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## **Blood, Land, and Conversion: “Chinese” Mestizonez and the Politics of Belonging in Jose Angliongto’s The Sultanate**

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# **Blood, Land, and Conversion**

## **“Chinese” Mestizoneess and the Politics of Belonging in Jose Angliongto’s *The Sultanate***

**In memory of Professor Edgar Wickberg (1927–2008)**

Jose Angliongto's *The Sultanate* (1969), the first Chinese-Philippine novel, focuses on the politically contentious, economically overdetermined, and ideologically riven discourse and practice of citizenship during the first two and a half decades of the postindependence period. The novel concerns itself with the ritual expression of patriotism on which citizenship is predicated, which this article discusses in the context of representational practices based on differing interpretations and valuations of blood, land, and conversion and entailing the social inclusion and exclusion of “Chinese” and “Chinese” mestizos. Naturalization as individual “conversion” is marked by a structural indeterminacy, given the lack of transparency between a person’s “inner” thoughts and “external” expressions. As the Marcos state itself redrew the parameters of citizenship, some of the novel’s ideas achieved orthodoxy, while others became obsolete.

**KEYWORDS: CHINESE · NOVEL · MESTIZO · CITIZENSHIP · CONVERSION**

Of the six novels on the Philippine Chinese that have been published in and outside the Philippines over the years, Jose L. Anglionto's *The Sultanate* (1969) is the first, but by far the least read and appreciated (fig. 1). It lacks the luminous prose, narrative drive, and rich characterization of Charlson Ong's prize-winning *An Embarrassment of Riches* (2000) and highly touted *Banyaga: A Song of War* (2006). Although well known as a businessman, newspaper columnist, and civic pillar of the community in his native Davao City, Jose Anglionto has not achieved the national recognition that has been boon and bane for *guiqiao* (overseas Chinese returnee) writers Bai Ren and Du Ai in China.<sup>1</sup> Nor has *The Sultanate* matched the commercial success of Burma-raised Kun Luo's multigenerational Philippine-Chinese saga, *Nanyang Lei* (Nanyang Tears 2003; 2005; vol. 3 forthcoming), which has gone into three printings and was optioned for a twenty-five-part television miniseries project in China in 2007.

For all that *The Sultanate* has been overshadowed by the five other succeeding (and successful) novels, there is little in Anglionto's book to suggest an overriding preoccupation with the question of literary merit and reputation. The fact that the back flapcover of the book, normally written by or with the cooperation of the author, places *The Sultanate* in the "best tradition of the *roman ancien*" indicates that Anglionto is concerned less with aesthetic innovation than with modeling his work on the ancient novel's grounding in contemporaneous everyday life. This is borne out by the flapcover blurb's insistence on the timeliness of the novel, its ability to refer, and direct the reader, to the "here and now" of Philippines circa 1969:

Intended primarily for the Overseas Chinese, [*The Sultanate*] is a serious attempt at portraying our times. . . . [The author] has been able to invest this, his first book, with urgency, immediacy and relevance. The reader of this novel will not fail to see the cogency of its material; he [sic] will not miss the compellingness of its contemporaneity. It is as up-to-date as this morning's newspaper headlines.

Just as important, and in line with the aim of ancient novels (Holzberg 1995, 26–27), *The Sultanate* sets out to depict certain ideals through a narrative account of the providential experiences of a given character. Just what these ideals are is suggested by the novelistic focus on the travels, adventures,



Fig. 1. Cover of Jose L. Anglionto's *The Sultanate*, designed by Ang Kiukok

and romances of a patriotic young overseas Chinese in the Philippines, whose “search for identity also becomes a struggle for national identification” (Angliongto 1969, back flapcover).<sup>2</sup>

Why was such a novel addressed to such an audience about such a topic written at such a time by such a writer? And what accounts for the novel’s relative obscurity?

This article proposes to read *The Sultanate* as an historically embedded, culturally specific act of writing (and reading) (Miller 2001, 63, 64). The novel’s value lies in its revelation of the politically contentious, economically overdetermined, and ideologically riven discourse and practice of citizenship during the first two decades of the postindependence period. Over the centuries, various “regimes of truth” (Foucault 1980, 131) created by Spanish and American colonial states and the Philippine nation-state produced facts, beliefs, values, and mores centering on the problematic position of the *sangley/chino* “Chinese” vis-à-vis the Philippine colonial society and national community. These regimes of truth underpinned the representational practices of exclusions and inclusions based on differing interpretations and valuations of blood, land, and conversion as conditions of settlement and, later, citizenship.

*The Sultanate* lends itself to being analyzed as an historical, social, and autobiographical document of its time. Yet its fictionality, its creative leeway to say and do things on the basis of the claim to verisimilitude or the “plausible” and “lifelike” rather than unmediated access to reality, highlights the fact that a “work of fiction,” as the etymology of “fiction” suggests, is something made or invented, even—or especially—when it purports to be “a serious attempt at portraying our times” (Angliongto 1969, back flapcover).

The ritual expression of patriotism on which citizenship is predicated is the central concern of *The Sultanate*. The acquisition of citizenship is founded on the idea of “conversion” as an inner transformation of the individual. *The Sultanate*, however, unwittingly exposes the structural indeterminacy that lies at the heart of the idea that acquiring citizenship means proving oneself deserving of being called “Filipino.” This indeterminacy, which consists of the lack of transparency between a person’s “inner” thoughts and “external” expressions, fuels the obsessive search for the “true meaning” of that person’s decision to acquire citizenship. This article argues that popular challenges against the Marcos state and the redrawing of the parameters of citizenship by the state itself during and after martial law in light of regional

economic and geopolitical developments further vitiated the social impact of the novel as some of the ideas it espoused achieved orthodoxy while others were quickly rendered obsolete.

### **Mestizness and the (Re)Valuation of Blood, Land, and Conversion**

The main events in *The Sultanate* unfold in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. Recently widowed, 50-year-old Generoso Dy Angco, a successful businessman, leader of the Chinese community in Davao, and son of a Chinese trader who married a Tausug princess, is assassinated allegedly at the instigation of his business rivals. His three Philippine-born, grieving sons each deal with the tragedy in their own ways. Rolando, the youngest, finds himself adrift, rudderless, in life. Mariano, the eldest, concentrates on his business, eventually becoming a tycoon. Grieving is more protracted for middle son Ricardo whose father’s death triggers an identity crisis. Frustrated by the inability of his relatives and the factionalized Chinese community to bring his father’s killers to justice, Ric embarks on a study trip to China. He writes to his brother Mariano with his observations of a China in political and social crisis and returns to the Philippines determined to build “his own sultanate out of sweat and brawn” (Angliongto 1969, 14) and “in the hearts of people” (ibid., 149). Convinced that the communist takeover of China means that the security of the Philippines is at stake (ibid., 130) and setting out to prove “to the Filipino people that those who came from Chinese stock are as good citizens if not better than those of Malayan, Indonesian, Spanish or even American extraction” (ibid., 120), Ric becomes a counterespionage agent for the Philippine state, and spends ten years working undercover within the Chinese community to identify the “red infiltrators.” In his conversations with his Filipino contacts and friends, he discourses at length on the Chinese problem and proposes easier access to citizenship and assimilation as the solutions. Ric falls in love with Lileng; the lovers are cleaved—in its double senses of clinging together and splitting apart—by their respective patriotic commitments to the Philippines and Taiwan. Another woman, Chin Fong, an ardent communist sympathizer, whom Ric admires for her intellect, commits suicide after she returns to communist China. Ric buys an islet south of the Mindanao Sea to serve as the “seat of his sultanate” and transplants the molave saplings planted by their father in the old family property. The book ends with Ric holding the hands of his Filipina lover, Esperanza.

*The Sultanate* addresses the nationalist problematique of community and belonging through its evocation of protagonist Ricardo's life and career as a "good citizen." If the concept of citizenship is a way of specifying the relationship between the state and individual as well as a way of formulating the conditions of membership in a community, then what does *The Sultanate* tell us about the terms and limits of "Chinese" membership in the Filipino national community?

The question of citizenship loomed large in postwar public, scholarly, and policy debates about the "Chinese Question." Various identified with capitalism, communism, and cultural chauvinism, Chinese were viewed as economically dominant, politically disloyal, and culturally different. They were the specific targets of economic nationalism in the form of retail and other nationalization laws in the 1950s to 1960s (Hau 2000, 133–76, 292–93). Periodic raids by the Philippine military (with the help of the Guomindang/Kuomintang [hereinafter KMT] branch in the Philippines)—often tantamount to extortion—were conducted in the name of weeding out the "communist" elements of the Chinese community, the most notorious being the one on 27 December 1952, which rounded up more than 300 Chinese.<sup>3</sup> "Overstaying Chinese" was another issue, accompanied by public clamor for mass deportation. "Once a Chinese, always a Chinese" was a recurring refrain (Immigration Commissioner Emilio Galang, quoted in Ople 1958, 18) that accompanied journalists and pundits' calls for the assimilation or integration of the Chinese.

Given this political, economic, and cultural construction of the Chinese as "aliens," acquiring citizenship was a protracted, difficult, and expensive process. Charles Coppel (1974, 79) has argued that the postcolonial Philippines differs from other Southeast Asian countries in the role played by judicial interpretation—an American legacy—in restricting Chinese access to citizenship, through the application since 1935 of the principle of *jus sanguinis* (literally, "right of blood") in determining Chinese membership in the Philippine national community. The terms, laid down by the Commonwealth and postcolonial state, by which "Chinese" inhabited (or were allowed to occupy) the political space of the Philippine nation depended on juridical legislation and the value it assigned to land (the question of "origins"), blood (the question of racial difference), and conversion (the ability to undergo fundamental change through personal transformation) in determining "Chinese" acquisition of citizenship. Given this context, litigation

became the principal means by which the Chinese spoke to, and negotiated with, the state.

What makes Angliongto's novel noteworthy is his choice of the mixed-blood "Chinese mestizo" as patriarch. Generoso Dy Angco is the son of a Chinese trader made good who converted to Islam and fell in love with a scion of the Sulu sultanate. As part of the dowry, the sultan awarded the Chinese trader the island of Siasi near Jolo in western Mindanao. The princess, however, died in childbirth, and her grief-stricken husband asked the sultan for permission to bring his son back to China to be raised by his first Chinese wife. Raised as "Chinese" but proud of his mixed-blood royal heritage and property claim, Generoso undertakes the process of naturalization and obtains Filipino citizenship, which he then passes on to his sons, who are now considered "native-born" and who are raised as "devout Catholics" (Angliongto 1969, 7).

