

THE MANILA CHINESE: COMMUNITY, TRADE AND EMPIRE, C. 1570 – C. 1770

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By

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the Chinese community of Manila from 1570 to 1770, revealing that the community was not an insular, ethnic enclave unified in its efforts and aspirations but one made up of different groups with varying goals. Not all Chinese saw the Spanish presence as conducive to their livelihoods but certain sectors of the community did. I argue the collaboration of these elements within the Chinese community was essential in maintaining the Spanish presence in Manila. Those whose interests most closely aligned with Spanish aims included a small group of wealthy Chinese merchants involved in supplying the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade with merchandise (mainly silk), merchants and artisans in the Chinese quarter called the *Parián* and Chinese leaders who acted as middlemen linking the needs of the regime with Southern Fujianese workers to supply the city with services, food, and labor. In return, Spaniards provided New Spanish silver, government monopolies and recognition of the authority of Chinese elites over laborers. In that way, the Spanish empire in the Asia-Pacific region was a collaborative enterprise, constructed in the cooperation of various interest groups.

When the abuses of Spanish authorities threatened the lives of those they ruled, Chinese intermediaries could not maintain their claims of mitigating the demands of the regime on behalf of Chinese workers and lost control of those under their supervision. In 1603, 1639, and 1662, Chinese laborers raised the banner of revolt. These moments of

violent rupture with the colonial order indicate that mediation was crucial to preserving the Spanish presence in Manila. Coercion could put down threats to control but on its own could not hold colonial society together.

The Chinese, with others, created the ties that bound colonial society together through kinship and credit networks for mutual aid. *Compadrazgo* (coparenthood), *padrinazgo* (godparenthood), and marriage connected Chinese to colonial society and provided a means of profit, protection and recruiting labor. These links persisted into the nineteenth century and helped the Chinese shape the ecology of Manila to their purposes, albeit within the confines of Spanish sovereignty.

Sources: baptismal records, notarial books (*protocolos de Manila*), court cases

To Olga, Misha and Mila

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It has been almost twelve years since I chanced upon a copy of Antonio de Morga's *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* in the stacks of Alderman Library at the University of Virginia. This chance encounter opened up a new world of inquiry that has led me from being a student of Spanish literature to the study of history, from Charlottesville to Washington D.C. and beyond to Seville and Manila. What an adventure it has been. Now at the completion of a long journey, I have the pleasure of looking back and remembering those who have made it all possible.

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Introduction

“Who built the seven gates of Thebes?
The books are filled with names of kings.
Was it the kings who hauled the craggy blocks of stone?”~ Bertolt Brecht, “Fragen eines lesenden Arbeiters”

“There is no Spaniard, secular or religious, who obtains his food, clothing or shoes, except through them.”~ Governor Tavora to Philip IV (1628)

“It is very noticeable with these Sangley¹ people that they intermix with any other people who are here, in a very singular fashion; for at once they intermarry with the women of these nations, adopt their customs and live like Indians.”~ Fray Miguel de Benavides (1605)

By Manila Bay, not far from where the South China Sea meets the Pasig River in swirls of dark turquoise and milky brown, lies an old city surrounded by walls of dark, wizened stone and fresh green moss. This is *Intramuros*, the location from which a small group of Spaniards claimed to rule over the Pacific. Yet in this seat of colonial power, amongst the churches and monuments to Spanish glory, are signs of another culture’s influence. Watching over the entrance to San Agustin Church, completed in the seventeenth century, is a pair of Chinese lions. Embedded in the courtyard of the church are cobblestones with fragments of Chinese tombstone inscriptions. When and how mythical Chinese temple guardians came to stand at the doors of Manila’s oldest church

¹ “Sangley” was the Spanish term for Chinese in the Philippine context. Scholars suggest several possibilities for the origins of this word. William Schurz says that “ ‘Sangley’ is derived from ‘Seng-li,’ a word of the Amoy dialect (Hokkien), meaning ‘trade.’” In Schurz, *The Manila Galleon* (New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., Inc., [1939] 1959), 63. Edgar Wickberg on the other hand says the term was probably derived from “shang-lü: ‘merchant traveler.’” See Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life, 1850-1898* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965. Reprint, Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila Press, 2000), 9. It seems more likely, however, that “Sangley” comes from the Hokkien “siong-lay,” which in Mandarin is “chang lai,” meaning, “to come frequently.” This interpretation is based on a colored drawing of a Chinese man and woman found in the sixteenth-century source (ca. 1590) called the Boxer Codex. Above this drawing is the heading “Sangley” with the Mandarin characters “chang lai” written next to it. I was made aware of this interpretation while on a visit to the Bahay Tsinoy, a museum in Manila on the Chinese in Philippine Life. The Boxer Codex can be found at the Indiana University Lilly Library. The Codex has been fully digitized and is available online at <PURL: <http://purl.dlib.indiana.edu/iudl/general/VAB8326>>.

remains largely a mystery. Much of the history of the Chinese in Manila in the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries is undocumented and like the markers of the Chinese dead that have become mundane pavement to be trampled on, that history, though part of the very processes which shaped the city, has been largely forgotten.

This study seeks to excavate and reconstruct the Chinese role in making Manila, the crossroads between Asia and the Americas and one of the world's first global cities. It was in Manila and its American counterpart, Acapulco, that two continents separated by the vastness of the Pacific became linked for the first time by the Manila-Acapulco galleons. The incredible wealth to be made from the trans-Pacific traffic of these galleons attracted people from many distant shores to Manila. To this nodal point in the emerging system of world trade flowed the silver of the Americas and Japan, the silk and porcelain of China, the flavorful produce of the Spice Islands, the cotton of India and slaves from Africa. Multi-ethnic traders gathered in this port city to profit from this bountiful commerce and to sustain it. As a friar reported in 1662,

The diversity of the peoples who are in Manila and its environs is the greatest in the world, for these include men from all kingdoms and nations—Spain, France, England, Italy, Flanders, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Poland, Muscovy; people from all the Indies, both east and west; and Turks, Greeks, Persians, Tatars, Chinese, Japanese, Africans and other Asians.²

In this cosmopolitan capital, Spain asserted its sovereignty and claimed dominion over the Pacific for more than three centuries, from 1571 to 1898. The Portuguese, the Dutch, and the English eventually came to severely test this grandiose vision engaging in

² Quoted in Robert R. Reed, *Colonial Manila. The Context of Hispanic Urbanism and Process of Morphogenesis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 33.

battles and raids all around the “Spanish Lake,” as well as competing with the Spanish in trans-oceanic trade. The Japanese shoguns and Chinese merchant-pirate lords challenged this myth too in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, through repeated threats of war and in one instance in 1574, an actual assault on Manila (the attack of the Chinese corsair Limahon, known in Mandarin as Lin Feng).

Spain’s pretensions of empire in the Pacific seemed unconvincing when faced with the realities of regional and European competition. In Manila, however, the Spanish dominated public life and successfully defended the city against all aggressors for more than three hundred years—faltering only once during its rule when the English occupied Manila from 1762 to 1764 as part of the Seven Years’ War (1754-1763). Spanish longevity in holding Manila lends credence to claims of Spanish sovereignty in the city. Yet, how was it that a handful of Spaniards managed to rule in Manila, a city where the majority of its residents was comprised of thousands of Chinese immigrants and an even larger indigenous population? The short answer to this question and the essential argument of this dissertation is that the Spaniards did not and could not rule without the help of others. This finding resonates with the argument put forward by Henry Kamen that the Spanish empire was “made possible only by the collaboration of many people from many nations” and that Spaniards were not the “unique ‘movers and shakers’ who ‘fashion an empire’s glory.’”³ For the two hundred years from 1570 to 1770, the Manila Chinese, by providing manpower, financial services, and material support to the city, played a significant role in making Spain’s collaborative empire possible.

³ Henry Kamen, *Empire: How Spain became a World Power, 1492-1763* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2004 [2002]), xxiv.

The Taking and Re-founding of Manila

The advent of Spanish rule in Manila owed much to ancient commercial relationships between the Chinese and island communities in the Philippines. Chinese sojourners and inhabitants of the Philippine islands had been trading for centuries before the arrival of the Spaniards in the sixteenth century: such encounters date at least from the time of the Song dynasty (960-1279).⁴ In 1372, *Lü-sung* (Luzon, the island on which Manila is located) had sent an envoy to the Nanjing court on the occasion of Zhu Yuanzhang's ascension to the Ming imperial throne. Likewise, *Ho-mao-li* (Camarines) and *Feng-chia-shih-lan* (Pangasinan) had sent delegations to the Ming court in 1405 and 1408 respectively. Chinese bought gold and pig skin from Cebu, and cinnamon, gold and pearls from Mindanao.⁵

The Spanish expedition that eventually succeeded in setting up Spanish rule in Manila first arrived in 1565 on the island of Cebu.⁶ For six years, the Spaniards, led by Miguel López de Legazpi, struggled to keep the expedition from failing by relying on alliances with local society for sustenance. Although Cebu provided a base from which to explore the islands, it is doubtful a Spanish presence would have eventually taken root had they remained there. Legazpi had a bleak outlook of the islands after four years in Cebu, writing in 1569 that "The Philippines ought to be considered of little importance because at present the only article of profit that we can get from them is cinnamon." Legazpi saw trade with China as essential for success, writing to New Spain that due to

⁴ See Edgar Wickberg's *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, 3-4.

⁵ Ch'en Ching-Ho, *The Chinese Community in Sixteenth Century Philippines* (Tokyo: The Center for East Asian Cultural Studies, 1968), 10-11, 26-27.

⁶ Cebu is in the Visayas, which are islands situated in the middle portion of the archipelago.

the scarcity of profitable local goods, he hoped to “gain the commerce with China, whence come silks, porcelain, perfumes and other articles.”⁷

The Spaniards only learned about the China trade through the initiative of merchants from Luzon. Two months after the Spaniards had arrived in Cebu, seven or eight Luzon merchants came to see them seeking permission to trade. They said they had met in Panay a native sent there by Spaniards to buy rice. From him they had learned that the Spaniards had an abundance of silver coins. It appears that Spanish interest in Chinese manufactures was conveyed to the Luzon merchants because soon afterwards, they returned to Cebu with two junks from Mindoro Island laden with Chinese goods.

The possibilities of Spanish colonization were thus shaped from the outset by local knowledge of regional trade with China. From local traders, it seems that Spaniards quickly became aware of the Chinese need for silver. In 1565, the treasurer Guido de Lavezaris prepared a memorandum of supplies to be sent from New Spain to Cebu. Among the items requested were “coins and small bars of fine silver for trade in China.”⁸ As Ch'en Ching-Ho argues, this shows that “once in Cebu, the Spaniards began preparations for an immediate trade with the Chinese. Despite such Spanish wishes and preparations, they were unable to realize a direct Sino-Spanish trade so long as they were in Cebu and Panay. Instead they could obtain Chinese goods only through the hands of the native traders of Mindoro and Luzon.” It seems the move to Manila, was motivated

⁷ Quoted in Kamen, *Empire*, 205-206.

⁸ “A Letter from the Royal Officials of the Filipinas, accompanied by a Memorandum of the Necessary Things to be sent to the Colony,” in E.H. Blair and J.A. Robertson, trans., *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898* (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1903-1909), vol. 2, 191. Blair and Robertson will henceforth be denoted by BR. Cited in Ch'en, *The Chinese Community*, 28.

by a desire to cut out the mediation of local traders and to gain “the commerce with China” as Legazpi put it in his report to the Viceroy of New Spain in 1569.⁹

Armed with knowledge gained from local merchants, the Spaniards headed to Luzon in May of 1570, with the intent of taking it over.¹⁰ The invading party comprised ninety Spaniards and three hundred Visayan auxiliaries.¹¹ These forces “sailed under the guidance of a native chief of the island [of Luzon?] named Maomat.” Though the documents do not make clear Maomat’s intentions, his actions suggest that the local regime in Manila headed by Rajamora and Rajamatanda was not without its opponents.¹² The history of Luzon and Manila as recorded by Antonio de Morga, who spent time in Manila as a member of the high tribunal (*Audiencia*)¹³ from 1595 to 1603, suggests that Rajamora and Rajamatanda were perceived as either outsiders or having ties with external powers by local society. Morga writes that “according to tradition, the natives of Manila area proper are not aboriginals of this island, but came and settled here in the past, being Malays and from other islands and distant provinces.” He also writes that

A few years before the Spaniards subdued the island of Luzon, some natives from the island of Borneo began to arrive there to trade, and in particular they went to the townships of Manila and Tondo. As a result the

⁹ Ch’en, *The Chinese Community*, 28. For the report, see “Relation of the Philippine Islands and of the Character and Condition of their Inhabitants,” in BR 3: 54-61.

¹⁰ The Spanish made an initial foray to try to gain Manila in 1570 but only succeeded in taking it in 1571.

¹¹ Kamen, *Empire*, 202.

¹² Antonio de Morga, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*, ed. and trans. J.S. Cummins (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society at Cambridge University Press, 1971), 56. It is unclear if Morga means Panay or Luzon when he writes “of the island.” Rajamora means “young rajah.” Raja Soliman, was the “young rajah” and heir to the ruler of the Manila area, Rajamatanda, meaning “old rajah.”

¹³ The *Audiencia* was a “tribunal which performed the triple function of hearing important cases, advising the governor, and sometimes initiating legislation. The term also refers to the geographical area in which the tribunal has jurisdiction.” Definition is from the glossary of Nicholas P. Cushner, S.J., *Spain in the Philippines: From Conquest to Revolution* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila Press, 1971), 263.

two peoples intermarried. The Borneans being Muslims were gradually introducing their religion among the Luzon people giving them instructions, ceremonies and details of the way to observe their religion. ...Now many, including the leading chiefs, were beginning (though by piecemeal) to turn Muslim....¹⁴

If Rajamora and Rajamatanda were perceived as imposing foreign rule, the appearance of the Spaniards and their Visayan allies must have created an opening for local chiefs subordinated to them to renegotiate power relationships. Each community and individual would have had to calculate the cost of war and peace. Each would have had to weigh whether living under rulers with Bornean links was preferable to negotiating with newcomers and Visayans. Among those considering their options under these new circumstances were Chinese present in Manila.

When the Spaniards entered the Manila Bay area on June 24, 1570, they found “forty married Chinese” in the area.¹⁵ They also discovered

close to the houses of natives...four Chinese ships. Immediately the Chinese came in their skiffs to visit the master of camp [Martin de Goiti]. They brought him brandy, hens, winnowed rice, a few pieces of silk, and knick-knacks of little value. They complained to the master of camp of the Moros of Menilla, saying the latter had taken away by force the helms of their ships the best of their goods without paying for them.¹⁶

From the inception of Spanish claims to Manila, certain Chinese merchants sought to use the Spanish presence to their advantage.

But not all Chinese sided with the Spaniards. When conflict broke out between Rajamora and the Spaniards, some married Chinese joined forces with Manila’s rulers. In the aftermath of the battle,

¹⁴ Ibid., 247 and 280.

¹⁵ “Relation of the Voyage to Luzon [June 1570?],” in BR 3: 101. The Spaniards also found twenty Japanese in Manila.

¹⁶ BR 3: 94-95.

among the prisoners were the Chinese wives of some of the Chinese who had married and settled in the town, and although it would have been justifiable to make them slaves because their husbands had fled with the Moros, the master of camp was unwilling to do so, but simply handed them over to the Chinese of the ships.¹⁷

The “Chinese wives” were most probably women born in the Philippines—either native women or children of marriages between Chinese immigrants and indigenous women.¹⁸

The bonds between Chinese and local society were deep, existing long before the entrance of the Spaniards into Manila and certainly strong enough to sway many Chinese from collaboration with Spaniards.¹⁹ The Chinese community consisted of divided interests even before the imposition of Spanish rule, a characteristic that would continue throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Even though some Chinese sided with local rulers, it seems that many merchants welcomed the opportunity to trade with the newcomers. Following the burning of Manila in 1570, Chinese vessels followed the Spanish fleet out of the bay. The merchants onboard these ships bartered “trifles of little value” with Spanish soldiers for wax.²⁰ This incipient trade was of little monetary value, it seems, but more importantly, it was the beginning of a long running trade relationship between the two sides. When the Chinese

¹⁷ BR 3: 102.

