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# The "Chinese" and the "Mestizos" of the Philippines: Towards a New Interpretation

*Richard T. Chu*

In the past decade or so, there has been an increasing interest in Chinese communities in different parts of the world, particularly in Southeast Asia. This interest was brought about by several factors, not the least of which are the rise of China as a world power, and the economic success (at least in the early 1990s) experienced in several Southeast Asian countries. Many attribute the success of "economic tigers" such as Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand to the role of "Chinese tycoons," "taipans," or "Confucian businessmen" in these countries. Thus there has been in recent years a resurgence in the study of the role these "overseas Chinese" play in their "host" societies and the new ways of talking about "Chinese" identity.<sup>1</sup>

The case of the Chinese in the Philippines is no different from their Southeast Asian counterparts. While comprising only about one percent of the total population, they have played a major role in the local economy.<sup>2</sup> Due to their perceived economic prosperity and position, however, they have also become the object of both admiration and envy, as well as hostility and derision, of the local government and the native population. When then President Corazon Cojuangco Aquino, whose great grandfather was an immigrant from the southeastern part of Fujian, China, visited her ancestral home in 1988, her trip generated a lot of pride among the Chinese in the Philippines.

While the period of the Aquino presidency may have been a rosy time for the Chinese in terms of their reputation in Philippine society, more recent turns of events in the Philippines have again put them in an unfavorable light. Names like Lucio Tan, Dante Tan, and Atong Ang figured in scandals surrounding the Estrada administration. Their alleged involvement in bribery, corruption, and cronyism has led to some of the most virulent criticism of the Chinese in the Philippines in

most recent history (e.g. Jose 1999). Some people, however, have come to the defense of the Chinese, arguing that not only are the Chinese more appropriately termed *Tsinoy*s—a combination of “*tsino*” and “*pinoy*” (the colloquial term for “Filipino”), and thus not separate from but part of the larger “Filipino” community—but also that those involved in the scandals in no way represent the larger Tsinoy community (e.g. Roxas-Lim 1999; Lee-Flores 2000; Ang See 2000).

In the light of these developments—in which the Chinese and the Filipinos are once again pitted against each other—I would like to re-examine in this paper the history of their ethnic relations and the ethnogenesis of the Chinese in the Philippines. The common view today is that the Chinese and the Filipinos have always been separate and distinct from one another. This view is supported by the important studies of historians like Edgar Wickberg (1964, 2000) and Antonio Tan (1972). Recent works in cultural anthropology and social history dealing with ethnic “minority” groups, however, have begun to challenge this binarist view of ethnic identities and show that identities are also fluid, especially when viewed from the perspectives of the people themselves. Using their approach in the study of identities, I am offering an alternative way to understanding both the ethnic identities of the Chinese and their historical relations with the Filipinos.

### The Question of “Chinese” and “Mestizo” Identities

The creation of the present-day “Chinese” and “Filipino” legal classifications can be traced to the time when the Americans took over the Philippine Islands from Spain in 1898. Prior to the American take-over, the Spanish colonial regime used a three-way classification system to segregate the people under its rule. The “*sangleyes*” or the “Chinese” comprised one group, and the “*mestizos*” (the creole offspring of “Chinese” men and local women) and the “*indios*” (the natives) comprised the other two.<sup>3</sup> In their efforts to nationalize and simplify ethnic classification, the American colonial government placed the “*mestizos*” and “*indios*” under the category of “Filipinos,” while the “Chinese” were regarded as “aliens.”

According to some scholars (e.g. Wickberg 1964; Skinner 1996), the case of Philippine mestizos shows interesting differences from their Southeast Asian counterparts, particularly those in Malaysia and Indonesia. While the creole offspring of Chinese men and local women in these two Southeast Asian countries are also not recognized as a separate legal entity, they are, nonetheless, still very much identified with

the Chinese community culturally.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, Philippine mestizos are today considered both legally and culturally "Filipinos."

In explaining why mestizos did not identify with the Chinese, Wickberg (1964; 2000) contends that during the Spanish colonial period, especially in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the mestizos were the most Spanish and Catholic of all. They were a "special kind of Filipino" who rejected their Chinese heritage and found instead a cultural affinity and rapport with the equally hispanicized and Catholicized upper-class indios. Together, mestizos and indios would fight for independence from Spain and demand that they too be considered legally "Filipinos," a term once used to refer only to Philippine-born Spaniards and Spanish mestizos. In the meantime, the Chinese were also beginning to view themselves as a "national minority." And even though a number of them converted to Catholicism and intermarried with local women, they were too small in number and thus the community still was ostensibly "Chinese." Those who converted kept to their Chinese religious beliefs even while practicing Catholic rites. They were Catholics only in name.

Thus, in yet another sense, the case of the Philippine Chinese may be seen as unique. In the study of ethnic identities during the Spanish colonial period, scholars in the past dealt not only with the legal classifications used by the colonial government but also with the religious classifications used by the Church.<sup>5</sup>

Recent works in cultural studies, however, show these ethnic constructions to be the *modus operandi* by which colonial or post-colonial governments and other dominant groups have sought to control others in order to achieve certain political and ideological ends (see for example Anderson 1991; Eley and Suny 1996; Hobsbawn and Ranger 1983). The construction of a universal and homogeneous "Chinese" or "Filipino" community provided nationalists in both China and the Philippines not only a foundation upon which to build a strong nation-state but also a united front to protect themselves from those they considered "outsiders." Unfortunately, this binarist and exclusionary construction of an "Us" versus "Others" could also result in conflict. For instance, while the formation of a united "Chinese" community in the Philippines during the American colonial period may have provided the Chinese with some form of leverage and protection against an increasingly hostile Filipino nationalistic sentiment that regarded them as undesirable "aliens," this reification and essentialization of their Chinese identity also heightened the difference between them

and the larger Filipino majority. This led to greater local ethnic tension and division.

Furthermore, in order for these hegemonic groups to succeed in uniting a heterogeneous group of people, a long-standing and common cultural tradition and heritage often had to be invented or reconstructed (Hobsbawn and Ranger 1983). Thus, in explaining why the Chinese remained separate and why mestizos and indios became "Filipinos" by dint of their shared hispanized-Catholic culture, scholars may unwittingly contribute to the perpetuation of this local ethnic conflict by adhering to the nationalist rhetoric of the leaders in China and in the Philippines in their study of ethnic relations in the Philippines (e.g. Wickberg 1964, 2000; Skinner 1996).<sup>6</sup>

Following the pathbreaking work of Fredrik Barth (1969), theorists have pointed out that the study of ethnicity needs to take into consideration not only how groups have been identified by others, but also how the members of these groups view themselves in relation to others, since ethnic identities also are self-ascriptive (e.g. Cohen 1978). Indeed, by investigating people's self-identification, many scholars of modern Chinese history (e.g. Crossley 1989, 1990a and 1990b; Duara 1995; Gladney 1991; Honig 1992) as well as those of Philippine history (Ileto 1979, 1998; McKenna 1998) have begun to question and deconstruct the administrative, ideological, and religious classification systems of colonial rulers and the nationalist rhetoric of leaders in China and in the Philippines. Such an approach not only provides us with a more complex and sophisticated understanding of what constitutes "identity" but also brings back agency to the people whom we study.

An alternative approach currently used by some scholars to study the identities of the Chinese in Southeast Asia is to view them as "diasporic subjects" instead of "overseas Chinese" or "sojourners." By using "diaspora" as a trope with which to describe the connections, links and flows that characterize the experiences of these Chinese in "modern" times, we can avoid the pitfall of studying their identities based on a particular nation-centered discourse (McKeown 1999). Moreover, the identities of these "diasporic Chinese" are flexible, malleable, and multiple. For in their efforts to elude or overcome the attempts of modernizing nation-states or of other dominant groups to localize them into disciplinable subjects, these "modern Chinese transnationals" often employ "border-crossing" strategies such as acquiring transnational mobility or flexible citizenship (Ong 1993, 1999;

Ong and Nonini 1997). Present-day Chinese in the Philippines, for example, have attempted to construct themselves as "Tsinoyos" not only to reflect their unique bi-culturalism, but also to break down the Chinese-Filipino binary (Blanc Szanton 1997). This paper wishes to extend this approach to the study of Chinese ethnic identities in the "pre-transnational" or "pre-modern" era (Ong and Nonini 1997, 37–38).<sup>7</sup>

Furthermore, people who belong to "ethnic minority" groups or who have been colonized in the past often have a different perspective of their own identities. They reconstruct these in ways that are unlike those of the hegemonic groups, but meaningful to their views and understandings of their own world. Moreover, the choices they make in their everyday lives and through their lifetimes often exhibit a flexibility and permeability of the boundaries of their ethnic identities (Oxfeld 1993; Leonard 1992; Becker 1995).

Identities of people—when viewed from their own perspectives—are often fluid and complex. As Ong and Nonini write

Different identities—gender, race, nationality, subculture, dominant culture—intersect in and constitute an individual. A person is therefore a site of differences; someone can be simultaneously Indonesian, Chinese, working-class, and a mother as well as all of these together. (1997, 24–25)

I similarly argue that the identities of the Chinese and mestizos in the late Spanish colonial period also flowed along a shifting and problematic continuum. By demonstrating the fluidity of their identities through the investigation of their familial and social practices, I hope to challenge the binarist construction of nationalists of a long-standing, universal, and inevitable divide between the "Chinese" and the larger "Filipino" community. Instead, however, of limiting my study only until 1898 as Wickberg did, this will extend up to the early years of the American colonial period. By doing so, I want to show that the mestizos at least until 1901 were still recognized as a separate group, and that the simplification and essentialization of their identity as "Filipino" took several more years to establish. Moreover, straddling these two periods will show that even if the Chinese in the American colonial period were reclassified as "aliens" in their individual lives, their identities remained very much the same as they had in the latter part of the Spanish colonial period, and that it took several more years before their cultural identities as "Chinese" approximated that of the nationalists. This dissolves the periodization used by other scholars, separating the "sangley" of the Spanish colonial period from the "chi-

nos" of the American colonial period. Showing that people's perceptions and constructions of their own identities did not necessarily follow those of institutional or political ones will illustrate the complexity of the ethnogenesis "Chinese" and "Filipino" identities.

The questions this study seeks to answer are: (1) Were the Chinese really as homogeneously "Chinese" as past works have portrayed them to be? (2) Were the mestizos really a "special kind of Filipino" who lacked any deep affinity to their Chinese heritage? (3) How can the investigation of some of their socio-cultural practices lead us to a more complex way of understanding what it meant to be "Catholic," "Chinese" or "mestizo"?

The conclusions I will make are tentative, and are based on a selected number of case studies. This paper is part of an ongoing research project in which more and more relevant cases are being found. I am presenting my initial findings to suggest new ways of analyzing identity formation among the Philippine Chinese and to alert scholars to new archival materials that can be used for the study of the Chinese and mestizos in the Philippines.