No doubt the choice of a mestizo protagonist over a "pure Chinese" may have been dictated by hopes of attracting a wider readership and facilitating readerly identification with the main characters among the Filipino public.<sup>4</sup> But this genealogical detail is not a mere function of literary convention. The "prehistory" of the novel embroiders on a common motif in textual renderings of Philippines-China relations—reading the nation form back in time, scholars find evidence of centuries-long historical, bilateral linkages between "Chinese" and "Filipinos" in the form of trade, tributary, and personal connections in order to advance the notion of "close" relations between the two peoples. Despite the fact that various polities in Mindanao had been maritime trading centers independent of the Spanish Philippines, and Mindanao itself was administered separately by the Americans (Abinales 2000b), some scholars have utilized Mindanao history to attest to Chinese "integration" in Muslim, and by extension Philippine, society. Chinese traders converted to Islam and married into royalty, thus accounting for surnames like Tan and Kong in the ranks of present-day Muslim elites (Tan 1994). The career of Maguindanao strongman Datu Piang—son of an Amoy trader, "minister of lands" and economic advisor to the powerful Datu Uto, and married to the daughter of Datu Uto's ally<sup>5</sup>—is held up as a typecase of the longstanding "harmonious" relations between Chinese and Muslims (See 2004, 48).

Moreover, intermarriage is commonly taken in sociological literature as a key index of incorporation if not assimilation (Marcson 1950–1951,

75). Living proof of the fact that racist boundaries are constantly being breached, the mestizo physically embodies the fusion or amalgamation of ethnic or racial groups, thus making hybridity a genetic fact rather than a mere metaphor of cultural exchange and border-crossing. Far more important, mestizness, rather than “pure” nativeness, is the dominant feature of Philippine elite self-representation and popular identification, with fairness being prized over *kayumanggi* (brown) skin as the standard of pulchritude. Given the extent of intermixing among the Philippine population, particularly among its elites, the resulting line between “Chinese” and “Malay” is not easily drawn.

Malayness itself originated as a toponym for Sumatra and more generally the Straits of Melaka, and was variously associated with claims of descent from the kingdoms of Srivijaya and Melaka, with the commercial diaspora and urban culture that developed in the port cities of the region, and with the Islamic *umma* or community of believers (Reid 2004). Attempts at fixing Malayness as a racial identity are fraught because the term historically encompassed an ethnically mixed, heterogeneous population that included people who would come to be known as “Chinese.” Commenting on the call for mass deportation of the Chinese in 1952, for example, journalist Teodoro Locsin (1952) argued that the average Filipino could not claim “previous occupation” of Philippine territory owing to the then-popular theory that the Philippines was an empty land subsequently populated through “waves of migration” by “Negritos,” “Indonesians,” and “Malays.” To compound matters, judging who is liable for deportation creates the further problem of “Who goes? Full Chinese? Half? Quarter?” (ibid.). *The Sultanate* highlights Filipino “national hero” José Rizal’s Chinese ancestry and, in another passage, has Ric repeating the truism, popularized by elementary and high school textbooks, that the Filipino “race” is “produced by the comingling [sic] of Malayan, Arab, Chinese, Spanish, English, American, Japanese, Hindu and Indonesian blood” (Angliongto 1969, 23, 120).

If the fusion of ethnic groups through interbreeding is a universally human condition, and if the Filipino race is generically “mestizo” and many of the country’s national heroes and leaders—including presidents Jose Laurel, Elpidio Quirino, Ramon Magsaysay, Ferdinand Marcos, and Corason Aquino—are “Chinese mestizos” (Tan 1987, 1), then what accounts for Angliongto’s contention that Chinese mestizos were “treated as second-class citizens” in the postwar period? The “deglamoriz[ing]” (Angliongto 1969,

120) of the Chinese mestizos is implicated in the construction of the “Chinese” as political, cultural, and economic “aliens” in the postindependence period. Their debased status has to do with the historical shifts in valuation of blood, territorial nativity, domicile, and conversion in defining the terms of membership in Spanish and American colonial society and Philippine national community.

Unlike the Dutch, French, and British in Southeast Asia, the Spanish colonial state created a separate legal category for people of mixed blood ancestry (Wickberg 1964). Because few Spaniards settled in the Philippines, Philippine colonial society was not characterized by the highly ramified social distinctions based on fine gradations of skin color that obtained in parts of Spanish America (which also had a sizeable population of descendants of African slaves), and the category of mestizo referred mainly to the far more numerous numbers of people of mixed “Chinese” ancestry. Wickberg (ibid., 62) states that Chinese mestizo “membership is strictly defined by genealogical considerations rather than place of birth” and by the fact that Chinese mestizo’s “cultural characteristics could be distinguished” from those of Chinese and natives. Wickberg (ibid., 66) also argues that, although legal distinctions helped create social distinctions among the population, Philippine colonial society was not a rigidly bounded plural society because social mobility was facilitated by intermarriage based on conversion to Catholicism. Deploying sociological lingo, Wickberg (ibid., 70) argued that religious conversion was a “method of taming and perhaps assimilating the Chinese,” and Binondo (the heart of what would, centuries later, eventually become “Chinatown”) an “acculturation laboratory for Catholic Chinese and Chinese mestizo community.”

Wickberg’s useful analysis needs to be unpacked if we are to obtain insights into the specific valuation that the Spanish accorded blood, territorial nativity, and conversion in defining the Chinese mestizo. Until the second half of the nineteenth century, the term *sangley* was commonly used to refer to immigrants mainly from Fujian. Wickberg (1965, 9) stated that *sangley* is derived from the Mandarin *shanglü* (merchant-traveler), while popular understanding among present-day Chinese Filipinos traces its origins to the Hokkien term *sengdi* (business, trade; *shengyi*). Citing the Boxer Codex (1590), Scott (1994, 190, 279) argued that *sangley* is derived from the Hokkien *sionglai* (frequently coming; *changlai*). Two things stand out as markers of *sangley* distinctiveness, regardless of the debate over its etymol-

ogy. One is the sangley's intimate association with the economic activity of trade: even though the majority of sangleyes worked as artisans and provisioners (and in some cases farmers and fishermen), sangley involvement in the China-Manila-Mexico galleon trade was a key element of the early Spanish colonial economy. Second is mobility, that is, the sangley's "frequent coming" from somewhere not here but near. Incursions by so-called corsairs Limahong and Koxinga as well as visits by emissaries from the Ming and Qing courts had made the Spaniards keenly aware of the proximity of the nearby "celestial empire," an awareness that periodically tipped over into paranoia about invasion and resulted in massacres and expulsions of the sangleyes.

Conversion, however, was the principal condition of sangley settlement in Spanish colonial society. Conversion to Catholicism allowed the sangley to establish permanent residence and move around within the bounds of the colonial territory. But Catholic sangley mobility was limited to the territorial bounds of Spanish soil; in principle, the sangley could no longer go back to his place of birth in Fujian. The sangley infidel, in contrast, was by definition a "transient" who could move only between the Parian ghetto (and, occasionally, nearby areas) and his place of "origin," Fujian, but not elsewhere *within* Filipinas.

Wickberg (1965, 16) states that "acceptance of baptism was a shrewd business move for a Chinese. Besides reduced taxes, land grants, and freedom to reside almost anywhere, one acquired a Spanish godparent, who could be counted upon as a bondsman, creditor, patron and protector in legal matters." Far more crucially, conversion allowed the sangley—by definition male—to marry native women (in the relative absence of immigration by women). But the creation of the sangley mestizo as a legal category also meant that, while the children that a native woman bore her sangley husband would be marked as having sangley blood, they could not be "pure" sangley. In other words, at least until the 1880s, while sangleyes mestizos could choose (as Rizal's grandfather did) to be reclassified as indio, the one thing that these mestizos were discouraged from becoming was to be sangley just like their father. The father's sangley status was something that he, and only he, embodied fully. Self-identification as sangley was not fully heritable because the sangley's physical origin in someplace not here-but-near was indivisible from his physical body, and in its "pure" form passed out of colonial society with the extinction of that body. Moreover, the fact that the sangley *infidel* (infidel) was not allowed to marry meant that there would be no

such thing as a "sangley" family in the Philippines, since that family could only be established "back home" in Fujian. In this sense sangley was defined not simply by his economic activity, but by his natal origin outside but near the colonial territory. This meant that there would be no native-born (i.e., Philippine-born) sangley whereas their mestizo offspring were almost certainly native-born.

In reality, however, the continuous influx of Chinese immigrants prevented Binondo—which originated as a land grant to Catholic "Chinese" and their mestizo offspring—from becoming an "all-mestizo" community. It is also likely that converted Chinese established dual families in Fujian and Filipinas, with their Fujian-born sons (as well as mestizo sons who were raised outside Filipinas) subsequently joining them in Filipinas as "new immigrants." "Sangley" was basically coded as a first-generation phenomenon, one that theoretically speaking could not be perpetuated in its "pure" form across generations within Spanish Philippine territory. Unlike men, women migrated to different categories through marriage (Chu 2002b, 47): a mestiza who married an indio (native) or Spaniard changed her status to that of her husband's. But the limits of that categorical migration were set by the sangley: an india who married a sangley remained an india, and was allowed to change her status to mestiza *only upon his death*. Thus, like her offspring, she did not or could not, by marrying a sangley, be considered sangley herself, although she could claim the social status of mestizeness as her inheritance upon his death.

The creation of mestizo as a mediating category illuminates Spanish conceptions of the link between "biology and economics" and Spanish beliefs that different cultures should be kept apart rather than mixed together (Wickberg 1964, 64). The mestizo's blood link to the sangley allowed mestizos—who were thought to inherit not just their fathers' capital but their "financial aptitude" as well (ibid., 86)—to engage in trade, and indeed mestizos flourished in that occupation at a time when the "Chinese" were expelled from the colony following the British occupation of Manila in 1762–1764. But their blood ties to their native mothers and their territorial nativity in the Philippines meant that they were usually raised as Catholics and, unlike their fathers, could claim to be born *of* the land and therefore able to acquire land.

By the mid-nineteenth century, however, this "regime of truth" regarding membership changed in line with the economic transformation of the

colony and its deepening insertion into the global economy. Conversion was no longer the sine qua non of permanent settlement. By the late 1880s, the mestizo category had been abolished. The term *sangle*, though still used in public discourse, was replaced by the nationality-inflected term *chino* in bureaucratic usage. A few mestizos, such as Ildefonso Tambunting, identified themselves as Chinese (ibid., 95).

