Death, Identity & Discourse
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- [Culture] denotes an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life. (Clifford Geertz)
Deathspace: London
Deathspace: Vienna
Deathspace: S. Cataldo, Modena
Deathspace, China
Old Protestant Cemetery, Macao
1821-1858: 161 tombs, 164 dead
Systems of Meaning Interpellation

- Spatial organisation (syntax)
- Types of memorial structure
- Iconography
- Inscriptions
Macao
Foreign factories at Canton
Burial at sea
In memory of

STEPHEN B. R.

Seaman

Son of Thomas L P
of the City of New
(U. S. of America

who was drowned at W
from on board of th
The Campo, Macao
Sacred to the memory of
Mary,
wife of Robert Morrison.
Who, erewhile anticipating a living Mother's joy,
suddenly, but with a pious resignation,
departed this life after a short illness of 14 hours,
bearing with her to the
Grave,
her hoped-for child.
Mary was born in Dublin, Oct. 24, 1791,
and died at Macao,
June 10, 1821.
Old Protestant Cemetery, Macao
Cimetière de Montmartre, Paris
Chest tomb
Headstone – Ideal Real

Christian Johann
Friedrich Jpland

Geboren zu Apenrade
den 30 Juni 1818
Gestorben zu Macao
den 5 October 1857

Sant Ruhe deine Asche
Du müder Wanderer.
Monument – real/IDEAL

Regeneration

Resurrection

Eternal life
Slab – REAL/ideal

- corruption, decay, disintegration
THE MEMORIALS IN PLAN

Alter Teixeira
Layout – ‘Occidental geomancy’

Sepulchral linearity: order, discipline, regularity, coherence
‘Fung Shui’

- [I]f anyone wishes to see to what a howling wilderness of erratic dogmatism the human mind can arrive, when speculation usurps the place of science, and theories are reverenced equally with facts, let him endeavour to fathom even the elementary principles of that abyss of insane vagaries, the science of Fung-Shui. (Edwin Joshua Dukes. *Everyday Life in China*. London, 1885)
Western views of the Chinese

- With all their civilisation, still envy and malice, deceit and falsehood, to a boundless extent, pride and boasting, a selfish, ungenerous, scarcely honest prudence, and a cold metaphysical inhumanity, are the prevalent characteristics of the people of China. (Robert Morrison, Missionary Sermons, 1835)
Symbolism in the West
Symbolism in the West
Spatial syntax: colonised space
SACRED TO THE MEMORY
OF
THE REV. D. SAMUEL DYER
Protestant Missionary to the Chinese
Who for 16 years devoted all his energies
to the advancement of the Gospel.
among the emigrants from China
settled in Pinang Malacca & Singapore.
As a Man, he was amiable & affectionate,
As a Christian, upright, sincere, & humble-minded;
As a Missionary devoted, zealous & indefatigable.
He spared neither time, nor labour, nor property,
in his efforts to do good for his fellowmen.
He died in the confident belief of that truth
which for so many years he affectionately & faithfully
preached to the Heathen.
He was born 20th February 1804.
was sent to the East by the London Missionary Society in 1827
And died at Macao 24th October, 1843.

For if we believe that Jesus died & rose again,
even so them also which sleep in Jesus
will God bring with him.
DEEPLY LAMENTED AND MOST AFFECTIONATELY BELOVED.

DEEPLY AND DESERVEDLY LAMENTED BY HER FOND AND

R ON THE 21ST Nov. 1844 AGED 21 YEARS DEEPLY LAMENTED

beloved and respected and died LAMENTED by all who knew

ESTEEMED BY HIS FRIENDS AND LAMENTED BY ALL WHO

team and respect for their distinguished and LAMENTED Chief by the

A Who died at Macao sincerely and deservedly LAMENTED On the 22nd

As a token of regard For their amiable and LAMENTED Shipmate

BELOVED AND LAMENTED TO THE MEMORY OF FREDCK

MARY CLARK The beloved and LAMENTED Wife OF
Representative and Social Interpretation

• The representative interpretation considers the key lexical and grammatical features which appear in the corpus; and the social interpretation the interpersonal and ideational meanings associated with them.
Interpersonal and Ideational Meaning

• Interpersonal meaning: How the writer creates a relationship with the reader
• Ideational meaning: Shared assumptions about the world and the entities in it
Lexical and grammatical choices

• (i) The distribution and foregrounding of adjectives and nouns as content words
• (ii) The distribution and foregrounding of verb forms denoting actions and changes of state
• (iii) The grammatical environments in which items appear
Adjectives and nouns

- values and beliefs;
- time;
- place;
- relations;
- status;
- memorial structures;
- states of being and transition;
- work.
States of being and transition

