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# ARCHITECTURAL STYLES AND IDENTITIES IN HONG KONG:

## THE CHINESE AND WESTERN DESIGNS FOR ST TERESA'S CHURCH IN KOWLOON TONG, 1928–32

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### ABSTRACT

In 1928, the Dutch monk-artist Fr Adelbert Gresnigt was asked to make sketches for the new parish church of St Teresa's in Kowloon Tong, which would become the Catholic monument of the new urban developments of the British colony. He sketched a Chinese-style church and a Western style one. The former was promoted by Mgr Celso Costantini in the context of the sinicisation of the Catholic Church in China, but the latter was finally chosen by the Portuguese parishioners and benefactors, who were not concerned with Catholic inculturation. At the crossing of Prince Edward Road and Waterloo Road, they preferred to see a tower like St Mark's Campanile of Venice rather than a Chinese pagoda.

The article contextualises St Teresa's church in the 'Catholic cluster' of Kowloon Tong in the 1930s, where Italian, French and American missionaries built schools, residences and a hospital in different styles that expressed their national identities. Furthermore, the article sheds new light on the authorship of St Teresa's plans and on the role of the Belgian company Crédit Foncier d'Extrême-Orient and architect Gabriel Van Wylick in the real estate investments of Catholic missionary societies.

## KEYWORDS

Architecture, Hong Kong, Kowloon, Catholic Church, Religious identities, Interwar period, Crédit Foncier d'Extrême-Orient

## 香港的建築風格及面貌：1928-32 年間，為九龍塘聖德肋撒堂繪畫的中式及西式設計

高曼士 及 何培斌

### 摘要

1928 年，荷蘭籍本篤會士兼藝術家葛斯利神父受託為擬建的九龍塘聖德肋撒教堂繪畫建築草圖，這所堂區新教堂將要成為英國殖民地新市區發展中天主教會的標誌建築。他草畫了一座中式及一座西式教堂。在天主教會中國本地化的背景下，前者備受剛恆毅蒙席所推崇，然而，葡萄牙藉的堂區教友及捐助人卻並不在乎天主教本位化的問題，最終選擇了後者。他們較希望在位於太子道與窩打老道的交界處，看到一座貌似威尼斯聖馬可鐘樓的建築，而不想要一座中式寶塔。

本文把聖德肋撒堂置於 1930 年代九龍塘一帶的「天主教建築群」中，期間意大利、法國、美國的傳教士在此處築建學校、宿舍及醫院，風格各異，各自都反映著其國家的面貌。此外，本文也重新闡述聖德肋撒堂設計圖作者的身份，及比利時義品地產公司和建築師王威烈在天主教傳教會的房產投資上所扮演的角色。

### 關鍵詞

建築、香港、九龍、天主教會、宗教特性、兩戰期間、義品地產公司

On Sunday 18 December 1932, Mgr Enrico Valtorta, vicar apostolic of Hong Kong, solemnly blessed and dedicated the new church of St Teresa's in Kowloon Tong. The most prominent Catholics of the colony—diplomats, diocesan clergy, missionary societies, Catholic schools and parishioners—attended the ceremony. Prior to unlocking the door, the bishop publicly thanked the people involved in the design, construction and financing of the works:

The building of this Church is an act of Faith and also an act of great generosity ... Thanks are due to the Rev. Father Spada and his committee and I say that but for them there would have been no Church for us to open today. Thanks are also due to the Professor of Architecture at the Catholic University of Peking, Father Gresnigt, who sent a sketch of the church, and to M. Van Wylick, of the Crédit Foncier, for making out the plans from the sketch, and to M.J. Guérineau for the constructional engineering plans. Thanks also are due to the contractors, Mei On and Co. ....<sup>1</sup>

The bishop's quote attributes unequivocally the design of the church to the Dutch Benedictine monk Adelbert Gresnigt and the Belgian architect Gabriel Van Wylick. The full speech was reported in the *Evening Post*, and later in some publications about St Teresa's church.<sup>2</sup> This attribution is repeated by most architectural historians and internet sites.<sup>3</sup>

In a previous article, we have analysed the pioneering role of Fr Gresnigt as promotor of the Sino-Christian style and designer of the South China Regional Seminary in Aberdeen, 1927–31.<sup>4</sup> Further research on Fr Gresnigt and Gabriel Van Wylick revealed that the two men did not collaborate and that the plans of St Teresa's church were finally drawn by a Hongkong man named Joseph Chanatong. Van Wylick, indeed, signed the plans only to oblige both Chanatong, who was not an authorised architect, and Catholic business partners in Kowloon. This raises several questions that the present article will try to answer and contextualise.

Why did Mgr Valtorta mention that Van Wylick made the plans of St Teresa's from the sketch of Fr Gresnigt? What do we know about Fr Gresnigt's sketch; was it Chinese or Western style? How influential were the benefactors, mostly Portuguese or Macanese Catholics, in the choice of the design of their parish church? What was the role of the Belgian-French company Crédit-Foncier d'Extrême-Orient (C.F.E.O.) in Catholic construction business in Hong Kong?

Investigations in public and private archives in Hong Kong and Belgium,<sup>5</sup> will help us to understand certain mechanisms related to the foundation of a new parish, the financing of a church building, and how architectural style expressed identity in Hong Kong's cosmopolitan 1930s' colony.

## THE 'CATHOLIC CLUSTER' OF KOWLOON TONG<sup>6</sup>

In 1860, the southern part of Kowloon Peninsula was ceded to Great Britain by the Qing dynasty. Northern Kowloon, i.e. the vast area north of Boundary Street to the foot of Lion's Rock Mountain, was leased to the British in 1898 for 99 years as part of the New Territories. The urban development of Kowloon started around 1900 and a first Catholic parish was founded in Tsim Sha Tsui for the Portuguese, who moved from Hong Kong Island. Rosary Church, built 1903–05 on Chatham Road South, became the core of a 'Catholic cluster' including parish buildings and schools. The Italian Canossian Daughters of Charity founded St Mary's College for girls in 1900, and the Brothers of the Christian Schools opened a school for boys in 1917.

Kowloon's urbanisation increased rapidly after the opening of the Kowloon-Canton railway in 1910.<sup>7</sup> The Chinese village of Kowloon Tong, north of Boundary Street, was relocated and a garden city for Europeans was built west of Waterloo Road in 1922–25.<sup>8</sup> South of Boundary Street, Prince Edward Road was established as a main axis connecting the districts of Mongkok and Kowloon City. From 1927 to 1934, the Belgian company *Crédit Foncier d'Extrême-Orient* 義品放款銀行 or 義品地產公司 (henceforth C.F.E.O.) played a major role in the development of the western part of Prince Edward Road as a European residential area, with modern buildings designed by architect Gabriel Van Wylick 王威烈 (1897–1964) and his team.<sup>9</sup> One of the new streets, Belfran Road 巴芬道, was named after the company's telegraphic code Bel(gium-)Fran(ce). Founded in Tianjin in 1907, the C.F.E.O. developed branch offices in Shanghai, Hong Kong (1911), Beijing, Jinan and Hankou.<sup>10</sup> Apart from mortgage-guaranteed loans and financing modern technology infrastructure (water supply, telephone, tramways, electricity, etc.), the company dealt with construction works, the production of bricks, and all possible real estate activities.<sup>11</sup> Its architects designed company-owned buildings, as well as individual houses for private clients, and offices and buildings for other Western and Chinese investors.<sup>12</sup> The C.F.E.O. benefited from the confidence of the Catholic missionary societies and contributed, as we will see, to their investments and constructions in Kowloon Tong.

From 1923, as the city grew, the Catholic Mission was looking for further development in Kowloon. On the one hand, in 1927, Bishop Enrico Valtorta 恩理覺 P.I.M.E. [Pontifical Institute of Foreign Missions] (1883–1951) acquired land in the populous area of Sham Shui Po and in 1929 established a convent

for the Chinese Sisters of the Precious Blood, a Hongkong congregation that had gained independence from the Canossian Congregation in 1922.<sup>13</sup> The first floor of the convent at Un Chau Street included a chapel for the Catholics from the neighbourhood. The sisters also built a school and a hospital. On the other hand, Kowloon Tong seemed to be an ideal location for establishing a new parish. The ongoing residential development was attracting Portuguese families, who were Catholic and asking for a church and schools. The Catholic population of Kowloon soon exceeded that of Hong Kong Island. In 1924, some of them offered themselves to Mgr Domenico Pozzoni P.I.M.E. 師多敏 (1861–1924) as founding members of a committee for building a monumental church, much larger than Rosary Church:

In view of the remarkable development of this Colony during recent years, it is essential that in the erection of this church both the laity and their Spiritual Superior should take a long view of Catholic needs and should aim to build an edifice which it would not be necessary to demolish and re-erect on a larger scale within the next ten or fifteen years.<sup>14</sup>

The project, however, did not progress until Mgr Valtorta's appointment on 8 March 1926.<sup>15</sup>

From 1927, the scenario of founding a new 'Catholic cluster' including a parish church, schools and a hospital took form on both sides of Boundary Street in Kowloon Tong. In twelve years, considerable human and financial efforts, coordinated by the bishop, were made by different stakeholders of the Catholic Mission.