Beginning in 1849, Chinese immigrants were categorized as either transient or permanent. Mobility and settlement, however, continued to be disentangled by the contingencies of colonial policy, as when Spaniards passed a law in 1886 prohibiting Chinese from living permanently in the provinces, and attempted without much success to prohibit them from trading with the Moros (Muslims) in 1888. Regulations concerning nationality in Spanish Philippines considered “persons born in Spanish territory” or persons whose fathers or mothers were Spaniards to be Spaniards. In cases in which a child’s parents were foreigners, the parents had to be naturalized or else have “acquired a residence in any town in the monarchy.” They had to “declare” before officials that they chose Spanish nationality “in the name of their children.” Upon reaching majority, the persons had to express their “desire to enjoy the citizenship of Spaniards” (*Official Gazette*, vol. 1, 1903, 189, cited in Jensen 1956, 289). In practice, the Spanish regulations for determining subjecthood were so confusing that they subsequently created problems for the American colonial state.<sup>6</sup>

Their growing affluence as a group enabled mestizos to send their children to school in Manila and abroad. Mestizos were, along with the native elites, some of the most Hispanized among the Philippine population, and, because they found their room for advancement and recognition blocked by Spanish racial prejudice, also among the most politically articulate. Not surprisingly, these mestizos’ nascent national consciousness was compounded of varying emphases on claims to belonging by “race,” migration to and birth on Spanish/Philippine soil, domicile, and blood ties to the *naturales*/indios. Filomeno Aguilar’s (2005) incisive analysis of *ilustrado* (literally “enlightened”) nationalism reveals the extent to which nineteenth-century racial and wave-migration theories informed these ilustrados’ ideas of national origins and boundaries, ideas that occluded the Chinese mestizeness of many of these ilustrados while excluding the “mountain tribes” and “Chinese.”<sup>7</sup> This nationalism created a space for the articulation of Chinese mestizo interests with those of the *naturales* (natives) (and, in some cases, Chinese mestizo

interests with those of the *chinos*), but *not* the articulation of Chinese interests with those of the *naturales*, as “Chinese” came to be defined as alien to the national community (Hau 2000, 140–52). The Chinese and their mestizo offspring in Mindanao had a slightly different trajectory in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries mainly because they were (an indispensable) part of a “ports and polities” regional maritime network (Abinales 2000a, 196) that only later became increasingly circumscribed by the Philippine nation-state (Abinales 2000b).

At the same time, the political projects that espoused revolutionary nationalism against Spain sometimes exceeded the racial categories and the dichotomy of *jus soli* and *jus sanguinis* established by international law. The 1899 Malolos Constitution of the Philippine revolutionary government made the principle of *jus soli* (citizenship by place of birth) as well as residency the bases for extending citizenship to foreigners. Aside from blood, territorial nativity, and domicile, there was one other condition that allowed the foreigner membership in the revolutionary community. This can be gleaned from Rizal’s *El Filibusterismo*, where Simoun urges Basilio to join his uprising in the following exchange:

“Cabesang Tales and I will join one another in the city and take possession of it, while you in the suburbs will seize the bridges and throw up barricades, and then be ready to come to our aid to butcher not only those opposing the revolution but also every man who refuses to take up arms and join us.”

“All?” stammered Basilio in a choking voice.

“All!” repeated Simoun in a sinister tone. “All—Indians, mestizos, Chinese, Spaniards, all who are found to be without courage, without energy. The race must be renewed! Cowardly fathers will only breed slavish sons, and it wouldn’t be worth while to destroy and then try to rebuild with rotten materials . . . (Rizal 1912, ch. 33)

As the above passage shows, the community created by revolution did not limit itself to the terms set by Spanish colonial policy and practice. It is not identity by blood or place of birth or residency that determines who will or will not be spared, but rather revolutionary action, the individual decision

to “take up arms and join us.” The presence of a “fullblooded” Chinese, Ignacio Paua, in Emilio Aguinaldo’s revolutionary army attests to an expanded definition of political membership based on the common endeavor of revolutionary activism beyond the dichotomy between *jus soli* and *jus sanguinis* established by international law (Kaisa para sa Kaunlaran 1989).<sup>8</sup>

Americans allowed Chinese free rein to travel all over the Philippines, but applied the Chinese Exclusion Law to the Philippines in an effort to prevent Chinese labor immigration and “to preserve the Islands for the natives thereof” (*Congressional Record* vol. 35, 3801, cited in Jensen 1956, 110). This application created some confusion and controversy over what “Chinese,” “Chinese persons,” “Chinese race,” and “a person of Chinese descent” meant (Jensen 1956, 123). Americans applied the principle of *jus soli* to “Spanish subjects,” but drew on the principle of bloodline to define who counted as Chinese. Thus, a Chinese was anyone whose parents were both Chinese and those whose fathers or mothers were “pure Chinese.” One who had “predominantly” Chinese blood, even when this was mixed with white blood, was counted as Chinese. By the terms of the exclusion law, the “Chinese” could not be naturalized because they were not eligible for citizenship (*ibid.*, 290), and only merchants (along with travelers, diplomats, and students) were allowed reentry into the Philippines. The net effect was to reinforce the increasing conflation of “Chineseness” with mercantile capitalism; but, unlike the early Spanish treatment of the “Chinese” as an essentially first-generation attribute, American regulations cemented the link between “Chinese” and “merchant,” and made this identification something that was to be inherited across generations. The correlation between ethnicity, kinship, and occupation ensured that the “Chinese community” would have a higher concentration of members tracing their ancestry to a small number of neighboring hometowns in Minnan-speaking Fujian than other Chinese communities in Southeast Asia.

But again, reality eluded the strictures of theory. Chinese exclusion helped institutionalize the split-family system whereby Chinese men married women in China, and had their eldest son brought to the Philippines at a young age. The eldest son, now a migrant, would go back to China to get married and in turn had his eldest son brought over. Furthermore, the exclusion law did not prevent new Chinese immigration because “paper sons” claiming fictive kinship to “Chinese merchants” could circumvent the restrictions, and some Chinese opted to smuggle themselves in through Sulu

(with the help of enterprising Moros). Far more crucially, judicial interpretation read the law in different ways under different contexts. In the case of Chinese mestizos who were born of Chinese fathers and Filipino mothers, they could elect Filipino citizenship (and opt out of the mercantile occupation of their fathers) upon reaching maturity. But more interesting is the 1917 Supreme Court ruling that a child born of Chinese parents in the Philippines was a Filipino citizen (*ibid.*, 290). Thus, while the exclusion law remained in effect until 1940, judicial interpretation selectively applied *jus soli* to extend citizenship to the Chinese.

The Philippine Commonwealth upheld Chinese exclusion and made *jus sanguinis* the basis of Philippine citizenship, barring Chinese from owning land, exploiting Philippine natural resources, and operating public utilities.<sup>9</sup> In the postwar period, various incentives that gave Filipinos special preference and priority in obtaining business license also worked to curb Chinese economic activities (Appleton 1960, 155). The difference is that, while mestizos used to be exempted from the restrictions imposed on their Chinese fathers, the principle of bloodline could be used against the mestizos as their “Chineseness” (and all the negative economic, political, and cultural associations surrounding it) came to overshadow their Filipino ties. Mestizos could, in the past, elect Filipino citizenship upon maturity, but in 1947 the Supreme Court, citing the 1909 Chinese Nationality Act, held that a Filipino woman who married a Chinese citizen took on her husband’s nationality, and for that reason, her mestizo progeny were considered Chinese. But since the gateway to citizenship was policed by judicial interpretation, decisions were made on a case-to-case basis. While there were judges who applied the 1947 Supreme Court decision to bar mestizos from Philippine citizenship, some mestizos continued to acquire citizenship upon reaching 21 years old (this discrepancy was noted by Weightmann 1959, 215).

Richard Chu (2002b, 46) has shown how, despite the reduction of legal categories to Spanish, Filipinos, and Chinese in the late nineteenth century, Chinese mestizo identity in everyday life was “multiple,” “ambiguous,” and “flexible.” Renewed large-scale immigration after 1850, coupled with innovations in steamboat technology, the lifting of travel bans that had hitherto restricted Chinese mobility within the colony and between the colony and China, and the Qing state’s efforts to mobilize “overseas Chinese” and their money for its agenda, ensured that mestizos—especially first- and second-generation ones and depending on where they lived, how they were edu-

cated, how involved their fathers were in their upbringing, and what social and business opportunities they had to mix with “Chinese” and “Filipinos”—did not necessarily “disappear” (a trajectory taken by many of the earlier mestizo generation of 1740–1850), but could maintain links with both Filipinos and Chinese across generations and territories, and claim Chineseness or Filipino-ness (or both) as circumstances allowed or required.

Various Chinese nationality laws based on *jus sanguinis* since 1909, the establishment of Chinese institutions such as schools, churches, chambers of commerce, and clan and other organizations, as well as the nationalist KMT’s (and, in the 1930s, the Chinese Communist Party’s) active interest in “overseas Chinese” (regardless of their citizenship) laid the groundwork for attempts to (re)sinicize the “Chinese” and their mestizo offspring. The first four decades of the twentieth century had witnessed a substantial increase in the immigration of women and children from China as immediate relatives of Chinese merchants who were already based in Manila, and, after the Sino-Japanese war broke out, as war refugees. During these decades stable communities of “Chinese families”—made up of “Chinese” fathers and mothers and their offspring—first became a sociological fact.

Chu (2002b, 44; 2002a, 61) traces the usage of the Hokkien term *tsut-si-a* (*chushezi*, literally, “born outside”) to Chinese nationalist efforts to reclaim the mestizo in the politically tumultuous 1920s and 1930s. *Tsut-si-a* is a term of selective inclusion and exclusion that draws on the discourse of blood descent and intermarriage, but the boundaries are laid down not simply by racial distinctions but also by shifting cultural, political, and circumstantial definitions of Chineseness in terms of family names, language, ancestral links to *Tengsua* (“Tang mountains”), residential space, school ties, religious affiliations, business networks, knowledge and practice of “Chinese culture” (however variably this was defined), relations with “Chinese” and “non-Chinese,” and responses to political events taking place in China and the Philippines. A *tsut-si-a* who speaks Hokkien, lives among *lanlang* (“our people”), marries a *lanlang* or another *tsut-si-a*<sup>10</sup> (for example in Cebu City), is educated in a Chinese school, does business or worships with *lanlang*, and follows the events in China or Chinatown, is considered one of “our people,” just as a Filipino raised as “Chinese” is considered *lanlang*. *Tsut-si-a* may be invoked in an inclusionary way in instances where a mestizo is part of one’s business and social network. A mestizo whose Filipino connections are a business asset may also be considered *lanlang*. In Vigan, the capital of

the northern province of Ilocos Sur, some of those who are considered “Chinese” by Filipinos call themselves *mestizo* (Miyahara 2008b).

These cultural, political, and circumstantial ideas of “Chineseness” are often articulated as Han-Chinese ethnic identity. But even though Han-Chineseness as ethnic identity is inflected by modern ideas of race (Dikötter 1992), it encompasses as well older notions of patrilineal kinship that are concerned less with racial purity than with (often mythical) origins. The genealogy it constructs is flexible, capable of transcending place, disregarding physical appearances, encompassing intermarriage and adoption, and incorporating diverse cultural practices (including “non-Chinese” ones) (Ebrey 2003, 165–76). Patrilineal kinship is linked to the idea of “Confucian culturalism” and its ability (or, more accurately, claim) to absorb “outsiders” and sinicize them. However, as lived practice, sinicization is neither a foreordained nor unidirectional process of assimilation. Blood or race assumes explanatory force mainly in discussions of a mestizo’s upbringing and life choices, especially as these bear on the mestizo’s ability (or inability) to speak Hokkien and socially interact with *lanlang*. Being accepted socially as Chinese does not preclude the fact that what or who counts as “Chinese” and what “Chineseness” means may change over the years and according to circumstances. Rather than signaling a fixed conception of primordial attachment, multifarious ideas of *lanlang* and *tsut-si-a* take shape within the context of citizenship regimes in both the Philippines and China, geopolitics, homeland (in the plural) influences, and the contingencies of everyday life and social interactions across the seas and generations.