## The Chinese

Soon after the Spaniards arrived in the Philippines in 1565, they set up the galleon trade that linked trade routes between Manila and Acapulco. In this the Chinese found a niche and soon established themselves as a valuable component of the colonial economy.<sup>8</sup> The number of Chinese settling in the Philippines grew, and in areas penetrated by the Spaniards, particularly in those that became centers of trade and commerce, different cultural communities consisting of Spaniards, the natives, and the Chinese began to form. Before long, the Spanish colonial government built an administrative structure distinguishing these groups along socio-cultural and political lines. The Spanish colonizers classified the natives as "indios" and the Chinese as "sangleyes."<sup>9</sup> But in the middle of the eighteenth century, they established a separate and legal category called "mestizos" to categorize the growing number of creole offspring of intermarriage between the Chinese and indigenous women. While initially drawn for tax purposes, this division soon affected rights to travel, property ownership, and participation in government.<sup>10</sup> For such rights, the division was two-fold: the indios and the mestizos shared the same rights while the Chinese did not (Wickberg 1964, 64-65; 2000, 31).

To ensure their loyalty and subservience, the Spanish colonial government, in cooperation with the Catholic Church, sought to convert the Chinese.<sup>11</sup> It encouraged conversion by providing converts with benefits, such as the opportunity to marry local women.<sup>12</sup> With the establishment of more Catholic Chinese-mestizo or Chinese-indio families, the Spaniards hoped that not only would they be carrying out their mission of conversion, they would also be creating a colony of loyal and faithful subjects (Wickberg 2000, 68–69).

But according to Wickberg, early Spanish attempts at conversion were only “moderately” successful. Basing his estimates on reports given by Spanish friars and officials, he states that the number of converts stood at three to four thousand at any given time from a “Chinese” population that could go as high as twenty to thirty thousand (2000, 16). Furthermore, while not discounting the existence of “sincere” converts, he accepts Spanish accounts that many converted for pragmatic reasons in order to earn rights not enjoyed by non-converts and to acquire a Spanish godparent whom they could count on for protection (*compadrazgo*). However, around the mid-eighteenth to nineteenth centuries, the Spanish colonial government began to remove the advantages enjoyed by converts. Wickberg concludes then that the importance of conversion among the Chinese diminished. He also points out, however, that Catholicism continued to play an important role in the lives of the Chinese since conversion was still required of those who aspired for high positions in the government and who wanted to become Spanish subjects. Furthermore, the Chinese continued to find certain Catholic rituals, such as the system of *compadrazgo*, to be economically beneficial. Thus, as in the past, the motivations of these converts remained suspect; it was thought that they converted only out of convenience rather than a sincere desire to be good Catholics. Even after conversion to Catholicism and profession of loyalty to the Spanish crown, the Chinese could not share the degree of sincerity with which mestizos and indios, especially those in the upper class, embraced Spanish culture and religion. But in accepting the evaluation of Church officials of the quality of conversion among the Chinese, Wickberg may have inadvertently heightened the difference between Chinese and indigenous converts, and by extension, between the “Chinese” and the “locals.”<sup>13</sup>

Furthermore, Wickberg writes that by the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Chinese were beginning to develop a “community consciousness” among themselves. According to him, several factors

contributed to this. One was the homogeneity of the Philippine Chinese, most of whom belonged to the same dialect group.<sup>14</sup> Another was the decline of Spain's power in the Philippines, which left the Chinese with no one to rely on but themselves. Still another was the greater tie between the Chinese in the Philippines and China which was brought about by the greater influx of new arrivals from China and the ease with which they could go back and forth between China and the Philippines after the invention of the steamship. Finally, and what Wickberg considers as the most important, the rising anti-Chinese movement in the 1880s and 1890s moved the Chinese to organize themselves. This included the formation of the Anglo-Chinese School in 1899 in order to "check assimilation and to reclaim mestizos for their community" (2000, 204). Wickberg writes that when the United States took over the Philippines from Spain in 1898, and extended the exclusionary law to the Islands which would bar Chinese labor from coming to the Philippines and deny those already in the Philippines from obtaining "Filipino" citizenship, "the way had already been prepared for the Philippine Chinese to survive, not only as a community, but as a community whose cultural orientation was specifically Chinese" (236).

From here we can see that Wickberg's analysis follows the framework of nationalists in both China and the Philippines. His approach suggests that the segue of the Chinese from a culturally and legally distinct group in Spanish times to a separate "alien" national group during the American period was natural and inevitable. Using a different approach, however, the following sections will show, through an investigation of some of their socio-cultural practices, that the culture of the Chinese during this period was not homogeneous or wholly distinct from that of the local population. Specifically, a discussion of their marriage practices will show that the behavior of Chinese converts was not fundamentally different from that of local converts, and that they lived out a "Chinese-ness" that differed from present-day constructions of being "Chinese." Furthermore, an investigation of their inheritance practices will show that their ethnic identity was also fluid and complex, oftentimes blurring the boundaries set up by the colonial and nationalist governments. In appropriating Spanish laws and Chinese customs to fit their specific familial or domestic situations, they could be "Chinese" or "Spanish" at different times or simultaneously.

### Sources

Before proceeding with my case studies, I would like to provide some background information regarding the documents I am using. The documents used to examine the marriage and inheritance practices of some Chinese (as well as some mestizos in the next section) are testaments filed under the heading *Protocolo de Manila* at the Record Management and Archives Office in Manila (RMAO). The protocolos are bound volumes of contracts and instruments drawn up by different residents of Manila, and were notarized by any of the eight notary publics found in the city.<sup>15</sup> The documents include powers of attorney, sales of property and goods, and some testaments. Each protocol contains about a thousand instruments, and the testaments were discovered by going through the indices of the protocols belonging to two notary publics, whose protocols show that they had a good number of Chinese clients. I focused on the years 1895 to 1901. For some years, particularly from the years 1896 to 1898, there were very few instruments drawn up, owing to, I believe, the political uncertainties of the time.<sup>16</sup> Out of the thousands of entries in the indices scanned, I found a number of testaments drawn up by Chinese and mestizos, from which I chose nine. These were chosen on the basis of the substantial data contained in them regarding the testators and their wills. More importantly, they serve as a starting point with which to introduce and test my hypothesis that identities during the period under study also were fluid and flexible.

### Profile of Testators in Inheritance Cases

Of the nine cases included here, eight belong to male testators, and only one to a female. Their ages ranged from the early 30s to the early 70s: three of the cases involved people who had already died, and whose testaments were being subjected to implementation, protocolization or contestation. Several of these wills were drawn up in anticipation of impending death. There was one that was drawn up because the person was returning to China, and probably did not expect to come back to the Philippines soon (Federico R. Correa Lao-Sama). All of the testators owned at least some property, and all of them, including the female testator, were *comerciantes* or owners of businesses.

Of the nine testators, eight were married, and only one was single. Of the eight married men, five were married twice, either after the

death of the first wife, or with the second marriage overlapping with the first. Here, we have to distinguish between marriages contracted in China and those in the Philippines, and—among those marriages contracted in the Philippines—between consensual ones and the ones consecrated by the Catholic Church. For instance, Sy Tiong-Tay married Chan Sinin “according to the rites of his country” and then married Ana Cuangsi under Catholic rites in Manila, even while his first wife was still alive. Cu-Un-Jieng also was married to Ong Sy in China but lived consensually with Dominga Ayala in Manila.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, Mariano Velasco Chuachengco was married simultaneously to two women—to Sy Sacia and to Maria Consolacion Ang Quinio. However, these two marriages were contracted in “rites according to his country” (RMAO, PM 1901, 877, 1).

Because of the interesting conjugal arrangements of some testators, I have chosen to discuss in the next section their marriage practices and what they can tell us about their identities as “Catholics” or “Chinese.”

#### **Bad Chinese Husbands and Faithful Local Wives**

Quite a few outside observers and Church officials lamented the practice of Chinese converts keeping a wife in China and having another in the Philippines. As early as the seventeenth century, a Dominican missionary already deplored this practice (see Riccio 1667, ff. 235r-v).<sup>18</sup>

Indeed, the case of “*el chino cristiano*” Lucio Ysabelo Limpangco, a forty-two year old businessman, a widower, and a native of Amoy, China reflects this practice.<sup>19</sup> On 2 November 1895, he executed his will before the notary public Numeriano Adriano. In it, he claims that he was married in Catholic rites to Francisca Cinco, who is deceased.<sup>20</sup> Lucio also writes that he has two children with Francisca: Fernando, who is ten years old, and Maria Angeles, six years old, both of whom are “studying in China.” However, in the fourth clause of his testament, he declares that he also is married “according to the rites of his nation” to Chu-Cua, who is still residing in China and with whom he has five children, with ages ranging from seven to “*mayor de edad*” (age of majority) (RMAO, PM 1895, 561, 4). Thus, it can be inferred here that up to the time of Francisca’s death, he was married to these two women.

Because of practices like this, i.e., a Chinese having two wives, Catholic missionaries doubted the sincerity of their Chinese converts. The missionaries pointed out that the Chinese often converted out of

convenience: they chose to be baptized only because the State and the Catholic Church granted more rights and benefits to converts. After having been converted, however, they returned to their "pagan" ways.<sup>21</sup> Oftentimes, those who married local women also returned to China and abandoned their local families.<sup>22</sup> From these descriptions, Wickberg concludes that the Chinese converts were "nominal" Catholics. If we were to follow this line of reasoning, these converts therefore were no different from the non-converts. They all remained "Chinese" and thus could be taken as a group who were different from the "hispanic-Catholic" population, especially the upper-class mestizos and indios.

But how much of the actions of these Chinese converts really were a reflection of their being "bad" Catholics? A short review of pertinent Catholic Church policy regarding marriage between the Chinese and local women may provide us with a better perspective on how to evaluate these converts' behavior.

In 1585, Pope Gregory XIII granted a special concession to slaves, who were married pagans when they were captured and taken away to far away places. These slaves were permitted to remarry upon conversion, provided that either the first "pagan" wife consented to the second marriage, or that it could be established that it was impossible to contact the first wife (Garcia 1973). Moreover, if it was possible to contact her, but doing so would take a long time, the second marriage could be granted. Furthermore, even if the first wife decided to convert after the second marriage had been performed, the second marriage remained valid.<sup>23</sup>

Although this concession was first granted to slaves, a number of Church theologians such as Fr. Gainza opined in 1860 that this concession also applied to the situation of the Chinese in the Philippines because of the great difficulty of communicating with the wives they had left behind in China. Furthermore, he argued that although the concession was granted specifically to the slaves of Angola, Ethiopia and Brazil, the papal decree also stated that this concession was to take effect in "other regions of the Indies," including the Philippines. In fact, as early as 1831, the opinion of Fr. Gainza had been officially upheld by the University of Santo Tomás in Manila (see Garcia 1973, 75-76).

While the Catholic Church had a general policy prohibiting the practice of polygamy, it also had to adapt its own policies to the local situation.<sup>24</sup> The desire of the Catholic Church in the Philippines to con-

vert the "pagan" Chinese at all costs may have caused them to follow the concession granted by Gregory XIII when adjudicating cases involving the intermarriages between a Chinese and a local woman. As Fr. Benedicto Corominas, O.P. wrote in 1873 (as quoted by Garcia 1973, 48, footnote 141), "On the one hand, while it is bad for the women of these islands to get married with them [i.e. the Chinese] because of [the latter's pagan] customs and because many [of them] go back to China, [thus] abandoning here their wives; it is even worse, on the other hand, to allow the Chinese to corrupt everything and bring scandal because they are not married to their wives." In other words, rather than have them live in concubinage, the Church resorted to granting the Chinese baptism and have his relationship with a local woman solemnized in the Church to avoid displaying what it considered "immoral" acts to other people. Furthermore, Fr. Riccio, writing in 1667, opined, albeit grudgingly, that some good could also come out of these intermarriages, since "the sons of these converts were such true Christians that they would oppose their fathers in matters pertaining to religion, as it has been shown to happen in various occasions" (1667, f. 235v).