- On 13 November 1928, Mgr Valtorta purchased a piece of land—K.I.L. [Kowloon Inland Lot] no. 2153, of 76,500 square feet—at the intersection of Prince Edward Road and Waterloo Road, backed by Boundary Street.<sup>16</sup> Its size and location were ideal for erecting a monumental church and become the core of the 'Catholic cluster'.
- In 1928, the Brothers of the Christian Schools settled along Boundary Street and built La Salle College, 1930–32, Kowloon's elite college for boys.<sup>17</sup>
- In 1931–32, the Italian missionaries of the Pontifical Institute of Foreign Missions (P.I.M.E.) built two apartment buildings designed by the C.F.E.O. near St Teresa's church.

- In 1930–33, the Missions Étrangères de Paris (M.E.P.) and their ‘practical visionary’ Fr Léon Robert M.E.P. 金神父 (1866–1956), built 22 houses on Prince Edward Road, all designed by the C.F.E.O.<sup>18</sup>
- In 1933 the Maryknoll Sisters of St Dominic, American missionaries who arrived in Hong Kong in 1925, bought a piece of land at the corner of Boundary Street and Waterloo Road and built their first school complex in 1936.<sup>19</sup>
- In 1934, grounds were acquired along Prince Edward Road by the French Sisters of Charity of St Paul, from St Paul’s Hospital, Causeway Bay. They built a noviciate and St Teresa’s Hospital that opened its doors in September 1940.<sup>20</sup>

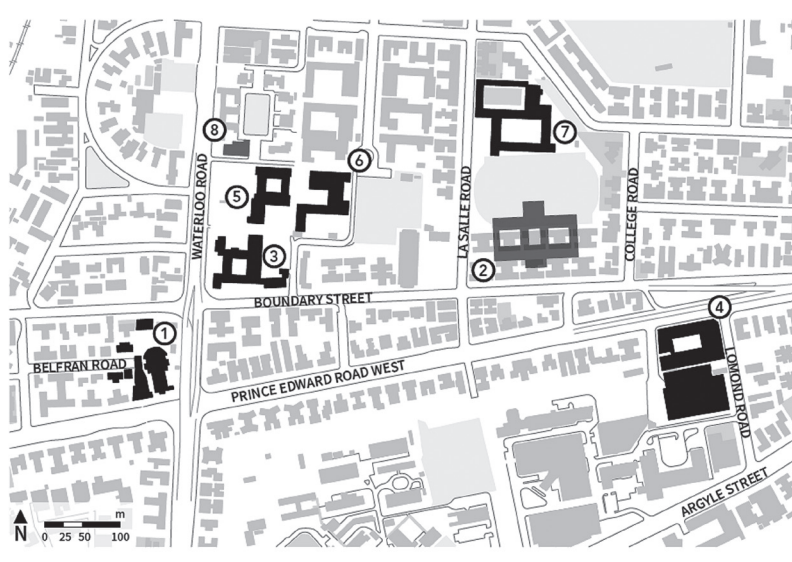


Figure 1. Present Map of Kowloon Tong and Location of the Components of the ‘Catholic Cluster’: 1. St Teresa’s Church, 1931–32, and residence of Italian missionaries, 1933 (demolished), St Teresa School 1952–54, Caritas building, 1966; 2. La Salle College of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, 1930–32 (demolished 1978); 3. Maryknoll Convent and School, 1936; 4. St Teresa’s Hospital of the Sisters of St Paul, 1940; 5. Maryknoll Convent, 1952; 6. Maryknoll School, 1957; 7. New La Salle College, 1982; 8. Anglican Christ Church, built 1936. (drawing Luka Ng 2015).



## FATHER GRESNIGT'S SKETCH OF A SINO-CHRISTIAN STYLE CHURCH

The 1920s were marked by a radical shift of the Roman Catholic mission. Popes Benedict XV (1914–22) and Pius XI (1922–39) initiated the movement of ecclesiastical and cultural inculturation to replace the nineteenth-century colonial and Eurocentric mission. 'Inculturation' or 'indigenisation' aimed to localise the Church by promoting native bishops and priests and inviting them to express the universal evangelical message in their particular cultural context.<sup>21</sup> China was the main concern of Rome's new missionary policy. Accordingly in 1922 Pope Pius XI sent an Apostolic Delegate to China, Archbishop Celso Costantini 剛恒毅 (1876–1958), with the task of promoting a Chinese Catholic Church.<sup>22</sup> As part of his policy, Mgr Costantini considered sacred art and architecture to be important tools of inculturation. His article 'Proper Style of Church Architecture for the Chinese Missions', published 1923, is a plea for sinicising church architecture.<sup>23</sup> Since he could not find a Chinese Catholic architect, he commissioned the Benedictine monk-artist Adelbert Gresnigt O.S.B. 葛利斯 (1877–1956) to create a proper Sino-Christian style.<sup>24</sup>

One of Fr Gresnigt's major projects was the South China Regional Seminary, now Holy Spirit Seminary, in Aberdeen. This milestone in Hong Kong's religious architecture has been extensively analysed and discussed in a previous issue of this journal.<sup>25</sup> Fr Gresnigt made three visits to Hong Kong:

- First, in February 1927, when breaking his journey from Venice to Beijing, he was welcomed by Mgr Valtorta who informed him about the project of the Regional Seminary.
- Second, in October–November 1928, he visited the site in Aberdeen and discussed the plans of the seminary with Mgr Valtorta, Fr Giovanni Michele Spada P.I.M.E. 德若翰 (1867–1950), and the architectural firm Little, Adams & Wood. He needed to rely on local collaboration because he was not an authorised architect in Hong Kong and was living far away, at the Catholic University of Peking.
- Third, from 26 October 1930 to 19 January 1931, he visited the works of the seminary with Mgr Costantini and Mgr Valtorta. For financial reasons, they decided to postpone the construction of the side wings and chapel. He did not attend the opening of the Regional Seminary on 1 November 1931.

Fr Gresnigt's involvement with St Teresa's church fits into this tight chronology. Obviously Mgr Costantini tried to convince Mgr Valtorta to accept the principle of a Chinese-style church, which, at that time, did not yet exist in Hong Kong.<sup>26</sup> This put Mgr Valtorta in a delicate position. On the one hand, he was subordinate to Rome and had to obey the inculturation policy. On the other hand, Chinese-style architecture could make little headway in the context of British colonial Hong Kong, with its entrenched official architectural styles, and where otherwise styles were driven by the market. The European Catholics of Kowloon were little concerned with inculturation and therefore not interested in financing the construction of a Chinese-style church. In October 1928—that is to say during Fr Gresnigt's second stay in Hong Kong—the *Bulletin of the Catholic University of Beijing* published drawings of his projects, including a 'Church and Rectory, Kowloon (Canton), Kwantung' [sic].<sup>27</sup> The original Chinese ink drawing still remains in Fr Gresnigt's archives.<sup>28</sup>

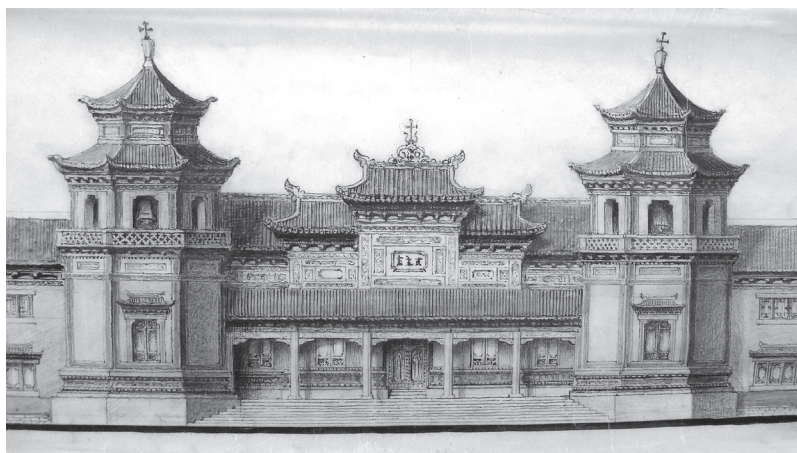


Figure 2. St Teresa's, Elevation of the Main Façade, Original Drawing by Fr Adelbert Gresnigt. First Published in October 1928. (Maredsous Abbey Archives)

As soon the land in Kowloon was purchased, Mgr Valtorta urged Fr Gresnigt to draw plans. He needed more than just an elevation to convince the Committee and start fundraising.