By the postwar period, on the one hand, Philippine laws and regulations (passed by both central and local governments) aimed at preventing Chinese from practicing professions and owning land further drove the Chinese deeper into their economic niche even as retail and other nationalization laws forced some Chinese into unregulated areas like light industries or complicity in the netherworld of corruption and extortion that turned the alienness of the “Chinese” into a profitable informal business for government officials, military personnel, and professional criminals alike. On the other hand, cold war geopolitical and strategic imperatives as they affected the Chinese assumed institutional form in the Treaty of Amity between the Philippines and the Republic of China within the context of America’s “Free Asia” containment policy (Wickberg 2006, 22).<sup>11</sup> This 1947 treaty guaranteed the property rights of Chinese citizens and gave Taipei the right of

supervision of Chinese schools. The KMT and the Chinese embassy, and the umbrella community organizations created under their guidance, played a most visible and preeminent role in politically and culturally policing the Chinese community, with the active backing and cooperation of the Philippine government and military, which relied on the KMT for information on the political activities of the Philippine Chinese.

The KMT saw itself as a government in exile and the “true” legatee of the Chinese Republic. Its attempts at sinicizing the Chinese community in the Philippines took place alongside its efforts to “nationalize” the Taiwanese and other “overseas Chinese.” In the 1950s to early 1960s, the government’s promotion of Chinese culture functioned mainly to reinforce the myth of cultural continuity and shared origin among Chinese and overseas Chinese. Later, reacting to the Cultural Revolution and the political turmoil in Hong Kong, the KMT began promoting an increasingly conservative version of “traditional Chinese culture” through the disciplinary mechanisms of school, media, family, and workplace (Chun 1995, 30).

The postindependence period thus saw mestizo identity becoming far more circumscribed by the either-or logic that distinguished Filipino from Chinese. By that time, the descendants of Chinese mestizos who had become Hispanized in the nineteenth century had become Americanized in the twentieth, and formed the social base of a national oligarchy whose wealth was based on its acquisition of friar lands during the American period and whose power came from its participation in American-introduced electoral politics (Anderson 1998). These elite mestizos had effectively distanced themselves from their “Chinese” origins, the only visible traces being the Hokkien suffix “-co” in their surnames (e.g., Cojuangco) and the occasional appearance of *chinito* features in their descendants. Newspapers of the time routinely used words like “Sinos” as a blanket term to refer to naturalized and alien Chinese, and to Chinese as well as Chinese mestizos (Miyahara 1997, 75). While some mestizos came to be seen as and lumped together with the “Chinese,” the term mestizo itself in popular usage was stripped of its sociological and historical reference to “Chinese” and came to be increasingly ascribed to Filipinos of mainly white (American or European) ancestry whose hybridity indexed the hegemonic power and prestige of “white” America/Europe.

## The Logic and Limits of Civic Conversion

This long-term historical shift in the status of the Chinese mestizo is encapsulated in the following exchange between Ric and his cousin Maning from *The Sultanate* (Angliongto 1969, 120):

Maning told Ric, “If you want to be a Filipino, try hard to prepare yourself to be a good one. Show to the Filipino people that those who come from Chinese stock are as good citizens if not better than those of Malayan, Indonesian, Spanish, or even American extraction.”

“Yes, Maning,” said Ric. “I’ll try hard to do as you say. But what is a Filipino, a good Filipino?”

Maning was silent for a good while. Finally, he answered, reflectively. “The measure of a good Filipino is not the color of his skin or his eyes or his hair or the type of blood that flows in his veins. The accident of birth is minor. The true measure is the heart that feels, the mental attitude and, most important of all, the way he behaves.”

“I believe deep in my heart that the Filipino race is one of the finest in Asia,” said Ric with feeling. “I wish to belong to this race which was produced by the comingling [sic] of Malayan, Arab, Chinese, Spanish, English, American, Japanese, Hindu and Indonesian blood. But why are the Chinese mestizos discriminated against? They are treated as second class citizens. Look at the handsome Spanish mestizo or the American mestiza. The Chinese mestizo or mestiza is deglamorized. They are glamorized. Is it the manner of speaking or the shape of the eyes or the texture and color of the skin?”

“The texture or the color of the skin of the Chinese mestizo or mestiza,” said Maning, “is the finest in the world—whatever the blend. It is smooth and devoid of blemish.”<sup>12</sup>

The above passage shows how, as the word mestizo was becoming selectively desinicized and resinicized, Chinese mestizos found themselves living with the competing public discourses and disciplinary mechanisms of Filipinization and Sinicization and their either-or logic. The flexibility which

had once enabled the mestizo to flourish in the colonial Philippines had become problematic. In *The Sultanate*, mestizness is thematically rendered, in terms borrowed from sociological discourse, as experientially fraught in-betweenness, in other words, an “identity crisis.” Middle-son Ricardo feels himself caught in the middle of two cultures: he “sometimes felt that his person was rooted in China” even though he was “loyal to the land of his birth” (ibid., 6). Ricardo’s trip to China is illuminating, but it also quickly disabuses him of any illusion he may have had in considering himself “rooted” in China: “Home to me, I realized, was not here in Mother China but there in the Philippines” (ibid., 83). His acquaintance Commodore Chan’s exhortation that a “Chinese is always Chinese anywhere in the globe” notwithstanding, Ric finds that his Mandarin is not understood in Shanghai. He deplores arranged marriages that turn Chinese women into “victims of petrified customs and traditions” (ibid., 110). Ric’s journey to “Mother China” is basically a rite of exorcism aimed at expelling the personal demon of double consciousness that keeps him rooted in “Mother China” even as he calls the Philippines “home.”

Bidding “farewell to Mother China,” Ric is determined to prove himself a natural-born Filipino who inherits his Filipinoness from his naturalized mestizo father. To some extent, Ric’s “assimilation” is a function of his physical distance from Manila, where the majority of Chinese are concentrated; provincial Chinese are considered by scholars to be more readily assimilable than the Manila Chinese (see, e.g., Tan 1988, 182; See 1988, 326–27). Davao, where *The Sultanate* is set, was a frontier where Chinese lived alongside Filipino Christian settlers and the numerous and economically competitive Japanese migrants in the prewar era, and was thus a land where the foreignness of the “Chinese” was not as visibly marked as elsewhere.

For *The Sultanate*, assimilation is a sociological process, but, far more important, it is an individual decision. Ric recalls that, by blood and place of birth, his father Generoso could have claimed the land of Siasi and, by extension, the Sulu sultanate, through his Tausug mother. But rather than assert his Filipinoness on the basis of blood (*jus sanguinis*), or territorial nativity (*jus soli*), Ric opts to build a “sultanate in the hearts of the people of his adopted land”:

It was a sultanate of a different kind, unlike the principalities and kingdoms of the old days. There was neither scepter nor crown nor

throne. There were subjects, the people, co-workers and friends and wards over whom the ruler had no power of life and death. His privilege to rule was premised on the love of the people for him and his concern for their welfare. (Angliongto 1969, 149)

*The Sultanate* argues that the true meaning of citizenship does not lie in the standard definition of citizenship by blood or the “accident of birth,” nor is it a question of attaining the right social status. The “true measure” is the “heart, mental attitude and action” (ibid., 120) of a “good citizen.”

Ric differs from his brother Mariano in the career paths they choose to assert their claim of belonging. In Mariano’s case, this has meant achieving the kind of large-scale economic success that allows him to breach the social boundaries that separate Chinese from Filipinos. Money—lots of it—allows him to lift himself onto the ranks of the Filipino elite, much as money had once enabled the mestizos to challenge the social-status hierarchy based on lineage considerations in Spanish Philippines (Wickberg 1964, 87). Secure in his standing as a tycoon, with businesses spread across “Manila, Tokyo, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao” (Angliongto 1969, 241) providing employment for Filipinos, Mariano serves in the armed forces as a reserved officer, marries a Tagala, sends his children to the best Philippine schools, pays his taxes, joins civic clubs, and contributes to charity. Mariano in effect illustrates that being rich and successful is one way of being a good citizen. Mariano considers all these life choices proof of his assimilation, but believes that, because “[i]t’s your money they [Filipinos] respect” (ibid., 155), the best that can be done is not to “change the world” (ibid., 154) but live up to the popular association of Chineseness with business sagacity and industry.

But the idea that money can “buy” respectability cannot completely purge money of its other, negative associations with exploitation and inequality, and serves only to further reinforce popular assumptions about the stereotypical “Chinese” big capitalist. Partly motivated by sibling rivalry, Ric opts for “personal recognition” rather than “subordinating [the] self to the one running the business for purposes of cooperation” (ibid., 158). He sets out to prove that he is a “good Filipino” who loves his country and professes absolute loyalty to it by pursuing a different set of goals and actions. The arena he works in is not economy, but ideology. Having witnessed China turn communist, Ric undertakes to prevent the same thing from happening in the Philippines. In this regard, and despite his misgivings about having

to “masquerade” as “Chinese” so soon after he has mentally renounced his allegiance, he works as a counterespionage agent, spying among the Chinese community to identify the Chinese communists who smuggle themselves into the Philippines through Mindanao, and who “mix with Chinese residents” and “infiltrate schools” (ibid., 177).

Ric sees his service to the Philippine state as a means of proving himself a “good Filipino.” This entails working to advance the anticommunist agenda of the state. As an “insider,” Ric utilizes his linguistic skills and kinship and social connections to the lanlang to ferret out subversives. Being a “good Filipino” means weeding out the “bad Chinese,” while simultaneously advocating the integration of the “good Chinese” into the Philippine mainstream. Expressing dissatisfaction with the KMT branch for having been “infiltrated by our enemies” and for being captive to factionalized interests and internecine conflicts of the Philippine Chinese community, Ric opts to work directly with the Philippine state, acting almost literally as its eyes and ears among the Chinese community. This identification with the Philippine state means embracing its cold war imperatives without recourse to the (self-interested) mediation of the “foreign” KMT and Chinese embassy.

Even Ric’s romantic life is shaped by the lines drawn by geopolitics. Ric falls in love with Lileng, who is as patriotically attached to the Republic of China as he is to the Philippines. Their love of country brings them together and sunders them. Ric finds stimulation in his debates with the intellectually formidable leftist Chin Fong, but he is not (or perhaps cannot bring himself to be) sexually attracted to her. Romantic passion is ignited by, and in turn stokes, nationalist passion, and plays itself out within the scope and limits of the Philippines-Taiwan cold war partnership.

The irony, of course, is that the success of his mission depends on his ability to appear Chinese and be considered Chinese by the Chinese. It is his “Chineseness” that makes him an asset to the state. As an agent of the state, he must speak Hokkien and live as “Chinese” so as to be taken as Chinese not just by the Chinese but also by Filipinos. Since nobody, not even agents of the state other than his direct Filipino superiors, knows that he is working for the state, his public service is kept secret from the public. Not surprisingly, (mis)taken as Chinese by other agents of the Philippine state, he finds himself prey to extortion and harassment by Filipinos. At the same time, his return “to the fold” of the Chinese community puts him at risk of being embroiled in the internecine conflicts that belie the myth of

homogeneity and clannishness of that community. His father, accused of being both a Japanese collaborator and a Chiang Kai-shek sympathizer, was a casualty of enemies unknown: Ric has not been able to determine whether the assassination was undertaken by communists, tong (secret society) members, blackmarketeers, or rival businessmen.