Thus, in the light of the Church adapting their policies to suit local needs and realities, we may be able to place the behavior of these Chinese Catholics in a wider perspective. For while some kind of economic or pragmatic consideration may have been involved in the Chinese converts' decision to marry native women in Catholic rites while maintaining another family in China, the Catholic Church also condoned the practice. Furthermore, if we were to look at the marriage practices of the locals in the Philippines, we would see that they, too, practiced polygamy, concubinage and other "scandalous" or "immoral" habits that also caused the Catholic missionaries to bend or adapt Church law so that their mission to Christianize the country would succeed (Garcia 1973).<sup>25</sup> I believe that the practice of local Catholic converts living consensually with another Catholic, as gleaned from accounts of some travelers, was not only prevalent but also commonly accepted.<sup>26</sup> These couples—whether of mixed or similar ethnic backgrounds—who lived in concubinage often had the full knowledge of neighbors and family members, and, as Wilkes notes in 1840, "no odium whatever is attached to such a connexion" (1974, 40). Thus, the case of Guillermo Cu-Un-Jieng and Dominga Ayala was probably not unusual.

At noon of 9 March 1901, Un-Jieng, a Chinese subject, businessman, and married "according to the rites of his country to Ong Sy," ap-

peared before the Notary Public Genaro Heredia to draw up his will. In the document, he states that his wife Ong Sy is residing in China, and that they have two children. He then proceeds to provide an inventory of all his possessions, and in the fourth clause, leaves a pension of one hundred pesos per month to Dominga Ayala from the time of his death and as long as she is living. What is interesting here is that in later biographies of Guillermo Cu-Un-Jieng, who was one of the most prominent Chinese merchants of Manila, it is often stated that Guillermo (or Un-Jieng) "married" Dominga, a Chinese mestiza, in 1893 (e.g. Lim 1930, 18; Wong 1994, 62).<sup>27</sup> However, in this 1901 document, he does not identify her as a legal wife. Furthermore, in the testament of a man named Ty-Chiulo, Cu Un-Jieng was identified as "soltero" or single, thus bolstering the idea that he and Dominga, at least up until 1901, were living consensually.<sup>28</sup> While up to that time Cu-Unjieng did not convert to Catholicism, I believe that Dominga was Catholic.

The foregoing discussion suggests that the culture of the Chinese could not be totally homogeneous or distinct from that of the local (Catholic) population. Scholars, following colonial accounts, have used "sincerity," or lack of it, in conversion to Catholicism as a way to demarcate cultural identity. Chinese were labeled as "bad" Catholics because they were "insincere" converts, and they continued practicing their "pagan" customs. Mestizos, on the other hand, were "good" Catholics because they followed the normative behavior of Spanish Catholics and forsook their Chinese heritage. However, my cases show that both Chinese and mestizo Catholics engaged in continuous negotiation of both Catholic and Chinese social practices. Moreover, the practices of the Chinese and the mestizos were often very similar to those of the indios, and equally condemned by the Church. Once again, this shows that scholars have arbitrarily drawn a cultural binary between ethnic groups that in fact was very blurry at the time. My cases on marriage precisely demonstrate this point.

I propose then that in analyzing these people's behavior and decisions, we go beyond the categorical assignations of the Catholic Church, which are necessarily tinged by Western- and Christian-centric views of what it means to be a "true" or "good" Catholic. Conversion often occurred in ways that were different from the agenda of the colonizers, and Catholicism was often understood differently by the colonized, who often appropriated the elements, meanings, and symbolisms of Catholicism in ways that made sense to their own indig-

enous sociocultural perspectives (Leonard 1992; Becker 1995; Iletto 1979; Rafael 1993). With more research on the marriage and other Catholic practices of these Chinese converts and their wives, and with a focus on their historical specificity, I hope to establish that there was some pattern in how they negotiated Church policies, and consequently, in how they understood "Catholicism."

### A Question of "Chinese-ness"

And how might these examples redefine our present-day notions of what being "Chinese" means? From the standpoint of Chinese marriage practices, polygyny (in which a man takes a wife legally and takes a concubine later on) was allowed (Bernhardt 1999, 161–62). Thus, it would not be too far-fetched to think that Chinese wives back in China did not really oppose their husbands' marriages to another woman from another country. This practice might have been not only tolerated from afar but even accepted, as can be inferred from the case of Lucio, whose two children with Francisca were sent to China. I suspect that they were sent there to be placed under the care of his first wife Chu-Cua. This practice of handing over the children of a concubine to the care of the first wife, especially if the concubine died, was common in China. In fact, the principal wife was regarded as the "formal" mother. Conversely, when the principal wife died, the concubine often assumed the role of the matriarch, and thus became responsible for the children of the former. More often than not, however, her relations with her stepchildren were strained, or at best, distant (for more discussions, see Bernhardt 1999, 161–78; Watson 1991, 239–44).<sup>29</sup>

From the point-of-view of a Chinese of the nineteenth century, therefore, the practice of taking another wife overseas might have been regarded as being within the norms of Chinese social customs. Moreover, it might have even been acceptable to marry someone from a different culture.<sup>30</sup> But viewed from today's perspective of what being "Chinese" means, these intermarriages with a "non-Chinese" is "un-Chinese," since nationalists would have it that to be "Chinese" means to belong to a superior race with a superior culture, and thus anyone classifying himself or herself as "Chinese" would not deign to marry someone from another race and culture. Many Chinese in the Philippines today still prefer to marry a fellow Chinese. If someone marries a Filipino or "*hoan-a*" (Hokkien word for "foreign barbarian"), a stigma seems to accompany the marriage itself. But if it could be shown through more examples that such intermarriages between these

diasporic Chinese and local women were common, then we could ask ourselves how this redefines our understanding of what it has meant to be a true "Chinese" through time and context, and how and when intermarriages with people belonging to another ethnic group became taboo among the Chinese in the Philippines today.<sup>31</sup>

The next section will focus on how inheritance practices of these testators reflected a creative strategy appropriating the differing and sometimes contradictory inheritance policies of the Spanish and Chinese legal traditions. Furthermore, it will show what their inheritance practices can tell us about their identities.

### **Filial Chinese Sons and Strong Chinese Women**

The following cases seem to show a reversal of what we understand as a "Chinese man" or "Chinese woman." Sinologists have generally pointed out that being a "Chinese man" meant having a higher status in society and more rights than a "Chinese woman." For instance, according to the Chinese code on inheritance of property during the Qing dynasty (1644–1911), only sons, whether belonging to the main wife or the concubine(s), inherited equally. Daughters, on the other hand, did not receive anything except a dowry (Bernhardt 1999, 9–46).

According to his will drawn up in 1895, however, "el chino cristiano" Lucio Ysabelo Limpangco bequeathed two-thirds of his goods to all his "legitimate children," which included his five children from his first wife Chu-Cua, whom he married in China, and his two children from second wife Francisca Cinco, whom he married in Manila. This type of division followed the Spanish Civil Code of 1889, which states that the "legitimate of legitimate children and descendants consists of two-thirds of the hereditary estate of the father and the mother" (Article 808).<sup>32</sup>

It can not be ascertained from their names whether Lucio Limpangco had a daughter among the five children from the first wife.<sup>33</sup> He did, however, have a daughter from the second wife. Maria Angeles (b. 1889), along with her brother Francisco (b. 1885), was entitled to an equal share of the inheritance. Lucio clearly chose to follow Spanish inheritance practices instead of Chinese. Thus, in converting to Catholicism, in marrying a local woman and in allowing hispanic-Catholic laws to govern his familial practices, Lucio could hardly be identified solely as a "Chinese" in the way we understand today. But back in his time, he must not have felt very "un-Chinese" as he departed from Chinese customs that he had grown up with. By

giving his daughter an equal share of the inheritance, Lucio could have just been employing one of his negotiating strategies as a person straddling two worlds, in which his understanding of what it meant to be a “Chinese man” or “Chinese woman” had to be adapted to the given situation.

José Chio Taysan, a native of Leonque in China, who at seventy-five years old drew up a will on 23 March 1895 (RMAO, PM 1895, 561, 1), even named as executor of his will his only daughter and only heir Silvina Chio-Taysan, who was at that time, still of minor age.<sup>34</sup> Giving the entire inheritance to a daughter would have been quite uncommon in China then. Not only did a woman not inherit anything except a dowry, but in the absence of a male heir, the widow was supposed to name and adopt a male heir from the patrilineal clan (see Bernhardt 1999, 44, 62–65). Furthermore, Taysan stipulated that should, at the time of his death, Silvina was still of minor age, his wife Avelina Caballero would become the executor. Thus, in this case not only was the daughter empowered, but so was the mother.

The same empowerment was granted to the wife of another testator, Go-Quia-co. On 23 November 1900, Quia-co drew up a will stating that he was married to Sy Quieng and that they had three children: Go-Chongco (twenty-three years old and living in China); Go-Chawco (eighteen and living with Quia-co in Manila); and Go-Chuyco (thirteen and living in China) (RMAO, PM 1900, 829, 7). Although he declared his three children as his heirs who would inherit his goods in equal parts, he named as tutor of his children, and as executor of his will in China, his wife Sy Quieng.<sup>35</sup> Again, this seems to be a departure from the customary practice in China, which often had men from the lineage or from the village appointed to oversee the division of the property of a deceased person (Huang 1996, 27).<sup>36</sup> What also is interesting in this case is that Quia-co used Spanish civil law with regard to his domestic affairs, even if his marriage was contracted in China.

Lastly, Sy Tiong-Tay also seemed to have veered away from Chinese gender roles when he did not give preferential treatment to Carlos, his first and only son from his first wife. While it is true that all sons of both a primary and a concubine were to inherit equally according to Qing civil law, the fact is that in practice it was the primary wife’s sons who enjoyed more privileges and power (see Freedman 1966, 51). However, in this case, Carlos inherited less than the children of the “concubine.” Details about Tiong-Tay’s family will help to explain this.

Sy Tiong-Tay married his first wife Chu-Cua in China in 1855. Two years later, Carlos was born. Documents show however, that Tiong-Tay had sired four other children with another Chinese woman named Ana Cuangsi, a "Chinese national" whom he either met in Manila or brought with him to the Philippines. In either case, I construe her to be the "second wife," since their first son was born at a much later date than Carlos. Their four children were: Baldomero (b. 1874), Felipa (b. 1879), Manuel (b. 1883), and Justina (b. 1886). In his will drawn up in 1892, Tiong-Tay divided his inheritance, estimated at approximately two hundred eighty four thousand and ninety five pesos, into three equal parts: one-third (from which medical and other expenses were deducted) to be divided equally among the five heirs Carlos, Baldomero, Felipa, Manuel, and Justina; another third, considered as "legitimate," to be divided again among the five heirs; and the last third, which was classified under *mejoras*, i.e. an act leaving by will a larger share than the legatee by law had a right to, to be divided *only* among Baldomero, Felipa, Manuel, and Justina. In his will, however, it was stated that Carlos had malversed twelve thousand and four hundred three pesos, twenty nine cents and four *cuartos* when he was the treasurer of his father's business.<sup>37</sup> Consequently, he might have lost the good graces of his father. In fact, the amount malversed was deducted from the total of his inheritance (see RMAO, PM 1895, 871, 12).<sup>38</sup> Thus, even though he was the eldest son of the main wife, Carlos did not enjoy the special privilege which would have been accorded him had he been in China.