On Nov. 13 [1928], we happily succeeded in purchasing the land I have shown you for the new church to be built on Kowloon side. According

to the conditions set by the Government it is required that we build within 36 months. I hope that the Great Architect of the Orient would hasten to prepare the project of a Chinese Church in honour of the Little Flower [i.e. St Teresa of the Child Jesus]. It is not that I can promise straightaway that in this cosmopolitan city of Hong Kong the Chinese project will undoubtedly be adopted, however I have already started to spread the idea through someone and I will try my best to succeed.<sup>29</sup>

This letter proves that the bishop had visited the site with the architect, had doubts about the positive reception of a Chinese-style project and was lobbying. Fr Gresnigt, however, was overworked and had other priorities, notably drawing plans for the Catholic University of Peking, the South China Regional Seminary, the Central China Regional Seminary in Kaifeng, and the Seminary of the Disciples of the Lord in Xuanhua.<sup>30</sup>

Fr Gresnigt sent two sketches, one of a Chinese-style church flanked by two courtyards and another of a Western style free-standing church.<sup>31</sup> The Hong Kong Catholic Diocesan Archives conserve both undated sketches as well as a letter of Fr Gresnigt to Fr Andrea Granelli P.I.M.E. 顏思回 (1892–1976), dated 25 January 1929, accompanied with three pictures that are lost.

Enclosed I send you three photos of a single church, one where the church is connected with the parish house and a Catholic club on a ground floor that would use the full surface of the site. The third is a project for a regional seminary. [...] The sketched churches have a capacity of 1200 seats. From the visit I made on the site I had the feeling that the surface measured less than 150 x 230 feet [45.50 x 70 m]. I have drawn the project within those limits. The church is in the middle, surrounded by a parish house, a parish school, a Catholic club, a conference room etc. [...] Everything depends on what they want; from my side I wanted no more than to show my good will. [...] The Church in the second project has foundations 6 feet deep.<sup>32</sup>

In all likelihood the three pictures were plans of 1) the free-standing Western-style St Teresa's, 2) the Chinese-style St Teresa's, 3) a regional seminary, perhaps that of Kaifeng, designed for Italian Franciscan missionaries.

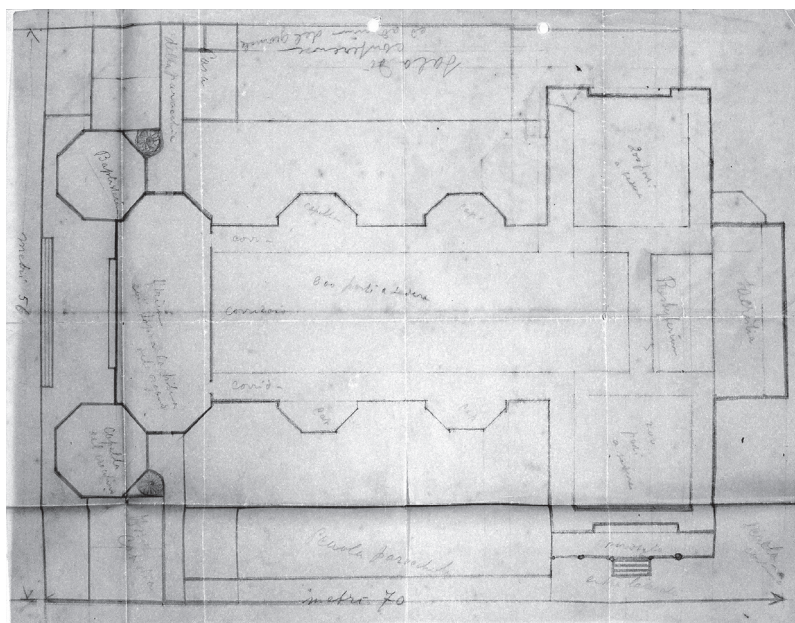


Figure 3. St Teresa's, Sketched Ground Plan of the Chinese Project by Fr Adelbert Gresnigt, January 1929 (Hong Kong Catholic Diocesan Archives, photo Shu Changxue).

The ground plan of the Chinese-style church and side buildings matches the elevation from 1928 (Fig. 2). The plan mentions the function of the different rooms as well as the general dimension (56 m x 70 m). According to the main façade on Prince Edward Road, the orientation of the church is not the classic west-east Christian axis but the Chinese south-north one, which conforms with *fengshui* 風水: Lion Rock mountain being the northern protective mountain and Kowloon Bay the southern water bringing good spirit. Behind the main façade, the two pagoda-looking towers are used as the baptistery and Holy Cross Chapel. A transverse hall, surmounted with a tribune for the organ, opens to the nave (north), the parochial house (west) and the Catholic mission (east). It is worth noting that there is no axial doorway connecting the hall and the nave, but two lateral doors. The church consists of a single nave of five bays with a capacity of 800 seats flanked by four polygonal side chapels, a large transept with room for 200 seats in each arm, a *presbyterium* partially under the crossing, and a straight

choir ending. The sacristy is located behind the *presbyterium*. The eastern arm of the transept has a side entrance to Waterloo Road. At both sides of the church a conference room (west) and a parish school (east) are separated from the nave by two open courtyards.

#### FATHER GRESNIGT'S SKETCH OF A WESTERN STYLE CHURCH AND THE FINAL CHOICE

The other sketch, pencil on draft paper, presents at small scale a plan, four sections and three elevations for St Teresa's church.<sup>33</sup> The plan, the elevation of the apse and the longitudinal section are the same as the actual building; the four other elevations and sections show a dome instead of an octagonal roof at the crossing. The sketch is neither dated nor signed, but could be attributed to Fr Gresnigt, who was accustomed to making such precise small scale drawings.<sup>34</sup> The comparison of the sketch with the final plans for St Teresa's confirm that the sketch was accepted by the Committee and that the Romanesque style octagonal crossing was preferred to the Byzantine style dome.

The plan is that of a basilica with an aisled nave of eight bays, a large transept with four corner chapels, a crossing with an octagonal tower, and a choir of two bays with a round apse and ambulatory. The first bay of the nave has a gallery for the organ and is connected with a free standing campanile and a baptistery. Three doors, each with a porch, open to the main façade and the transept arms. The elevations show round arches on columns in the nave and choir, double small round arched windows at the clerestory, a flat ceiling covering the nave and choir, a dome on pendentives pierced with small windows, a decorated main porch, and a high tower with two balconies and a pyramidal spire. A roof truss and a ciborium are sketched on one cross section.

This design fits in with the trend of Early Christian and Romanesque-Byzantine style architecture adopted by the Liturgical Movement promoted by Pope Pius X (1903–14) and the Conference of Malines, Belgium (1909). Fr Gresnigt knew that these stylistic trends were proposed as an alternative to the dominant Gothic Revival. He had learned sculpture and painting at the Art School of Beuron Abbey in Germany (1893–95) and worked at St Benedict's Abbey of Monte Cassino in Italy (1903–13).<sup>35</sup> His design for St Teresa's combines elements from Early Christian architecture (basilica section with ceiling, campanile), Byzantine architecture (dome of St Sophia) and Romanesque architecture (round apse, ambulatory), all including round



arched forms. St Teresa's tower refers explicitly to St Mark's campanile in Venice. Such a reference was meaningful to Mgr Valtorta and the Italian P.I.M.E. missionaries, all the more because Venice had historic links with China as Marco Polo's hometown. Located at the crossing of Prince Edward Road and Waterloo Road, the tower dominated the flat urban landscape of Kowloon Tong. Except the south-north orientation, the project has no explicit Chinese element or reference. As built, the reinforced concrete roof trusses of the nave and the apse have a kind of simplified *dougong* 斗拱 bracket at their extremities, which give a discrete Chinese taste. There are also Chinese auspicious cloud motifs which can be seen in many parts of the upper surfaces of the church interior.