¹⁸ This assertion is based on the finding that most of the Chinese migrants in Manila were men in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Chapter two elaborates on the composition of the Chinese population in more detail.

¹⁹ Marriage was a strong bond but probably not the only one which influenced the decision of certain Chinese to side with Rajamora. Perhaps, these Chinese had derived advantage in their business dealings from a close association with local society and ruling elites.

²⁰ BR 3: 103.

left, they gave the Spaniards letters of security and promised to return the next year to trade.²¹

The trade between Chinese and Spaniards eventually grew into the trans-Pacific commerce carried by the famous Manila galleons. Even though the initial exchange between Chinese merchants and Spaniards involved mere trinkets, this quickly changed. The meeting between Goiti and Chinese merchants in 1570 helped realize what eventually became the substantial exchange of silk for silver and removed the Spanish dependence on Mindoro and Luzon middlemen for direct dealings with the Chinese. From small beginnings and big dreams, the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade grew into the largest commercial enterprise in Spain's foothold in Asia.

The Manila Galleon Trade

Of all the trades and people that met in Manila, the most important for its survival and existence as a center for world trade was the silk for silver exchange between the merchants of Southern Fujian and New Spain—the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade, which lasted from 1565 till 1815.²² For two and a half centuries, Manila became an entrepôt for Chinese and New Spanish merchants, connecting America and Asia directly for the first time. Manila provided the link between silver-hungry Chinese markets and silver-rich New Spanish merchants seeking investment opportunities. Chinese demand for silver had already begun in the fourteenth century and only increased with time. By

²¹ BR 3: 104.

²² The galleon trade had its beginning in 1565, when the galleon *San Pablo* arrived in New Spain from Cebu in June of that year. The galleon carried a small shipment of cinnamon acquired in Mindanao on the royal account. By 1571, Manila—more precisely, Cavite (the location of the shipyards of Manila)—came to replace Cebu as the Asian terminal for the galleons, when the Spanish transferred their main base of operations from the Visayas to Luzon.

1500, Ming China—home to the world’s largest and densest population—had an expanding silk and cotton textile industry, and growing local and regional markets in which manufactures were increasingly traded for silver owing to the debasement of government-issued bronze coins. With markets resistant to government efforts at standardization of monetary media, the state came, by the late sixteenth century, to levy tax payments in silver, further increasing the already growing demand for the white metal.²³

Meanwhile, in the Andes, in the mining town of Potosí and far to the north of Mexico City in Zacatecas, mountains of silver yielded unprecedented levels of production. These streams of silver made their way across the Atlantic to Europe and onwards to China.²⁴ When the Spanish gained control of Manila in 1571, the merchants of Spanish America (particularly those of New Spain) gained a second major avenue for investing their capital. From the beginning, this lucrative trade of about 50 metric tons of silver shipped annually across the Pacific—sometimes more during the opening years of the trade and slightly less in the eighteenth century—was predominantly a New Spanish and Chinese affair. Chinese merchants demanded payment in silver refusing “to accept gold or other methods of payment”²⁵ and New Spanish merchants or their Filipino representatives obliged, receiving primarily silk and porcelain in exchange, which would later be traded for handsome profits in New Spain.

²³ Richard Von Glahn, *Fountain of Fortune: Money and Monetary Policy in China, 1000-1700* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

²⁴ John Tutino, *Making a New World. Founding Capitalism in the Bajío and Spanish North America* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2011).

²⁵ Morga, *Sucesos*, 307.

As Carmen Yuste López has convincingly argued, the trade was not an extension of the Atlantic commercial system nor was it one that took place in an Iberian Pacific context; rather it was an inter-colonial trade where most benefits accrued not to the metropolis but to New Spanish merchants, Filipinos (citizens of Manila), and one might add, Chinese merchants.²⁶ Furthermore, Chinese merchants provided much of the credit necessary for the galleon trade, especially in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and gradually came to demand payment in cash following delayed payments and losses.²⁷ The merchants of New Spain stood surety for the loans taken from the Chinese, bought lading space on board the galleons from the citizens of Manila, to whom the Crown had granted the monopoly of consigning goods onboard the galleons, started charitable organizations called *obras pías* as repositories for capital to provide maritime insurance for the trans-Pacific and intra-Asian trade centered in Manila, and participated in the trade via Filipino representatives and partners linked to them by kinship, funding them directly from Mexico City.²⁸ The Chinese-New Spanish bond remained strong for over two hundred and fifty years, and though others—the Dutch, the Portuguese and the English—sought to insert themselves into this two-way trading relationship to reap the riches borne of it, the unmatched silver supplies of New Spain, the citizens of Manila, and the Spanish Crown successfully beat off competitors. Later, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Batavia came to rival Manila as a destination for Chinese merchants and immigrants, and the English found advantage trading directly in China as part of the Canton system, but

²⁶ Carmen Yuste López, *Emporios Transpacíficos: Comerciantes Mexicanos en Manila, 1710-1815* (Mexico, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2007), 22.

²⁷ Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 79.

²⁸ Yuste López, *Emporios*.

Manila maintained its position into the mid-eighteenth century as an important, if not the major transit point in Asia for New World silver and Chinese silk.

From the above sketch of the galleon trade and the previous section on how Manila came into Spanish hands, it is evident that the Spanish presence in Manila at its outset owed much to the pre-existing trade relationships between the Chinese and local communities. Spaniards only managed to wedge themselves into local and regional markets through alliances with Chinese and islanders. As Manila developed into a significant node where American silver was exchanged for Chinese products, the Chinese remained essential for Spain's collaborative empire for another two hundred years, continuing to play crucial roles in maintaining Manila as a Spanish outpost well into the eighteenth century.

Manila: A Chinese Colony under Spanish Sovereignty

Despite the lion's share of profits going to Chinese and New Spanish merchants, and the reality that Chinese constituted the single largest group of immigrants to Manila by far—provisioning and supplying it as well as contracting intimate ties with local society—the city has often been conceptualized as a Spanish colony. I argue that the image of Manila as a Spanish colony owes much to Spanish formal control of public life through a legal framework for arbitration and also Catholicism, which as a consequence has obscured the informal power wielded by the Chinese in the city.

The Spanish Crown controlled public life by insisting “it provided justice and promoted the common good among its subjects, however diverse and distant.”²⁹ By setting up a legal framework for arbitration, of which the *Audiencia* was the most visible symbol, the Crown provided a space in which the wronged could seek justice. By providing room for contention in courtrooms, the Crown gave those seeking redress recourse to a higher power when faced by the abuses of elites or accusations of competitors. By appealing to the king’s decrees, claimants could “lead power to act on their behalf” and in doing so “embrace the empowering dependency of the King’s protection.”³⁰ The various communities in Manila—Chinese included—were not undifferentiated but linked internally by hierarchical relationships. As such, there was always the potential for conflict. Spanish courtrooms provided an alternative center of power to the rule of community leaders. The Chinese community of Manila was hierarchical and this was shown in the manner of dress, which had “varying designs according to the wearer’s occupation and rank.” The Chinese also had “a governor of their own race” with “his court, prison and assistants.” When the arbitration of the Chinese governor was unsatisfactory, claimants could appeal to the *Audiencia*, which took “a special interest in the Sangleyes and in everything concerning them.”³¹ The use of Spanish courtrooms reinforced the Crown’s authority, and its claims to sovereignty. The continued participation of colonial subjects in contentious conversations in court surrounding the meaning of the king’s law gave legitimacy to Spanish rule and order.

²⁹ Tutino, *Making a New World*, 48. For a fuller articulation of this view, read Brian P. Owensby’s *Empire of Law and Indian Justice in Colonial Mexico* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008).

³⁰ Owensby, *Empire of Law*, 276.

³¹ Morga, *Sucesos*, 317.

Here, John Tutino's insight on power is most relevant: "as long as debates are limited to questions shaped by assertions of legitimacy, power persists."³²

Claims of moral rule were not only contested in the legal arena but also in the context of Catholicism and in that way the Catholic Church was a second pillar of Spanish power in Manila. As in Spanish America, Catholicism offered "a spacious domain of religious belief, difference and debate."³³ The new religion linked Spanish rulers to their subjects, redefining spiritual truths but also creating a context in which to contest legitimacy. Through the Church and courts, Spain ruled. But neither the courts nor the Church could compel the Chinese to provision Manila or serve the interests of Spaniards. It was New Spanish silver that kept the Chinese coming to Manila and maintained that city as a premier exchange point for global commerce for the two hundred years which form the core of this study.

In the commerce that took place between Chinese and others in Manila, Chinese merchants dictated terms, using the Spanish presence in Manila to extract what they wanted: silver. In this regard, elite Chinese merchants wielded considerable power. As William Schurz observed, "The Chinese were not buyers, but sellers, and they demanded silver in exchange for their goods."³⁴ A Spanish governor, in 1576 wrote that he "did not dare impose" duties on exports or imports on the Chinese for fear of losing the trade.³⁵ Although the Crown was alarmed at how much silver was passing out of Spanish hands to the Chinese, never to return, it could not stem the tide. The power of Chinese

³² Tutino, *Making a New World*, 49.

³³ Ibid., 7. Resil B. Mojares, *Brains of the Nation* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila Press, 2006), 383-418.

³⁴ Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 75.

³⁵ Quoted in Ch'en, *The Chinese Community*, 61. For the document in translation, see BR 4: 88.

merchants was also evident in attempts by a group of Manila citizens to wrest back control over the terms of trade by calling for official negotiations of prices in what became known as the *pancada*. Under the *pancada*, the Governor and municipality of Manila appointed two to three persons who would negotiate prices for Chinese goods with Chinese representatives. The goal of this exercise was to prevent the Chinese from raising prices in Manila when there was a glut of silver and eager buyers. The *pancada* did not meet its objectives because the Chinese always found willing allies in officials and other individuals who made personal arrangements with the Chinese to have goods brought to them at a pre-arranged price. The consignee would meet the Chinese before the junk reached Manila Bay or smuggled the personal consignments in with “the connivance of those entrusted with the surveillance of the arriving junks.”³⁶ The Crown finally acknowledged the impossibility of enforcing the *pancada* in 1696 and settled for a lump sum of 8,000 pesos to be paid to the royal treasury by Chinese merchants. In exchange, it sanctioned free trade between Chinese and their clients. The Spanish Crown did not wield sufficient power to dictate terms to the Chinese and had to negotiate to get its share of profits.

It was not only in the field of trade that the Spanish Crown had to acknowledge Chinese power and influence in Manila. Chinese laborers and those who sought to mediate with Spanish rulers on their behalf abounded in Manila. It was through the work and mediation of these Chinese that much of Manila was built, supplied and maintained. Morga claimed that “without these Sangleyes the city could not continue nor be maintained, for they are skilled in every trade, are very hard workers and satisfied with

³⁶ Schurz, *The Manila Galleons*, 74-80.

moderate wages.”³⁷ In addition, Morga wrote that the Chinese “know better than do the Spaniards themselves,” the land, “reconnoitering the river creeks and ports.”³⁸ He also observed that the Chinese had “fixed settlements of their own” and that they engaged in “fishing and agriculture up and down the islands side by side with natives.” Chinese immigrants also challenged Morga’s sense of morality and he accused them of being a “wicked and vicious people” who influenced the indigenous population “so that those natives who have any contact and dealings with them make little progress in their Christianity and good habits.”³⁹ Given that the Chinese persisted in their own ways, had close contact with indigenous communities, had their own settlements, explored the waterways and knew the country better than the Spaniards, would it not be appropriate to see the Chinese as colonizers? Matteo Ricci noted that the Philippines were the Indies of the Chinese and that it was only a step from there to conclude that the Spaniards were the *indios* of the Chinese.⁴⁰ Viewed in this light, Manila existed in large part to serve Chinese aims and could be said to host an informal Chinese colony within the confines of the formal Spanish empire.

The notion of Manila as a Chinese colony is a potentially contentious one but remains an important concept to explore as it questions the limits of Spanish control and exposes the underlying power dynamics that made the Spanish presence in Manila possible. One obstacle to seeing Manila as a Chinese colony is the problem of who ruled

³⁷ Morga, *Sucesos*, 314.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 315.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 314.

⁴⁰ Quoted in Juan Gil, *Los Chinos en Manila, Siglos XVI y XVII* (Lisboa: Centro Científico e Cultural de Macao, 2011), 312.

Manila. The Spanish claimed to be sovereign—to be the ultimate authorities—in Manila. Yet despite Chinese acknowledgement of that authority, they still managed to manipulate the outcomes of their encounters with the Spaniards to achieve their goals, even against the wishes of those who sought to rule. In Manila of the sixteenth through the eighteenth century, Spanish authority did not translate into overwhelming domination, even if the Spanish ultimately retained the power of coercion. Here, it is useful to consider Kamen's argument that power does not necessarily mean "just the capacity to apply force. More exactly, it can be applied to the underlying structures that made empire possible."⁴¹ Given that the Chinese had a major hand in setting up and running these "underlying structures," the Chinese could get their way even in the face of official opposition. Chinese power stemmed from the fact that the Spanish needed the Chinese to keep the Spanish presence alive in Manila. If a colony is an area controlled by a group of people who settle a certain locality away from the home community, and Manila was a place which could not have existed as it did without the Chinese migrant community and one where Chinese elites wielded significant power vis-à-vis larger society, it follows that Manila was an informal Chinese colony (though under Spanish sovereignty).

Furthermore, from an environmental perspective, colonization could be said to happen when a group of people migrates to a new environment and creates or carves out niches in that locale, with the aggregation of the migrant group's activities significantly shaping the ecology in the venue for their purposes. Given this definition, a venue could host several colonizers. In the case of Manila, the Chinese and Spanish were the main colonizers, shaping Manila's ecology to their purposes. As discussed above, Spaniards shaped Manila's ecology by legal and ecclesiastical means. Significant as these

⁴¹ Kamen, *Empire*, xxiii.

techniques were, they were not the only ways of molding the environment to one's ends. The Chinese deeply impacted the ecology of Manila by dominating the economy and having close ties with colonial society. Both Chinese and Spaniards transformed the environment of Manila to meet their goals. Therefore, both should be seen as colonizers, albeit in different realms.

Manila was never only a Spanish city, as prominent as the Spaniards were in public life. The power of the Chinese as suppliers of the galleon trade and builders and provisioners of Manila meant this was also very much a Chinese city. The Chinese community exercised their considerable power by providing manpower, supplying credit, arranging financial transactions, provisioning the city, and maintaining close ties with others in colonial society. Without them, the Spanish would not have held the Philippines for as long as they did.

Major Arguments

Building on the conceptualization of Manila as a Chinese colony under Spanish sovereignty, this dissertation puts the Chinese community of Manila from 1570 to 1770 at the center of a larger narrative about the Spanish empire in the Asian portion of the Pacific. In pursuing this focus, two questions arise: Who were the Chinese of Manila? What role did the Chinese play in Manila and Spain's empire? Answers to these queries reveal that the Chinese community of Manila in the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries was not an ethnic enclave unified in its efforts and aspirations but rather was one made up of different groups with varying goals. Not all Chinese saw the Spanish presence as conducive to their livelihoods although certain sectors of the community did.