In the preceding inheritance cases, we can see that there seems to be an overturning of not only what it means to be a real "Chinese" but also what it means to be a "Chinese" daughter or son, i.e., if we are to view these children, as present-day Chinese nationalists would do, as part of a "Chinese" family. Clearly, their fathers treated them differently from the way Chinese sons or daughters would be treated in China then. This also shows how the study of the intersection of gender and ethnic identities can provide us with a more complex picture of "Chinese" identity.

#### **"Chinese," "Spanish," or "Catholic"? The Cases of Mariano Velasco Chuachengco, Sy Tiong-Tay, and Federico R. Correa lao-Sama**

Even if they were "Catholic" or naturalized Spanish subjects, three testators still managed to keep their "Chinese-ness," in spite of the fact

that, upon the act of conversion or naturalization, one was expected to act like a good Catholic and loyal Spanish subject.

Married to two women in China with whom he had a total of thirteen children, Mariano Velasco Chuachengco, a Catholic, divided his numerous assets only among his male children.<sup>39</sup> He declared that according to the laws of his nation, in which he contracted these two marriages, daughters did not receive any rights to the inheritance, since they would eventually marry out.<sup>40</sup> Instead, the four daughters would only receive a "valuable gift" (*regalo de importancia*) from their mother (RMAO, PM 1901, 877, 1).<sup>41</sup>

Similarly, Sy Tiong-Tay, who married his first wife Chan Sinin in China, also claims in his will that upon Sinin's death in 1883, their conjugal property was not liquidated (RMAO, PM 1895, 871, 12). He states that the reason for this was "that their society [i.e. conjugal partnership] never existed since such society is a consequence of the contract of marriage celebrated under Spanish laws, (and) that their wedding was celebrated under the laws of China which do not recognize such society."<sup>42</sup> Thus, Tiong-Tay argues that during his first marriage all the assets were his legitimate and exclusive property and he had no obligation to divide them when his marriage with Sinin was dissolved after the death of the latter. Furthermore, with regard to his second wife Ana Cuangsi, Tiong-Tay states that their conjugal property could not count from the date when he married her in Catholic rites on 2 September 1891, for both of them were still of Chinese nationality. But since their marriage was performed under Catholic rites, their union was not subjected to the laws of China either. Thus, this line of reasoning asserts that Ana Cuangsi still deserved a share in the conjugal property, but only counting those acquired from the day of Tiong-Tay's naturalization on 25 December 1891 up to the time of his death.<sup>43</sup> However, in recognition of Articles 835, 838, and 839 of the Civil Code, she also inherited a portion of her deceased husband's assets when he died in 1892.<sup>44</sup>

The last case involves Federico R. Correa Lao-Sama, another Catholic convert who was married to Gregoria Espejo. In the will he drew up as he prepared to go home to China, he left one-half of his entire inheritance to Gregoria and their three minor children Ramon, Maria Salud, and Cenon, while leaving the other half to his "other legitimate son" Lao-Tian-Chiao, who, based on his Chinese-sounding name, was most probably born in China of a Chinese wife, but brought over to

the Philippines at a young age (RMAO, PM 1899, 875, 10). However, instead of equally dividing the inheritance among the four children, he chose to give more to his Chinese wife's son, and thus seems to have followed Chinese custom which often gave preferential treatment to the children of the main wife.

The three cases above show that despite their being baptized or naturalized, and expected to behave like a "Catholic" or a "Spanish," some testators still followed "Chinese" practices. Although the laws relating to inheritance applied equally to all those who lived under Spanish colonial rule, including the Chinese, these testators appropriated certain Chinese customs in the disposition of their wealth.<sup>45</sup> At a time when one's identity was not yet defined by a territorially-bound nation-state, a "diasporic subject" was able to draw from different cultural traditions, customs and practices that accounted for an identity that was at once multiple, fluid and flexible.

Looking at the specific familial practices of these Chinese individuals and families allows us to take a different view of their identities: their identities were not rigid, fixed, or unidimensional. Instead, these people were able to play simultaneous identities by appropriating and negotiating the different ethnoreligious classifications and sociocultural practices that they had access to. They could be "chino," "sanglely," or "Catholic,"—at least in so far as their choices and decisions showed—all at the same time or at different times, depending on the context. In playing with different identities, crisscrossing them as the situation dictated, they wielded a kind of power that allowed them to collude with the colonial regimes and at the same time, act "obliquely to them, and systematically set out to transgress the shifting boundaries set by both" (Ong and Nonini 1997, 20). Moreover, their ability to appropriate practices from different cultural traditions suggests that they had a different understanding of what these categories meant. Finally, it can be pointed out that these Chinese were not very culturally different from the locals, especially in terms of what being a "Catholic" means.

The Chinese were not alone in their "border-crossing" practices. The next section will show, through the investigation of their inheritance practices, and through the life of one of them, that mestizos also played with different identities. This will further support my hypothesis that identities during the period under study were fluid.

## The Mestizos

It should be pointed out that when the term “mestizo” was used in Spanish official documents or in popular parlance, it often referred to “mestizo sangley,” (Wickberg 1964, 67). And while there were mestizos *españoles*, they were very few in number.<sup>46</sup> The situation back then was different from today, when “mestizo” refers to someone of mixed Caucasian-Asian ancestry.

As unions between the Chinese and local women grew in number during the Spanish colonial period, so did the number of mestizo children.<sup>47</sup> And, as indicated earlier in this essay, by the middle of the eighteenth century the Spanish colonial government had established a separate legal classification for “mestizos.” Law classified male descendants of Chinese paternal ancestors as mestizos, even after several generations (Wickberg 2000, 33; Robles 1969, 77). However, the situation was different for female descendants. Through marriage, a mestiza could change status. While a mestiza marrying a mestizo or a Chinese remained in the mestizo classification, as did her children, one who married an indio or Spaniard assumed her husband’s classification along with her children.<sup>48</sup> Presumably, an *india* became a mestiza when she married a mestizo.

Wickberg states that this kind of legislation posed a problem for mestizos who wished to change their classification to indio or Chinese. Both male mestizos and indios however, could still change their classification for tax purposes. This occurred especially in the provinces. An example is Jose Rizal’s father who changed his and his children’s status in the tax-census register from Chinese mestizo to indio. But in urban areas, the mestizos preferred to retain their status (2000, 33–34).

Many of these Chinese mestizos were educated abroad and were introduced to the liberal ideas of the reform movement in Spain and in other parts of the world. Upon returning to the Philippines, they, along with other upper-class indios, worked for reforms in the political system. Indeed, a number of Philippinists have pointed out that the history of the Philippines and its rise to nationhood can not be written without including the role and contributions of the mestizos (Agoncillo 1974; Tan A. 1985 and 1972). Some of the more well-known mestizos who were active in the movement for reforms were Jose Burgos, Mariano Gomez, and Jacinto Zamora, three secular priests who were executed for their alleged participation in the Cavite Mutiny in 1872. Other well-known mestizos include Jose Rizal, Pedro Paterno,

Gregorio Sancianco, Emilio Aguinaldo, and Flaviano Yenke. Other Chinese mestizos such as Roman Ongpin, Mariano Limjap, Telesforo Chiudian, and Luis Yangco made financial contributions to the revolution (Tan A. 1972, 17). Thus, in the nationalist version of Philippine history, many of these mestizos are considered “fathers” of the “Filipino” nation.

Wickberg shows why mestizos, along with the larger indio population, naturally fell into the “Filipino” classification upon the American takeover. He cites certain historical developments prior to 1898, such as the abolishment of the tribute in the 1880s and the removal of the legal distinction between indio and mestizo, as contributing to their association with one another.<sup>49</sup> But more importantly, he provides the cultural explanation for this political development. Wickberg believes that

the mestizos were more Spanish than the Spanish, more Catholic than the Catholics. Yet with those characteristics they combined a financial acumen that seemed out of place. *Rejecters of their Chinese heritage*, they were not completely at home with their indio heritage. The nearest approximation to them was the urbanized, heavily-hispanized indio. (1964, 97; italics mine)

He then goes on to explain that

Only when hispanization had reached a high level in the nineteenth century urban areas could the mestizo find a basis of rapport with the *indio*. Thus, during the late nineteenth century, because of cultural, economic, and social changes, the mestizos increasingly identified themselves with the *indios* in a new kind of ‘Filipino’ cultural and national consensus. (1964, 97)

Thus, it “took a special effort for a mestizo to identify himself with China, an effort the majority did not wish to make, given the mestizo cultural outlook” (Wickberg 2000, 31). The child-rearing practices and the structure of the Chinese-indigenous family contributed to this outlook. In the absence of fathers who often returned to China, the mestizo or indio mothers often had the most influence over their mestizo offspring. They reared them as devout Catholics, and even if “there were instances of Chinese fathers instructing mestizo sons in business methods,” it was mostly likely that the mothers themselves had some business sense and thus were capable of providing the business training to their mestizo children (33). Consequently, during the American colonial period, many mestizo children who were classified as “Chinese” under the new American policy, but had the option to either remain

one or become a "Filipino" upon reaching the age of maturity, invariably opted to become "Filipinos."<sup>50</sup>

Furthermore, Wickberg points out that there were only "a very few prominent mestizos who openly identified themselves as Chinese and followed Chinese customs" (1964, 95). One of the very few whom he identifies is Ildefonso Tambunting.<sup>51</sup> By 1900,

the unmodified term "mestizo" no longer referred to the Chinese mestizo, but had acquired the meaning it has today: Spanish mestizo or Eurasian in general. . . There was no longer a third ethnic status as an alternative for Chinese mestizos. (Wickberg 2000, 141)

While I agree with Wickberg that indeed, there were many mestizos who had chosen to become "Filipino" by legal classification, I argue that in the first few years of American rule, when the classification of mestizo had already been removed, mestizos, culturally and socially, were still recognized as a separate entity. This was evident in the hearings of the Philippine Commission.

In an effort to gather more information about their new colony and its inhabitants, the First Philippine Commission conducted several hearings in 1899. Many people—foreign businessmen, Chinese, and natives—were called to give testimony about the Chinese labor question. During the hearings, a set of questions was also asked regarding the identity of the "mestizo" (see U.S. Philippine Commission 1900–1901, 224). This shows that, at least around 1899 and most probably the years immediately succeeding it, the mestizos had not yet been considered, culturally, as belonging to the wider "Filipino" community.

Furthermore, I believe that there may have been more mestizos during the Spanish colonial period—even at the height of hispanicization and Catholicization in the Philippines—who did not reject their "Chinese-ness." While many mestizos may have rejected their "Chinese-ness," a distinction must be made between *first generation* mestizos and those of later generations. In fact, the definition given by Carlos Palanca Tan Quien-sien, a prominent leader and businessman in the Chinese community of Manila, of the mestizo is revealing. As one of the "Chinese" interviewed by the First Philippine Commission in 1899, Carlos gave this definition of a mestizo,

In the commencement a Chinaman marries a Tagalog woman and they get children from that marriage, and their children marry in time, and the descendants of that marriage are called mestizos. (U.S. Philippine Commission 1899–1900, 224)

This implies that some Chinese fathers may have placed a distinction between their mestizo offspring and those of later generations. Although they were legally classified as "mestizos," the identity of these first-generation mestizos were culturally ambiguous at best. They were most likely to have been baptized as Catholics, but this would not have prevented them from being "Chinese," too, in their cultural orientation. The following inheritance case will illustrate my point.