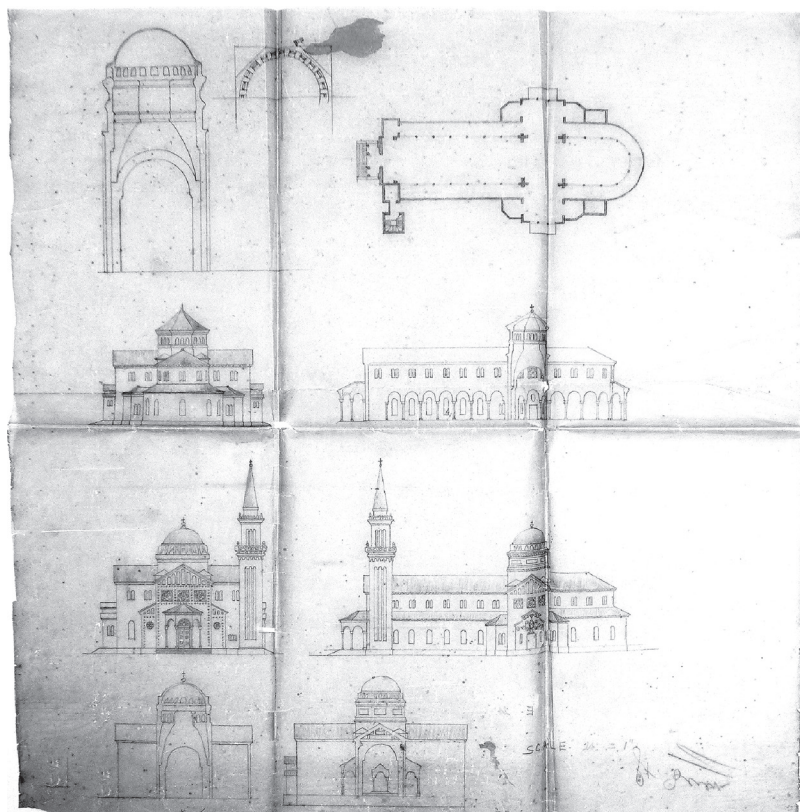


Figure 4. St Teresa's, Sketch of the Western-Style Project by Fr Adelbert Gresnigt, January 1929 (Hong Kong Catholic Diocesan Archives).

Mgr Valtorta presumed that the Committee would reject the Chinese project and adopt the Western one at a meeting on an unknown date between January and June 1929. Our research on the Regional Seminary has revealed that Mgr Valtorta and Fr Spada did not very much like the Sino-Christian style and had arguments with Fr Gresnigt and Mgr Costantini.<sup>36</sup> The latter imposed his views because the Regional Seminary was a strategic project financed by Rome. St Teresa, however, was a local project depending on the bishop, the parish and local benefactors.

The Committee of St Teresa's was international and included 25 influential Catholics who would involve their networks and raise funds.<sup>37</sup>

- 5 missionaries: Fr G.M. Spada P.I.M.E., secretary and treasurer of the Committee; Fr George Byrne S.J. (1879–1962), Irish Jesuit from Ricci Hall; Fr Francisco Noval O.P. (1871–1945), procurator general of the Dominican Mission in the Far East; Fr Alphonse Biotteau M.E.P. (1883–1972), procurator general of the French missions; Fr Wilbur Borer M.M. (1897–1982), procurator general of the American missions (Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers).
- 14 Portuguese or Macanese: Chev. J.M. Alves<sup>38</sup>; Arthur A. Alves; J.M.C. Basto; A.R. Botelho; José Pedro Braga<sup>39</sup>; M. Figueiredo; See. Lopes; José Maria Noronha<sup>40</sup>; J.G. Ribeiro; L.G. Riberio; Edm. Roza; F.G. Ozorio; P.B. Silva; B.A. Souza.
- 4 British or Americans: F.H. Barnes; L.A. Barton<sup>41</sup>; H. Dixon<sup>42</sup>; A.F. Osmund<sup>43</sup>.
- 2 Hong Kong Chinese: J.V. Chanatong; Y.Y. Tang.

St Teresa of the Child Jesus had been officially chosen as patron saint of the new parish and church by the Mission Council on 22 November 1928.<sup>44</sup> Teresa was a 'trendy' saint because she had been canonised in 1925 by Pope Pius XI who, on 14 December 1927, had named her and St Francis Xavier S.J. (1505–52) the two co-patrons of the Catholic missions. Having both a name and a sketch for the church, the Committee started fundraising and launched the first subscription on 24 June 1929.<sup>45</sup>

## JOSEPH CHANATONG'S ROLE

Given a letter to Fr Spada from Mgr Valtorta dated 31 October 1929, it

seems that another design was circulating. Mgr Valtorta was clearly irritated by the suggestion that a decision already taken in favour of one of Fr Gresnigt's designs should be upset.

Regarding the project of the church of Santa Teresina, [...] must we understand, yes or no, that all the Catholic architects of Hong Kong should be given a chance? And with what right could we now pass over the decision taken? If you want to do so, the only way is to convoke the Committee, first to propose and have approved a change of decision, and then take Chanatong's project into consideration. It would not be fair and, instead of doing so, I would prefer to resign. [...] I do not think it appropriate to send Chanatong's project (even if I would approved it) to be reviewed by Father Gresnigt, since he has already sent his own sketch for the said church?<sup>46</sup>

Joseph Vincent Chanatong 陳阿堂/亞同 (?–1942) was one of the two Hong Kong members of the Committee.<sup>47</sup> Together with his brother Peter Chanatong, he was a partner of Chan A Tong, a firm with many business interests including construction, brick production, import and export and property development. They inherited the business from their father, Chan A Tong who founded the company for construction work, which was responsible for building many notable buildings in the colony including Supreme Court, Harbour Offices and Tramway and Power Stations, Tai Tam Reservoir, the Butterfield & Swire Building and the Taikoo Sugar Refinery.<sup>48</sup> The father of Chan A Tong and his wife were Catholics and sent their son to St Joseph College.<sup>49</sup> Joseph also worked as a clerk of works and contractor for the French missionaries in Hong Kong and in Canton from 1923–24. Several letters of Fr Robert M.E.P., the then procurator general of the French Mission of Paris,<sup>50</sup> and Fr Léon Vircondelet M.E.P. 衛神父 (1890–1973), adjunct-procurator general, describe Chanatong as 'our friend' and praise his honesty.<sup>51</sup> He was perfectly able to design plans and supervise works.<sup>52</sup> His most successful collaboration with the French missionaries was Christ the King's Chapel at St Paul's Hospital, Causeway Bay. He drew the plans for the Sisters of St Paul of Chartres, who were advised by Fr Vircondelet and obviously were satisfied: 'He is as skilled as selfless, devoted to the sisters as much as he loves his art'.<sup>53</sup> On 21 April 1928, Mgr Valtorta, assisted by Fr Robert, laid the foundation stone of Christ the King's Chapel on which is



carved: 'Architects: Crédit Foncier d'Extrême-Orient / Designed by Jos. V. Chanatong'.<sup>54</sup>

We have seen that the C.F.E.O. played an important role in the development of Kowloon Tong and owned a part of Belfran Road. Unfortunately, the archives conserved in the National Archives of Belgium, only contain files about the buildings that belonged to the company.<sup>55</sup> There are thus many files about the residences owned by the C.F.E.O. in Kowloon Tong,<sup>56</sup> but nearly nothing about the other constructions in which the company was involved in one way or another, like Christ the King Chapel and St Teresa's.<sup>57</sup> Chanatong and St Teresa's, however, were the subject of internal correspondence from April-June 1930 between Van Wylick and his superiors in Brussels and Shanghai. Van Wylick informed Brussels that:

A church will be built Prince Edward Road on lot K.I.L. 2153 adjoining our building lot No. 6 (K.I.L. 2158). [...] The contractor J.V. Chanatong makes the plans for free, but as he is not 'authorized architect' he cannot present them to the P.W.D. [Public Works Department] and asks us to sign them free of charge.<sup>58</sup>

Edouard Molines, the head of C.F.E.O. South-China direction, authorised Van Wylick to sign the plans 'exceptionally because it is a church erected with funds from a public subscription'.<sup>59</sup> The director general asked that all necessary precautions be taken.<sup>60</sup> Van Wylick's answer is a major source because it sheds light on the relationship between the C.F.E.O. and Chanatong.

[...] the plans will not be ready for several months. [...] our architects will take all their precautions and require that the reinforced concrete structure plans will be made by an engineer approved by them. The latter will accept only plans that meet the standards of P.W.D., the execution of the church will be entrusted to a good contractor. There is no reason to believe that this construction will not be as successful as St. Paul's Chapel, which was executed entirely by J.V. Chanatong. Our purpose, in signing these plans, is to associate the name of our Company with an important work erected on Prince Edward Road. If you are afraid of making us responsible, please tell us, we will inform Mr J.V. Chanatong, who will easily find other architects willing to sign church plans for free.<sup>61</sup>

The final plans seem thus to have been drawn for free by Chanatong after Gresnigt's Western style sketch and signed by Van Wylick. This gentlemen's agreement was based on the precedent of Christ the King's chapel. Unfortunately no original plan of either building has been conserved.<sup>62</sup> In 1929–32, the architectural office of the C.F.E.O. had its hands full with the housing projects in Kowloon Tong. Moreover, in 1931, Van Wylick, then only aged 34, was promoted to head the branch office in Hong Kong. Henceforth he was not only responsible for the architectural works, but also for C.F.E.O.'s financial business in Hong Kong, official contacts and all staff decisions with Shanghai and Brussels. Drawing plans for St Teresa's definitely was not the priority of his office.

