individual commemoration and led to an erosion of class barriers.²²

Along with the new cemetery design came a fundamentally new way of seeing death: not as the end, but merely as an intermezzo, during which the departed is temporarily separated from the living loved ones, soon to be reunited with them in heaven.²³ Hence art sought to replace the grizzly medieval image of the “terrible death,” symbolized by crossed bones, skulls, *Danse Macabre* and “grim reaper,” with a new vision of the “beautiful death,” embodied in statues of angels, putties, mourning women, laurels, and religious imagery. Thus, a new form of architecture arose that celebrated death and mourning in a veritable “death-cult” expressed in architecture, sculpture, painting and literature, and elaborate tombs and mausoleums.²⁴

20. See David Robinson and Dean Koontz, *Beautiful Death: Art of the Cemetery*, New York: Penguin Books USA Inc., 1996.

21. Alcazaren, “Cities of Remembrance.”

22. Robinson and Koontz, *Beautiful Death*.

23. Robinson and Koontz, *Op. cit.*

24. Robinson and Koontz, *Op. cit.*

The time period from the 1870s to the present is one of the most interesting in architectural history, having seen in a span of less than 200 years the resurrection of various historic styles, followed by the emergence of revolutionary new forms such as Art Nouveau and later Art Deco. This culminated in the global triumphant of classic Modernism/Bauhaus and the International Style since World War II with its myriad of sub-forms and regional variations, just to be challenged by Post-Modernism after only a few decades. The Manila's northern necropolis is a virtual architectural museum of the evolution of Philippine (and global) architecture, for nowhere else in the country can samples of all of the styles en vogue during this short time span be experienced in such close proximity, often with an interesting local twist.

During the Spanish colonial era mausoleums did not exist in the Philippines; instead, the dead of high rank were interred inside churches or in cemeteries in close proximity to the church.²⁵ Starting in the 19th century, with increasing scarcity of space and sanitary concerns about burial practices, interment inside churches was banned, and cemeteries relegated to sites far from urban centers. The dead were then commonly interred inside masonry niches or ground burials within these newly-built cemeteries complete with mortuary chapels.²⁶ A prime example is the Paco Cemetery of 1822, the oldest still existing (albeit now longer used as such) cemetery in Manila.

The oldest still extant burial in the Chinese Cemetery is the tomb of Pilar Tiaoqui de Lim-Tuaco, which dates from 1895, set in an open small plot of ca. 4 x 6 meters enclosed by a low wrought iron fence. The sarcophagus in the center is covered with an engraved marble slab, similar to those found embedded into the walls and floors of ancient churches. (Plate 4)

Judging from vintage photos of the necropolis from the turn of the previous century, the first roofs over tombs seem to have appeared during the first two decades of the 20th century. One of the oldest still existent, roofed-over tombs is the one of a woman named Tiu, an immigrant from Kaiping, Canton who was interred here in the 1900s. A simple sloping roof is carried by four concrete posts in between which stretches open fretwork called *calado*, which are carried by ornately carved wooden brackets in floral design. Such brackets and *calados* are typical design elements of the "Floral Style" of the Filipino-Hispanic *Bahay na bato* or "stone house."²⁷ Hence, the Tiu tomb combines Chinese and Fil-Hispanic design elements into a coherent one. (Plate 5)

Most of today's mausoleums inside the Chinese Cemetery still follow this basic model of a covered tomb, albeit usually in concrete construction, with the roof carried by columns in all imaginable shapes and styles, and low side

25. De Viana, *Three Centuries of Binondo Architecture, 1594-1898*, p. 88.

26. De Viana, *Op. cit.*, p. 121.

27. See Fernando N. Zialcita and Martin I. Tinio, *Ancestral Houses of the Philippines, 1810-1930*, Quezon City: GCF Books, 1980, pp. 149-152.

walls in between enclosing the inscribed stele and the tomb behind it (see, for example, the mid-1930s Yu Chan Seh Mausoleum with its neoclassical Tuscan columns. (Plate 6)

Historism

The first fully-enclosed mausoleums seem to have emerged in the 1910s in the neighboring North Cemetery, and also began to appear in the Chinese cemetery in the 1920s.²⁸ This was the high-time of all kinds of revivalist styles, such as Neo-Romanesque, Neo-Renaissance, and Neo-Baroque, which emerged in Europe in the 18th and 19th century and found their way to the Philippines either directly or filtered through the USA and Spain.

Neo-Classicism

A Revivalist style particularly popular for funerary architecture was (and still is) Neo-Classicism. It emerged in the mid-18th century as a reaction to the frivolity and decadence of the absolutist courts then ruling in Europe and embodied in the flamboyant and luxurious Baroque. Arising from the era of the Enlightenment as espoused by Rousseau and his ideals of rationality and reason Neo-classicism is closely associated with the ideals of republicanism and democracy which was then seen embodied in the ancient Greek city states and the Roman Republic of Antiquity. Consequently, it became the preferred architectural style of the newly-independent United States of America and revolutionary France, and soon spread throughout the globe. The formal canon employs elements of classic Greco-Roman architecture, such as the classical orders (Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Composite), colonnades, porticos, pediments, acroteria, etc. as described in the writings of Vitruvius' *De Architectura*. The style also incorporates forms of the Renaissance and 16th-century Palladian architecture. Due to its association with enlightenment, democracy, and education it quickly became the popular style for museums, libraries, schools and academic institutions (in Manila best exemplified by UP Manila and De La Salle College), but also government offices and courts buildings.²⁹ Its close affinity with state institutions, hence "stateliness," also made it a preferred style for the mausoleums of politicians, statesmen, or judges.

28. Based on vintage photographs and dates of Interment. Although a number of mausoleums carry *oriels* (marble plates) at their base indicating their actual year of construction, in the majority of tombs that is not the case. However, interment dates can only serve as one of several clues in determining the age of a structure: mausoleums may have been built over the grave only long after burial, or mortal remains may have been transferred from another, original burial site (secondary burial). It is even possible that a mausoleum was built already during the lifetime of its future "occupant," as is sometimes still the case today.