The collaboration of these elements within the Chinese community was essential in maintaining the Spanish presence in that “noble, and ever loyal city.”⁴² The “noble” and “loyal” in the city were those whose interests most closely aligned with Spanish aims and these included a small group of wealthy Chinese merchants involved in supplying the galleon trade with merchandise and Chinese leaders who acted as middlemen linking the needs of the regime with Chinese workers to supply the city with services, food, and labor. In return, Spaniards provided silver for merchants, as well as government monopolies and recognition of the authority of Chinese elites over laborers. In that way, empire was constructed in the meeting of various interest groups.

The perception that empire was a collaborative enterprise is further sharpened by the consequences of periodic breakdowns in mediation between Spanish power holders and the Chinese laborers upon whom Spanish rule depended. When the abuses of Spanish authorities became unbearable and threatening to the lives of those they governed, Chinese intermediaries could not maintain their legitimizing claims of mitigating the demands of the regime on behalf of Chinese workers and lost control of those under their supervision. In three major instances in the seventeenth century—1603, 1639, and 1662—Chinese workers, fearing for their lives, raised the banner of revolt and targeted not only Spanish authorities but also Chinese elites. In their desperate attempts to escape the oppression of power holders, Chinese laborers sought alliances with others in colonial society. By reaching out to indigenous communities and Japanese groups, and by targeting Chinese elites who would not side with them, the actions of Chinese insurgents

⁴²A royal decree dated June 21, 1574, conferred the title of “noble and ever loyal city”/ “*Insigne y Siempre Leal*” on Manila in Archivo General de Indias (henceforth AGI) Filipinas 339, L.1, F.50R-51V.

in seventeenth-century Manila should give historians pause in labeling the uprisings of 1603, 1639 and 1662 as “Chinese” insurrections. These moments of violent rupture with the colonial order serve as indicators that mediation was crucial to the preservation of the Spanish presence in Manila. Even in their coercive actions to rein in revolt, the bulk of government forces was made up of indigenous fighting men with Japanese auxiliaries. The existence of empire required the cooperation of various groups.

These groups found common ground and connection through networks of fictive kinship and credit. The Chinese were proficient developers of webs of mutual aid through godparenthood (*padrinazgo*), coparenthood (*compadrazgo*) and extending loans to all sectors of Manila society. While their financial position in Manila society made elite Chinese more powerful than others in Manila society, in cultivating such interdependence, the Chinese were not deviants but merely employed strategies common to indigenous and Spanish society. Rather than viewing the Chinese as exceptional in such practices, this study suggests that Chinese, together with others, helped create the mechanisms that made colonial life viable.

Periodization

This study focuses on the period between 1570 and 1770, and sees the relationships of power negotiated by the Chinese and others in Manila during this formative period as continuing into the mid-nineteenth century. 1570, the year the Spaniards first ventured to Manila, marks not only the beginning of the Spanish presence in that city but also the start of a centuries-long relationship of trade, collaboration, and also conflict with the Chinese. 1770 serves as an endpoint for the core of the study as this

was the year after which the Crown enacted legislation—the 1769 *Adiciones*—that radically restructured the galleon trade. Prior to 1769, the Crown granted all Spanish (a colonial category denoting the most privileged class of subjects and not necessarily those from the Iberian peninsula) residents of Manila the sole right to consign goods on the galleons to New Spain. After 1769, this right was revoked, and invested in the *Consulado*, an exclusive group of powerful merchants who could demonstrate at least ten years residence in the Philippines, a minimum of 8,000 pesos capital, were heads of households and at least twenty-five years of age. The new rules took many residents who had previously depended on selling their lading space to the wealthy merchants of New Spain or their representatives out of the galleon trade. Through the 1769 legislation, the Crown sought to direct the majority of Manileños towards agriculture and provincial industries and also to loosen the grip of New Spanish merchants on the trans-Pacific trade for the benefit of metropolitan ventures and Iberian merchants.⁴³ Even though the merchants of New Spain adapted and retained their position in the galleon trade, the Crown’s initiative marks a shift in imperial thinking concerning Manila’s place in the empire and was symptomatic of a move away from reliance on the galleon trade. In 1770, the Chinese community and New Spanish merchants still retained their preeminent roles in the Manila economy but ways of production were changing towards commercial agriculture and a new elite was emerging—the Chinese *mestizos*. Old relationships of power negotiated between Chinese, Spanish rulers and others in the years between 1570 and 1770 persisted beyond this formative period, but for the Manila Chinese, the environment was changing rapidly to require new responses—the start of another story.

⁴³ Yuste López, *Emporios*, 149-256.

Historiographical Context

Chinese adaptations to colonial life in Manila in the period before the late nineteenth century were laid down and solidified in the years between 1570 and 1770. Surprisingly, there is only one published book-length monograph that deals with these foundational years of Chinese life in Manila—Juan Gil’s voluminous *Los Chinos en Manila: siglos XVI y XVII* [The Chinese in Manila: Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries], which was published in 2008. The other significant publication that deals with Chinese in the Philippines during this period is a collection of essays edited by Alfonso Felix Jr. and entitled *The Chinese in the Philippines* (published in 1966).⁴⁴ In between the publications of these two works there have been few others. The present study is an attempt to bring to the fore Manila as a key center of early modern trade and to draw attention to the Chinese role in maintaining the Spanish presence in the city.

Past work on the Chinese in the Philippines from the sixteenth through the seventeenth centuries has often stressed the importance of Chinese to the economy of Manila. But it has tended to view the Chinese as set apart from colonial society and a community that posed an immigration problem. The 1966 collection of essays, *The Chinese in the Philippines*, centers on the problem of Chinese migration for the Filipino nation, sees the Chinese as alien, and questions the community’s ability to assimilate. Juan Gil’s recent publication, though a significant work based on an impressive base of original Spanish sources, also views the Chinese community in Manila in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as an enclosed ethnic enclave, isolated in a ghetto. Gil sees the

⁴⁴ Alfonso Felix Jr., *The Chinese in Philippine Life, 1570-1770* (Manila: Solidaridad, 1966). I will elaborate more on the historiography on Chinese life in the Philippines between 1570 and 1770 in Chapter One.

persistence of the Chinese minority as an external and inassimilable group entrenched in society as leading to a dead end, which was resolved regrettably by force.⁴⁵

In this dissertation, I present a different view of the Chinese community of Manila, stressing the interconnectedness of Chinese and others in the city and the importance of those links for making Manila an intersection of global trade. Chinese strategies and adaptations to colonial life were not foreign when we consider that larger colonial society used similar methods in negotiating life under Spanish rule. The Chinese certainly can be seen as collaborators in creating the onerous demands of colonial rule but so were indigenous elites who occupied the role of intermediaries. In that sense, the function of certain Chinese as middlemen and agents of the regime was not unique. Furthermore, it should be stressed that many Chinese bore the burdens of empire and in their attempts to cast off oppression sought the alliance of local society. Chinese fought too in “indigenous” uprisings, bringing into question the perception of insurrections based solely on interethnic conflict. Finally, Chinese forged lasting bonds with local society through marriage and kinship. Given how much Chinese were a part of the fabric of colonial society in Manila, even dominating certain sectors of city life, branding the community as always insular is historically inaccurate. For the years from 1570 until the late nineteenth century, Chinese and indigenous society maintained close ties.

Other works that deal with the Manila Chinese in the early modern period often do not examine the relationship between the Chinese and the making of the colonial order. For example, there is an unpublished dissertation by Wu Ching-Hong (1975) which takes the causes and effects of “massacres” of Chinese between the years 1603-

⁴⁵ Gil, *Los Chinos*, xvi.

1762 as its focus.⁴⁶ Wu is primarily concerned with assigning blame for the deaths of Chinese in conflicts with Spanish authorities and also gauging the impact on trade these “massacres” had. More recently, Birgit Tremml published an article entitled “The Global and the Local: Problematic Dynamics of the Triangular Trade in Early Modern Manila” (2012). She sees the Chinese as being the “real colonizers of Manila” in that Chinese merchants and laborers supplied the city and dominated its economy.⁴⁷ The focus of Tremml’s article, however, is on “what had gone wrong” in Manila. She subscribes to the view that Manila experienced a great decline for most of the seventeenth century after an initial spurt of growth in the late sixteenth—a view with which I disagree and will elaborate on in Chapter Four. She asks why the Spanish, Chinese and Japanese states failed to take full advantage of Manila’s potential and her answer is that different perceptions of sovereignty prevented them from doing so.⁴⁸ Tremml’s article emphasizes missed opportunities and inter-state relations, but minimally touches on the relationship between Chinese and the colonial order.

Besides Tremml, there are a few other scholars who have published articles which deal with Chinese in Manila during the early modern period in the last fifteen years such as Lucille Chia (2006), Nariko Sugaya (2000) and José Eugenio Borao (1998).⁴⁹ Chia

⁴⁶ Wu Ching-Hong, “Historico-Economic Aspects of Sino-Philippines Relations, 1603-1762” (Ph.D. diss, University of the Philippines, 1975).

⁴⁷ Birgit M. Tremml, “The Global and the Local: Problematic Dynamics of the Triangular Trade in Early Modern Manila,” *Journal of World History* 23, no.3 (2012), 555-86 (68). Tremml’s characterization of the Chinese as the “real colonizers” of Manila is somewhat overstated given that Spanish control of public life significantly shaped the ecology of the city. While agreeing with Tremml’s attempt to draw attention to the importance of the Chinese in Manila, I see both Chinese and Spanish as shaping the urban environment.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 556-7.

⁴⁹ Lucille Chia, “The Butcher, the Baker, and the Carpenter: Chinese Sojourners in the Spanish Philippines and their impact on Southern Fujian (Sixteenth-Eighteenth Centuries),” *Journal of the Economic & Social History of the Orient* 49, Issue 4 (2006): 509-34; Nariko Sugaya, “Chinese immigrant society in the latter

looks at the connections between particular sending communities—Zhangzhou and Quanzhou—and Manila and traces the impact of Chinese trade and migration to the Philippines on Southern Fujian in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Nariko Sugaya’s article studies Chinese marriage and conversion to Catholicism in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Borao’s treatment of the “Chinese massacre” of 1603 sheds light on Chinese officials’ perception of the incident and places the Chinese of Manila between the influence of elites from Southern Fujian and that of Spanish authorities. While the work of these scholars has deepened our understanding of Chinese in Manila in the early modern period, none have examined the Chinese role in making the Spanish presence possible in Manila. The contribution of the present study is to offer new insights into how Chinese collaboration was crucial in making as well as sustaining the colonial order.

This dissertation has benefitted from research conducted on the Chinese community of Manila for the period from the nineteenth century onwards. Four works stand out in this regard: Edgar Wickberg’s *The Chinese Mestizo in Philippine History* (1964), his indispensable *The Chinese in Philippine Life, 1850-1898* (1965), Andrew Wilson’s *Ambition and Identity: Chinese Merchant Elites in Colonial Manila, 1880-1916* (2004), and Richard Chu’s *Chinese and Chinese Mestizos of Manila: Family, Identity and Culture, 1860s-1930s* (2010).⁵⁰ Wickberg’s work, which argues that the Chinese

half of the 18th-century Philippines: Strategy for survival in response to Spain’s new Chinese policy,” in *Intercultural relations, cultural transformation, and identity—the ethnic Chinese—Selected papers presented at the 1998 ISSCO conference*, ed. Teresita Ang See (Manila: Kaisa Para Sa Kaunlaran, Inc., 2000), 553-70; Jose Eugenio Borao, “The Massacre of 1603: Chinese Perception of the Spaniards in the Philippines,” *Itinerario* 23, no. 1 (1998): 23-39.

⁵⁰ Edgar Wickberg, “The Chinese Mestizo in Philippine History,” *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 5, no. 1 (1964): 62-100, Andrew Wilson, *Ambition and Identity: Chinese Merchant Elites in Colonial Manila*,

community structure and role in Philippine society of the 1960s grew out of developments of the period 1850-1898, has been foundational in that subsequent scholarship on the Chinese in the Philippines has had to contend with his conception of the Chinese place in Philippine history. By delineating the size and composition of the Chinese population, the social institutions of the Chinese and their relations with Philippine society, as well as the Chinese community's interactions with China, Professor Wickberg provided a template for further exploration of the history of the Chinese in the Philippines.

Furthermore, his periodization scheme of 1570-1770 as the formative years of Chinese society in the Philippines, 1750-1850 as the rise of Chinese *mestizo* society, 1850-1898 as a time of growing political relations with China has shaped our perceptions of the contours of the history of the Chinese in the Philippines. In recent years this periodization scheme has come under some scrutiny. Scholars like Wilson and Chu have taken issue with the 1898 end date of Wickberg's *The Chinese in Philippine Life*. For them, 1898, the year when Spanish rule ended and was replaced with American "benevolent assimilation" did not signal a sudden break with the institutions or strategies of the late Spanish colonial era. Wilson argues that "The gaps in Washington's attempts to apply law, order, and good government to the Philippines, exacerbated by ignorance of the locality, allowed significant elements of the pre-1898 colonial dynamic to survive throughout the American era."⁵¹ Chu finds the 1898 divide problematic in that past scholars have seen the removal of the Spanish categories of Chinese, *mestizo*, and *indio*

1880-1916 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004), and Richard Chu, *Chinese and Chinese Mestizos of Manila: Family, Identity and Culture, 1860s-1930s* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010).

⁵¹ Wilson, *Ambition and Identity*, 12.

and their replacement with the new American categories of “Filipinos” and “aliens” as an explanation for the changes in ethnic identities of Chinese and *mestizos* in the Philippines. He argues instead that “it took some time for cultural identities to approximate legal ones, or for self-identifications to conform to externally constructed ones.”⁵² Both Wilson and Chu make valid points but rather than detracting from Wickberg’s argument that strategies and institutions developed in the last fifty years of the nineteenth century had significant bearing on the Chinese community in later years, their contentions are in line with Wickberg’s claims of continuity over the 1898 divide.

In terms of a conceptualization of the long arc of change over time in the Chinese community of Manila, this study takes Wickberg’s periodization scheme as a starting point. I accept the characterization of 1570-1770 as the formative years of Chinese society in Manila. However, I disagree with the characterization of the period between 1750 and 1850 as a time when Chinese *mestizos* rose at the expense of the Chinese due to restrictions placed on them in the mid-eighteenth century expulsions. As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Five, the expulsions did not create long-term restrictions for Chinese and the *mestizo* ascendancy had more to do with their ability to outcompete others in landholding and intra-island shipping. In addition, this study builds on Chu’s argument—that Chinese and *mestizos* formed close ties⁵³—to suggest that in the

⁵² Chu, “‘Catholic,’ ‘Mestizo,’ ‘Sangley’: Negotiating Chinese Identities in Manila, 1870-1905” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 2003), 10. In the book based on his dissertation, *Chinese and Chinese Mestizos*, he makes the same argument but states it differently: “...while Wickberg’s study ends in 1898, mine ends in the 1930s....In choosing to focus on this timeframe, I am arguing...that during the period under study, ethnic categories are better understood as flowing along a shifting and problematic continuum,” 13-14.

⁵³ Wickberg conceptualized *mestizos* as a “special kind of Filipino” who eschewed Chinese identity. See *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, 31.

second half of the eighteenth century, the two groups were not always competitors but at times partners.

In its rejection of colonial categories of identity as hard boundaries between homogenous groups, Chu's work and this study find much in common. By looking at the points of connection between Chinese and others, I argue, like Chu, that colonial identities were negotiated. Looking at family naming practices (Chapter Two), I suggest that being Chinese, *mestizo* or *indio* could depend on calculated strategies of mutual aid and obligation. These findings will be of particular interest to those who study Chinese ethnicity and can be connected to the larger historiography on Chinese adaptations to overseas environments.

