

Toponymic Traces of Colonialism: Analyzing George Town and Binondo's Urban Naming Patterns

Abstract

Southeast Asia's Toponymy demonstrates profound socio-political changes driven by colonial and postcolonial histories and culture. In this study, GeorgeTown in Penang Malaysia and Binondo in Manila, Philippines has been selected for the assessment of street-naming patterns, to assess and compare the identity, power, and memory that are embedded in the urban landscape. Through historical maps, archival sources, and on-site observation, this study will trace street names evolution from colonial to present day. A comparative analysis highlighting different strategies in toponymic management for both George Town and Binondo will be discussed in this paper. George Town exhibits an approach that is preservation-oriented that intertwines colonial with multicultural identity while Binondo reflects more on politicized renaming that is tied to the nationalistic sentiment. Exploring the patterns underscore how each places remembers and reframed the past. The study will emphasize street name roles as an instrument of political discourse and cultural narration, and advocating street-naming that engages with layered historical narratives while promoting inclusive urban identities. This will also discuss opinions of the locals in shaping urban identity on the naming and renaming patterns for both George Town and Binondo. Lastly, this will advocate street -naming practices that will acknowledge the historical narrative layers and support inclusive urban identities in postcolonial Southeast Asian cities. In conclusion, this highlights the political discourse, cultural narration, and collective memory in postcolonial Street names in Southeast Asian Cities. This also argues the importance of adopting street-naming practices that acknowledge layered historical narratives while fostering inclusive urban identities. With the incorporation of official policies and community perceptions, this advocates not only for preservation of toponymic heritage but also engages the diverse voices that is currently shaping the contemporary urban experience.

Keywords: Toponyms, Binondo, George Town, Street Names

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I. Introduction

Street naming plays an important role in forming social and cultural identities and not only in shaping physical spaces. Naming and renaming streets serve as a powerful instrument in national identity reinforcement, ideological politics, and asserting collective memory. This practice helps preserve its layered cultural identity while reflecting historical and political shifts. They reveal how it contributes to understanding what Jackson (1980) described as the "Invisible Landscapes", an intangible layer of history and identity embedded in place. In Southeast Asia, postcolonial cities toponymy serves as a palimpsest where its imprints and contemporary period narratives intersect and often conflict. Regardless of the pattern in street naming, former colonial cities remain under examined dimension of urban cultural politics.

Some existing research on postcolonial contexts about toponymy has primarily focused on national level renaming projects and some have focused on symbolically erased colonial heritage (Azaryahu, 1996; Yeoh, 1992). However, this leaves a research gap at the district level or neighborhood especially in Malaysia and the Philippines where multicultural postcolonial societies are evident. This study addresses the said gap by assessing the street naming patterns of George Town, Penang and Binondo, Manila - both urban centers shaped by British and Spanish colonials. George Town's multilingual toponyms have a reflection of cultural convergence legacy with visible influence from Chinese, Indian, Malay, and British. Compared with Binondo - the oldest Chinatown in the world, displays Spanish period to Post

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46 independence evolution. Both George Town and Binondo illustrates toponyms function as inscribed power relations,
47 historical memory, and identity negotiations into the built environment.

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49 With guidance of the central research question: How do colonial legacies persist in George Town and Binondo's street
50 naming patterns? Explored through sub-questions:

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52 1. What are ideological frameworks informed the original naming systems in each city?
53 2. How have street names been preserved, altered or replaced since the end of colonial period?
54 3. What are the revaluation behind evolving toponymic landscape on contemporary national and cultural identity?

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56 This research also aims to analyze the historical origins and linguistic meanings of George Town and Binondo's street
57 names; trace the retention patterns, alteration, and renaming from the colonial to post-colonial period; and compare
58 toponymic practices of George Town and Binondo to represent identity, heritage, and political history in urban realm.

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60 **II. Scope and Limitations**

61 This research focuses on geographical and thematically aspect of two significant historical urban districts in Southeast
62 Asia: George Town and Binondo. These two sites have a fertile ground for toponymic change within colonial and post-
63 colonial layers in urban context.

