

Hong Kong 企業家才 Entrepreneurs

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解讀2025全國兩會

Key Takeaways from Two Sessions 2025

檢測合規助開拓穆斯林市場

Halal Testing and Compliance

「寵」出新藍海

Burgeoning Pet Economy

陳國民

Dr Edward Chan

變與不變的品牌哲學

Branding with Constancy in Change



香港中華廠商聯合會
The Chinese Manufacturers'
Association of Hong Kong



HKD40

落葉歸根

百年守護

A Century of Guardianship
for the Deceased

在華人社會中，死亡一直是個難以啟齒的沉重話題。然而，電影《破·地獄》以破紀錄的票房打破了這禁忌，其所呈現的喪葬禮俗，突顯了華人對生命的尊重，以及「逝者善終、生者善別」的生死觀。電影中的一個重要場景——東華義莊，是香港碩果僅存的「先人客棧」，曾承載着無數海外華工渴望死後落葉歸根的願望，讓人反思生命的價值。

Death is often a taboo topic in Chinese culture, but *The Last Dance* broke this silence, achieving remarkable box office success. The film's portrayal of funeral traditions underscores Chinese reverence for life and the importance of a dignified farewell. A key setting, the Tung Wah Coffin Home—one of Hong Kong's last "hostels for the deceased"—once fulfilled the wishes of overseas Chinese labourers to return home for burial, prompting reflection on life's meaning.



東華三院主席徐季良題

今來古往在宇宙亦猶傳舍逝者如斯

中華民國三十七年四月

東華義莊創建已久雖經變亂無恙願以日久失修風雨侵襲屋瓦淅瀝蟲蟻肆逞損壞堪虞同人等為先友靈柩安厝起見爰經籌劃始於本年二月召匠興修並推舉趙總理耀華主持其事施工庀材費時兩月盡復舊觀修理費用港幣四萬圓工事務竣爰用誌崇墓籍留紀念

優見愜聞賢子孫到此堂階孝思倍切

中華民國三十七年春日

東華義莊前身是位於西環堅尼地城牛房附近的「牛房義莊」，由上環文武廟於1875年出資興建，後於1899年起由東華醫院接管，並遷至薄扶林的沙灣大口環道現址，佔地達6,000平方米。

見證歷史 助先人魂歸故里

義莊是為客死異鄉的華人提供一個暫時安置遺體或骨灰的場所，讓逝者得以魂歸故里。東華三院高級經理（廟宇及文化服務）梁中杰介紹說，在19世紀的淘金潮時期，大批華人往美國做苦力，但多數在身故後沒有能力原籍安葬，「為幫助他們回家，各地的華人會館收到華工身故消息便會聯絡義莊，以水路方式運送先人遺體到香港，以作為臨時中轉站。隨後義莊會登報招領，聯絡內地親人接回遺體，讓先人入土為安。」

自19世紀以來，東華義莊經歷了多次擴建，呈現出不同時期的建築風格，並糅合了中式和西式建築。東華義莊在2003年和2004年進行了大規模修復工程，「我們堅持以『修舊如舊』的原則來修復，門線、鉸位，根釘大小、數量等，必須跟足原貌才收貨。」因此，義莊內不同年代的建築群都保留原有的形態，獲得聯合國獎項以表彰其保育價值，更在2020年被政府列為法定古蹟。

守候數十載 留存記憶與傳承

一般而言，棺骨由海外抵港，再經東華義莊運至內地故鄉需時6至8個月，如選擇在本地下葬的則多數不會存放超逾3年，不過也有例外；東華醫院創院總理之一的鄧鑑之伉儷寄厝於義莊至今已超過100年，「他們沒有親人安排葬禮，由東華三院董事局幫忙處理，董事局認為把棺木存放在義莊是對他們最好的守護，並會在每年清明節前來祭拜，管理員也會定時為莊內棺骨上香以示敬意，並非如民間謠傳的被遺棄。」梁中杰解釋道。

此外，有一些棺骨在東華義莊寄厝數十年才被後人尋回，曾經有一位女士為完成其祖母臨終心願，特地從海外回港尋親，得知祖父遺體有可能存在東華義莊後，便前來尋找並領回遺體，待他日回鄉與祖母合葬。「所以義莊不僅是一個提供殮葬服務的場所，更承載著無數家庭的記憶與傳承，是華人文化和傳統的重要象徵。」梁中杰道。