29. See Gerard Lico, *Arkitekturang Filipino: A History of Architecture and Urbanism in the Philippines*, Quezon City: The University of the Philippines Press, 2008, pp. 272-314.

A beautiful example within the Chinese Cemetery, albeit in a somewhat modernist idiom, is the Sy Mausoleum from the mid-1950s. It is a Greek temple en miniature, complete with (abstracted) columns, a wreaths-and-swags frieze around the architrave, and a dentil frieze above, topped by acroteria on the corners and on the pediment. (Plate 7)

A close replica of a famous Italian Renaissance building is the pre-war Tambunting Mausoleum. Just outside the walls of the Chinese Cemetery, this tomb of a famous family of Chinese businessmen replicates Donato Bramante's Tempietto di San Pietro, built 1502 in Rome, an exquisite commemorative chapel. The Tempietto, in turn, is based on the famous Temple of Vesta of Roman Antiquity. The round mausoleum is surrounded by a colonnade of Tuscan columns which carry a plain architrave with laurel wreaths. The drum of the circular chamber rises above the colonnade and is crowned by a dome, capped by a lantern with cross. (Plate 8)

Neo-Gothic

Also widely applied for funerary architecture was the Neo-Gothic, a revival of the daring Gothic style of medieval times which began in 1140 on the Île de France with the basilica of St. Denis. Its revival began in 18th-century England, and the style became immensely popular during the 19th century as a reaction to the negative social effects of the Industrial Revolution and Manchester capitalism, which was perceived as dehumanizing and miserable. At its core lies a notion of romanticism, which idealized the Middle Ages as a past "Golden Age" in literature (see Victor Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris*), painting, sculpture and especially architecture (see Karl Friedrich Schinkel, George Gilbert Scott, Eugène Viollet-Le-Duc). Well-known examples of the style are the House of Parliament in London, Cologne Cathedral, or St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York. With its emphasis on verticality and heaven-orientedness Neo-Gothic espoused mysticism and spirituality, and is thus seen as a conservative reaction to the republican and democratic rationalism represented by Neo-Classicism. In Europe, especially Germany, it was the preferred style of the emerging national "awakening" after the Napoleonic Liberation Wars,³⁰ and quickly spread throughout the British Empire, North America, and thence globally. In the USA it quickly became the preferred style for religious and academic institutions (Yale, Harvard), and likewise in the Philippines after the American takeover in 1898 (San Beda College, Centro Escolar College, La Consolacion College). Its mystic and spiritual associations also made it an immensely popular style for funerary architecture. One of the oldest mausoleums in the Chinese Cemetery, the Dijiongco Mausoleum, probably from the mid-1920s, is executed in the Neo-

30. See Norbert Huse (Hrsg.), *Denkmalpflege: Deutsche Texte aus drei Jahrhunderten*, München: C.H. Beck Verlag, 2006, pp. 39-47.

Gothic idiom, albeit in a somewhat eclectic manner, complete with “classic” Gothic spires, gargoyles, and statuary of angels (plate 9).

An interesting “Chinese” variation of the Gothic style is the twin mausoleums of the Benching and Machuca-Gotanco families from the early 1930s. Here the classic Gothic canon of lancet windows, spires, and crabs is eclectically combined not only with neoclassical elements, but also with classic Chinese motifs, such as *Foo Dogs* guarding the entrance, a colorful frieze in *jiannian* cutwork technique that wraps around each building showing birds, and large truncated medallions in the pediments which depict trees, birds, and Chinese dragons. (Plate 10)

Art Deco

In the 1930s the construction of elaborate mausoleums went into full swing, fueled by technological and economic progress and a massive construction boom in Manila and the rest of the country. This was the time when Art Deco replaced Historism not only in the Philippines, but worldwide. Following the disaster of World War I in Europe, the old imperial dynasties of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia had collapsed, and with them the revivalist styles that embodied their rule. Social transformation and revolutions in Europe demanded a more egalitarian society, which also meant a more egalitarian architecture expressed in new and forward-looking forms. Art Deco, which emerged in the 1910s, saw its debut at the 1925 *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* in Paris. Unlike Historism, which reveled in the past, and Art Nouveau which emphasized handicrafts, Art Deco celebrates the nascent machine age and embraces technological progress and mass production. Hence its industrial-looking decor such as stylized floral ornamentation with sharp edges as if machine cut, large plain surfaces, and a high degree of abstraction. The machine age imagery is also reflected in the use of geometric forms, like trapezoids, polygons, zigzags, chevrons, and boldly staggered volumes. Other popular motifs are frozen fountains, sunbursts, and lightning. Art Deco intends to portray an ambience of luxury and glamour through the use of novel and expensive materials such as chrome, marble, plastics, and stained glass, using bright and vibrant colors. For this is also the Jazz age, with its now widespread use of electricity, radio, and neon lights.³¹

Zigzag Moderne

The early form of Art Deco is also referred to as Zigzag Moderne, named after its predominant design motif, zigzag bands and ziggurat forms inspired by ancient Sumer. Instead of copying historic styles as did Historism, Art Deco borrows freely from past “exotic” civilizations, like ancient Egypt,

31. See Lico, *Arkitekturang Filipino*, pp. 318-327.

Mesopotamia, and pre-Columbian America, as well as from vernacular and “primitive” art of Africa, Oceania and elsewhere, combining them in an eclectic mix.³²

Such influence is visible in the Li Chay Too Mausoleum from 1948, which is modeled after an Egyptian temple, complete with pylons guarding the main entrance with its Egyptian-style portico. Beyond it, a vestibule leads to the inner sanctuary (in this case, the burial chamber), as in an ancient temples. For the discovery of the tomb of Tut-Ankh-Amun in 1923 sparked worldwide attention and renewed interest in the ancient culture along the Nile, which had not seen so much scientific and popular interest since Napoleon Bonaparte’s failed campaign there in 1798. Henceforth Egyptian motifs became a mainstay especially in Art Deco funerary architecture, quite appropriate given the importance ancient Egyptians attached to the afterlife. (Plate 11)