If the present study finds much in common with the themes explored in Chu's work, it also shares in Wilson's exploration of Chinese elite strategies in gaining advantage through manipulation of the middle ground. Wilson provides rich detail on the "liminal virtuosity"⁵⁴ of Chinese elites in Manila between 1880 and 1916, describing Chinese elites' great skill in maneuvering in between identities, geographical locations, political allegiance and cultures. Chapters One, Two and Three of this study suggest how Chinese elites sought advantage in mediating between Spanish authorities and Chinese workers. These elites facilitated trans-pelagic flows of migrant workers from Fujian to Manila as recruiters, employers, and protectors and also possibly acted as heads of brotherhoods. The discussion of how elites linked sending communities in Fujian with Manila speaks to the larger literature on diasporic Chinese of which Adam McKeown's article *Conceptualizing Chinese Diasporas, 1842-1949*, is probably one of the most

⁵⁴ "Liminal virtuosity" is a term used repeatedly in Wilson's *Ambition and Identity*.

widely quoted. The examination of power relationships within the Chinese community, on the other hand, finds a home in discussions that link Southern Chinese and Southeast Asian history via the topic of secret societies, as found in David Ownby and Mary Somers Heidhues' *Secret Societies Reconsidered*.⁵⁵

I have suggested several possible connections between this study and larger historiographical conversations and would like to add another: the study of the Chinese role in early modern colonial outposts in the South China Sea. John Wills Jr. has argued that Chinese shaped the conditions of colonial life in places like Manila and Batavia through suggesting forms of control early modern colonial states should adopt such as headmen, tax-farming and monopolies.⁵⁶ Leonard Blussé's work on VOC Batavia⁵⁷ supports John Wills Jr.'s argument by highlighting the role of Chinese middlemen such as Jan Con in influencing Dutch measures to control the Chinese community and the reliance of the VOC on Chinese operating between Batavia and China to mediate in trade in Taiwan, negotiate peace settlements with Southeast Asian rulers and to open up the hinterland. A comparison of Manila with early modern port cities such as Batavia, Macao, and Malacca will give a clearer idea of Chinese involvement in the creation and functioning of early modern empires. Indeed, this work has recently received much needed attention, with Philip Kuhn's masterful synthesis and analysis of early colonial empires and Chinese migrant communities in a chapter (Chapter Two) of his book

⁵⁵ David Ownby and Mary Somers Heidhues, eds., *Secret Societies Reconsidered* (Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1993). Adam McKeown, "Conceptualizing Chinese Diaspora, 1842 to 1949," *Journal of Asian Studies* 58, no. 2 (1999): 306-337.

⁵⁶ John Wills Jr., "China's Farther Shores: Changes in the Destination Ports of China's Foreign Trade, 1680-1690," in *Emporia, Commodities, and Entrepreneurs in Asian Maritime Trade, ca. 1400-1750*, eds. Roderick Ptak and Dietmar Rothermund (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag, 1991).

⁵⁷ Leonard Blussé, *Strange Company: Chinese Settlers, Mestizo Women, and the Dutch in VOC Batavia* (Dordrecht, Riverton: Foris Publications, 1986).

Chinese Among Others: Emigration in Modern Times.⁵⁸ Kuhn writes that “Although Chinese merchants were not empire builders on their own, they soon became essential collaborators in the empires of others. The colonial regimes were not ‘theirs’ in a political sense, but they came to control a substantial economic share in them and took part in administering them.”⁵⁹ Kuhn’s characterization of Chinese involvement in early modern empires resonates with my findings but we differ on the view of Chinese having initially being co-opted into the colonial system because they were “outsiders without native connections that might have compromised their dependence on their colonial patrons....”⁶⁰ The close relationship between Chinese and larger colonial society in Manila from the beginning stages of the Spanish entrance to the Philippines and throughout the Spanish colonial period calls for a rethinking of why Europeans who sought to rule in Southeast Asia found the Chinese so useful.

Finally, the collaborative view of empire presented in this dissertation speaks directly to the conceptualization of the Spanish empire as one where Spain’s pursuit of exploiting the mineral wealth of the Americas “locked Spain and its empire into a commercial system so heavily regulated as to prove counter-productive” and created an absolutist monarchy with stifling control of its territories.⁶¹ The heavy reliance of Spaniards on the Chinese and others in Manila and their inability to impose their will without resistance runs counter to the picture of an absolutist monarchy with stifling

⁵⁸ Philip A. Kuhn, *Chinese Among Others: Emigration in Modern Times* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008).

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 65.

⁶¹ One of the most famous proponents of this view is John H. Elliot. See *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492-1830* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 406.

control over its subjects and realms. Likewise, the dynamic Manila-Acapulco galleon trade, a primarily trans-Pacific operation with global implications heavily controlled by merchants from China and New Spain, diminishes the argument for an empire holding all within its iron grip.

Methodology and Sources

Most of the research for this dissertation is based on unpublished Spanish sources and was conducted in three archives: the *Archivo General de Indias* (AGI) in Seville, the Archives of the University of Santo Tomas (AUST) and the Records Management and Archives Office (RMAO), both in Manila. All three archives are rich repositories of Spanish colonial records pertaining to the Philippines.

At the AGI, the most important sections researched for this study were the *Audiencia de Filipinas* and *Escribanía*. In these sections, I identified court cases, debts owed, petitions for the establishment of guilds, and correspondence to and from Spanish agents and private individuals in the Philippines related to the Chinese for the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries. From the material collected in this archive, I was able to examine credit relationships between Chinese and others in Manila and also look at the reliance of Spanish authorities on Chinese intermediaries to supply the city and police Chinese workers. A growing number of documents at this archive are now available online at pares.mcu.es.

For research on Chinese social networks in the early Spanish period, AUST proved to be the most important archive. My biggest find there was a baptismal book⁶²

⁶² The mentioned book can be found in microfilm form at AUST and is catalogued in the *Sección de Parián* as *Libro de Bautizos Siglo XVII 1626-1700*, Rollo 47, Tomo 2 (henceforth AUST Libro).

for the Chinese Catholic community of the *Parián*⁶³ that spanned the years 1626 to 1700. I used this book to compile a database of names and occupations of those baptized, godfathers, godmothers, and also hometowns of those baptized. The database contains a little more than 3000 entries and was used to reconstruct the fictive kinship networks and recruiting patterns described in Chapter Two.

From bound volumes of notarized documents found at the RMAO in the section *Protocolos de Manila*, I constructed a database derived from a volume of 1740⁶⁴ examined in its entirety and all entries connected to Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* for the years 1740-1770 to answer the questions: what was the significance of the Chinese in the galleon trade and what was the significance of the galleon trade to the Chinese in Manila? The extant copies of *protocolos* only permitted me to present original findings for the eighteenth century. The situation of the notarial record found at the RMAO is as such: the earliest *protocolo* at the archive dates to 1674 but is the only one extant for the seventeenth century and does not touch on the galleon trade. The record for the eighteenth century onwards is much fuller. It starts in 1740 and carries right through to the nineteenth century. For most of the eighteenth century, the RMAO has one volume extant per year. Given the available data, I had to rely on secondary literature to comment on the period before 1740. The *protocolos* also provided evidence for partnerships

⁶³ The Spaniards required that Chinese in Manila live and trade in special quarters called the *Parián*. Most non-Catholic Chinese in Manila proper were confined to these quarters and conducted business there. There were other Chinese who lived in the outskirts of Manila, engaged in fishing, raising cattle and growing vegetables. There was a settlement of married Chinese Catholics and their families across the river from *Intramuros* in Binondo under the supervision of the Dominicans and another not far from there in Santa Cruz, which was run by the Jesuits.

⁶⁴ The *protocolo* in question is the one found at the RMAO, of the notary Marcos Gonzalez with the signature number SDS0764 (henceforth *Protocolo de Manila 1740*).

between Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* in the eighteenth century touched on in Chapter Five.

Apart from these three archives, I also relied on the Emma Blair and James Robertson collection of Spanish colonial documents. This fifty-five volume collection contains a large number of documents in translation from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries and is an invaluable resource to those studying the history of the Philippines for the Spanish colonial period. I used this collection as a starting point for information on insurrections and other topics. The bibliographical sections in each volume were helpful in locating the original Spanish documents. When I was unable to locate the originals in Spanish, I relied on Blair and Robertson's translations.

Summary of Chapters

Chapter One deconstructs the Chinese community of Manila to reveal multiple groups with differing interests. Insurrections involving the Chinese, so often painted as ethnic uprisings in secondary literature, were actually desperate bids for freedom by rural-based laborers from the abuses of the regime—Chinese elites included. The Chinese of Manila were not unified in their interests and therefore, characterizing conflicts involving mainly Chinese agrarian workers as ethnic rebellions obscures the internal complexity of the Chinese community. The first chapter also lays out the idea that the Spanish presence in Manila was never a foregone conclusion—something to which colonial officials and insurgents were sensitive. Those who sought to rule needed to build connections with larger society. Coercion could put down challenges to Spanish authority but it could not hold colonial society together in the long term.

Chapter Two examines kinship and credit networks that helped spin webs of interconnection that made colonial society stable and viable. The Chinese used both strategies to create or solidify networks of mutual obligation and aid within their own community and with other residents of Manila. The use of kinship and credit networks to gain advantage was not uniquely Chinese and in that sense, these practices were not an aberration introduced by the Chinese to Manila society; rather, Chinese migrants were adept in using these strategies to their benefit.

Chapter Three focuses on another factor that helped preserve the colonial order: Chinese contractors as middlemen. This chapter elaborates on the complexities of the relationships between Chinese middlemen, laborers, and Spaniards, introduced in chapter one. By exploring how Chinese intermediaries maneuvered in the middle ground and by examining so-called “Chinese” insurrections during the seventeenth century, this chapter argues that Spaniards, who were always few in number in Manila and lacking direct connections with sending communities in Southeastern China, maintained power by relying on Chinese contractors to recruit and police Chinese labor. The dependence of Spanish authorities on men of little wealth to act as intermediaries speaks of the importance of these middlemen to maintaining the colonial order. Conversely, Chinese intermediaries were reliant on the regime to protect particular niches in the economy, which they sought to exploit, and to recognize them as the official points of contact and control between the workers and Spanish authorities. When these go-betweens were unable to mitigate the abuses of the regime, revolt broke out. These uprisings were a reminder that the preservation of the middle ground was essential to the survival of the colonial order.

For two and a half centuries, the Spanish presence in Manila leaned heavily not only on Chinese middlemen and laborers but also on Chinese suppliers of the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade. From the founding of Manila until the late-eighteenth century, the trans-Pacific trade dominated the economy of the city. Chapter Four examines the role of the Chinese in this most important commerce and its significance to the majority of the Chinese in Manila. Throughout most of the existence of the Fujian-Manila-Acapulco enterprise, Spaniards rarely ventured to Chinese shores as merchants. The Fujian-Manila connection was maintained almost exclusively by Chinese shipping. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Chinese credit also helped sustain the Spanish consignors of the galleon trade. While a small group of Chinese merchants were vital partners in the silk for silver exchange, most of the Chinese in Manila were not directly involved in this lucrative commerce. Even though the majority of Chinese pursued activities linked to the local economy they were just as vital for Spanish colonial rule as the Chinese suppliers of the galleon trade in that they were the main provisioners of food and services in the city. The collaboration of all segments of the Chinese community was necessary to the survival of the Spanish presence in Manila.

By the mid-eighteenth century, the galleon trade had begun to wane in comparison to the seventeenth century. The trade still dominated the economy of Manila but the composition of investors had changed. By 1740, if not earlier, a small group of wealthy businessmen and bankers of religious organizations had become the major investors in this trans-oceanic business. The majority of Spaniards in Manila, previously dependent on consigning goods to Acapulco for a living were now in need of other economic options. This dissatisfied element turned its eyes on Chinese positions in the

local economy and clamored for the Chinese to be expelled. The call for expulsion was not sufficient to dislodge the Chinese grip on the local economy but reflected greater changes in the socio-economic environment of Manila; changes which precipitated the Chinese *mestizo* ascendancy and ushered in a period of uncertainty for the Chinese community of the city.

The study ends by looking at a moment when the Chinese presence in Manila was at a low point. Chapter Five looks at the effects of the mid-eighteenth century Chinese expulsions on the Chinese community of Manila and also on the rise of the Chinese *mestizos*. In this chapter, I argue that the expulsions following the British Occupation of Manila, while reducing the Chinese population significantly for a few years, was not responsible for putting new restrictions on the Chinese which aided in the rise of the Chinese *mestizos*. Previous scholarship, the most notable of which is Edgar Wickberg's 1964 essay, *The Chinese Mestizo in Philippine History*, has long operated on the premise that Chinese *mestizo* success was at the expense of the Chinese.⁶⁵ I challenge this long-perpetuated view by pointing out that the Chinese were not an "enclosed ethnic enclave" in the mid-eighteenth century and instead had close ties with *mestizos*.⁶⁶ Chapter Five is then the final part of a larger argument that forwards a view of the Chinese as integrated into the larger fabric of colonial society and essential to the colonial enterprise. This study presents the story of empire as not one of Spanish glory and decline but one of "a

⁶⁵ Wickberg, "The Chinese Mestizo," 62-100.

⁶⁶ Richard Chu uses this term in " 'Catholic,' 'Mestizo,' 'Sangley,'" 115.

relationship between very many peoples,”⁶⁷ including the heterogeneous Chinese community of Manila.

⁶⁷ Kamen, *Empire*, xxiv.

Chapter One

The “Sangley” Insurrection of 1603

Introduction

Manila, between 1571 and 1898, is often conceived as a part of the Spanish empire despite the limited presence of the Spanish in that city. In 1603, there were approximately 700 Spaniards in Manila capable of bearing arms, whereas the Chinese population—made up of mostly adult males—numbered around 15,000 strong.⁶⁸ The indigenous population of Manila was around 36,000, of which perhaps 10,000 could be mobilized as fighting men.⁶⁹ There were also approximately 1,000 Japanese in the area.⁷⁰ In the event of ethnic conflict, it would seem the Chinese would have had numerical superiority. While such a numerical advantage does not

⁶⁸ In what is now the Philippines, excluding Mindanao, there were about 1,000 Spaniards in total in 1603 and perhaps 20,000 Chinese. These figures are taken from Edgar Wickberg’s *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, 6. Wickberg bases his estimate of the Chinese population on a letter from Archbishop Benavides to Philip III dated December 16, 1603 in BR 12: 150. Benavides estimated that there were about 15,000 Chinese in Manila alone and others in other islands. The original is in AGI Filipinas 74, “Cartas y expedientes del arzobispo de Manila 1579/1678,” specifically AGI Filipinas 74, N.54, “Carta de Benavides sobre sublevación de los sangleyes.” As for the Spanish population, Wickberg bases his estimate on Antonio de Morga’s *Sucesos* (1609). Morga, writing on the 1603 insurrection, estimates that at the start of the uprising there were about 700 Spaniards in Manila able to bear arms (*Sucesos*, 225). Wickberg added a further 300 Spaniards to account for women, children and others in Manila and the other islands.

⁶⁹ The estimate of 36,000 indigenous inhabitants in the Manila Bay area is taken from Linda Newson’s discussion of long-term demographic trends in the Philippines for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in her work *Conquest and Pestilence in the Early Spanish Philippines* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009. Reprint, Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2011). Newson calculates population size by adding the number of tribute payers (6,700) multiplied by four to an estimate of the number of unconquered inhabitants in the Manila Bay area. See Newson, *Conquest*, 256-7. If sex ratios were balanced for the indigenous population at the time, that would mean an estimated 18,000 native males, of which perhaps 10,000 could be mobilized to fight given age limitations and assuming women did not generally take part directly in armed combat. As for long-term demographic changes, according to Newson, in 1570, there were approximately 43,000 indigenous people in Manila and its surroundings (Newson, *Conquest*, 118-9). By 1600, that number had dropped to 36,000 and even further to 32,000 in 1700. The decline was caused by labor exactions for constructing the city and providing food. In addition, alienation of native lands meant that local communities were finding it harder and harder to provide for their own subsistence. These already challenging conditions were exacerbated by epidemics that claimed many lives (Newson, *Conquest*, 126). By 1800, the native population had increased to 70,000. Tribute lists show about a two-fold increase in tribute payers in 1750, suggesting better reporting and an increase in the native population (Newson, *Conquest*, 256-7, 311).