安排華工棺骨回鄉的記錄
Records of arrangements for the
repatriation of Chinese labourers'
remains



梁中杰指，東華義莊不忍華工在世時孤身漂泊，離世後還流落異鄉，故幫助他們回歸原籍安葬

Mr Vandesar Leung explains that the Tung Wah Coffin Home helps return Chinese labourers' remains to their ancestral homes, recognising the hardship of living and dying alone abroad



電影《破·地獄》拍攝場景之一

A filming location used in the movie *The Last Dance*

由於國家政策變化，棺木一度積壓在義莊無法運回內地，1960年代高峰時存放了逾600具靈柩和超過8,000副骨殖。不過隨着火葬、海葬的盛行，寄厝的靈柩及骨殖逐漸減少。現時每年約有30具遺體新入莊寄厝在義莊內，或因擇吉日入葬，或需轉運至另一地方才下葬。過往寄厝於東華義莊的先人不乏名人，包括前北京大學校長蔡元培、廣東軍閥陳炯明，以及「賭王」何鴻燊等等。

超越生死 尋求解脫與安寧

在電影《破·地獄》中，甄小姐接受不了幼子夭折，拒為遺體下葬或火化，將兒子遺體作防腐處理及真空密封，寄厝於東華義莊。這不免讓人好奇，是否要這樣大費周章，才能寄厝於義莊？梁中杰指，義莊一般不會要求為遺體做防腐，最重要是把棺木的縫隙密封，防止屍蟲或液體滲出，以便存放。

至於戲中的「破地獄」儀式，是香港非物質文化遺產，旨在讓先人免受地獄之苦，甚至可以早登仙界。現實中，東華三院轄下的殯儀館平均每間每日都會進行3至4次「破地獄」儀式。梁中杰認為，「破地獄」的意義除了是超渡逝者，對生者也是一種慰藉和救贖：「超渡亡者，為他們謀求解脫是中國人重視孝道的一種體現，對家屬而言也能帶來心靈安寧，協助他們面對失去至親的傷痛和對亡者的遺憾。」

The Tung Wah Coffin Home was originally located near the Slaughter House in Kennedy Town, Western District, and was known as the Slaughter House Coffin Home. It was established in 1875 with funding from the Man Mo Temple in Sheung Wan and later, in 1899, came under the management of the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (TWGHs). It was then relocated to its current site in Sandy Bay, Pok Fu Lam, on Tai Koo Wan Road, occupying an area of 6,000 square metres.

A history of returning workers to their roots

Coffin homes provide a temporary resting place for the bodies or ashes of Chinese people who die far from home, allowing the deceased to return to their ancestral land. Mr Vandesar Leung, Senior Manager (Temples and Cultural Services) of TWGHs, explained that during the 19th-century gold rush, most of the Chinese labourers who travelled to the United States could not afford burial in their place of origin after death. "To help them return home, Chinese associations worldwide would contact coffin homes to transport their remains to Hong Kong as a temporary transit point. The coffin home would then post newspaper advertisements to find their relatives, allowing families to reclaim the remains and lay them to rest."



不少名人曾寄厝於此，以天字 1 號莊房最多人選用
Many prominent individuals have had their remains stored at the home, with the Number One "Tian" Room being the most chosen

Since the 19th century, the Tung Wah Coffin Home has undergone several expansions, showcasing various architectural styles that blend Chinese and Western elements. Extensive restoration work was carried out in 2003 and 2004. As Leung explained, "We adhered to the principle of preserving the old as it was. Door frames, hinges, the size and number of nails - everything had to match the original appearance." This dedication to preservation has earned the site a UN award, culminating in its designation as a statutory monument by the government in 2020.