Many questions about Chanatong remain unanswered. Why was he a member of the Committee? Was his project in the same style as Christ the King Chapel? Why did Fr Spada, perhaps with the new French procurator general Fr Alphonse Biotteau M.E.P., encourage his alternative project? The reason could be financial, since it seems that Chanatong offered to work for free, but what was his interest? Who, instead, would have been paid by the Committee for doing the plans? The name of the Portuguese authorised architect Antonio Hermenegildo Blasto (1894–1979) has been cited.<sup>63</sup> Why did Mgr Valtorta in his speech of 18 December 1932, publicly thank Van Wylick for having made out the plans from Fr Gresnigt's sketch?<sup>64</sup> Obviously he was bound with the signature on the official plans. Chanatong, however, was not mentioned by name, but was included in the general thanks to the Committee. Neither Chanatong, nor the C.F.E.O. are mentioned on the foundation stone.<sup>65</sup>

## FROM PAPER TO REINFORCED CONCRETE: THE CONSTRUCTION OF ST TERESA'S

We do not know if Fr Gresnigt, during his stay in Hong Kong in December 1930-January 1931, met Chanatong, Van Wylick and others responsible for St Teresa's. On the works of the Regional Seminary he collaborated with Fr Spada, the treasurer of St Teresa's. In his memoirs, he mentions St Teresa's briefly during his stay in 1928:

[...] several missionaries expressed their desire to have a plan for a church; sisters came for a school, a hospice or other buildings. Nobody

had money for these constructions, but “with a drawing in hand, one can always beg”, they told me. These attempts to obtain plans did not last long. It became clear that more serious occupations were taking my time. I only answered two requests: one was a church plan for the Hong Kong Vicariate [i.e. St Teresa's], the other an elderly home entrusted to the care of the Little Sisters of the Poor. These two projects were realised later.<sup>66</sup> [The latter is also attributed to Gabriel Van Wylick and C.F.E.O.<sup>67</sup>]

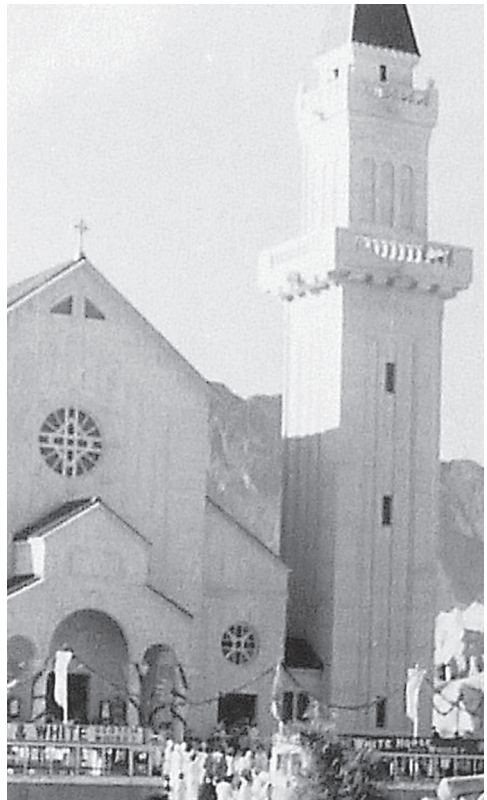
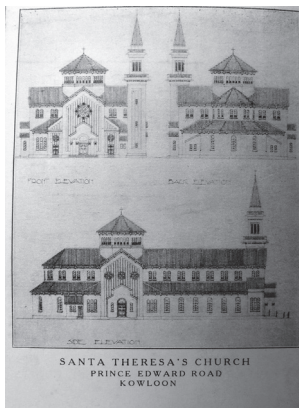


Figure 5. St Teresa's, Three Elevations of the Final Design, Drawn by Joseph Chanatong?, 1932, and Two Outer Views from the South, 1933. (Archives Van Wylick)



Figure 6. St Teresa's, Outer View from the South-East, 1933. (Archives Van Wylick)

It took more than one year for the parish to get the detailed plans from Chanatong and, thanks to Van Wylick's signature, to have them approved by the P.W.D.. The technical plans for the reinforced concrete structure were supervised by the French engineer Jean Victor Guérineau.<sup>68</sup> On 21 September 1931, Mgr Valtorta signed the contract for building the church with the Hong Kong contractor company Mei On Construction Co (or Mei On & Co).<sup>69</sup> The works were supervised by Fr Angelo Grampa P.I.M.E. 甘沛霖 (1882–1957), who had gained experience by supervising the construction of St Joseph's Hospital in Waichow 惠州 City and the Regional Seminary in Aberdeen.<sup>70</sup> As resident chaplain of La Salle College, he lived near St Teresa's and could visit the works daily.

No archives of the construction of St Teresa's church have been found. Van Wylick's family archives only conserve a couple of outer views of the church and a press clipping.<sup>71</sup> The technical information, therefore, is very limited and has to be derived from an analysis of the building. The works began with the foundations, which used the technique of Franki Piles, a pressure injecting footing system patented by the Belgian engineer Edgard

Frankignoul in 1909 that had spread worldwide.<sup>72</sup> Once the foundations were completed, Mgr Valtorta blessed and laid the foundation stone.<sup>73</sup> Placed at the bottom of the tower, this stone only mentions the date of 23 April 1932 and the bishop's name.<sup>74</sup> The works progressed fast and Mgr Valtorta planned to inaugurate the church before Christmas. Therefore, on 5 October, he asked Fr Spada six questions:

1. If it was advisable to put the altar of the church of S. Teresina in the middle under the crossing; 2. see the plans of the fathers' house near the new church and approve them personally; 3. information on the paintings I heard that you have ordered from Fr. Daelli [Pietro Daelli P.I.M.E. 達依理 (1893–1965)] [...]; 4. if you have approved any modifications that the architect of the Crédit Foncier has made to the original design of Father Gresnigt; 5. if new donations were made for the new church in the last few months; 6. if you can know with certitude when the new church will be ready [...].<sup>75</sup>

Fr Spada's answer is not preserved. For knowing what changes there had been between Gresnigt's sketch and the final plans it would have been a key source. Fr Spada, the secretary and treasurer of the Committee, collected ca HK\$100,000 for the construction. The names of the twelve most generous 'benefactor founders', almost all Portuguese, are carved on two marble tablets at both sides of the main entrance.<sup>76</sup> Partially erased, but still readable, the name of Benito Mussolini, the fascist *duce* and Prime Minister of Italy from 1922 to 1943, still raises questions. Although he was an anticlerical, Mussolini had signed the Lateran Treaty with Pope Pius XI on 11 February 1929, which gave the Vatican City the status of an independent state and recognised Catholicism as state religion in Italy.<sup>77</sup>

Mgr Valtorta's speech at the opening ceremony of St Teresa's church on Sunday 18 December 1932 has been evoked several times. The numerous attendees included priests from several missionary institutes, local officials and diplomats (the consuls of Italy, Portugal and Belgium), children from Catholic schools (La Salle College, St Louis Industrial School, St Mary's School), benefactors and parishioners.<sup>78</sup> The inner decoration of the church was completed at the beginning of 1933. Fr Andrea Granelli was the first Rector and Fr Peter Lam 林蔭棠 (1869–1939) his assistant.<sup>79</sup>



Figure 7. St Teresa's, Inner View to the North (THOC 2014).

## CATHOLICS, ARCHITECTURAL STYLES AND IDENTITIES IN THE COSMOPOLITAN COLONY

A Chinese-style project for a church designed by a Dutch missionary-artist was rejected by an Italian bishop and a (Portuguese) Catholic parish, and replaced by an Italian-Romanesque style project worked out by a Hong Kong contractor, with the complaisance of a Belgian mortgage company involved in real estate business with French, Italian and American missionaries... The analysis of the genesis of St Teresa's church, the people involved and its precise chronology, contextualise and illustrate a facet of the complex debate on architectural style in Hong Kong around 1930. However, most Catholics in Hong Kong were not able to place a local case like St Teresa's into the broad perspective of inculturation at the level of the universal Church. The national and religious identities of communities in the cosmopolitan British colony had not then opened them to the crucial issue of sinicising Christianity in China.

