

Internment Notices in Newspaper Published in Cebu, Philippines: A Source for Chinese Bio-Profiles.

Gyo MIYABARA

Deputy Director, Associate Professor, Global Collaboration Center
Osaka University

Abstract

This paper will review the collection of interment notices in several local newspapers published in Cebu, which dates back to 1960's, and will discuss the bio-profiles of Chinese residents.

The interment notices are from several newspapers published in Cebu; the Cebu Daily News, and the Republic Daily, the Sun Star Daily, the Freeman and so on, which are part of the collection of the Cebuano Studies Center, University of San Carlos. These newspapers are covering a certain period from 1950's to 1990's with some unavailability.

To deliver an interment notice in a newspaper is a common custom among residents in Cebu. We can find plenty of "Chinese names" in the massive data collected from notices, although it is inevitably ad hoc one.

With reviewing the collection of interment notices, I will focus two aspects for questioning the demographic implications of notices. Firstly, I will discuss how can we find "Chinese ethnicity" as the subject of the notices. The data includes "Chinese" interment notices as well as "non-Chinese" one. However, "Chinese" in this place cannot be presumed as a bounded social entity or category, even though we need an operational definition. The range of "Chinese ethnicity" must be discovered through over-viewing the data. Secondly, the author will examine family structure, which the collection shows. Every notice includes the name and the age of the deceased, the date of deceased, and the names of the family and in-laws. The collection of these data will show the long-term tendency of life expectancy, birth rate, and the gender gap as well as consanguineous and affined relationship among people. These data will also show preferable first names in each decade, and some cases that illustrate the supplementary sharing letter among the same generation of consanguine family.

Although the collection of the interment notices is useful, there are several limitations. Finally, I will point out the unstable and unsorted feature of the data, and the method for combining various sets of data into the overlook of demographic feature. I will also discuss the connection between an anthropological fieldwork and these data, which can be introduced to ethnographical reflections for studies on "Chinese Overseas."