

Historic Building Appraisal

Gateway

Fung Ying Sin Koon, Pak Wo Road, Fanling, New Territories

The Chinese characters of **Fung Ying Sin Koon** (蓬瀛仙館) can be seen on the Gateway. Fung Ying Sin Koon is a Taoist temple founded in 1929 by three Taoist priests, namely, **He Jinyu** (何近愚), **Chen Luankai** (陳鸞楷) and **Mai Xingjie** (麥星階) from China to propagate Taoist doctrines. They raised money from other Taoists and built the Koon. The Koon belonged to a Taoist branch called Lungmenpai (龍門派) which branched off from Chunzhenjiao (全真教). A few simple houses were first erected on the site. With the donation of **Ruan Chanqing** (阮禪卿) and **Su Yaochen** (蘇耀宸), three new buildings were erected for the worship of Sansheng (三聖, three deities), namely, Taishang Laojun (太上老君), Lu Chunyang (呂純陽) and Qiu Changchun (丘長春). Continuous reconstruction projects were carried out since 1951, and most of the buildings have been rebuilt and altered since then.

*Historical
Interest*

The Koon was not open to the public at its infant stage. In 1949, it was registered as a Taoist organization and began to propagate Taoist doctrines widely by participating in various charitable activities. In 1950, the administrative structure of the temple was changed, and since then it has been managed under the board of supervisors (理監事制). In 1972, Fung Ying Seen Koon was registered as a limited company and the range of services provided by the organization was further expanded.

The existing gateway or *pai lou* (牌樓) is at the entrance and on the central axis of the temple site with the Main Temple (大殿) at the back. The characters inscribed on the gateway show that the gateway was constructed in **1934** and rebuilt or repaired (*chong xiu* 重修; in Chinese) in **1980**. It is a symmetrical traditional Chinese vernacular structure with two columns and a horizontal panel up in the middle. Flanking the panel and the columns is a *toukung* (斗拱) structure and an *aoyu* (鰲魚) on each side. The front panel is inscribed with the name of the temple ‘蓬瀛僊館’ and at the back ‘眾妙之門’. One pair of couplets is on either side of the columns.

*Architectural
Merit*

Fung Ying Seen Koon is a notable temple in Hong Kong.

Rarity

The gateway has little built heritage value.

*Built Heritage
Value &*

The gateway has been refurbished with concrete and paints without any trace of an old structure. Its authenticity is hardly kept.

Authenticity

Taoist doctrines can be learnt at the Koon by two types of Taoists. The first is called zaijia jushi (在家居士) who do not have to reside at the Koon but participate in different religious activities and ceremonies. The other is called jinsheng (經生) who participate in various religious activities such as morning and evening scripture recitations (早晚課) in the Koon.

It is considered that the question of adaptive re-use does not arise at the present time.

***Social Value,
& Local
Interest

Adaptive
Re-use***