**Ana Sy-Yap y Gobonjua, et al.: "Mestizo," "Catholic," or "Chinese"?**

Ana Sy-Yap y Gobonjua, single, a mestiza, and thirty-three years of age, instituted as heirs her sister Manuela, as well as her nephews Gregorio, Agapito, and Julian, all of whom were identified as Christians; the last three were sons of her deceased brother Mariano (RMAO, PM 1895, 306, 2). The minor Gregorio was living in Manila, while the two older sons were sent to China. In her testament she also instructed that five Gregorian masses should be celebrated upon her death, and that a donation of thirty pesos be given to each of the Churches of Binondo, San Francisco, San Ignacio de Loyola, and Capuchina y Paules. Here is an example of a mestiza who was a devout Catholic woman, yet maintained strong ties to China. No doubt her family's close contact with China would have predisposed her to be very much aware of her "Chinese-ness."

Furthermore, Mariano's two older sons, who were second-generation mestizos since their father was himself a mestizo, would have become more culturally "Chinese" when they were sent to China to study. The same can be said of the mestizo children of Lucio Ysabelo Limpangco and Francisca Cinco mentioned earlier in this article.<sup>52</sup>

In the case of Ana and her nephews, we can argue that at least some mestizos, especially those belonging to the first generation, and even, as in the case of Ana's two nephews, those of the second-generation, maintained very strong ties with their Chinese kin and heritage. One can even argue that those who were sent to China might have felt much more at ease in being "Chinese" than "mestizo" or "Filipino" upon returning to the Philippines. Thus, even if one was classified as "mestizo/a," during the Spanish colonial period, he/she could have instead identified himself or herself more as a "Chinese." And does this not also suggest the possibility that some of them might have chosen to be called "Chinese" instead of "Filipino," or both "Chinese" and "Filipino" at the turn of the twentieth century? Furthermore, what does Ana's case say about the role of mestizo mothers in the

hispanization and Catholicization of their mestizo children? Ana and other mestiza offspring like her, as well as those who married "Chinese" men, could have played roles other than helping in the "mestizo-ization" of their children. They may even have retarded this "mestizo-ization" or encouraged their children to become "Chinese."<sup>53</sup>

In sum, Ana and her relatives do not fit the Wickberg's description of mestizos. Culturally, they could either be "mestizo" or "Chinese" simultaneously, or they could have shifted from one identity to another. The life of Mariano Limjap, another first-generation mestizo will make clearer such a playing out of identities.

### **Mariano Limjap: Chinese, Mestizo, Filipino or Spaniard?**

Mariano was born in Manila on 19 October 1856. His father Joaquin Limjap (b. 1832-d. 31 January 1888) was a prominent Chinese businessman born in the village of Dongshan located at the Longxi district in Fujian Province.<sup>54</sup> His mother was Policarpia Nolasco, a mestiza (b. 1831-d. 9 January 1875). Joaquin was one of the four Chinese merchant leaders who went to Hong Kong in 1886 to present a petition for the establishment of a Chinese consulate in Manila, even if, as early as 1881, he had already become a Spanish subject.<sup>55</sup>

Upon the death of his father in 1888, Mariano established an import and export business called Limjap y Cia.<sup>56</sup> He also had shares in San Miguel Brewery, the Manila Jockey Club, Hong Kong & Shanghai Banking Corporation, and other companies. He was a well-known figure in both the Chinese and mestizo communities, and was once *cabeza* (head) as well as *gobernalorcillo* (lit. "little governor") of the mestizos of Binondo.<sup>57</sup> For all his participation in various sociocivic activities, the Spanish government awarded him with the distinction of Caballero de la Real Orden Americana de Isabel la Católica. In 1893, he traveled to Europe with his wife.

Mariano also participated in the Revolution against Spain. He was one of the financiers of La Liga Filipina.<sup>58</sup> He was arrested on 16 September 1896, upon suspicion of complicity in the Revolution of August 1896, but was released on 29 March 1897.<sup>59</sup> In 1898, the Revolutionary government asked him to be an adviser on financial matters, and to head, along with Pedro A. Paterno and Telesforo Chiudian, the Republic's financing group. Together, they authorized the signing of paper bills issued by the Republic (Manuel 1955, 249; Boncan y Limjap 1998, 40).<sup>60</sup> He also helped found the Club Filipino Independiente on 6 November 1898.<sup>61</sup> In 1899, he served in the Revolutionary Congress

in Tarlac. When the American forces caught up with the officials of the Republic in Pangasinan, Mariano was brought to Manila, where he was imprisoned and later released.<sup>62</sup>

During the American colonial period, he dealt in real estate and built houses for rent in Manila. He branched out to other towns and vacation centers, and established other businesses. He bought shares in various companies such as the Compañía de Seguros de Filipinas, Tayabas Sawmill & Co., and La Perla, Inc. He was also elected one of the directors of the Bank of the Philippine Islands. He also was active in philanthropic activities, and served on the Rizal Monument Commission (Boncan y Limjap 1998, 29–30).

Mariano Limjap had two children by his first wife Juana Siaoingco (b. 1858 – d. 23 February 1885) and seven by his second wife Maria Escolar y Cochay (b. 25 March 1865–d. 7 April 1941), whom he married on 2 May 1886.<sup>63</sup> He died on 4 March 1926.

This short biographical sketch of Mariano, shows that he was, legally, a mestizo during the Spanish colonial times. Upon the American takeover, his classification undoubtedly became “Filipino,” since the Philippine Bill of 1902, decreed that all those who were Spanish subjects prior to 11 April 1899 were citizens of the Philippine Islands. His being a first generation mestizo and his participation in the society of Binondo, however, suggest that Mariano had close dealings with the Chinese community. Thus, I believe that he was just as comfortable and at ease with his “Chinese” identity as he was with his “mestizo” and “Filipino” identity. He shifted these identities as the situation dictated. Certain events in his life may prove these points.

The first event involves the charge of *estafa* (swindling) filed against him in 1891. According to the plaintiff Adriano Marcelo, who was a resident of Iloilo, Mariano’s father Joaquin had granted him the power to represent the business tycoon in his businesses in that province (RMAO, VP, *Mariano Limjap*). On 15 February 1885, Adriano was supposed to have earned an amount of seven thousand four hundred sixty six (7,466) pesos as commission. Instead of collecting the amount, however, he asked Joaquin Limjap to deposit the money with the Hong Kong-Shanghai Bank. Adriano produced several correspondences between himself and Mariano’s father referring to this matter. At the time of the litigation Joaquin had been dead for ten years, and since Mariano was the one designated as executor of his father’s will, he had to appear in court. Mariano contested Adriano’s claim, leading Adriano to sue Mariano for *estafa* since the latter refused to turn over the money the former claimed to be his.

One of the documents Mariano Limjap submitted to the Court of the First Instance of Binondo was a notarized record showing that he had also been granted the power to represent his father in the latter's businesses in Iloilo.<sup>64</sup> In this document, Mariano classified himself as a "mestizo español." He was ridiculed by Adriano's lawyer for having the "audacity" to call himself as such, when "his face tells us that he is of pure Chinese blood, his father Don Joaquin Limjap being pure Chinese, and his mother being Chinese mestiza." The lawyer went on to argue that Mariano's claim constituted a crime under the Penal Code. The lawyer included this matter in his arguments to point out the duplicitous nature of Mariano Limjap. Under Spanish law, however, a son took the legal classification of his father. In this case, Mariano was simply following his father's classification, since Joaquin Limjap was a naturalized Spanish subject.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, Mariano probably did not feel ill at ease to call himself a "mestizo español." Since "mestizo" could officially refer to both mestizo sangley and mestizo español, the qualifiers "sangley" or "español" could have been, to him, easily interchangeable.<sup>66</sup>

While Mariano was comfortable being part of the mestizo community—being able to speak Spanish as attested by other documents at the Archives—he would just have as easily been at ease with the Chinese community.<sup>67</sup> Partly due to his father's business connections, and partly due to his own, Mariano had extensive dealings with other Chinese merchants in Binondo. He was said to have helped Cu-Unjieng, a Chinese who later on became a prominent businessman and the first president of the Manila Chinese Commercial Council (later the Manila Chinese General Chamber of Commerce), start his own business.<sup>68</sup> A document from 1900 also shows that he and his brother donated some money to their relatives in China, as directed by their father Joaquin in his will.<sup>69</sup> While there has been no documentary evidence to the fact, I suspect that Mariano was also fluent in Hokkien, having grown up in Binondo, surrounded by his father's kin and business associates, whom he himself would be dealing or entering into business partnerships with in his adult life.<sup>70</sup>

In fact, a sure sign of his identification with the Chinese community can be gleaned from the incident involving the arrival of the Chinese cruiser Haiji on 8 November 1907. In it was H.E. Yang Shiji, who carried the title of Junior Vice President of the Board of Agriculture, Works, and Commerce of China, as well as of Imperial Commissioner (*Manila Times*, 6 Nov. 1907; Tan A. 1972, 110). According to newspaper

reports, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce gave the Chinese official and his entourage a "brilliant reception." This reception, not quite coincidentally, was held at the home of one of the most prominent "Chinese" businessmen of that time: Mariano Limjap. The front-page article states:

All the prominent Chinese residents of the city were present, to receive the royal commissioner and the officers of the cruiser Hai Chi. . . . Major Robert H. Noble presented to the distinguished visitors the hundreds who called to pay their respects. In the receiving line were Consul General Su Yu Chu, Ho. H.E. Yang Shih Chi, Mrs. Limjap, Taotai Mue Yew Chung, Commodore Shin, and the President of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Manila. (*Manila Times*, 14 Nov. 1907).<sup>71</sup>

Furthermore, eight days before this reception, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce also hosted a "splendid reception at Mariano Limjap's" to honor Secretary and Mrs. William H. Taft. The article states that the Chinese consul general and the leading "Chinamen" in the city were present at this reception. Among the "Chinamen" were "Benito Si Cobieng, the president of the Chinese chamber of commerce; Cu Unjien (sic), the ex-president of the chamber of commerce, and Tan Chu Tee, the instructor in English in the Chinese school" (*Cablenews America*, 6 Nov. 1907).

These events in Mariano Limjap's life show that Mariano, who was a prominent businessman in his community from the late Spanish colonial period to the early American period, was capable of playing different identities at different points in his life. Though he was a "mestizo" and later on a "Filipino," he also was "Chinese."<sup>72</sup>

## Conclusion

Through the cases used in this study, I have tried to show that the Chinese in the Philippines at the turn of the twentieth century may not have been as homogeneous as we think they were, in so far as their socio-cultural and familial practices show. Certainly, many of the practices they demonstrated were not "Chinese," i.e., if one were to base what twentieth-century nationalists in China and in the Philippines constructed as being "Chinese." Instead, their life choices and lifestyles reflected an identity that was flexible, multiple, and ambiguous. They could be "Catholic" or "Spanish" in their disposition of wealth or their marriage practices, but there is almost always another component of their practices that shows them also to be "Chinese." Their sense of

"Chinese-ness" is probably significantly different from those of the older generation of the Chinese in the Philippines today. In a certain sense, however, it could be similar to those of the younger generation.