The demands of secrecy ensure that Ric’s motives and actions are understood and appreciated only by himself and by a few people. In this sense, while misunderstandings by others put his life at risk, Ric may still rely on one or two people other than himself to provide verification and recognition of his good citizenship. But even though *The Sultanate* grants Ric this lifeline of external verification and recognition by the Philippine authorities, his primary source of verification is, apart from Ric himself, the reader of the novel. The reader’s access to Ric’s thoughts and actions enables the reader to attest to the sincerity of Ric’s motives and intentions. The novel puts the reader on a par with Ric as the principal sources of authority on the subject of Ric the good citizen (or on Ric as the citizen subject par excellence), for not even Ric’s bosses can see into Ric’s heart and read his mind.

In effect, the reader is the one who reads Ric “like a book.” The novel’s main function is to verify Ric’s motives and actions as “good citizen.” The fact that it goes through such lengths to do so points to an irresolvable structural indeterminacy at the heart of citizenship. Citizenship is not just a concept that specifies the relationship between the state and individual. The patriotism that informs it is institutionally and ritually promoted by schools, government offices, and business settings. Citizenship is thus a representational practice, something that is embodied and enacted by persons in their encounters with other persons. For this reason, it is deeply implicated in power relations, identifications, and sources of authority beyond the concrete “here and now” of a given encounter, even as its meaning and practice are bound to specific contexts of speaking and acting.

One claims and exercises citizenship by what one says and does under specific circumstances. Yet the meaning and practice of citizenship also exceed these contexts of saying and doing because citizenship is structured by affect, and by the attendant questions of sincerity and intentionality that are neither transparently accessible nor readily verifiable by speech or action. Acquiring citizenship in the Philippines is loosely modeled on religious conversion in that civic conversion entails a break with the past through the adoption of a new political identity, and renunciation of allegiance to one

political entity in favor of the transfer of loyalty to another.<sup>13</sup> Since this political conversion is constitutively personal, meaning that it assumes a transformation that takes place within a person, this conversion is primarily attested to by the feelings and motives of the convert himself or herself. The convert is the ultimate source of authority on herself.

Sincerity is publicly proclaimed by the applicant, who is required by law to pay newspapers to publish his or her petition for citizenship, and is backed by the sworn statements of witnesses. In the public petition, the prospective candidate's biography, complete with physical description and family history, follows the testimonial format<sup>14</sup> of a confessional narrative of acculturation and conversion based on the evidence of the candidate's duration of residency, occupation, linguistic proficiency in English and at least one Philippine language, upbringing of children and "social mingling" with Filipinos, adherence to the Constitution,<sup>15</sup> and declared intention to "become a citizen of the Philippines" and "renounce absolutely and forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state or sovereignty and particularly to Nationalist China." Also included is the applicant's income tax return.<sup>16</sup>

But if, as Webb Keane has argued (2006, 317), "in being sincere, I am not only producing words that are transparent to my interior states but am producing them for you; I am making myself—as a private and inner self—available for you in the form of public, external expressions," this public accountability of the self can only be externally manifested through the materiality of the political convert's words and deeds, not just what is said or done, but how, where, before whom, and in what language and behavioral context. In a circumscribed religious community, the sincerity of words and deeds is not a deeply problematic issue because the authority to decide on the question of authenticity rests not simply on one's neighbors and the earth-bound religious authorities, but on an omniscient God. In a secular context, however, the authority rests primarily on an all-too-fallible state and its representatives. Another difference is that the religious convert is conceived as a porous self, susceptible to as well as receptive of outside (for example, divine) influences, whereas the secular era valorizes a fortress-like autonomous individual whose thoughts and motivations, at least since Darwin and Freud, are not so readily fathomable.

The idea that no one, not the public witnesses, not even the political convert herself, has unmediated access to the convert's "intentions" means

that words and deeds cannot always be taken as direct expressions of the sincerity of one's "change of heart." Even if people acted as if they felt attached to the community, how is one to know for sure? The "true measure" of political conversion is tested at its very limits—that is, by the martyrdom of the citizen. A citizen signifies her sincerity through her willingness to sacrifice her life and all that she values for her country. This logic accounts for why life-and-death situations such as those of the Philippine revolution and the Pacific war have been held up as examples of how "good Chinese" can ally themselves with Filipino patriots (Cristobal 1965, 12; Taruc 1953, 76).

But in the absence of such life-and-death situations, and because real people do not always lend themselves to being "read like a book" (and, even if they did, the problem of reading them "correctly" remains), the structural indeterminacy of conversion means that conversion itself resists closure: without the guarantee of an all-knowing final authority, civic conversion is inherently ambiguous and always incomplete, because the convert's faith or loyalty must be determined and affirmed and tested again and again. Not even religious discourse is completely free of this ambivalence.<sup>17</sup> Spaniards energetically converted the infidel sangley to Catholicism while almost in the same breath bemoaning the "insincerity" of the converts. Colonial texts abound with Spanish criticism of the base, instrumental motives of the Chinese for converting, motives rooted in Chinese desire to avail themselves of the privileges accruing to converts, such as marriage, permanent settlement, mobility, and economic advancement, while continuing to practice ancestor worship (see, for example, the sources cited in Jensen 1956, 30–31; Weightmann 1959, 372). The Spaniards offered material rewards for conversion but worried that these inducements would overshadow the spiritual goal of salvation. Spanish ambivalence cannot be explained away by retailing empirical instances of Chinese "insincerity" because indeterminacy is intrinsic to the discourse of conversion. Similarly, charges of "citizenship by convenience" have been leveled at the Chinese when they apply for citizenship, even as the Chinese are enjoined to "assimilate" or "integrate" themselves into the Filipino national community. In a secular context, the foundation of "truth" about oneself rests on the very individual whose thoughts and actions are not always evident even to herself.

Because political conversion is founded on entry into community by individual decision—that is, an applicant signifies his or her desire or willingness to acquire citizenship through a statement before the authorities—

the structural indeterminacy of civic conversion creates the perennial public problem of how to tell “good Chinese” apart from “bad Chinese.” In religious conversion, sincerity, while reflective of the “inner state” of the convert, is not necessarily linked to the question of a convert’s virtue, since it only requires that the person *desire* to be virtuous. Religious conversion is only the first step to virtue. But in political conversion the question of authenticity is conflated with the question of virtue, since civic conversion hinges on a person’s prior qualifications for being granted citizenship. The transfer of personal political loyalty requires official recognition of a person’s irrefutable conduct. Therefore, from the viewpoint of the state, accepting a “good Chinese” as Filipino simultaneously entails justifying the rejection of “bad Chinese.” But who has the authority to decide?

In postindependence Philippines, the authority accorded to judicial interpretation puts the power of decision in the hands of individual judges. Given that decisions are made on a case-to-case basis, judges routinely assess individual character and qualification on the basis of the individual’s life and career. And because intentions and allegiance are not self-evident even from words and deeds, judges find themselves looking “beyond” the external appearance and acts of the individual to discover the “true meaning” and proof of integration. A naturalized citizen can be deprived of citizenship because of a legal technicality or proof of bad conduct. Moreover, in line with the practice elsewhere in the world, naturalized citizens remain on “probation” for the duration of their lifetimes; only upon their deaths can their descendants acquire the rights of “natives” (Jiang 1974, 95). Such attempts to construct, imagine, and police the intentions of the Chinese show how the line between judging an individual by her merit alone and judging an individual on the basis of her group membership is very fine indeed, and frequently breached. Civic conversion rests on individual decision, and precisely because this decision is not transparently readable it can be used to justify exclusion based on that individual’s membership in an alien group.

Some judges, in fact, having prejudged the Chinese Question, “prided themselves in not having approved a single case of naturalization” by routinely invoking technicalities such as the Chinese petitioner’s failure “to show that the laws of his country permit Filipinos to be naturalized therein as citizens” and the fact that “no evidence had been adduced to prove that the petition and notice of hearing had been posted in a public and conspicu-

ous place in the office of the clerk of the court or in the building where said office is located” (quoted in Yuyitung 1966, 36).

The community defined by citizenship emerges out of the distinctions between “good” and “bad” Chinese. These distinctions are not simply descriptions or explanations of reality, but are rooted in the structural indeterminacy of civic conversion on which citizenship is founded. Scholars on the Philippine Chinese have noted this preoccupation with distinguishing “good” from “bad” Chinese in their analysis of historical discourses on the Chinese without accounting for the underlying logic of this obsession (for example, Weightmann 1959, 372). *The Sultanate* replicates the logic by contrasting its protagonists, the Dy Angcos, to unscrupulous businessmen and criminal hoarders and profiteers like Taba “Fatty” Uy. Ric proves that he is a good Filipino by turning over the “bad Chinese” to the police while urging the integration of the “good Chinese.” This Manichean bifurcation of Chinese into good and bad “humanizes” individual Chinese (Cristobal 1965, 12) while also reinforcing negative images of the Chinese as a group, thereby aggravating the public demonizing of the Chinese (cf. Yu 2001, 191). For, on the one hand, there are always good and bad people, and to say so would be stating something so obvious and commonplace as to be meaningless. On the other hand, because of the abiding concern with intentions and the lack of direct, unmediated access to such intentions, the Chinese are routinely judged not only by their words and actions as individuals, but also according to their perceived membership in a group, the “Chinese,” with all the patterned behavior and positive and negative assumptions ascribed to this group.

In his effort to show the complexity of the “Chinese,” for example, Ric’s disquisition on the question of Chinese assimilation results in conceptual hairsplitting of the most elaborate sort: metropolitan or “Ongpin” Chinese and the provincial or rural Chinese, among whom are Chinese educated in Chinese schools and those in public schools, the native-born and the immigrants; “those who came to the Philippines before the Commonwealth but before the outbreak of the Second World War, [and] those who came after the communists took over the mainland China,” the latter being the “overstaying Chinese”; “based on attitudes and feelings toward their adopted country, we have the prewar and the postwar Chinese”; and the “sort of” new generation created after the war (Angliongto 1969, 182–84).