The key person was Mgr Enrico Valtorta, who stayed 44 years in Hong Kong and experienced the remarkable evolution of the Catholic mission from 1907 to 1951.<sup>80</sup> He was ordained bishop in 1926—the same year as the six first Chinese bishops and the reformation of the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions—and



was directly confronted with both Mgr Costantini's efforts to sinicise the Catholic Church in China and the specificity of Hong Kong as a British colony and secure hub for missionary societies working in the Chinese mainland.

St Teresa's and the Regional Seminary are two contrasting scenarios. The Regional Seminary was the first Sino-Christian building in Hong Kong but located in the then remote Aberdeen village. As a keystone of the Catholic inculturation policy, it was financed from Rome and entrusted to Irish Jesuits to educate South Chinese seminarians from Guangdong, Guangxi, Fujian and Hainan. Mgr Valtorta's role was limited to facilitating the relationships with the colonial authorities, coordinating the works and obeying Mgr Costantini. In contrast, Mgr Valtorta had full authority over a parish such as St Teresa's, and had thus to raise the funds and approve the plans. He knew that the European parishioners of St Teresa's were not concerned with inculturation and would not finance a Chinese-style construction. European Catholics would not sinicise their architecture before the mid-1950s,<sup>81</sup> however, American Catholics, the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers designed and built Maryknoll House for retreat and rest in Stanley (1931–35). During this period of time, the protestants were also building in the Chinese Eclectic Style: the Lutherans built Tao Fong Shan in Shatin (1930–36), the Anglicans St Mary's at Tai Hang (1935–37), and Holy Trinity at Kowloon City (1936–38), and the Methodists the Chinese Methodist Church (1936), etc.<sup>82</sup>

Kowloon Tong is a remarkable case proving that the issue of styles and identities in Hong Kong from the 1930s and beyond was not just a polarisation between Western and Chinese-styles, but expressed different Western national styles. Even the missionary societies chose different styles to express their identities in public space. La Salle College of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, built 1930–32, with its central pavilion surmounted by a dome that referred to St Peter's Basilica in Rome, was a powerful expression of Western Catholic and classical education.<sup>83</sup> In 1936 the American Maryknoll Sisters built a school in a modern style, with a massive brick tower referencing the Maryknoll motherhouse in Ossining (New York).<sup>84</sup> After the war in 1952, they built a new convent, designed by the C.F.E.O., and new school buildings in 1957.<sup>85</sup> The apartments of the P.I.M.E. and the M.E.P., all designed by Van Wylick and the C.F.E.O.,<sup>86</sup> as well as St Teresa's Hospital were modern and in reinforced concrete.

Kowloon Tong's urban landscape, made of modern residential buildings of three or four floors along broad straight lanes, contrasted with the

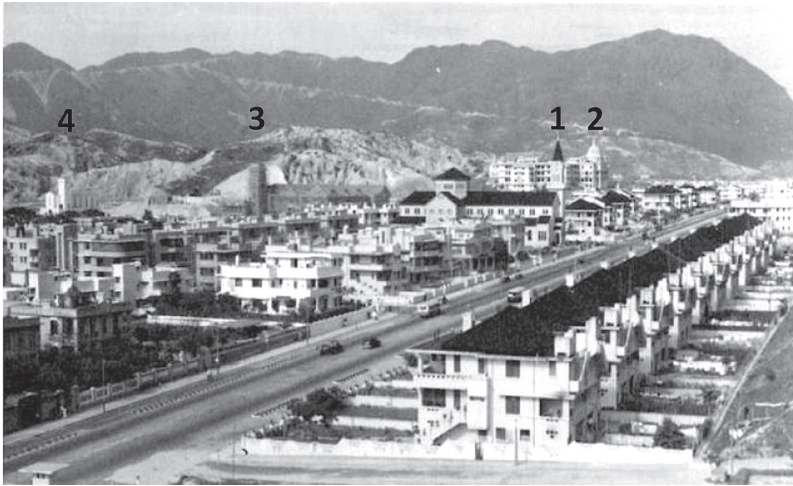


Figure 8. Kowloon Tong, Prince Edward Road to the East: the Volume and Towers of 1. St Teresa's Church, 2. La Salle College, 3. Maryknoll School, 4. Christ Church Anglican Church dominate the Architectural Landscape, Picture around 1940 (from <https://gwulo.com/atom/16840>, courtesy Gwulo.com)

chaotic architecture on the slopes of Hong Kong Island. The urbanism and architecture of this Catholic parish expressed order, Westernisation and modernity. The towers of the three Catholic buildings marked the skyline. The Italian tower of St Teresa's, the classical dome of La Salle and the American tower of Maryknoll constituted a 'Catholic cluster' and were explicit references to Venice, Rome and New York, on both sides of the Boundary Street that had once been the boundary between the British and Chinese Empires.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For their interest during our research and visits, the authors would like to express their gratitude to: Edouard Van Wylick, Fr Louis Ha Keloon, Sr Paola Yu Huiying, Fr Patrick Taveirne C.I.C.M., Fr Daniel Misonne O.S.B., Fr Sergio Ticozzi P.I.M.E., Dr Stephen Davies, Dr Jeffrey Cody, Dr Jean-Paul Wiest, Fr Matthieu Masson M.E.P., Haider Kikabhoy, Luka Ng, Dr Prudence Lau Leung-kwok, and Dr Shu Changxue.



## NOTES

- 1 *Evening Post* (Monday 19 December 1932), reproduced in: *St. Teresa's Church Kowloon, Hongkong. Silver Jubilee 1932–1957* (聖德肋撒堂銀慶紀念特刊 *Sheng Delesa tang yinqing jinian tekan*) (Hong Kong, 1957) no page number.
- 2 *St. Teresa's Church Kowloon, Hongkong. Silver Jubilee 1932–1957*, no page number; Sergio Ticozzi, *Historical Documents of the Hong Kong Catholic Church* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Catholic Diocesan Archives, 1997) pp. 151–53.
- 3 For example: Tony Lam Chung Wai, 'From British Colonization to Japanese Invasion. The 100 Years Architects in Hong Kong 1841–1941', *HKIA Journal* 香港建築師學報, 45 (2006) pp. 44–55 (quote p. 49). Website: [http://www.catholicheritage.org.hk/en/catholic\\_building/st\\_teresa/index.html](http://www.catholicheritage.org.hk/en/catholic_building/st_teresa/index.html) [accessed 2 January 2018].
- 4 Thomas Coomans, 'Sinicising Christian Architecture in Hong Kong: Father Gresnigt, Catholic Indigenisation, and the South China Regional Seminary, 1927–31', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch (JRASHKB)*, 56 (2016) pp. 133–60.
- 5 Abbreviations: HKCDA (Hong Kong Catholic Diocesan Archives); AGR-CFEO (Brussels, Archives Générales du Royaume, Crédit Foncier d'Extrême-Orient); AAM-AG (Denée, Archives of the Abbey of Maredsous, files Adalbert Gresnigt); SFRI-ACD (San Francisco Ricci Institute, Archives of the Canton Diocese); AVW (Rhode Saint-Genèse, Archives Van Wylick). With all our thanks to the archivist for their welcome and help.
- 6 This contextualisation was presented in a lecture: Puay-peng Ho and Thomas Coomans, 'Shaping Hong Kong's historical urban landscape: The specific contribution of religious orders and missionary societies', at the 12th International Conference on Urban History: Cities in Europe, Cities in the World, Lisbon (3–6 September 2014).
- 7 George B. Endacott, *A History of Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1973) pp. 273–8; Barrie Shelton, Justyna Karakiewicz and Thomas Kvan, *The Making of Hong Kong: From Vertical to Volumetric* (London-New York: Routledge, 2011) pp. 56–59.
- 8 London, British National Archives: *Development of the Kowloon Tong Garden City from 1930s to the present*, 2016 <http://www.arch.hku.hk/speculative-urbanism-01/> [accessed 18 December 2017].
- 9 Prudence Leung Kwok Lau, 'Building a Modern City: Legacies of Residential Development and Architectural Adaptation in Colonial Hong Kong', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Series 3, 28 (2018), pp. 339–53; Prudence Leung Kwok Lau, 'Adaptive Modern and Speculative Urbanism: The Architecture of the Crédit Foncier d'Extrême-Orient (C.F.E.O.) in Hong Kong and China's Treaty Ports,