Zigzag and chevron motives, on the other hand, dominate the marvelous Dy Buncio Mausoleum erected in 1930 for a famous businessman from Jinjiang, Fujian. It consists of a monolithic cube raised on a small platform and topped by a frieze depicting birds, which seem to carry the heavy flattened dome on their wings. The façade shows the interplay of horizontal and vertical lines typical of Art Deco: Two bands of zigzag and chevron bas-relief emphasize verticality, while grooves structure the block horizontally. Very Art Deco are the stylized urns that flank the building, and the perimeter fence made of artfully crafted grill works. (Plate 12)

Streamline Moderne

In the 1930s the Zigzag Modern style was gradually taken over by another Art Deco variation, the Streamline Moderne. It was likewise inspired by the new age of technology, but emphasized primarily speed and motion, the characteristics of the new age dawning at the horizon, when new speed records on road and rail, at sea and in the air were celebrated, and technological progress seemed unstoppable. Subsequently, designers and architects applied the forms of aerodynamics and streamlining even on buildings, using smooth wall surfaces, speed stripes, rounded corners, long horizontal lines and grooves, as well as flat roofs, all intended to express speed and movement. Also popular were maritime motifs, inspired by the huge ocean liner of the era: porthole windows, railings, nautical bridges, etc. As ornamentation largely disappeared, materials became simpler: steel, concrete, and glass, particularly glass brick walls, while colors became more monochrome: whites and beiges contrasting with dark or black tones. Art Deco quickly gained ground in the Philippines, popularized by such prolific architects as Juan Arellano (Metropolitan Theater, 1931), Andres Luna de San Pedro (Crystal Arcade, 1932), and Tomas Mapua.³³

32. Lico, *Arkitekturang Filipino*, pp. 329-340.

33. Lico, *Arkitekturang Filipino*, pp. 341-352.

However, in funerary architecture the style took on a more formal, somber and heavy mood more appropriate to the culture of mourning, as can be seen in the Go Sun Mausoleum ca. 1940. Said to have been designed by Pablo Antonio (unconfirmed) it employs the characteristic vocabulary of Art Deco: engaged columns flanking the entrance, horizontal grooves structuring the cube, and rounded niches with horizontal window bands protruding on both sides, expressing, while not exactly speed and motion, but sleekness and modernity. In front of the building and picking up its design, curving concrete bands mold into benches and tables, forming a remarkable *Gesamtkunstwerk*. (Plate 13)

As with other styles “imported” from the West, Chinese motifs sometimes found their way into Art Deco. The Lim Kong Sui Mausoleum, built around 1938, is capped by an abstracted modern version of a traditional Chinese roof with upturned edges (*dougong* 斗拱 or corbel). The stylized *dougong* is repeated atop the pilasters which flank the main entrance, creating a vertical ceremonial approach to the entrance door. The innovative design may have been copied from the former (now demolished) King’s or Asia Theater on Onping Street in Sta. Cruz (part of old Manila’s “Chinatown”) built the year before, which had a very similar façade.³⁴ While the overall material vocabulary of the mausoleum is pure Art Deco, as expressed in smooth white wall surfaces with rounded corners, extensive use of glass bricks and horizontal window bands on the sides, the *dougong* gives it a distinct Chinese touch without resorting to superficial pastiche. (Plate 14)

Modernism

The building boom of the 1930s, in the Philippines fondly remembered as “Peacetime”, was abruptly ended by World War II. Luckily, despite some fighting in the area, the northern necropolis was spared destruction during the Battle of Manila in February 1945, which reduced large parts of Manila to rubble. The erection of sophisticated mausoleums resumed in the late 1940s and 1950s. At this time Art Deco, associated with the optimism, exuberance and abundance of the pre-war era, gave way to a new and more spartan and frugal architecture more in line with the needs of a war-torn country. At the same time Modernism offered a way to leave the traumas of the past, such as colonialism, war and occupation, behind and offered a clean slate for the newly independent Philippine nation state in search of a national identity expressed in architectural terms untainted by the colonial experience.³⁵

Modernism covers a wide spectrum of architectural developments, particularly in Europe and North America starting at the beginning of the 20th century and partially running parallel to or overlapping with Art Nouveau

34. Lico, *Arkitekturang Filipino*, p. 352.

35. Lico, *Arkitekturang Filipino*, p. 365.

and Art Deco and other design trends. It gained strength and influence in the 1920s and 1930s (Bauhaus). Following the end of World War II Modernism and the closely related International Style would start their triumphant march around the globe. Some of its main protagonists were Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe and Walter Gropius in Europe, and Frank Lloyd Wright and Louis Sullivan in the USA.

Like Art Deco, to which it is closely related, Modernism grew out of the critique of the many forms of revivalism and its “pastiche” architecture, and sought new forms of architectural expression in line with modern developments in construction technology, industrial production, and social change towards a more equitable society. It sought to completely break with traditional forms of architecture and urban planning, replacing them with radical new approaches. Architecture was supposed to be “honest,” that is, its structural design was to be easily readable, and the natural appearance of materials was to be visible instead of being clad or concealed. Forms were to be simple, straightforward and clear, albeit both rectangular “box-shaped” and highly organic designs were common.³⁶

The new architectural paradigm is evident in the Chinese cemetery: All revivalist styles abruptly disappeared after the war, and Art Deco merged into Modernism in the 1950s, as evident in the mausoleum of the Gochecos, a family engaged in real estate construction, where the aerodynamic forms of Streamline Moderne now blended with the more plain wall surfaces and the thin concrete roofs inspired by classic Modernism in a transitional style typical of the 1950s. (Plate 15)