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65 This research will start the discussion from the beginnings of British colonization George Town during the late 18th
66 century and Spanish occupation of Binondo during the late 16th century up to the nationalist struggles and postcolonial
67 transformations on the present urban planning and administration. Such scope provides for a critical analysis of how
68 practice in street naming developed as a function of political, ideological, and cultural developments. The study focuses
69 on continuity and change of toponyms with focus on crucial historical discontinuities such as independence struggles, city
70 modernization schemes, and restoration campaigns (Yeoh, 1992).

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72 Nonetheless, there are various limitations in the research. To begin with, the research is only interested in the official and
73 lawfully sanctioned toponyms in the administrative limits of George Town and Binondo. Informal or colloquial toponyms
74 like nicknames, local place names, or slang place names are not included because of their variability and the lack of official
75 records. Second, temporal constraints come from the completeness and availability of archive materials. Specifically, for
76 Manila, there are overall gaps in pre-war and war records because of the widespread destruction during World War II
77 (Anderson, 2005) that limit analysis on some toponymic development. Third, this study does not cover other districts or
78 cities with possibly similar or opposite naming patterns but is an intensive study of these two districts as representative
79 model cases of Southeast Asian colonial urban toponymy.

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81 Even with these restrictions, the study presents a grounded and comparative analysis of adding substance to the
82 argumentation regarding critical toponymy, urban memory, and postcolonial construction of identity in multicultural
83 cities.

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85 **III. Colonial Periods of Georgetown and Binondo**

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87 **A. George Town, Unesco World Heritage**

88 George Town, the capital city of Penang in Malaysia, was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2008 due to its
89 outstanding architectural and cultural townscape, which illustrates the historical coexistence of diverse ethnic and cultural
90 communities in a British colonial urban framework (UNESCO, 2008). Established in 1786 by Captain Francis Light of the
91 British East India Company, George Town became a strategic trading post in the Straits Settlements. Its colonial urban
92 fabric features grid-planned streets, administrative buildings, and a blend of European and Asian architectural styles
93 (Gullick, 2007). Street names from the colonial era such as Light Street, Queen Street, and Farquhar Street highlight the
94 imperial legacy, often commemorating British monarchs, colonial administrators, and imperial ideals. These toponyms
95 serve not only as spatial markers but as enduring signifiers of colonial authority and urban planning ideology (Yeoh, 1992;
96 Rose-Redwood, Alderman, & Azaryahu, 2010).

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98 Post-independence, George Town's toponymic landscape has been shaped by heritage preservation efforts, including the
99 use of multilingual street signage in Malay, English, Tamil, and Chinese to reflect its pluralistic population (Ramasamy,
100 2017). This strategy reflects the balancing act between maintaining colonial-era names for heritage tourism and asserting a
101 multicultural national identity.

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103 **B. Binondo, World's Oldest Chinatown**

104 Binondo, located in the heart of Manila across the Pasig River from Intramuros, is widely recognized as the world's oldest
105 Chinatown. It was founded in 1594 by Spanish Governor Luis Pérez Dasmariñas as a settlement for Chinese immigrants
106 who had converted to Christianity, known locally as *sangleys* (Aluit, 1994). The district quickly grew into a vital economic
107 hub, where Chinese merchants became integral to colonial trade networks. As such, Binondo became layered with
108 Spanish, Chinese, and later American influences—both culturally and toponymically.

109

110 Colonial-era Street names in Binondo often carried religious and functional connotations. Streets like San Fernando, San
111 Nicolas, and Nueva reflect the Catholic religious order and Spanish urban taxonomy. Over time, some of these names
112 were replaced or hybridized to reflect nationalist and local identities. For example, Calle Anloague was renamed Juan
113 Luna Street in honor of the Filipino revolutionary painter, and Ongpin Street was renamed in 1915 to commemorate
114 Roman Ongpin, a Chinese-Filipino patriot who supported the Philippine revolution against Spain (Anderson, 2005).

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116 While some Spanish-derived names persist—such as *Escolta*, a street synonymous with commerce and cultural prestige—
117 others have been deliberately renamed to assert a postcolonial Filipino identity (Azaryahu, 1996). These evolving
118 toponymic practices reveal how Binondo, like George Town, is a palimpsest of colonial imprints and post-independence
119 efforts to reclaim symbolic space.