⁷⁰ Newson gives this figure for the number of Japanese residents in the Philippines at end of the sixteenth century based on the following sources: AGI Audiencia de Filipinas 29-51, and Reed, *Colonial Manila*, 53. The high point of Japanese numbers for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was reached in the 1620s with between 2,000 and 3,000 in Manila (Newson, *Conquest*, 126).

indicate preponderant Chinese influence in or control of Manila, it does suggest at least the challenges Spaniards faced in maintaining the upper hand in the city and the potentially large impact Chinese had on Philippine society. Spanish vulnerability is reflected in the series of insurrections by Chinese in 1603, 1639, 1662 and 1686. By examining one of these insurrections in detail—the “Sangleys insurrection of 1603”—this chapter explores how Spaniards maintained control of their outpost in Manila during a period of crisis even as certain segments of the Chinese community threatened to undermine their tenuous hold on the city. This chapter, in other words, focuses on the exercise of colonial power and its limitations especially pertaining to the Chinese community of Manila.

Earlier studies on the insurrection of 1603 have tended to place it within the framework of a unified Chinese threat to the security of the Philippines.⁷¹ This historiographical tendency is perhaps a reflection of contemporary statist preoccupations with alien nationals or an echo of centuries-old Spanish concerns in the source material. Either way this approach obscures the actual historical causes of the insurrection that arose from the complex internal structure of the Chinese community in the Manila Bay area at the time of the insurrection. The Chinese community in Manila in 1603 was not monolithic and the Spaniards did not perceive it as such. A close examination of contemporary documents reveals a more complicated picture. My research shows that the massacres following the insurrection targeted some but not all Chinese. Nor were Chinese united in the insurrection that led up to the massacres: indeed, some Chinese chose to inform the Spaniards about the plans of insurgents to take over the city and many did not take part in the uprisings at all. Nor was the violence of Chinese insurgents reserved for Spaniards exclusively but also targeted groups of Chinese associated with the Spaniards.

⁷¹ A notable example of this is *The Chinese in the Philippines*, edited by Alfonso Felix Jr. in 1966.

The split in Chinese interests and actions suggests that we should be careful about simplistic characterizations of the insurrection and massacres as straightforward conflicts of Chinese versus Spaniards. Instead, we need to ask who the various “Chinese” involved were and why they revolted or not. Answers to these questions reveal that at the turn of the seventeenth century, the Chinese community of Manila was partially made up of wealthy junk traders from Quanzhou called the “Avays,” as well as artisans and merchants who lived near the walled city. The community also contained a mobile and transient population, the ones Spaniards referred to as “restless and vagabond”⁷² and many others working in the countryside as stone-workers, lime-burners, sawyers, fishermen, and gardeners. The interests of these different groups were diverse and sometimes at odds. Wealthy traders were invested in the colonial order since the lifeblood of their enterprises was Spanish silver, whereas the “restless and vagabond” had “nothing to lose.”⁷³ Spaniards relied on Chinese intermediaries to mediate these different interests and maintain control over large segments of the Chinese population. These intermediaries were the focal point of networks of control and mutual aid bound together by putative kinship relationships. In the insurrection of 1603, the intermediaries lost legitimacy in the eyes of both insurgents and the Spanish regime, as egalitarian visions came to the fore to challenge the hierarchical colonial order.

Sources

Getting at the power relationships within the Chinese community and between that community and others in the Manila Bay area is difficult given the types of extant sources available. These are mainly letters written by Spanish officials and ecclesiastics—eyewitnesses

⁷² “Letter from Governor Acuña to the King,” December 18, 1603, in BR 12: 154.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

to many of the events—shortly after the insurrection ended in late October. They are written with an eye to assigning or deflecting blame for provoking the insurrection. Given this agenda, one still finds a remarkable consistency in the different narratives of events, suggesting either an honest and accurate recollection and rendering of what happened or a generally agreed upon version of how the insurrection unfolded. More information on the insurrection appears in books written about Spanish deeds and experiences in Southeast Asia, such as Antonio de Morga’s *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* (1609)⁷⁴ and Bartolomé Leonardo de Argensola’s *Conquista de las Islas Molucas* (also 1609).⁷⁵ In addition to these letters, there are also letters from Chinese officials to Spanish officials in Manila found in translation in the Archive of the Indies in Seville, and accounts of the insurrection and memorials to the Wan Li Emperor (1572-1620) in the *Huang Ming Xiang Xu Lu*, *Mingshi*, *Ming Qing Shi Wenbian* and *Dong Xi Yang Kao*.⁷⁶ These sources are “briefer than those of the Spaniards, and seem to be less defensive, even if they also seem to reflect partisan tendencies. They usually acknowledge provocation on the part of the Chinese expatriates, and yet refuse to be judged by foreigners. These documents... generally present themselves as part of an official investigation that was also transmitted officially. Also,

⁷⁴ Morga was a member of the Royal *Audiencia* from June 1595 to July 1603 when he left Manila for Mexico.

⁷⁵ According to José Eugenio Borao, Argensola’s narrative is constructed from reports that reached the court immediately after the insurrection and from personal reports from the main participants in the event. Borao thinks that the Augustinian Diego de Guevarra, who moved to Madrid shortly after the insurrection, was the principal source for Argensola’s reconstruction of what happened. See Borao, “The Massacre of 1603,” 2.

⁷⁶ For the Chinese sources cited above, see *Huang Ming Xiang Xu Lu* [*Record of the Interpreters of the August Ming*], (Taipei Shi: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, Minguo 55, 1966), *Mingshi* [*The History of the Ming Dynasty*], ed. Ding Wen, vol. 11 (Taipei, 1975), *Ming Qing Shi Wenbian* [*Anthology of the Official Document of the Ming Dynasty*], ed. Zhonghua, vol. 6 (Beijing, 1962), and *Dong xiyang kao* [*Studies on the Eastern and Western Oceans*], ed. Taiwan Shang Wu (Taipei, 1971).

since the events happened outside China, it is difficult for the imperial officers to verify them, which is why they put forward brief and detached explanations.”⁷⁷

Overlapping Spheres of Influence

In both the Spanish and Chinese sources⁷⁸ that this chapter builds on, the voices of the Chinese involved in the insurrection are almost imperceptible. In the Spanish sources, Chinese voices only filter through in terse reports about those whom the Chinese blamed for the insurrection, but not even these are directly quoted. To pierce through the silence, I have read these sources with the assumption that relationships of power in Manila in the early 1600s were hierarchical and were set within a framework of overlapping and competing spheres of sovereignty typical of the tributary relationships in Southeast Asia described by Thongchai Winichakul in *Siam Mapped*. Winichakul explains that rulers were connected to each by a hierarchy of relationships of subordination. A ruler managed his affairs within his own sphere of authority and demanded submission from lesser authorities, while yielding to more powerful ones.

This pattern of relations prevailed all the way up the pyramid to the most powerful kingships of the realm. ...[The] relationship between the central and local rulers was primarily one of personal subordination under the ‘High King.’ The kingdom held together as long as personal subordination to the supreme king remained. ...The supreme overlord could enforce his demand or intervene in the affairs of the inferior kingdom whenever he deemed it legitimate. Yet the overlord’s store of merit could suddenly expire—hence the decline of his power and legitimacy. In that situation the overlordship might be defied by its tributaries or even challenged by another contending overlord....Inevitably the uncertainty of hierarchy relations had to be

⁷⁷ Borao, “The Massacre of 1603,” 2-3. In the *Ming Shi*, the emperor and officials of Fujian acknowledged the roles of the Fujianese, Zhang Yi (Hokkien: Tio Heng), and Yang Yinglong, a military official, in deceiving the imperial court and bringing about the conflict. At the same time, they deplored the actions of the Spaniards, saying the “governor of Luzon murdered people without license.” Quoted in *ibid.*, 11.

⁷⁸ Borao utilizes both Chinese and Spanish sources to analyze the “remote and proximate causes of the tragedy of 1603,” *ibid.*, 1. I have drawn from his article for Chinese perceptions of the insurrection and rely on his discussion of Chinese sources to get at the official Chinese view of events.

decided by a concrete measure: a battle. A tributary might disassociate itself from any overlord for a while or might cooperate with another overlord until the order was resumed in one way or another; then it would be forced to enter the tributary relationship again.⁷⁹

In Manila and in the Philippines in general, local elites of kinship groups called *barangay* interacted with representatives of the Spanish Crown within a legal and administrative framework with Manila as the posited “center.” Nicholas Cushner as well as John Phelan provide evidence that Spanish rule transformed the *barangay* kinship group by making it an administrative unit and part of a framework of appeals and arbitration with the Spaniards at its core.⁸⁰ At the archipelagic level, Manila was the heart of this system, which combined judicial and administrative functions. The *Audiencia* of Manila received appeals from the twelve provinces of the Philippines called *alcaldias mayores*.⁸¹ The *alcaldias mayores*, were divided into *Pueblos de Indios*, which in the seventeenth century “consisted of a principal settlement, the *cabecera*, where the main parish church was located. Attached to the *pueblo* was a whole series of outlying clusters of population, the *visitas* or *barrios*, serviced by an itinerant priest from the *cabecera*, in addition to various *sitios* (less than ten families).” Every *pueblo* was made up of a collection of *barangays*. In the *cabecera*, there might be more than one *barangay* given the larger concentration of people there, whereas the *visitas* or *barrios* were usually made up of one *barangay*. The *sitios*, which consisted of less than ten families were combined to form a *barangay*. The structure of administration described above provided a framework for appeals starting at the level of *pueblo*, where the native chief magistrate tried civil cases involving small sums. Appeals on the verdicts of the native chief magistrate went to the *alcalde mayor* who also

⁷⁹ Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994), 81.

⁸⁰ Cushner, *Spain in the Philippines* and Phelan, *The Hispanization*.

⁸¹ Phelan, *The Hispanization*, 128.

acted as the court of first instance for civil suits involving large sums, all criminal cases and litigations in which the royal treasury was a party. From the *alcalde mayor*, appeals could be made to the *Audiencia*. The highest court of appeal, in theory, was the Council of the Indies in Spain but in practice cases stopped at the level of the *Audiencia* because it had the discretion to refuse to hear cases.

The transformation of the *barangay* into a unit of local government had the effect of transforming the role of the chief or *datu* from the head of the kinship unit with absolute authority to that of intermediary between the invaders and the group.⁸² Nonetheless, chiefs still held great power and without their cooperation—especially in areas where the Spanish presence was limited to a few priests—the extraction of labor and surplus would have been impossible over the long term. *Datus* were able to use their authority in their local communities as a bargaining chip to negotiate a relationship within the new order that would enable them to maintain their privileges, and even increase them.

On the part of non-elites, the reframing of power relationships meant that there were alternate sources of authority besides the *datus* such as the Church and Spanish officials. These other sources of authority created possibilities as well as potential burdens (extra requisitions of labor, for example) when trying to achieve one's aims.

In colonial Manila there were overlapping spheres of influence, a hierarchical network of power relationships, into which the Chinese community was interwoven. Furthermore, the Chinese community in Manila was linked to power-holders in China who tried to exercise sovereignty over the community. Taking this into consideration, it is possible to see the causes of

⁸² Cushner, *Spain in the Philippines*, 70. This assumes that in pre-hispanic times most *datus* did not play the same role, mediating between overlords from other more powerful *barangays* or other Southeast Asian polities. *Datus* in the vicinity of Manila had probably begun performing some intermediary role with the rule of Bruneian linked overlords but Spanish administration was more encompassing for many of these chiefs and further emphasized their position as intermediaries.

the insurrection of 1603 as arising out of the competition between different power-holders over the Chinese community in Manila and over the other communities in the area.

Indeed, Spanish officials traced the origin of the insurrection precisely to overlapping spheres of influence. The official version of events as laid out in a letter from the *Audiencia* and Governor Pedro Acuña to King Philip III, dated December 12, 1603, starts out referring to the coming of three “mandarins” from China to Manila. These “mandarins” reputedly came to Manila in May 1603 to verify the story of a Chinese man that in the Philippines there was a “great hill of gold.”⁸³ These “mandarins” had terrorized the Chinese community in Manila, “flogging them, in form of justice, according to the Chinese usage.”⁸⁴ The activities of the “mandarins” challenged the authority of the Spaniards and they worried that the “mandarins” were part of a larger plan to take over Manila.

After the mention of the episode involving the three “mandarins,” the remainder of the official account switches focus from the problem of dealing with a contest related to authority over the Chinese in Manila to painting what ensued as a tragedy redeemed by Spanish heroism. After the coming of the “mandarins,” Governor Acuña decided to fortify the city and lay up supplies for its defense and safety. “This caused some disturbance among the Chinese, who began to confer among themselves, in secret, concerning the means of insurrection.”⁸⁵ Acuña and the *Audiencia* tried to calm Chinese fears but to no avail. On October 3, Friday night, the eve of St. Francis’ Day, the Chinese decided to strike first. They chose a Christian Sangley named Joan Ontae as leader⁸⁶ who, according to investigations done by the *Audiencia*, “revolted in the name

⁸³ Account of Geronimo de Salazar y Salcedo dated May 27, 1603 in BR 12: 83-97.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 84.

⁸⁵ Letter from the *Audiencia* and Governor Pedro Acuña to Philip III, December 12, 1603 in BR 12: 142.

⁸⁶ Ontae’s name is also transcribed as “Hontay,” “Ontay,” and “Untae.”

of one Joan Baptista, governor of the Chinese. On him and the others, exemplary justice has been rigorously visited.”⁸⁷

About ten to twelve thousand Chinese gathered on the north bank of the River Pasig. The Spanish city and the *Parián*⁸⁸ were on the south bank. Many Chinese remained in the *Parián* and “fortified themselves as well as they could.” Meanwhile, the Chinese on the north bank burned “several houses, and the orchard of a citizen of this city named Captain Estevan de Marquina, with whom they commenced, killing him and his wife and four children and several servants.”⁸⁹ From Marquina’s house, the Chinese proceeded to a village called Quiapo on the north bank. They burned Quiapo “killing several Indian children and women.”⁹⁰ Acuña noticed the fire across the river in Quiapo, and taking into account the disturbances of the previous days, notified Don Luis Dasmariñas, who lived in Binondo, on the north bank. He also sent Don Luis troops to “keep watch of the enemy.”

On Saturday morning, October 4, Don Luis with reinforcements composed of Manila citizens went out to meet the rebels near the village of Tondo to the north of Binondo. In a heavily wooded and mountainous area, the rebels cut off Don Luis and his company’s retreat.

⁸⁷ Letter from the *Audiencia*, December 12, 1603 in BR12: 143.