What this shows is that the act of accepting an individual as “stranger” or “one of us” depends on the past history, the power and standing of the

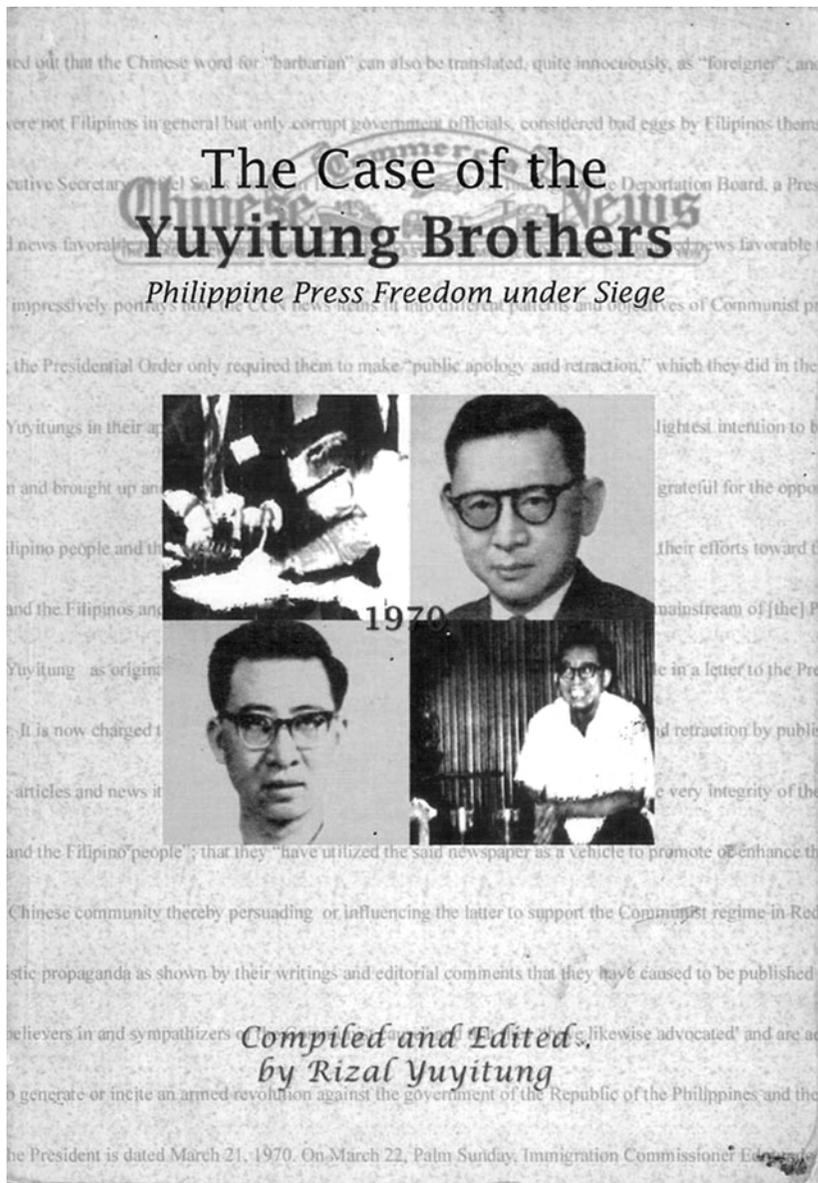


Fig. 2. Collected papers on Quintin and Rizal Yuyitung

one who is judged and the ones who judge, and their relations to each other. These relations are not just between individuals, but are shaped as well by institutions and categories, including discourses of “Chineseness” and the representational practices of inclusion and exclusion. A (Chinese-)mestizo congressman may well count Chinese among his friends and neighbors and be on good terms with them while voting in Congress for economic legislation against the “Chinese” as a group. Or a Chinese-hating Filipino may nevertheless love Chinese food or find Chinese women sexually desirable. How “freely” felt is love of country (whether “China” or “the Philippines”), given the discrimination and disincentives of the state and public against Chinese? And is one to be blamed for choosing to remain Chinese given the government’s complicity with KMT efforts to “resinicize” the Chinese community?

There is in fact no single authority to decide what counts as good and bad Chinese. For this reason, “good” and “bad” depend as much, if not more so, on circumstances and the people and institutions that arrogate to themselves the right to define who is a “good” or “bad” Chinese as on the apparent “sincerity” and “intentions” of the Chinese.

### An Act of State

A year after *The Sultanate* appeared in print, a deportation case involving two “Chinese” brothers became a cause célèbre. On 21 March 1970 Quintin Yuyitung and his brother Rizal, publisher and editor of the leading Chinese-language daily *Chinese Commercial News*, were abducted at the Manila Press Club by Philippine authorities and flown to Taipei to stand trial on the charge of spreading communist propaganda through print (for details on the case, see the articles collected in Yuyitung 2000, fig. 2). The evidence marshaled to argue the case against the brothers consisted of articles and news items deemed “favorable to the Communist cause and derogatory to the Philippine government” (ibid., xxiv) from the *Chinese Commercial News* (hereinafter CCN) published between 1949 and 1962. The brothers also faced additional charges of currency blackmarketing (remitting Philippine pesos to China without license).

The hearing quickly revealed that forty-seven out of the sixty-eight articles were actually translations of news dispatches by the Associated Press, Agence-France Press, Reuters, and UPI (ibid., xvi). The local news items that were singled out were mostly reports on the student demonstrations

then taking place in Manila (which would later be known as the First Quarter Storm).

At the time, the Yuyitung case was widely interpreted as Ferdinand Marcos's way of "testing the waters for imposing martial law" by attacking the "weakest link," the Chinese press (Yuyitung 2000, xvi). Denounced as *palabas* (show) and *lutong macao* (literally, "macao cooking" or a pre-arranged plan), the case against the brothers rested on a selective, decontextualized, and politicized interpretation of texts (ibid., 182, 174). An "expert witness" from a rival press who testified for the persecution argued that the CCN was communist because it printed words like "imperialism," "feudalism," "fascism," "protracted struggle," and "serve the people," and because the newspaper used the term "Peking" instead of the Taipei-designated "Peiping" to refer to the mainland Chinese capital (ibid., 30). A poem, "To Those Suffering Compatriots Who Entered Illegally," and a CCN article that used the word *choufan* (in Hokkien, *tsaohuan*)—which the prosecution translated as "stinking barbarians"—to refer to corrupt government officials were read as derogatory of Filipinos (ibid., 24). The Yuyitungs were also accused of funding leftist organizations based in the University of the Philippines (UP) and spreading "Maoist propaganda" in the UP Asian Center—charges that were easily refuted (ibid., 33). The CCN was faulted for publishing news about China, including the exploding of the hydrogen bomb, Han Suyin's visit, and the first Chinese satellite (ibid., 37).

Journalists criticized the government's reliance on information provided and translated by the KMT branch and the Chinese embassy in the Philippines, and pointed to the dangers "posed by the activity of a foreign political party in this country [Philippines]" (ibid., 104), and the lack of due process observed by the Philippine government. Others, however, defended Marcos by saying that the president's decision to sign the deportation orders was an "act of state" (ibid., 125) and therefore could bypass the due process of deportation hearings.

It quickly became known that the Yuyitungs had run afoul of certain Chinese community leaders and the KMT/Chinese embassy for refusing to toe the Taipei line (which apparently included prescriptions on what to print and the size of the headline font and amount of space devoted to the article). The wide readership enjoyed by the CCN had to do with the newspaper's "independent stance and crusading zeal" (ibid., 93), its criticism of Chinese wrongdoings, and its advocacy of integration and assimilation.

As Wickberg (2006, 23, 25) had noted, for all of Taipei's attempts to establish itself as a "cultural substitute" for the mainland and to create multiple linkages between Taiwan and the Philippine Chinese, Hokkien family ties to their ancestral land in the Tang Mountains were not easily replaceable by a transfer of loyalty to Taipei. Given the territorial disconnection between the Taiwan-exiled "Chinese" state and the (now Communist-run) "China" to which the lanlang traced their origins, curiosity about and interest in developments in the mainland as well as pride in "China's" achievements could not be fully suppressed or else rechanneled to Taiwan. More, as young Philippine Chinese, born and raised and educated in the Philippines and interacting more and more with Filipinos, became radicalized during the late 1960s, they sought autonomy from and became increasingly critical of the conservative Chinese establishment and elites (ibid., 26).

The Yuyitungs were known for their advocacy of citizenship by *jus soli* and mass naturalization by administrative process. Rizal Yuyitung received an award from the National Press Club for his article "It's Time for Change" (adapted from his 1961 Chinese-language article "Shi tuibian de shihou le"), which argued for the "integration" of the Chinese resident minority into the national community through "reorientation and reeducation processes" (Yuyitung 2000, 24; for the Chinese version, see Yu 1961b). Rizal Yuyitung's articles in Chinese used the word *hunhua* (harmonious mixing or combining) in place of *tonghua* and *yonghua*, which were more typically associated with "assimilation" and "amalgamation." Yuyitung called on the Philippine Chinese to undergo a process of "molting" (*tuibian*), shedding the "bad"/chauvinistic features of their Chinese identities and, in acquiring Filipino citizenship, proclaiming their absolute loyalty to the Philippine state while actively cultivating the "best" features of their Chineseness (in the form of Chinese culture and enterprise) in order to contribute to the development of the Philippine nation and culture.

In this sense, Yuyitung did not advocate the complete erasure of Chinese culture and identity, but rather their reinvention within a Philippine context. While calling on the Chinese to study the Philippine language, culture, and history, he believed that they should retain Chinese as their second language, because—like many Filipino intellectuals of the time—he assumed that Philippine culture itself was still in the process of formation, and the Philippine Chinese could contribute to the enrichment of the

national culture (Yu 1961a and 1961b; for an analysis, see Xü 1972 and esp. McBeath 1973, 237–40). Although built on the bifurcation of “good” and “bad” Chinese, Yuyitung’s concepts of integration and assimilation were not mutually exclusive, since Yuyitung’s advocacy of hunhua encompassed ideas of cultural preservation as well as amalgamation, political integration as well as Filipinization (following the deportation of the Yuyitungs, articles in the *Chinese Commercial News* began using more frequently the term tonghua, “assimilation” [Xü 1972]).

The Yuyitungs’ campaign for citizenship by jus soli and mass naturalization by administrative process—the very ideas that Ric propounds in *The Sultanate*—were widely viewed as a threat to the KMT-dominated Chinese community establishment. Long-running internecine conflicts had seen the Yuyitungs’ father and founding publisher—executed by the Japanese—accused of being a loyalist to the regime then in power in China in the 1920s, and criticized for reporting KMT loses during the Sino-Japanese war. The Yuyitungs themselves were Philippine-born and had never been to Taiwan (the embassy had refused to issue them passports, and the Yuyitungs had renounced their citizenship). As one journalist put it: “The transgression that the Yuyitungs committed, if at all, was to have run their paper as if they were Filipinos” (Yuyitung 2000, 134). The brothers were eventually sentenced to two- and three-years’ confinement in reformatory school (ibid., x, xi).