120

121 **III. Methodology**

122 This research adopts a comparative qualitative approach grounded in the interdisciplinary fields of urban studies,
123 historical linguistics, and critical toponymy. The methodology is outlined to reveal the cultural and socio-political layers
124 embedded in George Town, Malaysia and Binondo, Philippines street names. Integrating spatial analysis, archival
125 research, and field documentation to investigate the historical, ideological, and linguistic dimensions of toponymic
126 practices.

127

128 **A. Data Collection**

129 Primary sources in Data Collection were based from the field documentation which involved on-site observations.
130 Secondary Resources were obtained from a range of archival documents, including colonial-era gazetteers, municipal
131 council records, and naming ordinances, provided historical background and administrative rationale for original street
132 naming patterns (Gullick, 2007). Additionally, historical, contemporary maps, and city plans were used to trace spatial
133 and temporal shifts in toponymic designations enabling the identification of renamed streets and their alignment with
134 specific political regimes or cultural policies. Third, field documentation involved the on-site recording of street name
135 signage, commemorative plaques, and bilingual inscriptions. This approach helped verify current naming conventions,
136 assess their physical presence in the urban fabric, and detect changes over time. Lastly, a review of secondary academic
137 sources and linguistic databases enriched the analysis by providing insights into the etymological structure, linguistic
138 hybridization, and cultural relevance of Southeast Asian urban toponyms (Ramasamy, 2017; Yeoh, 1996).

139

140 As part of Data Collection, Photo documentation during the fieldwork served as a critical qualitative research tool to
141 capture visual evidence of street naming practices in the historical layers on urban districts of George Town and Binondo.
142 As toponyms are materially manifested through signage and spatial inscriptions, photography was used to trace how
143 colonial legacies, nationalist narratives, and multicultural identities are inscribed and contested in the streetscape. The
144 photographic records intent to record visually and interpret the presence, form, and language of street signage as
145 expressions of historical memory and authority. This provides spatial context for how toponyms interact with built
146 heritage, public symbols, and everyday urban life. Additionally, this examines how the visibility and aesthetics of signage
147 contribute to postcolonial identity formation, erasure, or preservation. This approach aligns with critical toponymy's
148 emphasis on the materiality of naming practices (Rose-Redwood, Alderman, & Azaryahu, 2010) and supports a grounded
149 visual understanding of place-based memory.

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151 **B. Selection Criteria**

152 Toponyms selected for analysis were filtered using a set of criteria to ensure both historical significance and analytical
153 depth. These included Geographic presence within the historic cores of George Town and Binondo particularly along
154 major commercial corridors and residential blocks; Linguistic diversity with inclusion of names representing different
155 cultural and ethnic traditions (e.g., Malay, Chinese, Tamil, English, Spanish, and Tagalog), and Historical transformation
156 that focused on streets that were renamed after political transitions to investigate how identity and memory are reflected
157 in naming practices (Azaryahu& Golan, 2001).

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159 **C. Analysis Technique**

160 There is different analytical methodology that are used for this research such as Etymological and Morphological Analysis
161 to trace the linguistic roots of each toponym including the derivation, structure, and language of origin. This helped
162 determine the extent of colonial retention, or hybridization in naming patterns.Semantic Categorization involved
163 classifying street names according to their meaning and function such as commemorative which are named after historical
164 figures, descriptive referring to topographic or occupational references, and symbolic such as ideological or religious
165 significance.Geospatial Mapping was also conducted to analyze the spatial distribution of toponyms which reveals
166 clusters of thematic zoning within the urban grid. Geographic Information System (GIS) tools were used to visualize how
167 cultural memory is inscribed across space (Rose-Redwood, Alderman, &Azaryahu, 2010).Historical Contextualization was
168 also applied to align toponymic shifts with significant political and cultural milestones such as colonial administration
169 periods, independence movements, and contemporary heritage. This allows interpretation of names as temporal markers
170 of identity construction and power negotiation. Overall, these methods offer a multi-layered understanding of how street
171 names function as socio-cultural texts, encoding memory, ideology, and identity into the urban landscape.