Space-Age Design

The 1950s and 1960s were an immensely optimistic age. Having left the ruins of war behind, people looked expectantly towards the future, when breakthrough achievements in science promised a brave new world. This was the space age, when rocket science enabled space travel; man raced to the moon; and the power of the atom was unleashed. Airplanes replaced ocean-liners and an all-encompassing car culture emerged. The new age found artistic and architectural expression in innovative and exciting new structures employing space age imagery, such as paraboloid shapes (as seen in Cesar Concio’s Chapel of the Risen Lord, UP Diliman, 1956), ultra-thin concrete shells (masterly executed in Leandro Locsin’s UFO-like Chapel of the Holy Sacrifice, UP Diliman, built in 1955), folded plates, curvilinear forms, boomerang shapes, starbursts, and dramatically upsweeping concrete roofs.³⁷ The new idiom must have inspired the design of funerary architecture

36. Lico, *Arkitekturang Filipino*, pp. 371-374.

37. Lico, *Arkitekturang Filipino*, pp. 406-420.

in the Chinese Cemetery as a number of futuristic mausoleums exhibit or at least hint at similar adaptations, albeit more restrained in line with the solemn nature of the building. (Plates 16-18)

Classic Modernism/Bauhaus

Classic Modernism at its best: The Saez-Coguanco Mausoleum is a rectangular box, devoid of any ornamentation and accentuated by a similarly minimalist tower structured only by black and white vertical planes and a simple cross. It espouses Modernist dogma that famously decried the use of any kind of ornamentation (“Ornament is Crime,” Adolf Loos) and imposed the dictum of “Form Follows Function” (Louis Sullivan) and “Less is More” (Mies van der Rohe). (Plate 19) “Tropical Modernism” best describes this mausoleum with a curving plain façade structured only by vertical sun-breakers called *brise-soleil*.³⁸ (Plate 20) This Modernist design, with purist white walls flanking a steel-and-glass curtain-wall façade and topped by a massive protruding canopy is in line with the age of mass production, when preferred materials such as glass, steel and concrete were to be industrially and cheaply mass-produced. (Plate 21) As espoused by Modernism, the beauty of these structures lies solely in their well-balanced proportions and careful composition.

Again in some cases designers managed to give classic Modernist a distinct Chinese twist. In this mausoleum a plain modernist design is crowned by an abstract version of a *dougong* roof of the kind previously seen in the Art Deco Lim Kong Sui Mausoleum, thus successfully merging Western and Eastern design ideas into a harmonious whole. (Plate 22)

An interesting approach was chosen by the architect of this mausoleum: while formally applying modernist purity he turned the whole building into a giant version of the Chinese character “lín”/ “lín 林,” a popular Chinese family name, and the name of the mausoleum. (Plate 23)

Apparently inspired by Leandro Locsin’s Cultural Center of the Philippines (1966-1969) is this interesting mausoleum, another example of how artistic developments outside the cemetery, in this case Brutalism, a variation of Modernism popular from the 1950s to the 1970s, have profound influence on those inside it, and how they are interpreted and adapted to the spacial and functional requirements of funerary architecture. (Plate 24)

38. Lico, *Arkitekturang Filipino*, p. 429.

Post-Modernism

In reaction to the supposed banality and monotony of Modernist doctrine³⁹ Post-Modernism emerged in the 1960s and gained ground globally in the 1980s. At that time, the great optimistic utopias of Modernism (Socialism, Rationality) of the 50s and 60s had given way to disillusionment, while the postindustrial society and Globalization started to take hold. Devoid of rigid dogma, Postmodernism promoted artistic plurality and freedom, where architectural ornamentation and symbols made a glorious return. But unlike Historism, Postmodernism does not dictate the catalogue-like academic application of historical styles, but is a free-for-all, joy- and colorful and often loud eclectic mix, a combination of a wide variety of past styles and forms from all over the globe with various subcurrents, such as Critical Regionalism and Neo-vernacular. Architectural tradition is not to be overcome, as in Modernist dogma, but to be freely and sometimes ironically cited at will, with or without actual function. In celebrating the “decorated shed” as hailed by Venturi-Scott-Brown, “form follows fiction” (Bernard Tschumi). The new style quickly found favor in the Philippines, where the notion of *horror vacui* (Zialcita) led to the ready and generous application of *décor* in everyday architecture.⁴⁰ Funerary architecture is no exception, as seen in more recent mausoleums within the Chinese cemetery. (Plates 25-26)

Mausoleums Inspired by Chinese Traditional Architecture

Apart from Western models, the Chinese Cemetery is characterized by a large number of mausoleums in a variety of forms inspired by traditional Chinese architecture, whose origins date back four millennia. It is guided by cosmological principles and geomancy, commonly known as *fengshui*. Based on the belief in immanence (the divine being manifested in the material world), great importance is attached to the cardinal directions, natural formations (e.g., mountains, lakes, the sea), and overall harmony and balance in order to reflect the cosmic order. This importance attached to universal harmony is seen in the “Hall of Supreme Harmony,” which together with the neighboring “Hall of Central Harmony” and “Hall of Preserving Harmony,” forms the heart of the Imperial Palace in Beijing. It symbolizes the natural, irrevocable, and strictly hierarchical cosmic order of society with the emperor at the helm, as proclaimed by the teachings of Chinese philosopher Confucius (551 – 479 BC). Hence, urban layout, size and form of buildings were regulated according to class and social status.⁴¹

39. See Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, New York: Vintage Books, 1961.

40. See Lico, *Arkitekturang Filipino*, pp. 495-504.

41. See Laurence G. Liu, *Chinese Architecture*, New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1989, pp. 27-39.

Buildings are typically rectangular and erected on raised platforms. Wood is commonly used as building material, but brick and stone as well as compacted earth are likewise widespread. Wooden post-and-lintel systems in particular are commonly used due to their good earthquake-resistant properties, and, prominently displayed and emphasized, are an important element of artistic expression.

Architecturally, emphasis is on the roof, rather than walls. The massive floating tile roofs are carried by a sophisticated system of wooden corbels (*dougong*). Characteristic are the sweeping curvatures of the often multi-tiered and multi-inclined roof, while the distinctive up-bent ridges are often elaborately decorated with ceramic figures such as stylized dragons, animals, birds and foliage.