- 1907–1959’, (Ph.D. dissertation, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2013) pp. 155–81 [unpublished].
- 10 For the history of the company, see: *Historical notes, 1921–1957* (AGR-CFEO, 8); René Brion and Jean-Louis Moreau, *Inventaire des archives du Crédit Foncier d’Extrême-Orient et de sa filiale, la Société Hypothécaire de Tanger: 1907–1991* (Brussels: AGR, 2000) pp. IX–XVI.
  - 11 Tasks included designing new buildings and transforming existing ones, evaluating land and buildings prior to acquisition, sourcing contractors and foremen, choosing building materials, monitoring works, etc.
  - 12 Prudence Leung Kwok Lau and Thomas Coomans, ‘Modern Architectural Influences of Western Construction Companies in China. The Crédit Foncier d’Extrême-Orient, 1907–1959’, in Austin Williams and Theodoros Dounas, eds, *Masterplanning the Future. Modernism: East, West & Across the World* (Suzhou: Transport Research Publications, 2012) pp. 69–77.
  - 13 Cindy Yik-yi Chu, *The Chinese Sisters of the Precious Blood and the Evolution of the Catholic Church* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) pp. 67–92.
  - 14 Kowloon Catholics to Pozzoni, 11 February 1924, letter fully reproduced in: *St. Teresa’s Church Kowloon, Hongkong. Silver Jubilee 1932–1957*, no page number.
  - 15 Moreover, the unprecedented nationalist general strikes that affected Hong Kong’s economy and society in 1925–26 interrupted many projects in the colony: David Faure, *Society. A Documentary History of Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press) pp. 149–50.
  - 16 HKCDA, S.IV, B.10, F.01. Sergio Ticozzi, *Historical Documents of the Hong Kong Catholic Church*, pp. 151–52.
  - 17 Tierney Patrick and Tam Paul, ‘The Lasallian Story, 1875–2007’, in Louis Ha and Patrick Taveirne, eds, *History of Catholic Religious Orders and Missionary Congregations in Hong Kong*, Vol. 1 (Hong Kong: Catholic Studies Publications, 2009) pp. 77–162 (esp. pp. 115–56).
  - 18 About Fr Robert: Alain Le Pichon, ‘Portrait of a Practical Visionary: Father Léon Robert MEP and the Sisters of St Paul de Chartres in Hong Kong 1914–19’, *JRASHKB*, 52 (2012) pp. 225–66. Biography: <http://archives.mepasie.org/fr/notices/notices-biographiques/robert-5> [accessed 30 December 2017].
  - 19 Cindy Yik-yi Chu, *The Maryknoll Sisters in Hong Kong, 1921–1969: In Love with the Chinese* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) pp. 38–39. The Maryknoll Sisters also set up a school, Holy Spirit School on Hong Kong Island in 1927.
  - 20 Josefina Santos, ‘Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres, 1848–1998’, in Louis Ha and Patrick Taveirne (eds), *History of Catholic Religious Orders*, Vol. 1, pp. 152–55.
  - 21 Klaus Koschorke, ‘Indigenization’, in Hans Dieter Betz *et al.*, eds., *Religion Past & Present: Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, Vol. 6 (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2009) pp. 459 • 60; Nicolas Standaert, *Inculturation: The Gospels and Cultures* (Makati,

- Philippines: Saint Paul Publications, 1990).
- 22 Paolo Goi, ed., *Il Cardinale Celso Costantini e la Cina. Un protagonista nella Chiesa e nel mondo del XX secolo* (Pordenone: Diocesi di Concordia-Pordenone, 2008); Sergio Ticozzi, 'Celso Costantini's Contribution to the Localization and Inculturation of the Church in China', *Tripod* 28 (Spring 2008) no. 148.
  - 23 Celso Costantini, 'Proper Style of Church Architecture for the Chinese Missions (Letter of the Apostolic Delegate to China Addressed to the American and Irish Missionaries)', *The Ecclesiastical Review*, 69 (1923) pp. 288–93; the same: Celso Costantini, 'The Need of Developing a Sino-Christian Architecture for our Catholic Missions (A letter addressed by His Excellency the Apostolic delegate in China to the Rt. Rev. Msgrs. James E. Walsh and Edward J. Galvin)', *Bulletin of the Catholic University of Peking*, 3 (1927) pp. 7–15.
  - 24 Thomas Coomans, 'The 'Sino-Christian Style': A Major Tool for Architectural Indigenization', in Yangwen Zheng, ed., *Sinicizing Christianity* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2017) pp. 197–232; Thomas Coomans, 'Indigenizing Catholic Architecture in China: From Western-Gothic to Sino-Christian Design, 1900–1940', in Cindy Yik-yi Chu ed., *Catholicism in China, 1900–Present: The Development of the Chinese Church* (New York: Palgrave and Macmillan, 2014) pp. 125–44; Thomas Coomans, 'La création d'un style architectural sino-chrétien. L'œuvre d'Adelbert Gresnigt, moine-artiste bénédictin en Chine (1927–1932)', *Revue Bénédictine*, 123 (2013) pp. 128–70.
  - 25 Thomas Coomans, 'Sinicising Christian Architecture in Hong Kong', pp. 133–60.
  - 26 Ibidem, pp. 149–52.
  - 27 Sylvester Healy, 'The Plans of the New University Building', *Bulletin of the Catholic University of Peking*, 5 (October 1928) pp. 3–12 (ill. p. 11).
  - 28 AAM-AG, drawing, not dated but reproduced in October 1928.
  - 29 HKCDA, S.V, B.50, F.02. E. Valtorta to A. Gresnigt, 15 November 1928. Translation from: Sergio Ticozzi, *Historical Documents of the Hong Kong Catholic Church*, pp. 152.
  - 30 Thomas Coomans, 'La création d'un style architectural sino-chrétien.', pp. 128–70.
  - 31 Sergio Ticozzi, 'Celso Costantini's Contribution to the Localization and Inculturation of the Church in China', *Tripod* 28 (Spring 2008) no 148: 'Dom Gresnigt submitted two sets of drawings to Mgr. Valtorta, who liked both of them. Unfortunately, the construction committee, led by Portuguese Catholics, did not appreciate the idea of a Chinese-style church, and they asked a local architect to change the drawings'.
  - 32 HKCDA, S.V, B.50, F.02. A. Gresnigt to A. Granelli (translation from the Italian).
  - 33 HKCDA, S.V, B.50, F.02.
  - 34 AAM-AG, sketches, 1927–32.
  - 35 Felix Standaert, *L'École de Beuron. Un essai de renouveau de l'art chrétien à la fin du*

XIXe siècle (Maredsous, 2011) pp. 29–35, 74–76, 134–162.

- 36 Thomas Coomans, 'Sinicising Christian Architecture in Hong Kong', pp. 142–146.
- 37 *St. Teresa's Church Kowloon, Hongkong. Silver Jubilee 1932–1957*, no page number.
- 38 Nobleman (chevalier), merchant, head of J.M. Alves & co; vice-president of St Teresa's Committee. He built a house on Prince Edward Road in 1931–33, designed by G. Van Wylick, C.F.E.O.
- 39 Macanese journalist, merchant and politician, member of the Legislative Council of Hong Kong (1929–37) [https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jos%C3%A9\\_Pedro\\_Braga](https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jos%C3%A9_Pedro_Braga) [accessed 4 January 2018].
- 40 Working at C.F.E.O. Hong Kong office, especially for the contacts with the Portuguese community. AGR-CFEO, 1110–1111: José Maria Noronha, 1919–50.
- 41 Working at W.G. Humphreys & Co (1921).
- 42 President of Wanchai conference (1921), working at Money Order Office, Post Office.
- 43 President of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament (1921); working at Jardine Matheson & Co.
- 44 Sergio Ticozzi, *Historical Documents of the Hong Kong Catholic Church*, pp. 152.
- 45 *St. Teresa's Church Kowloon, Hongkong. Silver Jubilee 1932–1957*, no page number.
- 46 HKCDA, S.V, B.50, F.02. E. Valtorta to G.M. Spada, 31 October 1929 (translation from the Italian).
- 47 Like many members of the committee, he had been educated by the Lasallian Brothers at St Joseph's College, Mid-Levels. J.V. Chanatong died on 30 September 1942, intestate, in what must have been his parents' old house at No. 33 Hankow Rd. 2nd fl. (SCMP, Notice of Probate, 10 Dec 1957). His aliases are given as Chan Nai Tong, Chan Kat Cho and Chan Wing Cheung. His brother Peter died in 1950 aged 79. With thanks to Stephen Davies for this information.
- 48 Arnold Wright ed., *Twentieth Century Impressions of Hongkong: History People, Commerce, Industries, and Resources* (London: Lloyd's Greater Britain Pub. Co., 1908; re-published Singapore: Graham Brash (Pte) Ltd, 1990) pp. 228–9.
- 49 The father of Chan A Tong is down as having contributed \$25 for the new Asile de la Sainte Enfance, Wongneichong, in 1906, so it seems a long term Catholic family. Joseph's mother, Agnes Chanatong, died aged 84 in 1936. She lived on Hankow Rd, Kowloon. The last rites were performed by Fr Spada, Fr Robba, Fr John Situ, Fr E Terruzzi and Fr P Ngai (SCMP 23 October 1936). With thanks to Stephen Davies for this information.
- 50 See note 18.
- 51 SFRI-ACD, F5.43: 110, 111, 112, 138, 153, 163, 166 (letters of L. Robert to Mgr Antoine Fourquet, 1923–24): Chanatong is said to be honest, 'not brave,