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176 **IV. Results and Recommendations**

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178 **A. Comparative Analysis**

179 This comparative analysis underscores how George Town and Binondo while similarly shaped by colonial legacies,
180 manifest distinct strategies in the negotiation of identity, heritage, and memory through street names. George Town's
181 toponymy is largely heritage-accommodative balancing preservation with multicultural representation whereas
182 Binondo's street names are more nationalist approach reflecting a desire to reclaim colonial space in the service of Filipino
183 historical consciousness.

184
185 **1. Colonial Origin**

186 Street names in both George Town and Binondo were initially designed to serve administrative, symbolic, and ideological
187 functions under colonial regimes. In George Town, the British colonial government employed street names to mark
188 imperial presence and order, naming major arteries after monarchs (e.g., King Street, Queen Street) or colonial officials
189 (e.g., Light Street, named after Francis Light) (Yeoh, 1992; Gullick, 2007). These names often followed a rational grid and
190 were linked to functional zones such as ports, markets, and government buildings.

191
192 **Table 1.** Comparative Analysis based on determinants of street names example in George Town and Binondo

Determinant	George Town, Penang	Binondo, Manila	Toponymic Function
Colonial Authority	Light Street	Dasmariñas Street	Asserts colonial power and control through naming. Embeds imperial

			memory in urban fabric.
Religious Influence	Church Street	San Fernando Street	Reflects missionary activity and religious symbolism in colonial administration.
Ethnic/Community Identity	Lebuh Armenian	Ongpin Street	Marks spatial and cultural identity of minority; contributes to ethnic zoning
Occupational/Economic	Beach Street	Escolta Street	Indicates commercial activity or urban function of the area.
National Heroes & Patriots	Tun Syed Sheh Barakbah Road	Juan Luna Street	Reinforces national memory and poscolonial identity through symbolic meaning.
Topographical Features	Jalan Air Itam	Estero de Binondo	Connects place names to local geography.
Colonial Legacy Retention	Victoria Street	Reina Regente Street	Continued use of colonial names reflects either heritage preservation or inertia in renaming.

193

194 Table 1 outlines the comparison of Toponymic Function between George Town and Binondo.

195 Meanwhile, Spanish colonial administration named streets in Binondo in alignment with religious and cultural authority
 196 resulting in names like San Fernando, Plaza Calderón, and Calle Rosario which reflected Catholic influence and honored
 197 saints, colonial governors, and religious concepts (Aluit, 1994). Naming was also a method of asserting cultural hegemony
 198 over the indigenous and Chinese merchant populations in the district.

199

200 **2. Postcolonial Transformation**

201 George Town has demonstrated a relatively conservative approach to street name transformation. While many colonial
 202 names have been retained, recent policies have introduced multilingual signage in English, Malay, Tamil, and Chinese to
 203 reflect its multicultural demography and UNESCO heritage designation (UNESCO, 2008). Few names have been formally
 204 changed, signaling a preference for heritage accommodation over nationalist revisionism (Ramasamy, 2017).

205

206 In contrast, Binondo underwent significant toponymic restructuring post-independence. Streets like Calle Rosario were
 207 renamed to Quintin Paredes Street, honoring Filipino political figures, while others like Calle Jolo became Juan Luna

208 Street, celebrating revolutionary heroes. This reflects a nationalist redress strategy wherein street names were mobilized to
209 decolonize urban space and assert a Filipino identity (Azaryahu& Golan, 2001; Anderson, 2005).

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Figure 1. Street signage of Juan Luna Street and M.D. Industria in Binondo, Manila

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215 **3. Linguistic Diversity**

216 George Town's street names exhibit high linguistic plurality, with names in Malay, Tamil, Chinese, and English. This
217 reflects Penang's history as a multicultural entrepôt and demonstrates a palimpsestic layering where multiple ethnic
218 histories coexist (Yeoh, 1996).

219

220 Binondo's toponymic landscape, while once monolingually Hispanic, has transitioned into bilingual and hybrid forms,
221 combining Spanish and Tagalog orthographies (e.g., "La Ongpin") with newer Filipino designations. While linguistic
222 diversity is present, it is less institutionally supported than in George Town and reflects a more linear shift from colonial
223 to nationalist language regimes.