Decorative elements such as guardian statues, *foo dogs* (actually lions), and dragons also have important symbolic meaning, as do symbols of good luck, such as certain fruits and animals. Finally, there is the important significance of numbers (especially “lucky numbers”), and of basic colors such as (imperial) yellow, red (vitality and wealth, but also power and fortune), green (longevity), and blue (heaven).

This formal canon of traditional Chinese architecture has remained largely unchanged until the end of the empire in 1911, and had much influence on the architectural evolution in Vietnam, Korea, and Japan. It is not only applied to Buddhist and Taoist temples, but occasionally also for mosques and even Christian churches.

Given the vastness of China and its many, very different landscapes, geologies, and climates, there are many regional styles and local variations, such as the *tulou* 土樓 (round residential fortress of the Hakka people). With the emergence of a significant diaspora especially in Southeast Asia, contact with the West led to newly built forms during the colonial era, such as the Chinese shop house of the Baba Nyonya in the Malacca Straits settlements.⁴²

Courtyard-style

Some or all of the above characteristics have been adopted for funerary design and are present in Chinese-style tombs inside the Manila Chinese Cemetery. A good example of the courtyard-type is the Ongche Mausoleum, probably from around 1936. Following the construction principles of wooden structures, but actually executed in concrete, it is an ensemble of three buildings in an axial, processional order: an entrance gate at the front, an open pavilion in the center, and the enclosed burial chamber at the end. The latter is decorated in Fujian style with a swallowtail roof and circular and rectangular windows with stylized Chinese characters as grills. The sharply bent roof eaves of the clay tile roofs are adorned with elaborate scrolls in filigree, multicolored

42. See Khoo Su Nin, *Streets of Georgetown, Penang*, Penang: Janus Print & Resources, 2001, pp. 18-20.

cutwork. (Plate 27) Also noteworthy is the Go Kong Wee Mausoleum from the same era. Likewise executed in concrete it is accessed by a “Moon Gate,” a popular motif in Chinese landscape architecture. The one-story cube is crowned by a curved tile roof, whose edges are marked by concrete dragon heads. Curved steps leading to the grilled gate echo the curved shape of the gate. The compound is surrounded by a highly ornate fence made of concrete posts with artfully crafted metal grills in between depicting a radiating sun. (Plate 28)

Pagoda-style

Another traditional building type popularly used for funerary architecture is the pagoda. Many small versions have sprung up, such as the Dy Her Chan Mausoleum from 1933: a pagoda “en miniature,” with a three-tiered tile roof above the burial chamber. Unlike most pagodas in China, whose footprint is octagonal, this one is square, as common in older Chinese towers. Like most Chinese-style mausoleums, ornamentation is elaborate: ornate brackets, between which stretch painted filigree reliefs, carry sharply bent roof edges where stylized dragons wind up and down. The small foo dogs guarding the entrance to the mausoleum symbolize strength and power. (Plate 29) A more recent and monumental version of the “tower style” is the Yu Chu Mausoleum (also known as Regal Mausoleum) in a newer part of the cemetery, one of its largest.

An interesting blend between “East” and “West” can be observed in the monumental Dee Ching Chuan Mausoleum built in 1941, and arguably the grandest of the many elaborate mausoleums in the Chinese Cemetery. It is the final resting place of Dee Cheng Chuan (1888-1940), born in Fujian, co-founder of China Banking Corporation (commonly called China Bank), and a leading anti-Japanese activist. Here is an interesting combination of Art Deco, as seen in the massing and corner and window articulation of the three-story tower, and Chinese motifs, such as the crowning two-tiered tile roof with traditional ornamentation and detailing. Imperial China appears to have been the guiding design motif, as many elements of the series of terraces forming the forecourt resemble those of the Forbidden City in Beijing. Chinese symbols proliferate, such as carps (prosperity), dragons (imperial power), and elephants (strength). The allusion to imperial China continues inside, where a three-story-high mural depicts dragons, clouds, and the Temple of Heaven in Beijing. (Plate 30)

Turtle Tombs

More in line with the tombs of other Chinese cemeteries in Southeast Asia are the turtleback tombs, of which a handful can be found along the western edge of the cemetery. Unlike Indonesia and Malaysia where they are common in the Philippines, they are the exception.

Turtle tombs which originate from South Fujian Province consist of an unroofed burial mound in the shape of a tortoise back, enclosed by a low omega-shaped wall with a stele in the center. While the turtle-shaped tumulus at the back symbolizes longevity and the shape of the universe, the surrounding wall forms an artificial ridge, to protect the grave from dangerous winds, as prescribed by *fengshui* principles.⁴³ (Plates 31)

However, even this very traditional type of tomb can be given an unexpected twist in line with the syncretism which so much characterizes Tsinoy religious beliefs, as seen in the case of the Go Mausoleum from the 1950s. Here, a Christian basilica, complete with dome and twin tower façade, has been superimposed on a traditional turtleback tomb. The eclectic, but principally neo-baroque chapel thus combines design elements of the Baroque (curving balcony, niches, scrolls, twin columns), the Greco-Roman world (meander frieze, ionic capitals, pediment), and even the Islamic realm (Moorish windows) with those from mainland China, representative of the adaptability of the Tsinoy to their new chosen homeland and their ready willingness to follow new fads and fashions, while still holding on to cherished beliefs and rituals brought along from their Chinese homeland. (Plate 32)

South Fujian-Style

With almost all the ancestors of today's Tsinoy having originally migrated from South Fujian Province (through the port of Xiamen, known as Amoy in Minnan dialect), a few mausoleums in Manila adopted the traditional architecture of their places of origin. A particularly beautiful example is the Basa Mausoleum, dating from the 1940s, which resembles a 19th-century South Fujian temple "en miniature." Apart from its characteristic swallowtail roof, the mausoleum is outstanding for its artful *jiannian* ceramic cutworks on the front façade. Made of multi-colored glazed shards cut to shape and carefully inserted into a filigree and colorful mosaic, they depict flowers, trees, birds, animals, and human figures. Apart from Southern China and Taiwan, *jiannian* art is commonly found in the Chinese communities in the Straits Settlements, namely Malacca, Penang and Singapore, where they adorn elaborately decorated temples, clan halls (Khoo Kongsi, Penang) and even private residences (Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion, Penang). As pointed out by Claudine Salmon, epigraphic records indicate that the craftsmen executing these craftworks were generally hired in China. (Plate 33)

Another example of the South Fujian-style was the Chong Hock Tong temple erected in 1878⁴⁴, a small building with a central sky well surrounded by open galleries and covered with a swallowtail roof crowned by dragons.