⁸⁸ The site of the *Parián* moved several times, from within the city walls to just outside of it, within cannon range. Over the years, the *Parián* grew and was burnt and rebuilt several times until finally, in 1790, it was torn down to “make room for new fortifications of the walled city of Manila.” See Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, 23. Alberto Santamaria, O.P. goes into detail on the various locations of the *Parián* in his article “The Chinese *Parián*: El *Parián* de los Sangleyes,” *The Chinese in the Philippines: 1570-1770*, vol. 1, ed. Alfonso Felix Jr. (Manila: Solidaridad Publishing House, 1966), 67-118. In addition to the *Parián*, the Chinese also lived on the North bank of the River Pasig in the settlements of Binondo—primarily for Chinese Catholics and their families—and Tondo. There were also considerable numbers of Christian Chinese in Santa Cruz and Quiapo. The Jesuits purchased large tracts of land in the North East sector of Quiapo and subleased it to Chinese cultivators who raised poultry and grew vegetables and fruit there (Santamaria, “The Chinese *Parián*,” 67-118). For more information on Chinese settlements in the Manila area, see chapter 6, “Extramuros: Residential and Occupational Quarters for Asians,” of Reed’s book *Colonial Manila*.

⁸⁹ Letter from the *Audiencia*, December 12, 1603 in BR 12: 143.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* “Indian,” used in this context is the English translation of the Spanish “*indio*.” “*Indio*” was a legal category used by the Spanish colonial bureaucracy to designate the non-European natives they came into contact with and in the case of the Philippines could cover a wide variety of native groups.

Don Luis along with one hundred Spaniards were killed, a disastrous loss considering there were only seven hundred Spaniards in Manila at the time.

On Monday, October 6, the rebels met and “after their custom drew lots, as usual in war; and finding these in their favor and learning from them, as they say, that they would take the city, they decided to go on to the *Parián*, and united with the people who remained there.” The united Chinese forces, now on the south bank, attacked the city walls “with many contrivances which they brought along to assault it.” Those within the walls fought hard and killed many rebels. In addition, the Spaniards succeeded in setting fire to the *Parián*. Following this, the Chinese retreated to a stone chapel twenty paces away from the city walls. At this juncture, an attacking force sallied forth from the walled city, or *Intramuros*, symbolically the city of Spaniards, to meet the rebels. The attacking force inflicted great losses on the rebels, who could not hold their position at the chapel any longer and divided into three bands and went inland, “doing much damage.” “A good force of soldiers” gave chase under direction of “one of the captains of the city, called Don Luis Velasco...”⁹¹ We are not told how much time elapsed until “one morning at dawn” Velasco attacked and killed more than three hundred rebels. On the same day, he sought the rebels out once more but went “so far into the enemy’s country that they killed him there with four or five other soldiers and two Franciscan friars.”⁹² The rebels at this point had “fortified themselves in a very strong place called San Pablo de los Montes, about fifteen leguas from this city, more or less.” A multiethnic force under the captain and sargento-mayor of the camp, Christoval de Axqueta, comprising “a hundred Spaniards, a number of native Indians, and some Japanese whom he took with him” sought the rebels out and engaged them in

⁹¹ Ibid., 144.

⁹² Ibid.

battle several times. The Spanish-led force then took the fort at San Pablo and killed many rebels in the process. Some escaped but all who remained were killed.

Axqueta and his multiethnic force then headed out to meet the other rebel army in a place called Vatangas, about six leagues away from San Pablo. They engaged the rebels and killed all of them without a losing a man. According to the official account, “This was the end of this incident.”⁹³

This version of the uprising affirms the assumption that the tensions between the Spanish and Chinese were fueled by tragic "misunderstandings" of each other and by failed "immigration policies." The cause of the insurrection is identified as the coming of the three “mandarins” that led to preparations for defending Manila; these in turn caused disturbances among the Chinese which culminated in the insurrection. Simply put, according to the official account, the Chinese acted on an unfounded fear and ended up endangering the colony. The Spaniards, drastically outnumbered, through their bravery and leadership saved the colony from destruction.

Various scholars echo some version of this narrative and link the “misunderstandings” to the “Chinese problem” in the Philippines.⁹⁴ While the Spaniards were constantly preoccupied

⁹³ Ibid., 145

⁹⁴ For example, Milagros Guerrero states that “...restriction would no longer solve the danger of Chinese overpopulation in Manila. When such a situation arose, insurrections quite naturally took place as a result of the anxieties of both Spaniards and Chinese.” She goes on to say that the “only solution to the problem” was “expulsion” and “restrictions on immigration” and “fundamentally, the Chinese problem was that of an unassimilated and possibly unassimilable racial minority which was a problem to the Spaniards in the Philippines since the first Chinese insurrection in 1603.” See Milagros Guerrero, “The Chinese in the Philippines,” in *The Chinese in the Philippines: 1570-1770*, vol. 1, ed. Alfonso Felix Jr. (Manila: Solidaridad Publishing House, 1966), 29, 38. Alberto Santamaria articulates another version of the “Chinese problem” stating that “in so far as segregation is concerned, we believe that what actually took place was a discrimination dictated by prudence which later on, however was exaggerated due to the various Chinese revolts. It is only fair to say...that every nation today discriminates in its treatment of foreigners and nationals” (Santamaria “The Chinese Parián,” 78). Horacio de la Costa likewise interprets the insurrection of 1603 in terms of the “Chinese problem” when he states that “what made them [the Chinese] most dangerous to the tiny Spanish settlement was their sheer numbers; that, and their close proximity to the mighty and mysterious empire, which, presumably, still held their allegiance.” See Horacio de la Costa, *The Jesuits in the Philippines, 1581-1768* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 207. Guerrero and Santamaria’s views on the 1603 insurrection are tied to nationalist preoccupations while de la Costa’s view places the insurrection strictly within the context of Sino-Spanish relations, with the Chinese and Spanish constituting two

with the “Chinese problem” as evidenced by numerous discussions on converting the Chinese and keeping the number of Chinese down to a “magic number”⁹⁵ that was just sufficient for keeping the colony going without becoming dangerous, focusing on the “Chinese problem” ignores other parts of the story such as the power relationships within the Chinese community. I will elaborate on these relationships shortly but would like to draw attention at this point to the coming of the three “mandarins,” as their appearance in the story complicates the assumption that the insurrection was driven by tragic misunderstandings and failed immigration policies. Rather, the visit of the three “mandarins” suggests that not only were Chinese in Manila entangled in overlapping spheres of influence, but Spaniards who sought to rule Manila were as well.

Previous authors writing on the insurrection have regarded the visit of the Chinese officials as the pivotal occurrence, which having aroused the suspicion of the Spaniards, precipitated a chain of events leading to the massacre. Horacio de la Costa, for example, states that the Spaniards feared the Chinese in Manila because they were numerous and close to the “mighty and mysterious empire which, presumably, still held their allegiance. ... Thus the visit of the mandarins on what was so obviously a wild-goose chase gave rise to the most disturbing speculations. Archbishop Benavides and others publicly declared that it was the prelude to invasion; that an armada was being readied to take Manila with the help of the *sangleys* the following year....”⁹⁶ He goes on to say that this fear led to preparations for an invasion and rumors of a massacre of the Chinese that frightened the Chinese, which gave rise to conflict.

large and undifferentiated blocks. Both views obscure, in my opinion, the possibility that the causes of the insurrection might include factors other than Sino-Spanish relations.

⁹⁵ Andrew R. Wilson uses this term. “In order to balance economic necessity and colonial security, the Spanish conceived of an ideal number of Chinese. ... Attaining a ‘magic’ number of Chinese was an elusive goal.” See Wilson, *Ambition and Identity*, 38-39.

⁹⁶ Costa, *The Jesuits*, 207-208.

Similarly, Borao, whose excellent article on the insurrection explores the identities of the “mandarins” and the court politics linked to the expedition, sees the coming of the “mandarins” as a “proximate cause” for the massacre.⁹⁷ He also asks: “But, the question is if the dispatch had been an advance party or not, and if it came to study the possibility of invasion of Manila—whether it was piratical or in an organized form. At the moment, the Spaniards could not know it, although an excess of suspicions could turn itself into an untenable situation that might end up out of control. It was precisely what happened.”⁹⁸ I do not disagree with the authors in linking Spanish suspicions to the coming of the “mandarins” but I think we can further build on this information by asking what this fear tells us about Spanish conceptions about their vulnerable position in Manila. The Spaniards in Manila were enmeshed in hierarchical relationships of power with neighbors like China and Japan that had local consequences.⁹⁹

In the aftermath of the massacre, the Spaniards, anxious about the response of the Chinese empire to the slaughter of the Chinese and aware that their position in Manila depended on trade with China, dispatched Captain Marco de la Cueva to Macao with the Dominican Luis Gandullo

⁹⁷ Borao, “The Massacre of 1603,” 33. Borao gives the identities of the three mandarins as such: Gan Yichen (Spanish transcription of the Hokkien pronunciation of the name: Chanchian), who was the speaker of the group. Gan was a “centurion” and “probably the military chief of Fujian.” The second “mandarin” was Wang Shiho, the magistrate of Haicheng district. The third “mandarin” was the Eunuch Gao Tsai (Spanish transcription of the Hokkien pronunciation of the name: Cochai). There is confusion surrounding Gao’s position in the government. He was either the superintendent of the Beijing expedition or Fujian’s quartermaster general for taxes. Accompanying the three “mandarins” were Zhang Yi (Tio Heng) and Yang Yinglong who was a “centurion” accused in the Chinese sources for collaborating with Zhang in informing the emperor of the mountain of gold in Luzon (Borao, “The Massacre of 1603,” 27).

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁹⁹ William Schurz writes that “Spanish fears of conquest by Japan appeared well justified by the belligerent temper and threats of Hideyoshi. The dread regent’s pretensions to tribute and vassalage, whether veiled or expressed with arrogant bluntness, while at the same time they were mingled with protestations of friendship and desire for trade, kept the Spaniards at Manila in a state of apprehension for years” (Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 105). In a recent study of early modern Manila’s relationship with Spain, China and Japan, Birgit M. Tremml, also paints the Spanish presence in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries as fragile, stating: “Despite being the nominal rulers of the Philippines, from a politico-economic point of view and in terms of actual power, ... Spain was only one among many actors on the Southeast Asian scene.” See her article, “The Global and the Local,” 554.

to inform the Portuguese of what had happened and so that they might be forewarned of ‘rumors of war’ from China. At the same time, they brought letters for the ‘*tutores*, *aytaos* and *visitadores*’ of the provinces of Guangdong and Fujian, explaining the conduct of the Chinese and the Spaniards’ response. What happened was not only known in Macao; news of Spaniards in Macao and the reason for their presence there soon reached Quanzhou, which was why ‘the wealthy Captains Guansan, Sinu and Guanchan, who regularly traded in Manila,’ went to see them. They gave their own conjectures about what really happened, brought letters to the mandarins, and encouraged the merchants and ships of Quanzhou to go to Manila. Cueva’s mission was a success, for soon after his return—in May of 1604—thirteen ships from China arrived, filling up two ships bound that same year for New Spain with their cargo.¹⁰⁰

Even though disaster was averted by Cueva and Gandullo’s mission, the Spanish presence in Manila could have been compromised had the Emperor heeded the administrative commissioner of Fujian Xu Xueju’s calls for forceful punitive action by positioning Manila within China’s sphere of influence. Xu considered Spanish actions as unacceptable and unlicensed by the Emperor and therefore requiring retaliation. Furthermore, Xu, in his letter to Spanish authorities asked that the widows and children of those massacred be repatriated.¹⁰¹ In doing so, Xu claimed the families of Chinese in Manila as subjects of the Emperor. The Emperor’s response to the administrative commissioner of Fujian suggests that he saw Manila as within his sphere of influence, stating, “due to their long tradition in trade and commerce, the people of Luzon were practically their subjects.”¹⁰² At the same time, the Emperor did not agree with Xu’s call for coercion, declaring he was unwilling to drain resources in a war for humble and unfilial merchants who abandoned their families to trade in Manila.¹⁰³ Instead, the Emperor left the punishment of the Spanish governor to “the officials”¹⁰⁴ and asked the *Audiencia* to serve up

¹⁰⁰ Borao, “The Massacre of 1603,” 31.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 31. Xu’s appeal is found in the *Mingshi*, chapter 323.

¹⁰² Ibid., 32. Taken from the *Ming Qing shi wenbian*, chapter 433.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 31. Taken from the *Mingshi*, chapter 323.

justice.¹⁰⁵ By showing his displeasure with Spanish actions, the Emperor maintained his position as overlord, but by allowing the *Audiencia* to handle matters, he acknowledged the Spaniards' sovereignty in Manila. Following the Emperor's rejection of Xu's plan to attack Manila, the commissioner was left with no recourse other than demanding the restitution of property of those who perished in the insurrection as a condition for the resumption of trade. Failure to comply, he claimed, would result in thousands of warships bearing down on Manila with the families of the deceased on board and mercenaries from vassal states to conquer and divide Luzon among themselves.¹⁰⁶ Even though Xu's threat of war did not carry the backing of the Emperor, the Spaniards did not know this. It is unclear if the Spaniards connected Xu's fighting words to the claims of Chinese captured during the insurrection that a Chinese armada would soon attack Manila.¹⁰⁷ What is certain is that the Spaniards did not discount the possibility of a Chinese attack as evidenced by governor Acuña's preparations. To ready Manila for the coming of a Chinese armada, Acuña appointed Captain Juan de Villaçon, a battle-hardened soldier who had spent "many years in Flandes" and was "experienced in the conduct of war in besieged cities—as it was expected this one [Manila] must be so in a short time," to be a part of the company of soldiers defending Manila. In addition, the governor told the King that he busied himself with "fortifying the weak places, erecting bulwarks and opening trenches."¹⁰⁸ The governor's actions

¹⁰⁵ Tremml notes that the Emperor asked the *Audiencia* to "serve up justice" (Tremml, "The Global and the Local," 572). For the Emperor's communication to Spanish authorities in Manila, see AGI Filipinas 74, n. 60, "Testimonio de memoriales de Benavides sobre sangleyes" (7 July 1605).

¹⁰⁶ Borao, "The Massacre of 1603," 33.

¹⁰⁷ Acuña's letter to Felipe III, BR 13: 225-226. In this letter, Acuña informed the King of a suspicion the Spaniards had that a great fleet was to come from China to conquer the land. The suspicion arose from "the coming of the mandarins and from information that some of those Chinese who were punished for their guilt in their uprising were trying to circulate. Accordingly, all the people were persuaded that this rebellion depended upon that; and at one time a rumor was current to the effect that seven hundred Chinese ships had been seen not far from here."

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 226.

suggest the precariousness of the Spanish position in Manila, entangled as it was in overlapping spheres of influence in the South China Sea.

Power Relationships and Differing Interests in the Chinese Community in Manila

While an understanding of overlapping spheres of regional influence enlarges our view of the insurrection, it does not explain the inner dynamics of the Chinese community, which are key to understanding why the insurrection unfolded as it did. In order to understand why the Chinese in the *Parián* initially did not join the rebels on the north bank, how Joan Ontae was tied to Joan Baptista and why Baptista did not lead the revolt on his own, one needs to identify differing interests and tease out the power relationships within the Chinese community itself.

Governor Acuña's letter to Philip III, dated December 18, 1603, offers insights into how the Chinese community was not united in its interests but was rather made up of different groups with varying relationships to the colonial regime.¹⁰⁹ In this letter, the governor draws the King's attention to the preparations he undertook to protect Manila and to keep Chinese residents from going over to the north bank. The governor demolished several houses of the *Parián* that were "very near to the wall ...so this space might be free." He also employed "a great number of Sangleys for the works, and had contracted with them to construct a ditch in the part where their *Parián* and *alcayeria* stand, and along the whole front from the river to the sea."¹¹⁰ His tearing down of Chinese residences and the use of supposedly contracted, but possibly *corvée*, labor would not have endeared the governor to the Chinese. But this, on its own, would hardly seem provocation enough to start an insurrection, though it may well be among background

¹⁰⁹ This letter was sent together with the *Audiencia*'s letter and most probably, the two would have been read together.