Today's older generation of Chinese (i.e. those born in the 1920s and the 1930s) in the Philippines who still feel strongly attached to China are products of the rise of nationalism in China and in the Philippines, particularly after the first decade of the twentieth century. From 1900 to 1912, there was only one Chinese school in Manila and one major Chinese organization (the Manila Chinese Chamber of Commerce). No Chinese language newspaper existed beyond one year; some not even beyond the first issue. However, when the Nationalist Party in China took over the reins of the government from the Manchu rulers in 1912, and when the Philippine Legislature was established in 1907, the stage was set for two battling nationalisms to intensify their efforts in strengthening even more the boundaries between who belonged and who did not. By the 1920s, there were more than ten Chinese schools in the Philippines, various Chinese-oriented organizations, and a number of Chinese newspapers with greater longevity and wider readership. On the other hand, the Philippine Legislature was enacting more laws that discriminated against the Chinese, such as the Bookkeeping Law of 1921 that required all business records to be kept not in Chinese but in either Spanish or English (for more information, see Tan A. 1972).<sup>73</sup>

Educated in these Chinese schools, influenced by the nationalist rhetoric of the Kuomintang and Communist governments in China, and, up to 1975, denied easy access to Filipino citizenship, this older generation of Chinese still shares with many other nationalists around the world a sense of "Chinese-ness" that regards the Chinese as one political, economic, and cultural bloc.

On the other hand, the situation of the younger generation of Chinese in the Philippines today seems to echo the flexibility and malleability with which the Chinese at the turn of the century lived out their identities. Those Chinese born after the second World War grew up with little or no contact with China. Their only contact with their Chinese heritage may come from their families and relatives and from attending a Chinese school in the Philippines.<sup>74</sup> This has resulted in a kind of ambiguity in their identities (see Chu 2001). For while their parents' views and attitudes are strongly "Chinese," they feel much more attached to things "Filipino." This is the main reason why they have coined the term "Tsinoy" to refer to themselves, reflecting once

more the ability of these Chinese in the Philippines to straddle two cultures (Blanc Szanton 1997). Consequently, they are able to adopt different identities, either simultaneously or in different occasions, in their lifetimes.<sup>75</sup>

As for the mestizos, I have attempted to show that at the critical period at the turn of the century, some of them had not rejected their "Chinese-ness." I believe that in my future research, I will be able to find more cases of mestizos who considered themselves culturally both "Chinese" and "mestizo," and later on, during the first decades of the twentieth century, both "Chinese" and "Filipino." However, I believe that even as ethnic boundaries were hardened during the rise of Filipino and Chinese nationalisms after 1910, there were creole offspring who continued living with multiple and flexible identities. I refer in particular to those "mestizos" who considered themselves, as their lives were inextricably more connected with other Chinese, more "Chinese" than "Filipino." However, they were beginning to be called "*tsut-sia*" (which means someone "born outside the border") by the other Chinese as the latter had been influenced by binarist ways of thinking about race. Many of these *tsut-sias* were the first students of the Anglo-Chinese school founded in 1899 (Wickberg 2000, 188). But without a legal classification to categorize them either as "mestizo," or "*tsut-sia*," their lives and stories seem to have been lost in the nationalist historical writings of both China and the Philippines. It would be interesting and important, therefore, for scholars to investigate the ethnogenesis of these people.<sup>76</sup>

In showing that identities before the rise of the modern Philippine nation-state in the twentieth century were also fluid and often shifting, and that the split between Filipino (formerly mestizo for some) and Chinese identities was not as absolute as some have suggested, I hope to challenge our present-day view of a universal and long-standing "Chinese-Filipino" binary, and to provide a more complex understanding of what it means to be a "Chinese," "Catholic," "mestizo," or even "Filipino." But much remains to be done. In order to further demonstrate the heterogeneity of the "Chinese" and "mestizo" communities and strengthen my hypothesis of the fluidity of their identities, I aim to do the following in my further research:

First, I am going to focus on and compare the lives of more two-generation families, i.e., in which the father was a "Chinese" and the son or daughter "mestizo" and analyze how within their lifetimes they understood and negotiated their own identities. While investigating

their lives I also hope to study what different sociopolitical and economic factors affected their decisions, practices, and choices. By combining both social and life history, I aim to present a study of these people within their historical specificity.

Second, as I mentioned in the section of "mestizos," I hope to look for more cases involving mestizas. I believe that by comparing their practices vis-à-vis those of the mestizo men, our understanding of the history of mestizos can be enriched and less "male-oriented" and "male-dominated."

Third, I also will focus on the intersection between class and self-identification in understanding how people of different socio-economic class might have differed in their choices and self-identifications. In the cases that I have included here, the socioeconomic status of the individuals seems to support Wickberg's thesis that it was mostly the wealthy who converted and had more identity options (1997, 158). I think more research is needed to further buttress this view. However, it is also my hope to find more archival documents that can reveal to us how the Chinese from the lower income class constructed and negotiated their own identities.

Fourth, I hope to expand my research to include the study of the ethnic relations between the Chinese and the indios, as well as that of the mestizos and the indios. My hypothesis regarding current relations between the upper-class and lower-class Filipinos in contemporary Philippine society is that the disparity and gap between the two groups is not only class-based, but also culture-based. In other words, when the American colonial rulers collapsed the mestizo and the indio classifications under one "Filipino" classification, the long-standing cultural differences between the two groups were not eliminated, addressed, or resolved, and continue to affect and shape their relations.

## Notes

An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 6th International Philippines Studies Conference, held at the Philippine Social Science Center in Quezon City, Philippines, from 7-11 July 2000. This paper also forms part of my dissertation which focuses on the familial and religious as well as political and business practices of a number of Chinese and mestizos in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a way to understand their self-identifications. Research on this paper was made possible through the Ahmanson Foundation Dissertation Fellowship, University of Southern California. I am very grateful to the staff of the following archives and libraries in Manila for the enthusiastic support they gave me in my research: the Record Management and Archives Office, the Archives of the Archdiocese of Manila, the

Spanish Archives of the University of Santo Tomas, the National Library, the Kaisa Para sa Kaunlaran Library, and the Rizal Library at the Ateneo de Manila University. The same gratitude is extended to researchers Rose Mendoza and Tina Bernabe for their help in my research. I sincerely thank the following for providing me with very helpful comments and suggestions in the revision of this paper: my dissertation advisors John E. Wills, Jr. and Charlotte Furth, Eugenio Menegon of the History Department at University of California, Berkeley, and most specially Edgar Wickberg, whose pioneering work on the Chinese in the Philippines continues to inspire my own.

1. For instance, several scholars (e.g. Harding 1993; Gold 1993; Wang 1993) have tried to advance the idea of a "Greater China" that mainly includes the Chinese living in the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. However, this geo-political entity can also be said to include the Chinese communities of Southeast Asia. As for the people who make up this "Greater China," one of their defining characteristics is an adherence to Confucian values that help explain their own or that of their countries' economic success.

2. The population of the Philippines, ca. 2002, is 80 million. Thus, it may be said that there are approximately 800,000 to one million "Chinese" in the Philippines today, although there are no accurate statistics available. One needs also to distinguish between "Filipinos" of ethnic Chinese background and those who recently came from China, and are mostly still "Chinese" citizens. In this paper, I mainly refer to the former.

3. Various interpretations have been given on the origins of the term "sangley." Most scholars, however, seem to subscribe to the theory that the word may have come from the Hokkien word "*seng-li*" which means "business." See Wickberg 2000, 9 note 14; Bernal 1967, 47.

4. For works on the Chinese in Malaysia, see Purcell 1948; Tan C.B. 1988. For Indonesia, see Skinner 1959; Willmott 1956; Williams 1960; Coppel 1983; Suryadinata 1979.

5. In many Spanish government and Church records up to the end of Spanish colonial rule, the words "infeles" and "cristianos" were often appended to "sangley" in order to differentiate between the two.

6. To this day, Edgar Wickberg's seminal works on the Chinese and mestizos (1964; 2000) remain to be the most important work on ethnic identities involving these people during the Spanish colonial period. However, his works share with many other studies done in the 1960s of "overseas Chinese" communities the approach of using earlier sociological and anthropological theories of ethnicity—theories that are based on the concepts of assimilation and integration and thus tied-up to nation-based metanarratives. In the 1980s, the Cold War and the status of Communist China were affecting the perception that newly independent nation-states of Southeast Asia had of these "Chinese," whom they started to regard as possible Communist collaborators. Consequently, scholars began to study how they could be assimilated or integrated into their "host" countries (Ong and Nonini 1997, 7).

I must point out however that, in his later works, Wickberg does recognize that "many things about Philippine society offered individual cultural opportunities" for the Chinese to participate in local custom and society. He also cites that non-Chinese intermingled with the Chinese (see Wickberg 1997, 176-77). Moreover, his later works reflect a different approach to ethnicity, in which ethnicity is regarded as being in a constant state of flux, as being constructed and reconstructed. Finally, he veers away from discussing ethnicity in terms of assimilation and integration, which he claims does

not “do justice to the complexity of the phenomenon” (see Wickberg 1998, 114). However, his later works are still too general to reflect how this construction—and I may add—negotiation—might have occurred in real life. This paper is an initial and modest attempt to fill this gap.

7. For other works investigating the “border-crossing” practices of these diasporic Chinese during the “pre-modern” era, see Duara 1997 and Trocki 1997.

8. It must be noted though that Chinese historical records show that Chinese traders had been going to the Philippines as early as the Song Dynasty (960–1279). See Ch’en 1968. For a more complete study of the Chinese in relation to the Philippine Spanish colonial economy, see Wickberg 2000.

9. While Wickberg asserts that this term was derogatory, it seems to me that it may not all be as derogatory as the word “insik,” the term used by Tagalogs to refer to the Chinese. For if it were so, how come the “sangley” allowed the establishment of the “Tribunal de Sangleyes” (a quasi-judicial body to adjudicate cases concerning the Chinese).

10. The Spanish colonial government, eager to exploit the Chinese traders, always taxed them higher than the rest of the population. For instance, between 1790 to 1823, the tax of the Chinese was fifty-four reales (slightly less than seven pesos). On the other hand, the mestizos were taxed around twenty-three reales and the indios around fifteen reales (Wickberg 2000, 158). This hierarchy of tax payments was the norm until the end of the Spanish colonial rule in 1898.

11. The desire to convert the Chinese also came from the hope that in doing so, these converts could be used to assist missionary efforts in China. See Bernal 1967, 63.

12. For more information regarding the procedures that a Chinese convert had to undergo in securing the permission to marry a local woman, see Sugaya 2000, 557–60; Garcia 1973, 47–50; Tamayo y Pascual 1906, 82–83.