43. See Jan Jacob M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, Leyden: E. J. Brill, 1892, III, p. 941.

44. De Viana, *Three Centuries of Binondo Architecture, 1594-1898*, p. 100.

Here again is an outstanding example of the synthesis of East and West so characteristic of Tsinoy syncretic religious belief and practice: a combination of a Catholic chapel with a Chinese temple. The Christian denomination was evident by the cross atop the two stone *campanarios* (bell towers) built in the Baroque style, which flanked the main hall. Inside the temple, Christian *santos* and crucifixes stand on the central altar side-by-side with the Taoist God of Death and Buddhist images. At the same time the temple honors outstanding deceased members of the Chinese community, such as Don Carlos Palanca, and serves the last rites for the dead.⁴⁵ Most important is its role in ancestor worship so central to Chinese identity, as expressed in prayer and the burning of incense and of paper-made objects (cars, appliances, money) for use by the ancestors in the otherworld.

The eclectic architecture of the temple, expressive of its ecumenical and syncretic nature, was already diminished in the 1950s, when the bell towers were replaced with more “Chinese-looking” ones along the lines of traditional Chinese architecture. In February 2015 the temple was demolished, to be replaced by a stronger and larger one, supposedly to be built by artisans from Taiwan. Hopefully the new temple will retain what has made the old one so unique, namely its peculiar Filipino-Chinese eclecticism and multi-denominationalism, instead of becoming an ordinary and interchangeable “Chinese-style” temple as many others in the worldwide Chinese diaspora. (Plate 34)

A similar concern was voiced by Teresita Ang See, founder of the Tsinoy civic organisation “Kaisa Foundation” in connection with the new Filipino-Chinese Friendship Arch which was opened with great fanfare in July the same year in Binondo. The arch’s inscription reads *Zhongguo cheng* (lit. “Chinatown”) rather than *huaren qu* (“Chinese people district”), implying that Binondo is “just” an outpost of mainland China, rather than a Filipino-Chinese district with a distinct culture, identity and history. As Ang See explains: “Where else can you see *hopia* [bean paste-filled pastry] that is *ube* [purple yam] in flavor or chiffon cakes sold side by side Chinese steam buns? Binondo is unique in its blending and that is what should be celebrated instead.” And “cultural street worker” Ivan Man Dy adds: “Binondo was born out of 400 years of interaction between Chinese, Filipino, Spanish and other culture that have touch [sic] our shores in the last 400 years.”⁴⁶

45. *100 Anniversary Souvenir Book 1877–1977*, Manila: Philippine-Chinese Charitable Association Inc., 1978, pp. 23–25.

46. Anson Yu, “Manila unveils world’s largest Chinatown arch in Binondo, but local Chinese Filipinos are not happy,” *Coconuts Manila*, June 24, 2015, <http://manila.coconuts.co/2015/06/24/manila-unveils-worlds-largest-chinatown-arch-binondo-local-chinese-are-not-happy>

Syncretism and Hybridization

The hybridity seen in Manila Chinese Cemetery architecture and especially the Chong Hock Tong temple exemplifies an underlying syncretism of religious beliefs. Hybridity refers to the separation of forms from existing practices and the recombination with new forms into new practices.⁴⁷ The definition of the concept of hybridity includes “borrowing,” “mixing,” and “translating.” It first developed from a biological model focusing on miscegenation and then shifted to a linguistic model stressing the potential of a hybrid counter-culture.⁴⁸ Pieterse (1995) argues that hybridity involves a wide-ranging, profound historical process of cultural intermingling so that what is being hybridized was already hybrid, and therefore there are no pure, authentic, uncontaminated cultures. Since no culture remains unaffected by the global flows of people, ideas, and products, the notion of cultural hybridity is significant for the cultural evolution of the Chinese in the Philippines, for it is through this process of borrowings and appropriations that cultures evolve over time.

As Kristine A. Muñoz and Catherine C. Reodique point out,⁴⁹ Chinese polytheism and Philippine-style Catholicism have quite a number of elements in common, such as the belief in an afterlife, the tradition of visiting the graves on certain days of the year and offering or consuming food there (All Souls Day, *Qingming* Festival), or the similarity between the Virgin Mary and the Chinese goddess Mazu and Guan Yin.⁵⁰ Also common are the belief in omnipresent spirits, superstition, and the intercession of saints or deities in heaven.⁵¹ Conversion and religious syncretism was facilitated by the relative tolerance and receptiveness of Philippine culture in combination with Chinese adaptability and religious beliefs where Chinese religious concepts and practices and foreign ones can easily co-exist side-by-side, overlay, or even blend effortlessly with one another.⁵² Moreover, Chinese pragmatism facilitated

47. See Jan Nederveen Pieterse, “Globalization as Hybridization,” in: M. Featherstone, S. Lash and R. Robertson (eds.), *Global Modernities*, London: Sage, 1995, pp. 45-68.

48. See Andreas Ackermann, “Cultural Hybridity: Between Metaphor and Empiricism,” in: P.W. Stockhammer (ed.), *Conceptualizing Cultural Hybridization*, Berlin/Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag, 2012, pp. 5-25.

49. See Kristine A. Muñoz and Catherine C. Reodique, “Buhay Chinoy, Bahay Chinoy: A study on Religious Acculturation in Contemporary Filipino-Chinese Homes,” in: *Espasyó: Journal of Philippine Architecture and Allied Arts*, vol. 2 (2010), Manila: National Commission for Culture and the Arts, pp. 99-105.