義莊內的《落葉歸根》壁畫，由本地藝術家黃鼎豐所創作
The Tung Wah Coffin Home's mural, *Fallen Leaves Returning to Their Roots*, was created by local artist Wong Ting Fung

Safeguarding memories and heritage for decades

Typically, it takes six to eight months for remains to arrive in Hong Kong from overseas and be transported from the Tung Wah Coffin Home to their final resting place in the Mainland. And it may take less than 3 years for repository if they choose to bury in Hong Kong. However, there are exceptions. The remains of Mr Tang Kam Chi, one of the founders of TWGHs, and his wife, have been housed in the Coffin Home for over 100 years. "They had no relatives to arrange their funeral, so the TWGHs' board of directors took responsibility, believing that keeping them here was the best way to honour them. Every year during the Ching Ming Festival, our board members visit to pay respects, and caretakers regularly offer incense as a mark of remembrance," Leung explained.

Other remains have also been stored for extended periods before being reclaimed by descendants. In one instance, a woman, fulfilling her grandmother's dying wish, travelled from overseas to Hong Kong to reconnect with their family. Upon discovering that her grandfather's remains were at the Tung Wah Coffin Home, she retrieved them to bury alongside her grandmother in their homeland. As Leung observed, "The Coffin Home is not just a place that provides mortuary services; it carries the memories and heritage of countless families, serving as an important symbol of Chinese culture and tradition."

At some points in the Tung Wah Coffin Home's history, coffins accumulated in the home as they could not be transported back to the Mainland due to national policies. At its peak in the 1960s, there were over 600 coffins and more than 8,000 sets of bones stored in the Tung Wah coffin home. With the increasing prevalence of cremation and sea burials, the number of coffins and remains stored has gradually decreased. Currently, around 30 bodies are newly admission in the Tung Wah Coffin Home each year, awaiting either an auspicious burial date or transfer to another location for interment. Prominent figures whose remains were once deposited at the Tung Wah Coffin Home include Cai Yuanpei, former president of Peking University; Chen Jiongming, a revolutionary figure in the early periods of the Republic of China; and Stanley Ho, the "King of Gambling" in Macao.



東華義莊最初是海外華工遺體運返原鄉安葬的中轉站，後來也為本地居民在覓地安葬先人期間，提供棺骨暫存服務
Originally serving as a transit point for the deceased Chinese workers waiting to be buried in their native soil, the Tung Wah Coffin Home subsequently provided temporary coffin storage for local residents awaiting burial plots for their ancestors

華工即使已在海外「土葬」，仍會「執骨」放入「招魂箱」送到義莊，再聯絡內地親友，將逝者骨殖送回故鄉。對於一些無法尋回骸骨先人，就會在空的箱子上寫上先人的姓名，將其運回來，讓家屬聊以慰藉。

In some cases, even if Chinese labourers were buried overseas, their remains were exhumed, boxed, and sent to the coffin home for repatriation. If retrieval was impossible, an empty box bearing the deceased's name symbolically carried their soul to comfort the family



Transcending life and death for liberation and peace

In *The Last Dance*, Miss Yan cannot accept the death of her son and refuses to bury or cremate his body. Instead, she has it embalmed and vacuum-sealed, placing it in the Tung Wah Coffin Home. This scene raises the question of whether such elaborate measures are necessary for storing remains in the home. Leung clarified that the Tung Wah Coffin Home typically does not require that bodies are embalmed. The most important thing is ensuring that all gaps in the coffin are sealed to prevent bodily fluid leakage or insect infestation.

The film depicts a “breaking hell’s gate” ritual, which is a Hong Kong intangible cultural heritage practice intended to relieve the deceased from suffering in hell and facilitate their ascent to the celestial realm. In reality, the each TWGHs funeral parlours conduct three to four such rituals every day. Leung believes that the ritual’s significance extends beyond simply guiding the deceased; it also provides comfort and solace to the living. “Guiding the deceased towards liberation is a manifestation of the importance of filial piety in Chinese culture. It brings peace of mind to the bereaved, helping them cope with the pain of loss and any regrets they may have concerning the deceased.” 雷頌



義莊內連同涼亭及花園等設施獲得香港政府古物古蹟辦事處頒發「文物保存及修復獎」(2004)榮譽大獎及於2005年獲得聯合國教育、科學及文化組織頒發「亞太區文物修復獎」(2005)優越大獎

The Tung Wah Coffin Home complex, encompassing the pavilion and gardens, won the Award of Honour in the Heritage Preservation and Conservation Awards (2004) from the Hong Kong government and an Award of Merit in the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation in 2005