The deportation was widely criticized by the Philippine media as a violation of press freedom, and it attracted international attention and condemnation. Far more instructive, the Yuyitung case exposes the potentials and limits of civic conversion for the Philippine Chinese. Like *The Sultanate*’s Ricardo Dy Angco, Quintin and Rizal Yuyitung argued in favor of the need for easing Filipino restrictions on the naturalization of Chinese. Like Angliongto, whose biography makes him an exemplar of assimilation (born in Davao; married to a Filipina doctor; served in the Philippine Army as a lieutenant; was president of the Davao Jaycees and Davao Citrus, Cacao and Coffee Planters’ Association and member of various civic and business organizations), the Yuyitungs had tried to live as they preached by residing among Filipinos (in Sierra Madre, Quezon City) instead of so-called Chinatown and sending their children not to Chinese schools but to Philippine schools (their children did not study Chinese). Real-life counterparts to “the Lost Prince of Siasi” (the working title of *The Sultanate*), the Yuyitungs were descended not only from Manchu mandarins, but also from Kumalalang

chieftain Ganlai Yibendum, who died on a tributary mission to the Ming state in 1420 (Yu 1997, 25–32).<sup>18</sup>

Despite all the talk of assimilation and integration based on the bifurcation of the Chinese into good and bad, an act of state, founded on highly politicized (mis)readings and translations of the Yuyitungs’ words and deeds, was all it took to put and keep the “Chinese” in their place. But ironically the Yuyitung’s plight would reignite public debates on the citizenship status of the Philippine Chinese and eventually prepare the ground for a shift in public and official opinion in favor of the political integration of the Chinese into the Filipino “mainstream.”

Filipino readers in 1969 and the early 1970s will find much in Ric’s letters from precommunist China to remind them of the turmoil in pre-martial law Philippines—the “nepotism, partisan politics, cliques, graft and corruption” (Angliongto 1969, 91), the low morale of people, the “loss of faith in government” (ibid., 119). The back flapcover in *The Sultanate* explicitly establishes this parallel: “The letters reproduced in the chapter, ‘Farewell to Mother China’ . . . will constitute, for the alert reader, a recall, not partial but total, of student demos today, a constant feature of our national life and the national scene.” In his letters, Ric is critical of the Nationalist government’s crackdown on demonstrations, and observes the loss of confidence in the government and the breakdown of law and order across China (ibid., 103–7).

By directing the reader to link the events in China to those in the Philippines, *The Sultanate* uses China to serve as a warning of what may happen if things are allowed to run their course. But while Ric proves himself worthy of being “Filipino” by embracing the state’s anticommunist agenda, his sympathy for the plight of the Chinese people and his intellectual attraction to the impassioned leftist Chin Fong would have provided enough ammunition for agents of the state to make a case about “subversion.”<sup>19</sup> In the novel, Ric’s status as a counterespionage agent does not grant him immunity from harassment by venal government officials, and the secrecy of his mission precludes his being able to defend himself against accusations of subversion (ibid., 205). Appearing as a “genuine” *intsik*, he is taken as such, and lives in fear of Chinese reprisals. In a conversation with his superior Frank, Ric expresses his frustration by pointing to the possibility of “the majority of the Chinese in the Philippines, including the naturalized Filipinos, becom[ing] sympathizers of Red China because they are driven to it” by Filipino extortionists (ibid., 208).

The irony of Ric's identification with the anticommunist state is that the ideological foundations of the state were increasingly challenged by the radicalization of the Philippine youth and Philippine politics in general in the late 1960s. Indeed, some of these leftist student organizations expressed support for the Yuyitungs by criticizing the government in language—"KMT bandit gang," "Marcos fascist puppet regime," and "US imperialism"—far more incendiary and "leftist" than the words that were lifted out of the CCN articles (Yuyitung 2000, 45, 46, 51, 52). For these people, the government itself was "bad," its legitimacy undercut by its corruption, its penetration by elite interests, and its brutal suppression of the "millenarian" Lapiang Malaya and, after the Jabidah massacre, the Muslims. How can one be a "good Filipino" when one works to shore up a corrupt and brutal regime? The authority that decides which Chinese is "good" or "bad" is now judged and found wanting. Citizenship in the abstract posits the formal political equality of all members of the Filipino national community, but the assertion of formal equality belies the historical reality of economic inequality and social differentiation that have fueled secessionist challenges against the Philippine state, notably from the Communist and Muslim nationalist and Islamic movements.

Given the critique of state legitimacy by social forces, *The Sultanate* resolves the danger of Ric's (misplaced) loyalty by having Ric withdraw from politics altogether and retire to his enchanted island. Questions of intention and feelings—all intangible—give way to tangible land and property, a fact already prefigured by the novel's recurring comparison of the Dy Angco brothers to trees and the attendant metaphors of "rootedness." The novel alludes to the political turmoil in the Philippines while sparing its main character from having to explicitly comment and take a position on current events. By doing so, the novel seals itself off from uncomfortable questions raised by anti-Marcos forces about the legitimacy of the state that Ric has spent ten years working for. The price the novel pays for refusing to engage this critical interrogation of state legitimacy is its own (and Ric's) increasing social irrelevance.

### **Postscript: Re/valuing Chinese Mestizness**

Less than five years after *The Sultanate* was published, Ferdinand Marcos signed Letter of Instruction (LOI) 270, which implemented the mass naturalization of the Chinese, more than 60 percent of whom applied for natural-

ization (Wang 2003, 330). The LOI 270, signed in conjunction with the normalization of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and the People's Republic of China, signaled a decisive shift in Philippine domestic and foreign policy toward China and the "Chinese Question" (Lim 2001, 278, 281; Tiglao 1990, 71; see Hau 2005a for a summary). The mass naturalization of the Philippine Chinese led to the acquisition of Filipino citizenship by a substantial portion of the Chinese population, whose changing demographic profile during the postwar era made naturalization an attractive option (Wickberg 1997, 170–71). But although mass naturalization legally incorporated the Chinese "alien" into the Filipino nation, the P6,000 to P10,000 fee required for application barred indigent Chinese from acquiring Filipino citizenship.

This act of state bypassed judicial and legislative power and public debate (by then curtailed by martial law) in favor of the executive decision to politically integrate the Chinese. Where an act of state had targeted for persecution the Yuyitungs, it would also subsequently function to resolve the problem of citizenship for the Philippine Chinese.<sup>20</sup> The authority and arbitrariness of state power were arrogated by the president instead of being left in the hands of judges, lawmakers, and bureaucrats. Given the suddenness of the decision, Marcos's "act of state" fueled the "rumor"—believed and repeated by many Chinese and even some of Marcos's own officials—that Marcos, who was known to refer to himself as a descendant of the sixteenth-century "Chinese pirate" Limahong, was the illegitimate son of a scion of the affluent Chua family, which was socially and politically active in Chinese community affairs and enjoyed strong links with the KMT. This proclivity for attributing Marcos's solution of the Chinese problem to his Chinese blood downplays the fact that Marcos had in his long career made milking cows of the Chinese, and had allegedly received a substantial "commission" for this particular act of state (Tiglao 1990). Rizal Yuyitung is related by marriage to the Chuas of Batac, Ilocos. His mestiza wife Veronica's uncle, Felipe Chua, was with Marcos in Palawan when the Yuyitungs were arrested. Her other uncle Julian, if rumors about Marcos's being a Chinese mestizo are true, would have been Marcos's half-brother.<sup>21</sup> Blood connections certainly did not save the Yuyitungs, who were known to be critical of the KMT-dominated Chinese community leadership. Ironically, the persecution of the Yuyitungs turned out to be one of the last public displays of KMT influence over the Chinese Philippine community.

Mass naturalization entailed a shift in the discourse of nationalism away from monoculturalist and melting-pot claims of assimilation, routinely associated with ideas of absorption and amalgamation, toward a strictly political definition of national belonging, which held that ethnic or minority groups could be “integrated” into Philippine society while preserving their cultural identities (Cariño 1988, 47). Assimilation, which originated in the late nineteenth century and was popularized during the first three decades of the twentieth century, is a term commonly used in American sociology, while integration, which was first applied to race relations by the Chicago school of urban sociology and was used in discussions of apartheid in South Africa in 1940 before gaining ground through the African-American civil rights activism in the segregated American South in the 1950s and 1960s, is more popularly deployed in European debates on immigration and settlement (Favell 2005; Favell 1998, 3).

In the 1950s, these two discourses competed to provide intellectual ammunition for debates in the public sphere about the desirable form of the relationship of the “Chinese” to their respective Southeast Asian countries. Indonesians, operating within a revolutionary nationalist context that stressed territoriality rather than fictive ethnicity as the principle of nationality, considered the Chinese as a *sukubangsa* or ethnic group without their own territory in Indonesia (hence not *asli*, or indigenous) before “assimilation”—mediated by Ong Hok Ham’s rumination on the case of the Chinese mestizo in the Philippines<sup>22</sup>—entered public discourse in the late 1950s and early 1960s. By contrast, in the Philippines, integration and assimilation were used loosely, sometimes interchangeably (see, e.g., Ople 1958), in the 1950s, before “integration” acquired its current association with cultural preservation in the early 1960s (Yu 1961b). Because Southeast Asian postcolonial states had perforce to deal with the challenge of governing heterogeneous populations, terms like assimilation and integration—with their often variable, shifting definitions—provided an academically legitimate “scientific” idiom for framing public and policy debates on the issue of Chinese settlement in Southeast Asia.<sup>23</sup>

The integrationist discourse argued that the “uniqueness” of cultural groups does not detract from peaceful coexistence and meaningful exchanges among these groups within a single polity, and the “cultures” of these groups enrich the national culture rather than impede its development. The mainstreaming of a pluralist and accommodationist stance on national iden-

ity is bound up with the shifting strategies over three decades of the Philippine state (Aguilar 1999, 315–20). This can be seen in the changes in the Philippine Constitution’s articles on citizenship that pertained to mestizos. Reversing the Supreme Court decision of 1946, the 1973 Constitution allowed a Filipina married to a Chinese to keep her citizenship; although there was some ambiguity concerning the status of the mestizo owing to the constitutional definition of Filipinos as persons “whose fathers and mothers are citizens of the Philippines,” the offspring of a Chinese-Filipino marriage was allowed once more to elect Philippine citizenship. The 1987 Constitution clarified the ambiguity by extending citizenship automatically to children with at least one parent who holds Filipino citizenship. The significance of these two Constitutions lies in their loosening of the restrictions on the citizenship status of the Chinese mestizo.

Adopting an integrationist stance enables the state to pursue its policy of attracting capital and technical flows, especially from America and the emergent East Asian region. In hopes of generating much-needed income, the state has resorted to commodifying citizenship by granting permanent residency to moneyed foreigners in hopes of attracting investment. It has also sought to reterritorialize the flows of Filipino migrant workers and settlers abroad by deploying the term *balikbayan* (literally, “return to one’s town/country”) to refer to Filipino immigrants and their descendants (Szanton Blanc 1996). In 2003 Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo signed the Dual Citizenship bill enabling Filipino migrants to reacquire Philippine citizenship.