224

225 **4. Symbolic Function**

226 Street names in both cities serve as symbolic narratives of power and identity. In George Town, names such as China
227 Street, Market Street, or Lebu Armenian act as markers of occupational and ethnic memory, offering a mosaic of plural
228 urban life (Ramasamy, 2017). Their symbolic function is largely descriptive and commemorative.

229 Conversely, Binondo's street names are more explicitly memorializing and ideological, used to inscribe heroic nationalist
230 narratives onto space—e.g., Juan Luna, Padre Burgos, or Jose Abad Santos—reinforcing state-sanctioned historical
231 memory and identity construction (Azaryahu, 1996; Rose-Redwood et al., 2010).

232

233 **5. Heritage Politics**

234 George Town's street-naming traditions are rooted deeply in heritage politics, especially since its inscription as a World
235 Heritage Site. Colonial-era name preservation is justified on the basis of their role in cultural tourism, cosmopolitanism,

236 and historic continuity (UNESCO, 2008). Such a conservationist approach aligns with Malaysia's wider multicultural
 237 branding strategy.

238
 239 Binondo's reduplication, however, is a postcolonial politics of disjuncture, intended to overwrite Spanish symbols with
 240 Filipino nationalist symbols. But there are some Spanish names that persisted either because of popular usage or
 241 embedded memory in history, substantiating state-initiated nationalist projects against vernacular memory (Anderson,
 242 2005).

Table 2. Comparative Analysis of Street Names in George Town and Binondo by Analytical Dimension

Analytical Dimension	George Town, Penang	Binondo, Manila
Colonial Influence	British derived names: monarchs, officials	Spanish derived names: saints, religious figures
Postcolonial Transformation	Retention of colonial names, Introduction of multilingual signboards	Systematic renaming with nationalist focus
Linguistic Composition	Multilingual: English, Malay, Tamil, Chinese	Bilingual: Spanish and Tagalog
Semantic Themes	Ethnic identity and occupational	Religious and National
Toponymic Function	Tun Syed Sheh Barakbah Road	Juan Luna Street
Heritage and Policy Context	Jalan Air Itam	Estero de Binondo
Spatial Character	Victoria Street	Reina Regente Street
Public Engagement	Community driven initiatives, Heritage Trails and QR code plaques	Dual usage: Official names co-exist with older
Temporal Continuity	Gradual integration of diverse toponyms	Marked by shifts after independence
Urban Identity Narrative	Cosmopolitan and cultural existence	Nationalism resistance and postcolonial assertion

244
 245 This table outlines comparative framework for examining the dynamics of colonial and postcolonial street naming of
 246 George Town and Binondo.

6. Public Engagement and Memory

249 Public interaction with street names is more visible in George Town as heritage trails, multilingual signages, and people-
 250 oriented placemaking. The street names are included within a negotiated memory where various ethnic groups impose
 251 their narratives without necessarily replacing others (Yeoh, 1996; Ramasamy, 2017). However, political participation in
 252 Binondo is implicit and political. Implication of the new names among the public is also uneven with earlier generations
 253 still using Spanish-era names in colloquial usage. There is a doubled system of memory with official renaming existing in
 254 parallel with informal use, and historical memory still being contested (Rose-Redwood et al., 2010).



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Figure 2. Street Marker of Lebu Armenian in George Town, Penang with detailed description on street name history

The Figure 2 was a Street Marker taken in George Town explaining the background origins of each individual street names.

B. Selected Case Studies for George Town and Binondo Colonial Street Names

The Selection of the following Colonial Street Names, Light Street in Penang and Dasmariñas Street in Binondo is informed by their prominence as a colonial thoroughfare that embody the spatial imprint of imperial governance and urban planning in Southeast Asia. Both streets are central nodes where colonial influence, trade, and cultural negotiation converged. These case studies offer critical lens into how colonial street-naming functioned as a symbolic instrument of authority while also shaping the socio-economic life and cultural identity of the communities they transversed. Their comparative analysis enables an understanding of their distinct strategies in their prime colonial administration in Southeast Asia, and how such practices continue to inform contemporary debates on heritage, identity, and urban memory.