¹¹⁰ Letter from Governor Acuña to the King, December 18, 1603, in BR 12: 154.

grievances. Acuña points an accusing finger at the “restless and vagabond people who had nothing to lose, and who on account of their crimes, evil life, and debts could not go back to China without being punished there for these things with much severity.” They are the ones he sees as causing trouble. These “restless and vagabond people” used the governor's preparations to “win over the merchants and quiet people, persuading them that the precautions and measures which I was taking were in order to kill them; and, since the Sangleys were so many and we so few, it would be well to be beforehand with us and kill us, taking our lands.”¹¹¹ From Acuña’s assessment of blame for the insurrection, it is clear he makes a distinction between “good” and “bad” Chinese and creates a continuum for judging them.

“Good” and “bad” Chinese had differing interests and investment in the Spanish presence in Manila. On one end of the spectrum, there were fugitive and vagabond Chinese who had “nothing to lose” and on the other, there were “merchants and quiet people” who derived great profit from dealing with Spaniards. Then, there were those caught in between who had to decide where their interests and self-preservation were best served. Spaniards and those who challenged their authority vied for the cooperation of this middle group. A sizable group of Chinese cast their lot with the Spaniards but many, despite the governor’s best efforts, left the *Parián* and crossed over to the north bank. Of those who remained in the *Parián* were “about 2,500 Sangleys who were considered peaceable, and among them five or six hundred Avays¹¹² who are

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² The Avays, from my readings of various sources were Chinese merchants from what the Spaniards called “Chincheo.” Blair and Robertson identify this “Chincheo as “the modern Chwan-Chow-Foo,” in BR 3: 41, i.e. Quanzhou, as does José Eugenio Borao. Ch’en Ching-Ho, on the other hand, in *The Chinese Community in the Sixteenth Century Philippines* (Tokyo: The Center for East Asian Cultural Studies, 1968) has Chincheo indexed as “Chang-chou,” in pinyin, “Zhangzhou.” There is no discussion as to how the authors arrived at their conclusions concerning the location of Chincheo. Wu Ching-Hong provides a way out of this conundrum by explaining that the term “Chincheo” and “its variations in Western languages became a loose or very broad one: some Westerners used it to refer to Chuanchou as in previous times, some to Changchou at that, or later, time, or it was used to include both of them, or even South Fukien as a whole. The identification of Chincheo in any Western language must be

merchants and people of better conduct than the others, for these gave information of what the others were doing. Although the same effort was made to stir them up, they never belonged to that party, or attempted to leave the *Parián*; for they are a gentle and prosperous people, with a liking for trade.”¹¹³ To the Avays, the Spanish presence was crucial for their trading enterprises to succeed. Without Spanish silver there would be little point in going to Manila to trade. They had no reason to overturn the colonial order and acted accordingly to preserve the status quo.

The different interests of the “Avays” and the “restless and vagabond” were clear to Acuña but he was not sure where to place other Chinese such as the stone-workers and gardeners along his continuum of “good” and “bad” Chinese. In his preparations for a potential attack on Manila, one of the things Acuña did was write the *alcaldes-mayores*¹¹⁴ and magistrates to “visit the Sangleys, and see what arms and provisions they had, particularly the stone-workers, lime-burners, sawyers, fishermen, and gardeners, as they were people who reside in the country, and for this reason it will be right to exercise more caution in living with them....”¹¹⁵ Those Chinese in the countryside probably were difficult for the governor to place because they lived away from known sources of control.¹¹⁶

case by case for each datum in references.” See Wu, “Historico-Economic Aspects,” 223. I believe the “Avays” were from Quanzhou because in other references they are said to be the same as the “Anhayes.” See BR 12: 155 and 277, as well as BR 20: 109. “Anhay” is the equivalent of Anhai, in Jinjiang district in Quanzhou prefecture.

¹¹³ Letter from Governor Acuña to Philip III, December 18, 1603, BR 12: 155.

¹¹⁴ These were Spanish governors of provinces (J.S. Cummins, “Introduction,” in Antonio de Morga, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*, trans. and ed., J.S. Cummins [Cambridge: Hakluyt Society, University of Cambridge Press, 1971], xi). As Charles Cunningham further explains “an alcalde was usually an ordinary judge. ... Generally speaking alcaldes ordinarios were town judges, in contrast to alcaldes mayores who had provincial jurisdiction as well.” See Charles Cunningham, *The Audiencia in the Spanish Colonies (1538-1800)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1919), 10.

¹¹⁵ Letter from Governor Acuña to Philip III, December 18, 1603, BR 12: 154.

¹¹⁶ It is unclear how Chinese on the outskirts of Manila organized in the seventeenth century, but evidence from the eighteenth century in Southeast China suggests that Chinese outside of the urban environment could possibly have formed mutual aid societies such as *chushe*, or “hoe societies” that were small-scale labor sharing organizations. For scholarship on *chushe*, refer to David Ownby’s essay, “Chinese Hui and the Early Modern Social Order:

In the city, Spaniards could rely on a formal structure of control headed by the Chinese governor, also known as the “*gobernadorcillo*” or “*capitán*.” The Chinese governor was appointed by the Spaniards and could judge in petty civil actions between Chinese parties. He collected taxes for the Spaniards and kept order. He also acted as an intermediary between the Chinese and the Spanish government. The Chinese governor had jurisdiction over all Chinese in the Manila area, in theory, and had two or three assistants to help him with his duties. The Chinese governor was immediately responsible to two Spanish officials: the special justice who handled Chinese criminal cases and civil suits involving large sums and the “*fiscal*” or crown attorney who was concurrently protector of the Chinese and the Indians. Within the Chinese community itself, the Chinese were supposedly divided into occupational guilds or “*gremios*” and each “*gremio*” was represented by a “*cabeza*” or “*cabecilla*.” These guild heads and the “*cabecilla principal*” or principal headman made up the board of notables or “*principalia*.” The “*principalia*” was responsible for making nominations for the office of Chinese governor and signed petitions presented by the Chinese governor to the Spanish government.¹¹⁷ This familiar structure of control probably gave the Spaniards a sense of security that was lacking in the countryside where such a mechanism of mediation was either non-existent or less visible.

Within this framework or at least the guise of it, the Chinese worked out power relationships, but as Edgar Wickberg insightfully noted, these structures of control were not necessarily reflective of how the Chinese organized themselves. Occupational “*gremios*” might have really been trade and craft guilds with social and economic functions or they could have been established mainly for purposes of tax collecting and representation in dealing with the

Evidence from 18th century Southeast China,” in *Secret Societies Reconsidered, Perspectives on the Social History of Modern South China and Southeast Asia*, eds. David Ownby and Mary Somers Heidhues (Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1993), 38.

¹¹⁷ Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, 37-8.

Spaniards.¹¹⁸ Even in Manila, with its network of surveillance, neither Acuña nor the *Audiencia* knew under what “regulation” the Chinese “were living and residing...”¹¹⁹ What lay beneath the surface remains largely unknown. Did forms of organizing from Southeast China, where the overwhelming majority of the Chinese in the Philippines came from, bind the Chinese community in the Philippines together? Alternatively, was the community split into various groups, which were at times in competition with one another such as lineages in Southeast China were?

There is evidence that Southeast Chinese trade and family networks extended to Manila as well. In his letter to the king, Acuña reports that after the insurrection and subsequent massacre of Chinese, among the letters sent to “the Viceroys of Canton and Chincheo and other mandarins” were letters from “Avays who could be found alive, written to their relatives and kinsmen, and the partners of the dead men.”¹²⁰ This suggests that segments of the Chinese community in Manila were in touch with relatives in China, in spite of distance and prohibitions on their travel abroad. Scarce as this information is, it is important evidence of trans-regional networks. While there is evidence of families and merchants in Southeast China extending operations to Manila, it is unclear if such networks bound the Chinese community in Manila together, nor if these trans-pelagic ties were sources of strife. Within Manila, other forms of Southeast Chinese organization—brotherhoods and pseudo-lineages—seem to have provided vehicles for cultivating connections among the Chinese and with other communities.

The True Relation of the Sangley Insurrection in the Filipinas, written by a now unknown soldier who served in the Philippines and printed in 1606 suggests the existence of

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 38.

¹¹⁹ Letter from Governor Acuña, December 18, 1603, BR 12: 159.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 157.

brotherhoods and pseudo-lineages in Manila in the 1600s.¹²¹ At the end of the war with the rebels, “on the fourteenth of November, Sargento-mayor Ascoeta [same as Christoval Axqueta from the letter of the *Audiencia*] entered this city, marching in good order with his camp, both Spaniards, and the Pampanga Indians and Japanese. They brought in the banners won from the enemy.”¹²² Among these banners were

two that contained characters in the Sangley language, which, translated into our Castilian vernacular, read as follows:
“The leader and general of the kingdom of España...so that all the Chinese take part together in this affair and obey us by destroying root and branch these hostile robbers, whom we have against our will, both Castilians and Japanese. We the Sangleys swear that after the conquest of this city we shall share the lands, even to the very herbs, with equal shares, as brothers.”

The message on the two banners, is an indication that the Chinese in the Manila area organized themselves in brotherhoods and is crucial to our understanding of how power relationships were structured within the Chinese community at the turn of the seventeenth century.

Furthermore, there is an enigmatic phrase in the banners that suggests that at least one brotherhood in Manila was linked to a lineage. The translation of the message on the banners quoted above is taken from the Blair and Robertson collection. The translation is accurate but omits the phrase “*tribuleco llamadotin*” and instead represents it with ellipses. Blair and Robertson explain their use of ellipses in place of the phrase by telling the reader “*tribuleco llamadotin*” is “evidently some typographical error.”¹²³ I disagree with this characterization of

¹²¹ This account, abridged by Miguel Rodriguez Maldonado and printed by Clemente Hidalgo in 1606, gives a detailed and global view of the events of the insurrection and is complementary rather than contradictory of the accounts of the insurrection I have analyzed thus far. See BR 14: 119-39, for the account in English translation. The University of Seville has digitalized the original in Spanish, which can be found on the website <fondosdigitales.us.es> under the search term “Relación verdadera del levantamiento de los sangleyes en las Filipinas, y el milagroso castigo de su rebellion con otros sucessos de aquellas islas. Escrita a estos reynos por un soldado que se hallo en ellas. Recopilado por Miguel Rodriguez Maldonado.”

¹²² BR 14: 135.

¹²³ Ibid., 135. See footnote 23.

the phrase and interpret it as meaning “By the leco tribe called tin.” The term “tribe” in the context of the message is not without ambivalence but given the use of the language of brotherhood, could be equated with “clan.” The “clan” was united under the surname/ *xing*, “Tin.” “Leco” is harder to interpret but could be the home locale of the “clan.” If this interpretation is correct, the “Tin Clan” could have been what Ng Chin Keong calls a “pseudo-lineage” made up of members with putative kinship relations who adopted a new common surname. The model of “pseudo-lineage” to deal with competition and threats was a common strategy employed by South Fujianese in the Ming-Qing period, especially in rural Quanzhou and Zhangzhou, according to Ng.¹²⁴ Given that almost all Chinese in Manila at the turn of the seventeenth century were from the Quan-Zhang region and given the message of the banners, putative kinship relationships solidified by brotherhoods and pseudo-lineages seem to have been what bound large segments of the Chinese community in Manila together.¹²⁵ If we accept the message on the banners as evidence of the existence of brotherhoods, it follows that expectations of reciprocity held the Chinese community together.

The message on the banners can also be understood as the grievances and vision of a just order of a certain segment of the Chinese community that had finally come to the surface and challenged the claims of reciprocity of the Spaniards and the elite Chinese. The message on the banner can be read as follows: the enemies of the Chinese are those who perpetrate an unjust system, namely the Spaniards and the Japanese (hostile robbers) who take away what is

¹²⁴ Ng Chin-Keong, *Trade and Society: The Amoy Network on the China Coast 1683-1735* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1983), 30-1. Ng explains the “local practice whereby different surnames often merged into larger organizations, each adopting a new surname” was widespread and “the new surname represented, in fact, some form of local alliance. Nevertheless, because the authorities would be suspicious of local associations of this kind, the new aggregate functioned under the officially acceptable form of ‘lineage.’ It was indeed a compromise between rural power and the government authorities,” (*The Amoy Network*, 31).

¹²⁵ From my study of baptismal records for the *Parián* for the seventeenth century, it seems that most migrants came from the Quan-Zhang region (See Chapter Two). These baptismal records can be found in AUST Libro. Edgar Wickberg has found that in the nineteenth century, the same held true (*The Chinese in Philippine Life*, 172-174).

rightfully the share of the Chinese. The Chinese must unite to root out this evil; this is a command for all are compelled to “obey.” The authority of those rising up is in the just, new world they are trying to create—where all are equal—to replace an unjust system.

If this was the vision of the rebels, then, our understanding of the actions of the elite Chinese needs to take up the interaction between this rebel transcript and the claims to legitimacy of elite Chinese. Earlier in this essay I asked why Joan Baptista did not overtly revolt and why Joan Ontae allegedly revolted in his name. One way to get at this question is to examine the relationship between Joan Ontae and Joan Baptista. Joan Ontae was a Catholic and the godson of Joan Baptista.¹²⁶ Ontae and Baptista were then, caught up in a web of ritualized relationships where “participants in the relationship were under some moral obligation to aid each other.”¹²⁷ An ordinance of 1599 prohibiting Sangleys from having godchildren acknowledges the moral obligations to aid each other and how these could be used:

...regarding the custom which the Christian Sangleys of that jurisdiction have among themselves, of receiving and having a great number of godchildren, both Christian and infidel, in order to have them ready for any emergency that may arise, and to employ them as false witnesses—to which they lend themselves with great facility, and at little cost—and for other purposes and intents, exchanging with them favors and assistance in their affairs....The others who are infidels shall do the same, so that there shall remain no remembrance of the said intercourse—under penalty that any Sangley...who shall be known to have continued it and to have the said godchildren or godparents, shall be condemned to row in the galleys for four years...without pay....¹²⁸

One thing that stands out in this ordinance is that the Chinese, by extending the godparent-godchild relationship to non-Catholics, had transformed the Catholic practice into something un-

¹²⁶ From the account given by Téllez de Almazán to the King, in Pastells and Navas' *Historia General de las Islas Filipinas* in *Catalogo de los documentos relativos a las islas Filipinas existentes en el Archivo General de Indias de Sevilla*, vol. 5, eds. Pedro Torres Lanzas and Francisco Navas del Valle (Barcelona: Compañía General de Tabacos de Filipinas, 1929). In this account, Almazán writes: “Eligieron por cabeza un Sangley cristiano ahijado de Encang, llamado Juan ontal” (LXXXI).

¹²⁷ Phelan, *The Hispanization*, 77-8.

¹²⁸ “Ordinances of *Audiencia*, 1599,” in BR 11: 76.

envisioned by Spaniards. The extension of ritual kinship to non-Catholics by Christian Sangleys seemed incongruent to Spanish eyes probably because they conceptualized the godparent-godchild relationship as fundamentally a Catholic one. Christian Sangleys, however, probably saw ritual kinship differently in that the Catholic rite of baptism provided another avenue for solidifying an alliance originally conceived outside the confines of the Church. The fact that both Christian and “infidel” Chinese were building networks of dependency through ritual kinship suggests that the Spanish authors of the ordinance were trying to describe a Chinese form of forging alliances using Spanish Catholic terminology. Looking beyond the veneer of Spanish Catholic terminology, the description of the “godparent-godchild” relationship in the ordinance presents a picture of powerful Chinese patrons with multiple followers connected by relationships of mutual obligation. If we accept the evidence of brotherhoods presented above, then these Chinese patrons were probably “big brothers.”