- ‘Death’ (3)
- ‘Life’ (39)
- ‘Remains’ (13)
- ‘Dead’ (3)
- ‘Illness’ (3)
- ‘Mortal’ (3).
4164. THIS MARBLE IS PLACED OVER HER REMAINS BY HER DISCONSOLATE HUSBAND AS A
4165. Macao Roads on the 21st of September 1825 Aged 21 And whose REMAINS lay interred on this
4166. Here lie the REMAINS of Andrew Ljungstedt Knight of Wasa Scholar and Philanthropist. He was
4167. HERE LIE THE REMAINS OF HENRY JAMES OSBORNE 4TH Son of Geo Osborne Esqur.
4168. THE REMAINS OF EDMUND ROBERTS ESQ SPECIAL DIPLOMATIC AGENT OF THE UNITED
4169. THE REMAINS OF ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL ESQ WHO DIED AT MACAO IN THE COMMAN
4170. IN THE VAULT BENEATH LIE THE REMAINS OF G. W. HARRISON Midshipman U. S. Navy
4171. Obiit 25th May 1836 ÆTAT. 31 YEARS THE REMAINS OF HER SISTER MRS DURANT ARE
4172. HERE LIE THE REMAINS OF CHRISTIAN CATHRO Spouse of JOHN WALKER (Bombay Country
4173. To the grief of the disconsolate Husband and Sons here lieth the Mortal REMAINS, of MRS
4174. BENEATH THIS SARCOPHAGUS ARE DEPOSITED THE REMAINS OF DANIEL BEALE ESQR.
4175. HERE LIE THE MORTAL REMAINS OF SANDWITH B. DRINKER A NATIVE OF Philadelphia
4176. WHO DIED AUGUST 24th 1842 This Stone Was Placed over his REMAINS BY HIS SHIPMATES
Values and Beliefs

• Ideational dispositions
  – Faith
  – Sentiment
  – Duty
Duty

- Service 5
- Testimony 4
- Labour 2 (1)
- Zealous 2
- Acting [resident] 1
- Advancement 1
- Arduous [duties] 1
- Care 1 (1)
- Conduct 1
- Consent 1
- Devoted 1
- Disposition 1
- Energies 1
- Exemplary 1
- Fervent 1
- Instruction 1
- Upright 1
- [In the] Command of 2
Elizabeth Fearon (d. 1838)

‘[Her] conduct ... during an union of 20 years was most exemplary’

IN MEMORY
OF ELIZABETH FEARON, WHOSE TRULY AMIABLE
DISPOSITION HAD ENDEARED HER TO ALL WHO KNEW
HER,
AND WHOSE CONDUCT AS A WIFE AND MOTHER
DURING AN
UNION OF
20 YEARS WAS MOST EXEMPLARY. THIS MONUMENT
IS ERECTED BY HER SORROWING HUSBAND
Llewelyn & Co
-
“THE LORD GAVE, AND THE LORD HATH TAKEN AWAY:
BLESSED BE HIS HOLY NAME.”
-
BORN IN LONDON
22 OCTOBER 1794

DIED AT LINTIN
31 MARCH 1838
Verb forms

- active agency;
- passive agency;
- imperatives;
- truth claims;
- modifiers;
- present participles.
Active agency

2257. HE affectionately & faithfully *preached* to the HEATHEN.
2258. HE *ASSISTED IN SETTING UP* THE FIRST MAGNETIC TELEGRAPH
2259. HE *completed* and *published* A DICTIONARY OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE,
2260. HE *devised* and *executed* for their law under instruction from his government
2273. HE *spared* neither time, nor labour, nor property
1476. CAPTAIN WILLIAM MORGAN late *COMMANDING* the British Ship General Wood
1987. twenty-seven years cheerfully *spent* in *EXTENDING* the Kingdom of the blessed REDEEMER,
4663. who died from the effects of a wound *received* while gallantly *STORMING* the enemy’s battery at CANTON
Truth claims

• Aspect
  – ‘Happy is he who dies in the Lord’ (Universal)
  – ‘He is dying happily in the Lord’. (Transient)
Types of aspect

• Proclamatory (present perfect tense)
  The Lord gave and the Lord **hath taken away**’

• Prophetic (auxiliary ‘Shall’)
  ‘They **shall** walk with me in white’

• Universalising (copula ‘Be’)
  ‘Blessed **are** the dead which die in the Lord’
  ‘As for God his way **is** perfect’
Exophoric reference (‘the’): A known world

- ‘The Blessed Redeemer’
- ‘The Lord’,
- ‘The Father’
- ‘The Dead’
- ‘The Deceased’
- ‘The East’,
- ‘The Chinese’,
- ‘The Heathen’
- ‘The Enemy’
Adverbial modifiers

- Deeply [Lament/Lamented] 4
- Deservedly [Lamented] 2
- Truly [Amiable] 2
- Cheerfully [Spent] 1
- Faithfully [Preached] 1
- Gallantly [Storming] 1
- Plainly [See] 1 (1)

- Safely [Ride] 1 (1)
- Severely [Wounded] 1
- Sincerely [... Lamented] 1
- Suddenly [... Departed] 1
- Sweetly [Slept] 1
- Unhappily [Perished] 1
- Universally [Loved] 1
The longing for ‘presence’

• Elizabeth Fearon’s ‘truly amiable disposition’.
• Intensifying effect: a higher order of amiability, (e.g. ‘truly awful’, ‘truly delicious’, etc.)
• The adverbial longs for the presence of pure meaning, the soul longs for the presence of God.
Identity construction

• (i) Culturally didactic semiology of cemetery layout and memorial structures
• (ii) Ideological interpellation of the reader through memorial inscriptions
• From the time man places himself in the presence of something enduring, only then can he expose himself to the changeable, the coming and the going ... We have been in dialogue since the time that ‘time is’. (Heidegger, 1971: 39-40)