1. Light Street, George Town, Penang

Light Street, established shortly after the British East India Company claimed Penang in 1786, was named after Captain Francis Light, the island's colonial founder. The street formed the administrative backbone of George Town, hosting institutions such as Fort Cornwallis, the government offices, and legal courts (Gullick, 2007).

Post-independence, Light Street retained its colonial name, consistent with George Town's broader strategy of heritage conservation following its inscription as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2008. While the colonial legacy is preserved in the street name, local authorities have introduced multilingual signage in English, Malay, Chinese, and Tamil to reflect the city's ethnic diversity and postcolonial sensibilities (Yeoh, 1996; UNESCO, 2008).

This naming continuity underscores the city's emphasis on historical pluralism and cultural tourism. Rather than renaming, George Town integrates colonial traces into a layered, multicultural narrative.

2. Dasmariñas Street, Binondo, Manila

307 Dasmariñas Street is named after Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas, a Spanish governor-general of the Philippines from 1590 to
308 1593. The street runs through the heart of Binondo and was established during the Spanish colonial period to facilitate
309 commerce between Chinese merchants and Spanish administrators. As one of the oldest thoroughfares in Manila, it
310 reflects the integration of political and commercial functions under Spanish colonial rule (Aluit, 1994).

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312 The name has remained unchanged since the colonial era, suggesting a complex relationship with historical memory.
313 Unlike other streets in Binondo that underwent nationalist renaming (e.g., Juan Luna or Yuchengco), Dasmariñas Street
314 retains its colonial name due to its entrenched commercial significance and administrative continuity. It continues to serve
315 as a financial artery, with banks, trading houses, and corporate offices occupying much of its frontage.

316
317 This persistence reflects a form of colonial legacy preservation driven by functionality rather than symbolic nationalism.
318 The street's enduring name illustrates how economic and historical pragmatism can outweigh political pressures for
319 renaming in postcolonial urban settings (Azaryahu, 1996).

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321 **C. Selected Case Studies for George Town and Binondo Street Names Changes in 20th**
322 **Century**

323 Both street names exemplify the broader shift from colonial legacies to postcolonial and nationalist narratives. These are
324 selected street names that has changed in the 20th century which are renamed after prominent national figures. Their
325 location reinforces their underscore relevance which occupies historically layered districts where commerce and
326 community life intersect. Additionally, these renaming also signal a transition from colonial legacies toward post-colonial
327 or nationalist narratives

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329 **1. Jalan Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, George Town, Penang**

330 **Former Name:** Pitt Street
331 **Current Name:** Jalan Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi
332 **Renaming Period:** April 2025

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334 Pitt Street, named after British Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger, was one of George Town's earliest colonial roads,
335 established shortly after the founding of the British settlement in 1786. The street was central to British administrative and
336 civic planning (Gullick, 2007).

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338 In the post-independence period, the street was renamed Jalan Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi in honor of Malaysia's fifth
339 Prime Minister. The renaming was part of a broader state effort to replace colonial references with nationally significant
340 Malay figures, in alignment with nation-building policies after 1957 (Ramasamy, 2017).

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342 This renaming has sparked mixed responses. Some local heritage groups argue that the original name carried significant
343 historical value and represented George Town's colonial narrative, now recognized as part of its UNESCO World
344 Heritage status. Others, especially within the Malay community, supported the change as an affirmation of postcolonial
345 identity and recognition of national leadership (Yeoh, 1996).

346
347 **2. E.T. Yuchengco Street, Binondo, Manila**

348 **Former Name:** Section of Calle Rosario
349 **Current Name:** E.T. Yuchengco Street
350 **Renaming Period:** July 2005

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352 E.T. Yuchengco Street is named after Enrique T. Yuchengco, a key Chinese-Filipino industrialist and diplomat. The street
353 was formerly part of Calle Rosario, which held significance as a Spanish-era commercial artery in Binondo. The renaming
354 recognizes Yuchengco's influence in finance, education, and Philippine-China diplomatic relations (Torres, 2017).

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356 The renaming exemplifies a shift in Filipino toponymy from Spanish imperial references toward honoring influential
357 Filipino-Chinese citizens. The business community welcomed the name change, citing Yuchengco's legacy in shaping the
358 modern economic landscape. However, there is limited critique on how such naming displaces older, more locally
359 resonant Spanish-era toponyms that long defined the character of Binondo (Anderson, 2005).