13. In 1840, in what seemed to be a further bid by Spain to win the loyalty of the Chinese, the Chinese were given the option to become naturalized subjects of Spain. Those who applied for naturalization had to have been a resident of the Philippines for a number of years, with good letters of recommendation from officials, and be baptized (Wickberg 2000, 155–56). Some wealthy Chinese indeed became Spanish subjects. However, Wickberg does not provide any statistical data on how many Chinese applied for Spanish citizenship. But I am currently studying the application files of several wealthy “Chinese” from the bundles “*Naturalización de Españoles*” and “*Naturalización de Estrangeros*” found at the RMAO, and which I procured with the assistance of Rose Mendoza.

14. Most of the “Chinese” in the Philippines came from the southeastern part of Fujian province, and today, they are known as Hokkienese. Those from Canton started coming after 1800. In the mid–19th century, the Cantonese population stood at around 500; and by the end of the century, probably 3,000, which was no more than 5 percent of the total “Chinese” population. But in Manila, the Cantonese stood around 10 percent of the total Chinese population. See Wickberg 2000, 177; Doeppers 1986, 385.

15. For more information about the notary publics of Manila during the Spanish colonial period, see Division of Customs and Insular Affairs 1899; Feria 1912; Flores 1911.

16. As much as I wanted to include more years of the American period in my study, particularly those from 1902 to 1905, the difficulty of obtaining access to the records of the early 1900s prevented me from doing so. During my research at the RMAO in the summer of 2000, these records were in the process of being transferred from an old

repository to a new one, and thus were in disarray. Requests through the RMAO personnel for specific records involving "Chinese" cases produced no results.

17. In other documents, "Ong Sy" name is spelled "Jong Sy." But for purposes of consistency, I will use "Ong Sy."

18. Eugenio Menegon pointed this reference out to me.

19. The city of Amoy is now known as Xiamen, which is located in the southeastern coast of Fujian province.

20. Although it is not stated in his will what classification Francisca Cinco belonged to, I presume that she was mestiza due to her last name "Cinco." The appending of "co" to the personal name of a Chinese ancestor was a common practice among mestizos. For more information regarding the surnames of mestizos, see Wickberg 2000, 32.

21. For example, Riccio (1667, f. 235r) writes that the Chinese converts in Manila can be called "*labados*," i.e. merely "washed" with baptismal water but are fake Christians (*cristianos fingidos*), since they received baptism only for temporal gains, and who, once back in China, abandon their religion and go back to their superstitious and idolatrous ways. Echoing Riccio's assessment of the Chinese converts in Manila, Fr. Agustin de San Pascual, a Franciscan friar who lived in both China and Philippines in the late seventeenth century, describes them as only desiring baptism for the benefit of marrying local women and obtaining a patron. The converts in Fujian, on the other hand, were more sincere (Wyngaert 1936, 434).

22. Garcia writes that they left their wives "abandoned here, notwithstanding the legal disposition which required the consent of the latter before they could leave the Philippines" (1970, 48). [Italics mine]. Apparently this requirement was a way by which the Spanish State and Catholic Church tried to protect the interests of the local wives.

23. The concession in part states that "any of them [i.e. the slaves] may legally contract marriage before the Church with a Christian, and remain in such a marriage, once it is consummated, as long as they live, even though their pagan spouse be still alive, *without asking the latter's consent or waiting for his or her answer, on condition that the impossibility of duly notifying the absent or the answer not being received within the given time be established at least in a summary and extrajudicial way.* And We [i.e. the Pope] decree that, though it should hereafter appear that the former spouse was hindered by a just cause, and could not declare his or her will, and even that at the time of the marriage the absent was converted to the faith, this marriage shall *never be rescinded, but shall be valid and firm, and that the children born from them shall be legitimate*" (from *Populis* of Gregory XIII, as quoted in Garcia 1973, 75). [italics mine]

24. In fact, the code of canon law was not codified until 1917, although much of the code was based on earlier laws, like the Papal decretals. In other words, although canon law prohibited polygamy, this law was not systematized until 1917. Before this period, according to Rene Javellana, S.J., the Catholic Church's laws were not applied equally to every place. See also Garcia 1973.

25. For more information regarding the procedures that locals had to undergo in securing the permission to marry, see Bankoff 1992, 13-14

26. Garcia also writes that the "betrothal" practices of the local people, in which a prospective groom lived in the house—without the benefit of a Church wedding—of the girl he wished to marry in payment for the expenses incurred by her parents in rearing her, was so prevalent that up until 1911, this custom was shown to still have persisted, as based upon a section in the document from the First Diocesan Synod of Nueva Caceres dealing with this matter (1973, 25).

27. However, my documents do not stipulate her ethnolegal classification.

28. On the night of 12 October 1900, Un-Jieng stood as one of the six witnesses to the testament of Ty Chiulo, who died that very same night. In the document which was an act of protocolization of Chiulo's will, Cu-Un-Jieng was identified as "soltero" (single) (RMAO, PM 1900, 829, 7). However, his own testament drawn up in 1901, clearly states that he was "married (*casado*) according to the rites of his country," and that he had been married to Ong Sy for at least ten years back, based on the age of his eldest son (RMAO, PM 1901, 830, 3).

Guillermo was born in 1865, and died in 1953. See Lim 1930, 17–19; Wong 1994, 61–63.

29. I do not know, however, as of this writing, how Chinese law treated or classified the "wives" overseas.

30. In an interesting study of the family structures in Fujian during the Ming and Qing dynasties in China, Zheng (2001) writes that at the height of commercial development in the late Ming period, adoption of sons became a widespread practice. The reason for this was that these sons were sent abroad to engage in maritime trade. Biological sons were therefore spared from traveling abroad and from risks associated with it, while enjoying the fruits of their (adopted) brothers' labor overseas (38). I suspect that this practice of adopting sons for the protection of one's own could be linked to the practice of the Chinese in different Southeast Asian countries marrying local women and bearing children. The latter practice might have also served the purpose of protecting the safety of one's own male children—and by extension protecting one's own descent line.

31. Daniel Doeppers (1986) estimates that in the late nineteenth century "barely 3 percent of the [Chinese] males were officially recognized as being married, which means that they were also Catholics married in a religious ceremony. . . and probably more than 3 percent informally cohabited with a Filipina wife. . . ." (384). However, Doeppers does not explain how he arrived at these figures. In my own investigation of the documents in the Archives of the Archdiocese of Manila (AAM), I found several folders containing the requests of Chinese in the nineteenth century to be baptized, as well as to contract marriage with local women. I believe that the number that Doeppers estimates may be higher. See AAM, SB and IM.

32. These inheritance cases were governed by the rules of the New Civil Code of Spain instituted in the Philippines in 1889. According to Fisher (1947), the Americans continued to use the Code as the basis for civil law. Although some changes were made—including those that pertain to "wills, the rights and liabilities of heirs and devisees, guardianship, and the rights of parents with respect to the property of their children"—these changes were mostly procedural. Fisher writes that "the Civil Code is still essentially the fundamental law governing the acquisition, conveyance, and transmission of property, the incidents of its ownership, and the creation and extinction of contractual and extra-contractual obligations" (1947, ix–x).

33. His children from the first wife were: Bung Juy ("mayor de edad"; age undetermined); Bun-Chya (b. 1879); Bun-Jin (b. 1883); Bun-Loc (b. 1884); Bun-Chin (b. 1888). See RMAO, PM 1895, 561, 4.

34. Leonque, pronounced Longxi in Mandarin, is located twenty kilometers southwest of Zhangzhou, an important city in Fujian. Leonque is now known as Long Hai. See Li 1995, 77–78.

35. Quia-co named Mariano Velasco Chuachengco, to look after his goods and to oversee the execution of his will in Manila.

36. A widow in the Qing dynasty did not legally inherit any property but had the right to choose a legal heir in case she was childless. She also maintained custodial powers over heirs below legal age. See Bernhardt 1999, 48, 62-74; Huang 1996, 55-56.

37. Which business this was is not specified.

38. The will which Tiong-Tay drew up in 1892 is contained in this file which pertains to the execution and final arbitration of his will three years after his death.

39. He married Sy Sacia in accordance with the "rites of his nation," and with whom he had four male adult children at the time of the writing of his will. Later, he married Maria Consolacion Ang Quinio, with whom he had nine children. See RMAO, PM 1901, 877, 1.

Some of his assets included three buildings, six warehouses, fourteen houses, and shares of stocks in different companies.

40. Freedman writes that once married, a woman has no further economic claims on her natal family, who will begin to treat her "as a kind of guest" (1958, 31). See also Bernhardt 1999, 9-46.

41. Presumably a dowry because Chinese customary law provided for such to daughters. See Bernhardt, 1999, 1-2.

It is unclear however where Maria Consolacion and their children were residing, although it was not uncommon for the Chinese to bring their mestizo children to China. On the other hand, Maria Consolacion could have been a concubine who was brought to Manila. Carlos Palanca, as noted by Wickberg (2000, 174, notes 16 and 18), testified in 1899 before the Philippine Commission that most of the Chinese women in Manila were either prostitutes or concubines, and that they numbered around 2,000, out of a Manila Chinese population of between 22,000 and 23,000.

Also, it is interesting to note that of their nine children, two had solely Chinese names (Chua Iocchiong and Chua Ticaooco) while the seven others had Western or Catholic names added to their Chinese names (Pedro Velasco Chua Chengco, José Velasco Chua Chengco, Florencia Velasco Chua Chengco, Maria Concepcion Velasco Chua Chengco, Francisca Velasco Chua Chengco, Rita Chua Chengco and Damiana Chua Chengco). It is possible that Chua Iocchiong and Chua Ticaooco were born in China, while the rest were born in Manila and presumably baptized in Catholic rites. I am currently investigating the practice of giving children different names and surnames as a creative and adaptive strategy of a Chinese diasporic subject in dealing with immigration policies.

42. For information on marriage practices in China and the rights of the widow, see Bernhardt and Huang 1994; Watson and Ebrey 1991.

43. For Tiong-Tay's application for naturalization, see his file in RMAO, NE.

44. Article 835 states that "The hereditary portion allotted in usufruct to the widowed spouse must be taken from the third of the estate available for the betterment of the children." Article 839: "In case of the survival of children of two or more marriages, the usufruct pertaining to the widowed spouse of the second marriage shall be taken from the third at the free disposal of the parents." Article 838: "The usufructuary rights of the surviving spouse may be satisfied by the settlement upon him or her by the heirs of a life annuity or the income from some specific property, or by the payment of money, as may be determined by agreement between the parties, or, in default of such agreement, by judicial decision." See Fisher 1947, 316-17.

45. A report submitted by Brigadier-General Otis to the Secretary of War in Washington states that "a Chinese person entering the islands came as an individual migrant and was treated as a Spanish subject, whose business and domestic relations were entirely under the control of the local laws. These laws provided for the estate of a deceased resident Chinese the same as if he had been a Spanish citizen" (quoted in Jensen 1975, 27). However, it is possible that the secular laws may have not been uniformly implemented and may have provided some leeway for the Chinese, just as we have seen with Church laws. Furthermore, an individual back then (as it is today), through the drawing up of a testament, could dispose of his/her wealth in any manner he/she so desired, even if this was not in accordance with the laws of inheritance of the country.

46. For some statistical data on the number of mestizo español and Spaniards in the city, one can begin with the *vecindarios* (tax registers belonging to a district) of Binondo, Sta. Cruz, and Tondo. See RMAO, *Vecindarios*.