- timid, careless, lazy, but he would not steal even though he is stupid enough to let stealing go on'. SFRI-ACD, F3.4, IV-III: 43, 46 (letters of L. Vircondelet to Mgr A. Fourquet, 1924); SFRI-ACD, F3.4, IV-III: 69, 74, 78 (letters of L. Vircondelet to Mgr A. Fourquet, 1926): 'Chanatong is pure spirit, it is almost impossible to get hold of him' (translations from the French).
- 52 SFRI-ACD, F10.25: 89, 94 (letter from M.E.P. Paris to Mgr Fourquet, 16 June 1931). He built Shek Shat residential blocks near the cathedral of Canton.
- 53 'Les Sœurs de Saint-Paul de Chartres à Hongkong', *Bulletin des Missions Étrangères de Paris*, 9/102 (June 1930) pp. 342–52 (quote p. 350).
- 54 Full text: "THIS FOUNDATION STONE WAS LAID BY / HIS LORDSHIP / THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP H. VALORTA D.D. / VICAR-APOSTOLIC OF HONGKONG / ASSISTED BY / THE VERY REV. FATHER L. ROBERT / ON SATURDAY THE 21ST APRIL 1928. / ARCHITECTS: CREDIT FONCIER D'EXTREME-ORIENT / DESIGNED BY JOS. V. CHANATONG".
- 55 Thomas Coomans, 'China Papers: The Architecture Archives of the Building Company *Crédit Foncier d'Extrême-Orient* (1907-59)', *ABE Journal. European Architecture Beyond Europe*, 5 (2014), article number 689. <http://dev.abejournal.eu/index.php?id=689>
- 56 Several analysed in: Prudence Leung Kwok Lau, 'Building a Modern City: Legacies of Residential Development and Architectural Adaptation in Colonial Hong Kong,' *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Series 3, 28 (2018), pp. 339–53.
- 57 Such archives were not sent to the headquarters of C.F.E.O. in Brussels, but were conserved locally. Van Wylick himself destroyed most of the archives of the Hong Kong office when the Japanese occupied the colony and tried to seize the office. Information about St Teresa's church is thus scarce.
- 58 AGR-CFEO, 442: G. Van Wylick (co-signed J.M. Noronha) to CFEO Brussels, 24 April 1930 (translation from the French).
- 59 AGR-CFEO, 442: E. Molines to Van Wylick, 12 May 1930 (translation from the French).
- 60 AGR-CFEO, 442: H. Le Bœuf and L. Baillieux to E. Molines and G. Van Wylick, 30 May 1930.
- 61 AGR-CFEO, 442: G. Van Wylick (co-signed J.M. Noronha) to CFEO Brussels, 30 June 1930 (translation from the French).
- 62 We have been to Chartres and visited the archives of the Sisters of St Paul but have not found any plan or picture of the chapels' construction.
- 63 Sergio Ticozzi, *Historical Documents of the Hong Kong Catholic Church*, p. 152. Blasto was an authorised architect: Tony Lam Chung Wai, 'From British Colonization to Japanese Invasion. The 100 Years.' p. 47.
- 64 *Evening Post*, Monday 19 December 1932. See note 1.
- 65 Full text: "TO THE GLORY OF GOD / AND IN THE HONOUR OF / ST.

TERESA OF THE CHILD JESUS / THIS FOUNDATION STONE HAS BEEN LAID / BY HIS LORDSHIP H. VALTORTA / VICAR APOSTOLIC OF HONG KONG / KOW-LOON 23RD APRIL 1932”.

- 66 AAM-AG, *Mémoires* (unpublished manuscript, ca 1950) p. 198.
- 67 Situated on Saikung Road, Kowloon City, the chapel was inaugurated by Mgr Valtorta on 23 December 1932, i.e. five days after St Teresa's. The press noted that 'the roof is of concrete, capped with Chinese tiles'. See: 'New Chapel Dedicated. Interesting Design for Building in Kowloon City District. Little Sisters of the Poor', *South China Morning Post* (Saturday 24 December 1932). AVW, press clipping.
- 68 Thanked in Mgr Valtorta's opening speech. Guérineau was an authorised architect in Hong Kong from 1926 to 1940. Mentioned in: Tony Lam Chung Wai, 'From British Colonization to Japanese Invasion. The 100 Years ...', p. 50.
- 69 *St. Teresa's Church Kowloon, Hongkong. Silver Jubilee 1932–1957*, no page number; Sergio Ticozzi, Historical Documents of the Hong Kong Catholic Church, pp. 151–153;
- 70 <https://archives.catholic.org.hk/In%20Memoriam/Clergy-Brother/A-Grampa.htm> [accessed 2 January 2018].
- 71 AVW, scrap book, 1930s. Courtesy Edouard Van Wylick. Other old pictures of St Teresa's and Kowloon Tong on: <https://gwulo.com/node/6585/photos>
- 72 'The church is constructed throughout in reinforced concrete, with a façade of granite pillars supporting the porch. [...] The structure rests on Franki piles driven to an average depth of from 26 to 30 feet, but in some cases, where extra heavy loads had to be carried, to a depth of 60 to 90 feet. The magnificent tower on the right of the main entrance is erected on foundations over 30 feet deep ...', *South China Morning Post* (Monday 19 December 1932). AVW, press clipping.
- 73 *South China Morning Post* (25 April 1932), text and two pictures reproduced in: *St. Teresa's Church Kowloon, Hongkong. Silver Jubilee 1932–1957*, no page number.
- 74 See note 65.
- 75 HKCDA, S.V. B.50, F.02. E. Valtorta to G.M. Spada, 5 Octobre 1932 (translation from the Italian).
- 76 Left tablet: 'Benefactors founders of this church: Chev. & Mrs J.M. Alves / Mps. S. Escaler / J.M.C. Basto Esq. / Mr. & Mrs. Adriano H.M. Silva / Mrs. E.L. do Rozario / H[is] E[xcellence] Benito Mussolini'. Right tablet: 'Benefactors founders of this church: Mr & Mrs. J.M. d'Eça / Mrs. M.G. de Carvalho / Miss. A.T. Gomes / Miss. G.M. Gomes / Mrs. L.U.M. Bernedo / F. & J. de la Cruz Bros'.
- 77 In all likelihood, the Committee of St Teresa's, which had launched the fundraising campaign on 24 June 1929, benefitted from a gift from the Italian state through the networks of Italian missionaries and diplomats.

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- 78 *Evening Post* (19 December 1932), reproduced in: *St. Teresa's Church Kowloon, Hongkong. Silver Jubilee 1932–1957*, no page number.
- 79 Sergio Ticozzi, *Historical Documents of the Hong Kong Catholic Church*, p. 153.
- 80 First, he was missionary in different neighbourhoods of Hong Kong, Kowloon, and the New Territories: <https://web.archive.org/web/20050817222824/http://archives.catholic.org.hk/administrators/valtorta.htm> [accessed on 3 January 2018]. Sergio Ticozzi, 'The Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions' in Louis Ha and Patrick Taveirne, eds, *History of Catholic Religious Orders*, Vol.1, pp. 189–286 (esp. pp. 237–39).
- 81 The chapel of Holy Spirit Seminary (1955) and St Francis of Assisi Church, Tai Tam Reservoir, the Butterfield & Swire Building and the Taikoo Sugar Refinery Sham Shui Po (1955).
- 82 Developed in: Thomas Coomans, 'Sinicising Christian Architecture in Hong Kong', pp. 149–152.
- 83 The architect of the College was Little, Adams & Wood. It was demolished in 1978 and replaced with a modern building in reinforced concrete. Old pictures on: <https://gwulo.com/node/2414/photos>
- 84 The first building, 1936, by the architectural firm Palmer and Turner.
- 85 The convent, 1952, by Gustave Volckaert: Thomas Coomans and Prudence Leung Kwok Lau, 'Les tribulations d'un architecte belge en Chine: Gustave Volckaert, au service du Crédit Foncier d'Extrême-Orient, 1914–1954', *Revue Belge d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'Art*, 81 (2012) pp. 129–153. The school building, 1957, by Luke Him Sau.
- 86 AGR-CFEO, 442: G. Van Wylick to C.F.E.O. headquarter in Brussels and offices in Shanghai and Tianjin, 7 September 1933. List of pictures of the works of the C.F.E.O. in Hong Kong in the years 1931–33.

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