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361 **D. Insight and Policy Implication**

362 George Town displays a heritage conservation model, colonial names remain in place to contribute to its UNESCO World
363 Heritage designation, and multilingual signs establish inclusive cultural visibility (Yeoh, 1996; Ramasamy, 2017). Binondo,
364 on the other hand is a nationalist-reformist model and post-colonial Spanish names have been deleted and substituted
365 with Filipino nationalist and Chinese-Filipino leaders as negotiation of local identity and historical justice continues
366 (Anderson, 2005; Azaryahu, 1996). Both towns have palimpsestic toponymy where superimposed names cope with
367 colonial pasts, postcolonial modernity, and multicultural urban memory (Rose-Redwood et al., 2010).

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369 **Table 3.** Number of Renamed Streets for George Town and Binondo After Independence

Category	Total Number of Street Names	Renamed and New Street Names after Independence	Percentage of Street Name Changes after Independence
George Town, Penang	155	11	7.10%
Binondo, Manila	66	34	51.52%

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371 This table explains that there are 11 out of 155 or 7.10% street names in George Town has been changed and 34 out of 66 or
372 51.52% for Binondo.

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Figure 3. Street signage of LebuH China in George Town

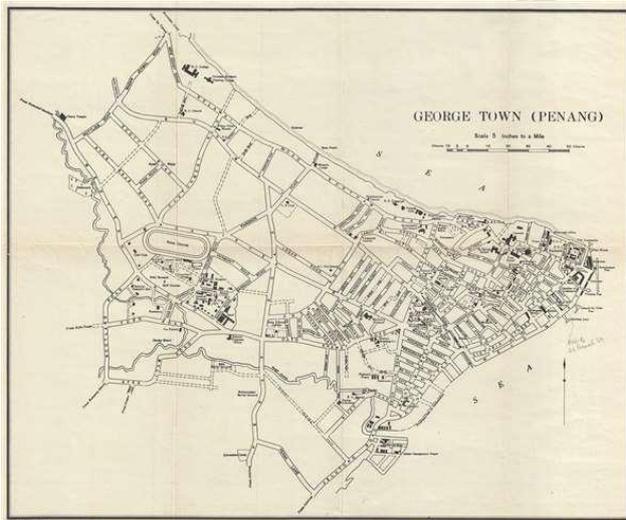
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Figure 3 shows existing Street Signage Post located in the corner of LebuH China Street in Penang.

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Figure 4. Old George Town Street Map

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Source: <https://www.geographicus.com/P/AntiqueMap/georgetownpenang-printersltd-1933>

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Figure 4 outlines the dense urban planning of Old George Town during the British colonial period. This also shows the grid-based planning and strategic arrangement of streets that reflect British colonial urban principles.

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Figure 5. Old Binondo Street Map

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Source: <https://binondopilipinas.blogspot.com/2015/08/introduction.html>

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390 Figure 5 shows the dense urban fabric of Old Binondo during the Spanish colonial period. This provides critical spatial
 391 context for understanding how colonial street-naming practices intersected with urban development, cultural identity,
 392 and economic activity in one of the most historic districts in Manila.

393 VI. Conclusion

394 George Town and Binondo both provide valuable insights into how urban toponyms reflect different colonial history
 395 responses. Binondo showcases more on the nationalistic redress through renaming while Georgetown showcases heritage
 396 accommodation. These 2 cities, however demonstrates street names encode identity, power, and memory into daily
 397 spaces. Future research could expand to other hybrid urban city such Malacca, Malaysia and Cebu, Philippines, and
 398 explore the role of digital mapping platforms and informal names in shaping modern toponymic landscapes. Some locals
 399 of both George Town and Binondo agrees that colonial street names must be changed to reclaim the nation's integrity,
 400 however, some will not agree as these street names are already entailed in the history of both districts. Toponyms are
 401 powerful cultural texts rather than being geographical markers. They tell stories on how urban spaces are remembered,
 402 interpreted, and inhabited. George Town and Binondo exhibits street names ongoing negotiations of heritage, identity,
 403 and historical belonging in the postcolonial urban imagination.

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