47. By around 1810, there were approximately 120,000 mestizos, or five percent of the total Philippine population of about 2,500,000. However, in the whole province of Tondo, which included then the northern part of Manila, including Binondo and Santa Cruz, the mestizos made up about thirty percent of the population. Large mestizo populations were found in urban areas like Manila and Cebu, and in the provinces of Cavite, Pampanga and Bulacan. In the last half of the nineteenth century, the mestizo population was around 150,000 to 300,000, out of a mean population of 5,500,000 (Wickberg 2000, 73-79).

The period between 1750 to 1850 saw the rise of mestizos to prominence in scale and in number. This was due to several factors, one of which was the Spanish colonial policy of 1755 that had non-Catholic Chinese deported as a means of controlling the number of Chinese staying in the colony. Those who opted to stay had to convert to Catholicism, which enabled them to marry local Catholic women. Consequently, the Chinese community in Manila was transformed into a Catholic one and this contributed to the accelerated increase of Chinese mestizos and their rise in the succeeding years (Sugaya 2000, 556-57). For more information regarding the mestizo population during this period, see Wickberg 1964; 2000, 28-29, 134-35.

48. Wickberg also writes that the "perpetuation of a mestizo group was also aided by the post-1800 marriage legislation, which tended to discourage mestizo-indio marriages." Legal status then, he continues, was not "ordinarily a matter of personal orientation or choice" but of the "status of the parents" (1964, 65).

49. For tax collection in the districts of Santa Cruz and Binondo, however, separate registers for mestizos and indios were still maintained until 1898. Thus, further study needs to be done to check whether the legal distinctions were indeed abolished in the 1880s. See RMAO, V *Binondo* and V *Sta. Cruz*.

50. The U.S. War Department, as quoted by Jensen, states that the exclusion laws applied to "all persons who were directly descended from one or both parents of pure Chinese blood; and that the admixture of blood other than Chinese, when the Chinese blood predominated, would not be held to exempt persons from the operation of those laws. The definition also stated that while the question had not been passed upon judicially, if a concrete case arose in which the admixture of Chinese blood was less than half or in which the white blood predominated, then the Department would be inclined to decide in favor of the predominant white blood" (1975, 67).

Thus, mestizo children whose parents remained Chinese subjects and while

remaining under their parental authority, were also considered "Chinese." However, upon reaching the age of majority or emancipation, they must state within a year whether they wanted to become Filipino citizens.

51. One reason why Ildefonso might have remained close to his Chinese heritage was his constant travel to Hong Kong and China to conduct business. As a consequence of his constant travel there, the government might have thought that he had forfeited his Spanish nationality, a matter that needed clarification in 1887. For more information, see Chu 2002.

52. It could be argued that it might have been a common practice for the Chinese to send their mestizo offspring, whether male or female, to China. See also Wickberg 2000, 188. In fact, Wickberg writes that Carlos Palanca Tan Quien-sien, another prominent Chinese businessman, did the same to his son Engracio (and not "Ignacio" as Wickberg uses) in order to prevent "the filipinization of his own son" (201).

53. For a more detailed study of the role of the mestizas in the sinicization of their mestizo children, see Chu 2002.

54. The character for Dongshan is clearly seen on a picture of his tombstone (Boncan y Limjap 1998, 6). However, Boncan mistook the place for Dongshan Island (2000, 2–3). My own archival research brought me to a document clearly showing that Joaquin was from Longxi County (see AAM IM 1876). Subsequent research showed that there is a Dongshan village in present-day Longxi, now named Longhai (see Li 1995, 77–78). Mr. Boncan passed on my finding to his contact in China, who sought the assistance of the Federation of the Returned Overseas Chinese at Longhai. They were able to locate this village and trace Mr. Boncan's relatives.

55. For more information regarding Joaquin, see Boncan y Lim 1998, 15; Manuel 1955, 248; Wickberg 2000, 216.

In his recent study of the Chinese in the Philippines during the latter part of the nineteenth century, Andrew Wilson (1998) also shows that certain Chinese managed to become subjects of both China and of Spain. In explaining how it is that these people did not find any contradiction in having different political loyalties, Wilson writes that they even could profess loyalty to both China and Spain since they never conceived themselves yet as part of a nation, i.e. as part of a "territorial and legal institution with authority and responsibilities, and to which they, as citizens, had binding obligation" (174).

56. For further information about Mariano's marine insurance firm and his connections with Hong Kong-based insurance firms, see Wickberg 2000, 87.

57. Lim's book says that he was a *cabeza* and *gobernadorcillo* of the Chinese in Binondo (1930, 249). However, I dispute this information, as borne out by my own archival research. See, for example, RMAO, VP, *Mariano Limjap 1820–1895*, Legajo 40, in which a document dating to 1889 and pertaining to Bonifacio Cobarrubias' case states that Mariano was *gobernadorcillo* of the mestizos. Likewise, he was listed as *cabeza* of the "mestizo" *barangay* number 16 in Binondo in the year 1875. See RMAO, V, *Binondo 1871–1898*.

58. Jose Rizal founded La Liga Filipina in 1892, and its members frequently met at the house of a Chinese named Doroteo Ongjunco in Binondo. See Boncan y Limjap 1998, 34.

59. One of the documents at the RMAO states that Mariano Limjap requested to purchase some arms. Whether these were used to aid the revolutionary movement is unclear. See RMAO, VP, *Mariano Limjap*.

60. One of the roles he assumed was Inspector General of the Railroad.

61. Other founders included Telesforo Chuidian, Jose Albert, Bonifacio Arevalo, Antonio Luna, Jose Luna, Juan Luna, and Maximino Paterno.

62. However, according to Boncan y Limjap, "some sources" state that he was captured in Tarlac. Unfortunately, he does not identify what these sources are (1998, 42).

63. His children by his first wife were Mariano Jr. or Marianito (b. 11 Oct. 1884–d. 31 Mar. 1948) and Gregorio (28 Nov. 1885–5 Apr. 1953). The children by his second wife were Leonarda, Jose, Esperanza Pacencia, Franciso, Felisa, and Pedro. See Manuel 1955, 248–250; Boncan y Limjap 1998, 5.

64. The document, which is a "substitution of power," is dated 1881, the year Joaquin Limjap died. See RMAO, VP, *Mariano Limjap*.

65. In this document in which Mariano identified himself as "español mestizo," Joaquin himself was identified as an "*español naturalezaza*." See RMAO, VP, *Mariano Limjap*.

66. What was the reason for Mariano to have used such a classification? Unfortunately, I can not find any rebuttal or reference to this matter beyond what I have just mentioned. I believe that this matter was simply dismissed by the judge since Mariano was legally a "mestizo español."

67. One such document is the testament of Cu-Unjieng, in which Mariano is listed as a witness, and as capable of understanding and speaking Spanish. See RMAO, PM 1901, 830, 3.

68. In fact, they were partners of this business, which was a trading company called Siuliong & Company. See Wong 1994, 62.

69. In 1900, Mariano and Jacinto Limjap y Nolasco appeared before the notary Genaro Heredia to donate the sum of three thousand pesos (3,000) to three different "Chinos": Antonio Lim-Siong-Chit, Francisco Lim Siong Cang and Lim Siong Que. According to the notarized document, they were "obliged" under the will of their father, to donate this sum to their kinsmen in order to alleviate their poverty, and who, at the time of the notarization of this donation, were in China. Mariano donated two thousand two hundred pesos while Jacinto donated eight hundred. See RMAO, PM 1900, 829, 7. My own research, with the help of Raul Boncan y Limjap, confirms that these two were Mariano's and Jacinto's half-brothers. However, the identity of the mother of these half-brothers is unknown.

70. In fact, I was told by Raul Boncan y Limjap that "It is known in the Limjap family that Lolo Mariano spoke Hokkien" (E-mail communication, 6 Dec. 2000). Furthermore, Wickberg writes, "In Manila, a local patois in which Hokkien, Cantonese, and Tagalog were mixed was spoken by many Chinese and also mestizos. It was a kind of lingua franca of the Chinese, not a specifically mestizo patois. . . . [Furthermore] . . . the mestizos of Binondo lived next to the Chinese and could hardly avoid contact with them" (2000, 32–35). Although Wickberg uses this description to describe the Manila community prior to 1850, I believe the same situation applied to the period I am studying.

71. For the romanization of the Chinese names found in the newspaper article, I use the *pinyin* system. However, the Manila Times uses a different form that is closer to the Wade Giles system. This explains the difference in our spellings.

72. One can also speculate how the Chinese community viewed Mariano Limjap. Looking at the list of past presidents of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, one does not find the name of Mariano Limjap. His name is not in the list of officers either. But

he was certainly well known among the Chinese community. See Manila Chinese Chamber of Commerce 1936.

Moreover, the present-day Chinese community also claims him as one of its own. In the Chinese Heritage Center in Intramuros, Mariano is exhibited as one of the prominent Chinese mestizos. Even in the 1993 edition of the *Dictionary of Overseas Chinese*, published in China, lists his name. See Zhou 1993, 472.

73. I think we also need to rethink our understanding of when and how this cultural homogenization of "Filipinos" and "Chinese" was supposed to have occurred. While Wickberg places this at the same time that ethnic identities were nationalized at the turn of the twentieth century, my hypothesis is that the reification of these two identities only occurred after 1912, i.e., after the founding of the Chinese Republic in 1912 and a few years after the establishment of a Philippine Assembly in 1907. In other words, what I am suggesting is that in the first decade of American rule—approximately from 1898 to 1910—even though the mestizos as a legal class had been eradicated back in the 1880s, they were still in the process of being "Filipinized" culturally. Similarly, the "sinification" of the Chinese, i.e. the creation of a culturally homogeneous "Chinese" community, occurred only after 1912. Thus, I am pushing Wickberg's timetable in the construction of a distinct "Chinese-Filipino" binary from the turn of the century to a later time when the nationalist sentiments and consciousness among the peoples of China and the Philippines reached a high point (Wickberg 2000, 164). By pointing to this possibility I am calling for a re-examination of these crucial first ten years of American colonial rule in order to understand the complex processes involved in the creation and construction of a "Chinese-Filipino" binary in the twentieth century. Moreover, in looking back to this period we also need to pay close attention to how the Chinese and especially the mestizos continued to renegotiate the new laws and policies that led to the increasing simplification, nationalization, and reification of their identities.

74. In 1974, former President Ferdinand Marcos issued a decree calling for the "Filipinization" of all Chinese schools, which, among others, effectively reduced the number of hours teaching Chinese-related subjects from half a day to one hour a day.

75. For a study of the Chinese in Davao and how they similarly negotiate their identities, see Hodder 1996.

76. In fact, a Ph.D. candidate from Cornell University, Irene Limpe, is working on her dissertation that focuses on the identities of present-day "Chinese mestizos." In a telephone conversation with the author, she says that her main sources are oral interviews.

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 NESP *Naturalización de Españoles, 1890–1892*  
 PM *Protocolo de Manila*  
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 Bundle 306, Tomo 2

1899. Bundle 875, Tomo 10

1900. Bundle 829, Tomo 7

1901. Bundle 877, Tomo 1

1901. Bundle 830, Tomo 3

VP *Varios Personajes* (personnel, distinguished)  
*Mariano Limjap 1820-1895, Legajo 40* (in folders)

*Mariano Limjap*

*Ildefonso Tambunting*

V *Vecindarios*

*Binondo 1871-1898*

*Sta. Cruz*

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