50. See Teresita Ang See and Go Bon Juan, “Religious Syncretism among the Chinese in the Philippines,” in Teresita Ang See (ed.), *The Chinese in the Philippines: Problems and Perspectives*, vol. 1, Manila: Kaisa Para Sa Kaunlaran Inc., 1997, as cited by Muñoz and Reodique, “Buhay Chinoy, Bahay Chinoy,” p. 102.

51. See J.B. Yu, 2000, “Inculturation of Filipino-Chinese Culture Mentality” as cited by Muñoz and Reodique, *Op. cit.*, p. 101.

52. See Ira Hubert Reynolds, “Acculturation of Chinese in Ilocos,” as cited by Muñoz and Reodique, *Op. cit.*, p. 102.

such assimilation and integration, especially conversion to Catholicism, to seek social, political, and especially economic advantages within the colonial society.⁵³ Hence, as Muñoz and Reodique observe, it is common for Tsinoy to visit both Catholic church and Chinese temple, to consult *fengshui* masters and Catholic priests, to observe both Catholic and Chinese holidays, to marry in Western-style but be buried with Chinese rites, and above all, to retain the all-important ancestor worship.⁵⁴ Thus, Christian *santos* (saints) and Chinese deities, surrounded by incense stick, candles and good-luck symbols, can be found co-existing side-by-side, not only in temples and chapels, as the Chong Hock temple inside the Chinese cemetery or the Chinese temple in Sta. Ana, Manila, but also in the private homes of many, if not most Filipino-Chinese.⁵⁵

Given that most cultures of Southeast Asia are characterized by a high degree of cultural fusion/hybridity and cultural influences (primarily from China, the Indian subcontinent, and a series of Western colonial powers), why has a Western-style mausoleum culture developed in the Philippines, but apparently not in the rest of the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia? As explained by Ivan Man Dy during his 'Old Manila Walks' on the cemetery, for once, this may have to do with the hot tropical climate and torrential rains in the Philippines, which necessitated the protection by roofs during All Souls Day (the Chinese equivalent of All Souls day is the *Qingming* Festival/Ancestors Day) when the family would spend the whole day at the graves of their deceased loved ones. And indeed, photos of the cemetery during the early 20th century show many of the tombs covered with simple roof structures. From here, it was only a relatively short step to adopting a full mausoleum style. However, apart from purely practical considerations, there may have been a number of other reasons.

The mausoleum culture of the Chinese Cemetery does not stand in isolation, but can be found in similar form on the neighboring La Loma Cemetery and Cementerio del Norte. Here too can be found the grandiose tombs of the former (and current) political, social and economical elite of Philippine society, typically made up of mestizo families with combined Chinese, Malay, and Spanish ancestry.

As noted scholar Fernando Zialcita points out, contrary to popular prejudice which likes to accuse them of being reclusive and separate from Philippine mainstream society, the Chinese in the Philippines actually appear to be far better integrated into their host society than other Chinese diasporas in Southeast Asia. Zialcita attributes this to the policy of the early Spanish colonial administration, which, contrary to commonly-held belief (which assumes a colonial policy of racial segregation), actually encouraged mixed

53. Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, p. 16.

54. Muñoz and Reodique, "Buhay Chinoy, Bahay Chinoy," p. 102.

55. Muñoz and Reodique, *Op. cit.*, pp. 102-103.

marriages, in the Philippines as much as in their “New-World” possessions of Mexico and Peru. What really mattered to Spain was first and foremost the conversion of the natives to the Catholic faith.⁵⁶ This deeper integration into the colonial host society is visible in Filipino-Chinese material culture, which not only more easily integrated into mainstream society, but in turn also heavily influenced it. In architecture this influence is best exemplified by the *bahay na bato* (lit. “House of Stone”), the quintessential Filipino-Hispanic urban house during the colonial era, which developed in the 17th century on Philippine soil and integrates Austronesian, Spanish, and Chinese and Japanese building traditions.⁵⁷

Conclusion

The Chinese Cemetery in Manila is unusual in Southeast Asia in that here developed a distinct mausoleum architecture uncommon in other Southeast Asian countries where large Chinese diasporas exist. There, Chinese funeral architecture follows traditional mainland China models such as closely spaced memorial steles, tumulus tombs, and/or Fujian-style turtleback tombs, often built into a slope for better protection.⁵⁸ Such can be found in cities like Jakarta, Indonesia, where the Petamburan Christian Cemetery contains many Chinese tombs, but only a handful of mausoleums (like that of Khouw Oen Giok), while the Chinese cemetery of Lasem in Java contains excellent examples of turtleback tombs. Chinese cemeteries in Thailand follow the same pattern, as seen in Bangkok’s Teochew, Tae Chio, and Silom Road cemeteries or on the island of Phuket. In the Straits Settlements Chinese cemeteries likewise follow mainland China models, as seen in the historic Bukit China in Malacca, the 19th-century cemeteries of Batu Lanchang (1805) and Mount Erskine (1842) in Penang, and Singapore’s Bukit Brown Chinese Cemetery (before 1833). Other examples are the old Kwong Tong Cemetery in Kuala Lumpur, founded in 1895, or the more recent Cheras Cemetery.⁵⁹

In contrast, in Manila emerged a well-developed mausoleum architecture at the beginning of the 20th century, executed in a variety of Western and Chinese styles. Such mausoleums are not confined to the Manila Chinese

56. Personal communication with F. N. Zialcita. See also Wickberg *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, pp. 8, 15, 18, 41.

57. See Fernando N. Zialcita, *Authentic but Not Exotic: Essays on Filipino Identity*, Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2005, pp. 283-294.

58. De Groot, *The Religious System of China*, p. 941.

59. On the former Hawthornden Plantation (now part of the Ministry of Defense compound) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, can be found an unusual mausoleum in the form of a pagoda, containing the tomb of Loke Yew (1845-1917), a business magnate and philanthropist. However, such mausoleums are apparently the exception, rather than the rule, in both Malaysia and Indonesia.