Reading *The Sultanate* nearly forty years later, one is struck by how quaint the book is. It is true that *The Sultanate*’s call for easing restrictions on citizenship has borne fruit since the 1970s, and its concern with the ritual expression of patriotism through asserted political loyalty remains a basic assumption of the now-dominant integration discourse. But its impact and social relevance as a novel have been vitiated by the fact that its embrace of state-propagated anticommunist ideology has been undercut by changes in Philippine foreign and domestic policy as well as region-wide economic and political developments in East Asia. Writing before Marcos signed LOI 270, Gerald McBeath (1973, 240) had already noted that Philippine Chinese youths, “in approaching political integration, present[ed] an optimistic picture for the future of the Chinese community,” but that—short of measures being “externally imposed”—the conservative Chinese community leadership and the “disinterest of most Philippine Chinese” in integration

presented obstacles to the full achievement of political integration. Events since then have shown that strategic and economic interests that inform acts of state matter as much as, if not more than, proclamations among Chinese of “good” citizenship and scholarly descriptions of assimilation and integration in terms of individual choices and actions over generations. In a less hostile political environment, Chineseness is no longer a defensive form of self-identification and strategy of survival, but can be reinvented as a “special kind of Filipino.”

The novel’s impact was further vitiated precisely by its success in spelling out the assumptions of good citizenship that would constitute the basis of the state’s rationale of “integration”: “Chinese permanently residing in the country, who having developed and demonstrated love for and loyalty to the Philippines and affinity to the customs, traditions and ideals of the Filipino people, as well as contributed to the economic, social and cultural development of our country, may be integrated into the national fabric by grant of Philippine citizenship” (LOI 270, quoted in Tan 1988, 179). These assumptions gloss over the fact that it is not only Chineseness but Filipinoness itself that has undergone important redefinition in light of the Filipino diaspora, and the ritual expressions of patriotism have been transformed as well. Contributions to the “economic, social and cultural development of our country” can now be done without being physically “rooted” in the Philippines. Demonstrating one’s love of country no longer precludes demonstrating one’s political loyalty to another country and taking up citizenship and residency elsewhere. Affinity to the “customs, traditions and ideals of the Filipino people” has been redefined so flexibly that it can encompass non-Filipino nationals who do not speak any Philippine languages, or send their children to Filipino schools, or even “mingle” socially with Filipinos.

In other words, integration discourse has made much of the “foreign” “Chinese” becoming more “Filipino” in the postwar years while failing to point out how much Filipinos were becoming, in a sense, more “foreign” in the wake of the Filipino diasporic deterritorialization over the last four decades. The datedness of *The Sultanate* underscores how quickly some of the ideas of the novel achieved orthodoxy even as subsequent events rendered the other ideas of the novel irrelevant within just a few years after the book’s publication. The assumptions about state and citizenship on which Angliongto built his story now seem at once orthodox and obsolete

in a world and region where China has reinvented itself as a socialist market state, where pluralism is now a global ideal, and permanent residency and citizenship need not be earned, but can be acquired—and is actively courted by the state—for a price (for a detailed discussion, see Hau 2005a).

The events that followed the publication of *The Sultanate* perhaps can be best understood as studies in irony. The Yuyitung case highlighted the political vulnerability of even the most passionate advocates of the Filipinization of the Chinese. As the court case against the Yuyitungs dragged on, a wave of kidnappings in late 1971 in turn spotlighted the vulnerability of the real-life Mariano Dy Angcos among the “Chinese community” (*Manila Bulletin* 1971). Under martial law, the state provided an administrative solution to the problem of citizenship for the ethnic Chinese, but also made sure that the legal solution would be backed up by the Filipinization of Chinese schools, which cut the number of hours of Chinese instruction and ensured that future generations of Philippine-born Chinese would be barely literate in Chinese. This form of integration would effectively turn younger generations of Chinese into cultural *tsut-si-a* whose mestizeness would be both a source of anxiety about the loss of Chinese culture and, by the 1990s, a cultural and economic asset in its ability to claim Filipinoness while accessing and mediating regional East Asian capital and cultural flows (Hau 2005a).

Even as it sought to Filipinize the Chinese, the state simultaneously embarked on a major project to turn “Chineseness” into a tourist attraction aimed at increasing state revenues. Aimed at showcasing “Chinese influence in [sic] the origin of the modern Filipino,” the plans included the construction of Chinese pagoda gates at Rosario, Ongpin, and San Fernando Streets; the restoration of Spanish-era buildings; the building of façades with Chinese motifs and “injection of Chinese atmospheres [sic] in the form of lamps, lanterns and hangings”; and the building of monuments and cleaning of the *esteros* (canals) (*United Daily News* 1973). The plans to turn Chinatown into a showcase of the Chinese-mestizo hybridity of Filipino culture extended to the docking of “sampans” (wooden boats) and celebrations of Chinese New Year and other festivals (*Bulletin Today* 1973a and 1973b).

Not all the plans were or could be realized: The mayor of Manila expressed disappointment that “Chinatown” Binondo had “lost the quality that sets it apart from the rest of the sections in the city” (Genovea 1972, 3), and found it expedient to set up pagoda gates and order the business

establishments to put up “Chinese signs” to mark the area’s “Chineseness,” just as newspapers began searching for the “vanishing breed” of “Chinatown Chinese” (*Times Journal* 1973).

## Notes

I thank Jun Aguilar, whose pioneering exploration of the relationship between citizenship and inheritance in Indonesia (2001) was the inspiration for this article, and Takashi Shiraishi and Jojo Abinales for their comments and encouragement. All the errors in this article are my responsibility alone.

- 1 Bai Ren, author of *Nanyang piaoliuji* (Adrift in the Southern Ocean, 1983), counted Zhou Enlai among his admirers and was, for that reason, targeted for criticism by Jiang Qing and Lin Biao during the Cultural Revolution (Hau 2004, 17–18), while Du Ai, once chairman of his native Guangdong Province’s Department of Culture and, with his wife and artistic collaborator Lin Bin, a victim also of the Cultural Revolution, is remembered for his critically acclaimed three-volume Second World War epic, *Fengyü Taipingyang* (Storm over the Pacific, 1985, 1988, 1991; for an analysis, see Hau 2005b).
- 2 *The Sultanate* can also be read as a form of autobiographical fiction. The assassination of Generoso Dy Angco is based on the real-life murder of prominent businessman Ang Liongto just after the Second World War. I thank Jojo Abinales for his help in obtaining newspaper accounts of this case.
- 3 When the cases were finally settled, only one was convicted of subversion (Miyahara 1997, 76; Research Staff of Pagkakaisa sa Pag-unlad 1973, 228).
- 4 The fact that the blurb proclaims that the book is “intended primarily for the Overseas Chinese” indicates that Angliongto meant the book to be read not just by the Philippine *huaqiao*, but by other “overseas Chinese” (at the time concentrated in Southeast Asia). However, the book’s regional scope was circumscribed by the highly localized nature of its production, distribution, and circulation as a book, which limited the readership to a small, English-reading public in the Philippines.
- 5 For biographical details and a nuanced analysis that historicizes the Maguindanao relationship with the Philippine colonial and national state, see Abinales 2000a.
- 6 I thank Jun Aguilar for this information.
- 7 See also Benedict Anderson’s (2008, 30–33) illuminating quantitative analysis of the political and social vocabulary of Rizal’s novels.
- 8 “Insik Pawa’s” role in the violent arrest of the Bonifacio brothers, however, embroiled him in the partisan politics among Filipino revolutionaries (see, e.g., the account by Alvarez 1992, ch. 38, 98, 334–35).
- 9 The 1940 Immigration Law imposed a quota on the entry of new Chinese immigrants. First set at 500 new immigrants, the quota was drastically reduced to fifty following Philippine independence, but has been suspended since 1949. Congressmen who were apportioned immigration quotas from 1945 to 1952 charged P3,000 to P5,000 “fees” for their sponsorship of Chinese new immigrants (see Jiang 1974, 100).
- 10 See Miyahara 2008a for a nuanced discussion of the biopolitics of “Chineseness” and the distinctions—based on intermarriage—that it draws between *lantang* and *tsut-si-a* in Cebu.
- 11 The Philippines was the only Southeast Asian country that Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek) visited (albeit in an unofficial capacity) in 1949, just three months before the Communists took over China. See Hsiao 1998, 42–46.
- 12 This remarkable passage illustrates the pitfalls of racializing the Chinese mestizo: the characters are at pains to argue that a “good Filipino” cannot be judged by the color of her skin, but then go on, rather as if they were debating the merits of good coffee, to rhapsodize over the “texture” and “color of the skin” of the Chinese mestizo!
- 13 Webb Keane (2006, 309) has argued that academic assumptions about “human identity, rights, liberation, individuals and society”—rooted in “Western culture’s” “core concerns with and ways of conceptualizing the self, objectification, agency, authority, power and materialism”—are deeply (and often unwittingly) indebted to Judeo-Christian thought and practice. See also Cannell’s (2006, 30–39) illuminating discussion of modernity being modeled on the idea of conversion.
- 14 I thank Jun Aguilar for pointing out that the historical parallel to the above public confessional text is the stylized personal testimony of the convert in Protestant Christianity, which is similarly concerned with the authenticity of conversion.
- 15 This adherence evidently entails renouncing, among other things, polygamy and assassination.
- 16 See, e.g., Nat. Case no. C-31, “In the Matter of the Petition of Ng See Kui also known as Flaviano Uy Suy Cui alias Flavy to be Admitted a Citizen of the Philippines” (*Daily Mirror* 1970).
- 17 See Vicente Rafael’s thought-provoking discussion of confession and the logic of conversion in *Contracting Colonialism* (1988, ch. 3).
- 18 William Henry Scott (1989, 9–11) notes that, during the fifteenth century, the “Eastern King” Paduka Batara died on Ming territory while on his mission, as did Ganlai Yibendum of Kumalalang on a subsequent mission, and some of their progeny remained behind and intermarried with the native population.
- 19 Not even local KMT officials were exempt from the anticommunist drives of the military (Miyahara 1997).
- 20 Martial law exacted a price from Philippine Chinese literature: there would be no literary columns or publications in the officially sanctioned Chinese newspaper.
- 21 On Marcos’s alleged Chinese father, see Seagrave 1988, 22–24; on Veronica Yuyitung’s connection to the Chuas of Ilocos, see Maximo Soliven’s article in Yuyitung 2000, 151.
- 22 See Ong Hok Ham’s influential essays (originally published in 1959) “Warganegara Filipina yang mempunyai darah Tionghoa” (Philippine citizens who have Chinese blood) and “Proses asimilasi keturunan Tionghoa di Filipina” (The assimilation process of descendants of the Chinese in the Philippines) collected in his *Riwayat Tionghoa Peranakan di Jawa* (Ong 2005, 153–73). Ong had visited the Philippines in the late 1950s as a young journalist before commencing graduate studies at Yale University. I thank Jafar Suryamenggolo for this information.
- 23 For a discussion of the impact on Southeast Asian studies of G. William Skinner’s application of the assimilation concept to the Thai Chinese, see Koizumi 2006. Ong Hok Ham (see n. 22) had in fact worked as Skinner’s research assistant in 1957, and something of Skinner’s influence can also be gleaned from Ong’s advocacy of assimilation as the solution to the so-called *Masalah Cina*

(Chinese problem) in Indonesia. On Ong's advocacay of assimilation, see Heidhues 2007, 231–32. I thank Jafar Suryamengoolo for alerting me to Ong's connection with Skinner.

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