Cemetery, but can also be found in neighboring Norte and La Loma and in provincial cemeteries.

With the emergence of a new type of cemetery design came a new way of commemorating and honoring the dead in sumptuous and elaborate mausoleums in all architectural styles of the past two centuries. The mausoleums that arose were as much an expression of the hybrid and syncretic nature of the Philippine's Tsinoy culture as they embodied the desire of mestizos and Chinese to express newfound wealth and status in Philippine society. The differing paths of the Chinese diaporas in Insular Southeast Asia shaped by fundamentally different colonial policies and the decisive role of the resulting mestizo community led to a specific Tsinoy culture in the Philippines noticeably different from those in Malaysia and Indonesia.

The history of Manila's cemeteries, like that of its elite and middle-class, is characterized by an ever-continuing out-migration further and further away from the heart of the city, prompted by an ever expanding and densifying metropolis. Where during Spanish times burials were right in the center of the community, namely inside the parish churches and the churchyards surrounding them, since the 18th and 19th century they were relegated for sanitary reasons to more remote sites at safe distance from human settlements, such as Paco Cemetery, Balic-Balic Cemetery in Sampaloc, or Cementerio de Binondo in La Loma. When at the turn of the previous century the rapidly growing city had caught up with these new cemeteries, they again were closed in the 1910s and 1920s for the same sanitary concerns, this time by the new US-colonial administration, and again moved outwards, giving rise to the North Cemetery in La Loma and its equivalent, the South Cemetery in Makati. A hundred years later, the ever-sprawling city has long engulfed even these then far-away sites and spilled their living human load into them. With continuing population growth and development pressure in the La Loma area, it is foreseeable that economic pressure and sanitary concerns (or pretexts) may again push for the closure and relocation of the three cemeteries that form the northern necropolis. As elaborated in the preceding paragraphs, this would spell a tremendous loss for the architectural heritage not only of Manila, but the whole Philippines in general, and, with regard to the Filipino-Chinese community, its Tsinoy heritage and identity in particular. Experiences in other Southeast Asian megacities, such as Jakarta, and Bangkok where the historic value of the recently demolished Silom Road Cemetery proved no obstacle to infrastructure development (in this case a new highway)⁶⁰, and Manila's own history over the past 150 years have shown that this is indeed a very possible scenario. As experience has also shown, even declaration as a historic site by government agencies is not always a guarantee for sustained preservation.

60. "Removing the Silom cemeteries 2000-2004," June 20, 2004, *2Bangkok.com*, <http://2bangkok.com/2bangkok-buildings-cemetery-cemetery.html>

Especially when a site is perceived by the general public to be decayed and neglected, public support for its preservation quickly dwindle. In this regard, the Chinese Cemetery administration's policy of not allowing maintenance of tombs if association dues are not paid, as sound as it may be in economic terms, is risky with regard to the cemetery's overall public perception, and potentially problematic with regard to its built heritage, moreover as none of the historic mausoleums inside are currently declared as a protected site by any national agency such as the NHCP, NCCA, or National Museum.

However, the cemetery administration must be praised for so far having managed to keep the cemetery very clean and orderly, and above all, accessible and safe for visitors and tourists alike due to tight security and supervision. With regard to its architectural heritage and the Tsinoy identity embedded in it, it is to be hoped that newly growing wider public interest in historic sites may extend to this irreplaceable repository of the Philippines' past. Recently emerged and fast-growing facebook groups such as "Manila Nostalgia," "Pearl of the Orient: Discover Old Philippines;" and especially "Sementeryo: Heritage Cemeteries of the Philippines" which for a few years has aimed to spread interest in Philippine funerary architecture, nowadays quickly spread heritage awareness and advocacy at the click of a mouse, and give hope for the future. So do the regular heritage walking tours conducted by dedicated cultural workers such as Ivan Man Dy and his "Old Manila Walks,"⁶¹ who among others frequently organizes tours of the Chinese Cemetery and Binondo. For his/her built heritage, be they houses, temples, churches or mausoleums, is witness to and evidence of the Tsinoy's firm rootedness in Philippine soil.

61. See www.oldmanilawalks.com

Plates 1-3 – “Mansions” for the elite (top), “townhouses” for the middle class (middle), and “condominiums” for the less fortunate (bottom). (Photos: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 4 – Spanish-colonial: Tomb of Pilar Tiaoqui de Lim-Tuaco. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 5 – Bahay na bato – inspired: Tomb of Tiu. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 6 – Neo-Classicism: Yu Chan Seh Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 7 – Modern Neo-Classicism: Sy Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 8 – Neo-Renaissance: Tambunting Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 9 – Neo-Gothic/Eclectic: Dijiongeo Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 10 – Chinese Neo-Gothic: Benching Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 11 – Art Deco/Egyptian: Li Chay Too Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 12 – Art Deco/Ziggurat: Dy Buncio Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 13 – Art Deco/Streamline Moderne: Go Sun Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 14 – Chinese Art Deco: Lim Kong Sui Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 15 – Art Deco/Modernism: Gocheco Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plates 16-18 – Space-age Design: (Photos: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 19 – Chinese” Modernism. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 20 – Tropical Modernism: Tan Tiong Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 21 – Classic Modernism. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 22 – Bauhaus Modernism: Saez Co Cuanco Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 23 – Architectural writing: Lin Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 24 – Brutalism: Cultural Center of the Philippines "en miniature." (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plates 25-26 – Post-Modernism. (Photos: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 27 – Courtyard-style: Ongche Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 28 – Courtyard-style: Go Kong Wee Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 29 – Pagoda-style: Dy Her Chan Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 30 – Chinese Art Deco: Dee Cheng Chuan Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plates 31 – Turtle Tombs. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 32 – Architectural Syncretism: Go Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 33 – South Fujian-Style: Basa Mausoleum. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)

Plate 34 – South Fujian-Style: Chong Hock Tong Temple. (Photo: Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), Ateneo de Manila University)