Joan Baptista, who was said to be “feared and respected by his own people whose governor he had been many times” and to have “many god-children and dependents”¹²⁹ might be assumed to be the head of a brotherhood and perhaps oversaw other brotherhoods with their own headmen or “ta ko” just as the “thaiko” of West Borneo or the “dage” of twentieth-century “hui.”¹³⁰ While Joan Baptista probably wielded much power, he had to maintain a public performance faithful to the role prescribed by the prevailing ideological order. While the

¹²⁹ Morga, *Sucesos*, 219.

¹³⁰ “Ta Ko,” “thaiko” or “dage” all mean “big brother” in Hokkien, Hakka and Mandarin respectively. Mak Lau Fong has characterized the “dage” of the twentieth-century “hui”; “their position resembles that of the *thaiko*: According to informants, a general headman or *ta ko* does not interact closely in daily life with any member within the organization. . . . [He] is actually a headman of a distinct major secret society which has its own organizational structure. . . . In other words, a general headman is himself the headman of a single secret society, while simultaneously overseeing a group of secret societies each with its own headmen.” Quoted in Mary Heidhues, “Chinese Organization in West Borneo and Bangka: Kongsis and Hui” in *Secret Societies Reconsidered, Perspectives on the Social History of Modern South China and Southeast Asia*, ed. David Ownby and Mary Somers Heidhues (Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1993), 68-88 (81).

legitimacy of a leader might be reinforced by coercion, he would still claim reciprocity to legitimize his leadership.¹³¹

The rumors circulating about an impending massacre of Chinese and the abuse of the Chinese by the natives and the Japanese, who “took from them their possessions, and ill-treated them, calling them treacherous dogs, saying they knew their intended insurrection but first they would kill them all and soon”¹³² probably challenged the legitimacy of Baptista as a leader. He would have had to consider how to maintain his legitimacy as leader of the Chinese community and if they clamored for violent action to overturn the situation, he would have found himself in a most difficult situation. It must be remembered that Baptista was caught between two worlds. On the one hand, he was “ta ko” and on the other hand, he was Juan Baptista de Vera, “baptized under the government of Governor Santiago de Vera who gave him his surname. . . .”¹³³ As the god-son of the former governor, and a “good Spaniard,” Juan Baptista was “much favored” by Spaniards and enjoyed privileges reserved only for Spaniards. He took part in the Manila-Acapulco end of the galleon trade, something reserved for Spaniards.¹³⁴ He also owned slaves, something prohibited to Chinese. In short, Juan Baptista had much to lose if he were linked to a failed insurrection. The ever increasing tension between the majority of the Chinese population

¹³¹ James Scott theorizes that power flows both ways and subordinates can hold elites to a public performance faithful to the role prescribed by the prevailing ideological order. Scott gives the example of the colonial master in Burma to illustrate this point. Quoting Orwell, Scott writes “it is the condition of his rule [the rule of the colonial master] that he shall spend his life in trying to impress the ‘natives’ and so in every crisis he has to do what the ‘natives’ expect of him” in *Domination and the Arts of Resistance. Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), 47.

¹³² Morga, *Sucesos*, 219.

¹³³ Bartolome Leonardo de Argensola, *Discovery and Conquest of the Molucco and Philippine Islands* (1609), trans. John Stevens (London: 1708), 214. Available online at <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/43451/43451-h/43451-h.htm>. The original in Spanish is available online in Google Books under the title *Conquista de las Islas Malucas*.

¹³⁴ I infer this from Baptista’s punishment after being convicted for treason following the insurrection. In Governor Acuña’s letter to Philip III of 1603, it is written that the *Audiencia* “confiscated his goods, which are understood to amount to 15,000 persos, including that part of them which went this year to Nueva Hespaña,” BR 12: 156.

and the Spaniards, Japanese, and natives made the status quo less and less tenable. Juan Baptista's claims to legitimacy were beginning to pull apart and he risked being exposed for what he was: an intermediary. But an intermediary without middle ground risks losing his footing and this is exactly what happened to Juan Baptista. Between being "in danger of being chosen their chief"¹³⁵ when sent by Acuña to calm his brothers following the outbreak of the insurrection and being arrested by the Spaniards for duplicity when he informed on those brothers, Juan Baptista found his intermediary position, previously such an advantageous one, now the reason for what would ultimately be the loss of his life. When Juan Baptista de Vera Eng Kang was tried, the rebels "all accused Bautistilla [Baptista], who as above stated was their governor, saying that he was the cause of the insurrection, and that he had been made king of all the country. ...since all blamed Bautistilla, the latter was condemned to be hanged and quartered, and his head displayed in the *Parián*. He was declared a traitor, and his property confiscated for his Majesty. His houses were razed and their sites sown with salt."¹³⁶

The tensions inherent in Joan Baptista de Vera Eng Kang's dual roles of "ta ko" and "good Spaniard" proved to be his undoing in the insurrection and explain seemingly contradictory claims he made to being both innocent and guilty at the same time. The *True Relation* says that Baptista "said that death was not due him for his conduct, and that he had always been a loyal vassal of his Majesty; and that God knew what was in his breast, and the thoughts of his heart. He died with the marks of a good Christian."¹³⁷ In Argensola's version of events, Baptista

¹³⁵ Argensola, *Discovery and Conquest*, 216.

¹³⁶ *True Relation*, BR 14: 130.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

own'd himself he had so great a hand in the rebellion, that it was not without good reason they would have made him their chief. That the Sangleys call'd out upon his Name. That Hontay [Joan Ontae] was troubled at his Absence, saying, He must needs be in some trouble, since he did not come to head them; and for the reason he hang'd himself. Next the Ring-leaders of the Mutiny, and it was prov'd against them, that they had set up a pole on the place call'd el Cerro, or the Hill of Calocan, and on it a black Flag, with two Chinese characters on it, which imported CUN TIEN, the significance whereof is, IN OBEDIENCE TO HEAVEN. Other colours were found with the Army that fought in Dilao, with a Cut on them containing the Chinese Figures of Encan, or Baptist.”¹³⁸

How could Baptista have claimed to be innocent while saying he had a great hand in the rebellion? These two seemingly contradictory accounts can be reconciled if we see Baptista as playing two roles at one time. One might call him duplicitous, and perhaps he was playing a wait-and-see game before committing himself, but his troubles arose from being caught in the middle at a time of opposing ideologies and visions of what Manila should be: an egalitarian utopia for certain Chinese or part of the Spanish empire.

Class and egalitarian motives underlay the insurrection and proved difficult for intermediaries to manage because the colonial order was hierarchical in structure. Accounts of the death of Joan Ontae suggest the repercussions of the collapse of the legitimacy of a powerful intermediary like Baptista for those associated with him. Joan Ontae's commitment to Baptista during the insurrection proved costly and he paid for it with his life. Ontae might have misread his godfather's motives given evidence of Baptista's seemingly great commitment to the rebel cause, especially his permitting the construction of a fort “suitable for twenty thousand men” with “very skillfully laid-out streets”¹³⁹ on the site of his “sugar work”¹⁴⁰ in preparation for an uprising. Alternatively, Ontae could have been leveraging his ties to Baptista to gain the

¹³⁸ Argensola, *Discovery and Conquest*, 221. For the original in Spanish see book nine of Argensola's *Conquista*, 326.

¹³⁹ *True Relation*, BR 14: 122.

¹⁴⁰ Argensola, *Discovery and Conquest*, 216.

leadership of a movement which he thought had a good chance of succeeding. Ontae's death, whether by hanging himself as mentioned above or at the hands of his men, as Costa says, was precipitated by Baptista's reluctance to declare himself for one side or the other. Baptista's lack of support for the insurrection conceivably radicalized the ideology of the non-elite participants. In Costa's telling, Ontae did not hang himself but was killed by the men when the Chinese in the *Parián* did not join the uprising after the initial burning of sections of the north bank. Ontae was declared a traitor and killed together with his "familiaris." What this suggests is that the non-elite saw elites like Ontae as obstacles to overthrowing the colonial order. After killing Ontae, the rebels chose "two heathen Sangleys" to be supreme commanders by "acclamation."¹⁴¹ While it is not known how exactly leaders were chosen in the Chinese community in Manila, the choice of commanders and the manner of choosing the new leaders suggests a radical break with old forms of control. First of all, the choice of heathen rather than Christian leaders was a shift away from the colonial conceptualization of the ideal candidate and the vote by acclamation broke with the idea of an elite chosen and Spanish appointed governor.¹⁴² Finally, when the new leaders ordered "auguries to be taken," they affirmed Chinese rituals and beliefs and at a cosmic level subjected the insurrection to their vision of order.

While the message on the captured banners gives us an insight into the shared perceptions of a large group of Chinese in Manila, it is only a snapshot of these perceptions in a very limited time frame. The discourse of those involved changed over time as the tensions of the insurrection allowed more and more of the grievances of the downtrodden to emerge. With the quashing of

¹⁴¹ Costa, *The Jesuits*, 212. Costa's account of Ontae's death is taken from the "Historia General" of Pablo Pastells (1846-1932). In his "Historia," Pastells quotes extensively from documents related to the insurrection from the Archive of the Indies in Seville. Costa's interpretation of events is faithful to the passages quoted in the Spanish by Pastells.

¹⁴² According to Edgar Wickberg, the Chinese guild heads nominated candidates for the office of Chinese governor. The Spanish governor would then appoint the nominee with the most votes in consultation with the Church. The Chinese guild heads' choice was respected by the governor (Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, 37-38).

the insurrection, visions of the oppressed of a system that would allow more equitable shares in the wealth generated in Manila could be buried for the time being. This suggests that class and egalitarian motives underlay the insurrection, though one must be cautious with accepting at face value the discourse on the banners.

The 1603 insurrection suggests that the Chinese in Manila were not a monolithic group and that while economic interest played a part in determining who would join the insurrection—the richer Chinese generally preferring to stay neutral—relationships of power drew certain Christian Chinese elites and non-Christian non-elites together, albeit only for a time. As the elite's claims of legitimacy crumbled in the face of tension, the non-elite formed new relationships of power with each other and with the world around them.

Chinese relationships with Indios and Japanese

The discussion of power and its limitations has been confined, so far, to the Chinese community and to a certain degree, its relationship with the Spanish community. It is important to realize that relationships in Manila extended beyond the Chinese-Spanish ones. Some episodes of the insurrection challenge the dominant characterization of it as a conflict between Chinese and Spaniards, not only in the lack of Chinese unity during the insurrection, but also in the moments when *indios* and Japanese became involved and in the aftermath when *Intramuros*, the city of Spaniards was opened up to certain Chinese.

The struggle for control over Manila in 1603 reminds us that no community could dominate there without the cooperation of others. This point is illuminated by the actions of all the parties involved. The Spanish governor Acuña wrote that upon the departure of the

mandarins, he set out to build up alliances in case of attack. He acted through the Church fathers to strike an agreement with different groups of natives.

I wrote to the alcaldes-mayor and the fathers; they sent me a memorandum of those who appeared to them most fit, saying that they had told them they should immediately get their people ready and well armed, each one with rations for a month. While this was being agreed upon, the uprising took place, and this precaution was of the greatest importance; for they were able to come without delay, and be of so much use that without them I know not what would have happened. In every way it has been on the greatest importance that these natives have lost their fear for the Sangleys, and have declared against them.¹⁴³

Acuña's account of the importance of the natives declaring for the Spaniards suggests that in the minds of certain native groups, Spanish control of Manila was not a foregone conclusion in 1603. The natives' fear of the Chinese also points to the possibility that the natives did not necessarily see Manila as a Spanish dominion. The Chinese provided an alternative to the Spaniards which the natives could potentially utilize, though the commitment of the Pampanga militias suggests that at least some groups of natives in the Manila area saw more advantage in allying with the Spaniards rather than the Chinese. Even so, we know that certain natives chose to ally with the Chinese, given a passage quoted by Pablo Pastells in his "Historia General." The passage reads (my translation), "They chose a Christian Sangley, the godson of Encang (Joan Baptista), called Juan Ontal (Ontae), and with him went many other Christian Sangleys with their women and children."¹⁴⁴ We know that the wives of Chinese were mainly natives given the lack of Chinese women in Manila in the seventeenth century and this suggests that the rebels included native women and *mestizo* children, who possibly had the support of the native relatives.

In his official complaint against the Chinese in 1605, Fray Miguel de Benavides, bishop of the Philippines, noted with much regret that the natives "embrace the superstitions and rites

¹⁴³ Letter from Acuña to the King, 18 December, 1603, in BR 12: 160.

¹⁴⁴ Pastells, LXXXI: "Eligieron por cabeza un Sangley cristiano ahijado de Encang, llamado Juan Ontal, y con este fueron otros muchos sangleyes cristianos con sus mujeres e hijos."

which the idolatrous infidels desire to teach them.” Likewise, the Chinese upon intermarrying “with the women of these nations, adopt their customs, and live like Indians.”¹⁴⁵ While it is dangerous to draw too much out of these brief mentions of intersocietal exchange, they indicate that acculturation was a two-way street. The intermixing of Chinese and *indios* also suggests that Chinese and indigenous people were plugged into each other’s social networks; Edgar Wickberg points out, however, based on Jacques Amyot’s study of twentieth-century adaptation of Chinese familism to the Philippine environment, that characteristically, “the Chinese husband was used and perhaps abused by his *indio* or *mestizo* in-laws, who found it financially advantageous to have such a moneymaker as a relative.”¹⁴⁶ This characterization, if it can be applied to the early seventeenth century, reverses the image of the innocent native being led astray and exploited by the pernicious Chinese so often brought up in documents of ecclesiastics.

In the insurrection of 1603, it is not clear if many *indios* fought on the side of the Chinese or not but there certainly were attempts by Chinese gardeners of the village of Quiapo to persuade their *indio* neighbors to join the uprising with them, “saying that they were good people and the Spaniards bad.”¹⁴⁷ The attempt to include *indios* in the uprising raises the question whether the insurrection should be viewed as ethnic conflict and if not, how it should be characterized. Was this a war to remake the system? Was it a revolution? Where would the allies of the rebels fit in the new regime? Would they also be brothers?

There is little indication of where and how the different ethnic groups would be absorbed if the insurrection succeeded. Perhaps, it was not a regime imagined ethnically but through relationships of ritual brotherhood that crossed ethnic boundaries. Bishop Benavides points to a

¹⁴⁵ “Complaints against the Chinese by Fray Miguel de Venavides”, 1605, in BR 13: 272.

¹⁴⁶ Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, 33.

¹⁴⁷ “Sworn Statement by Pablo Ruiz de Talavera, 1605,” in BR 13: 278.

potential alliance between Chinese and Japanese in his complaint about the Chinese. He submits what was written on the banners of the Chinese rebels of 1603 as evidence of this potential alliance. “For on the banner that the infidel Sangleys raised when they rebelled and made the late war against us, so endangering us, there were written Chinese letters, which declared the Sangleys to be friends of the Japanese.”¹⁴⁸ Benavides allows us a glimpse into an alliance that would have been unthought of by the Spanish given that the accounts on the insurrection tend to paint the Japanese as “a race hostile to the Sangleys.”¹⁴⁹ A more detailed account of a banner speaking of an alliance with the Japanese can be found in Argensola’s account:

The Chief and General of the Kingdom of China, call’d Ezequi, and another of the Tribe of Su, called Tym, following the Dictates of heaven in this Affair, that all the Chinese may unanimously joyn in this work, and obey them, in order to root out these enemy robbers, are willing that Yochume and Quinte, Japoneses, in Conjunction with us Sangleyes, do conquer this city, and when we have subdu’d it, we will divide this country, even to the grass of it, equally between us, as becomes loving brothers.¹⁵⁰

This banner, Argensola claims, was present at the gathering at Joan Baptista’s sugar works, at the start of the insurrection. One wonders how the alliance was born and if Yochume and Quinte were isolated cases or representatives of larger Japanese groups. We cannot know for sure, but we see that the language of the banner had been altered to accommodate allies of different ethnicity.

Another hint that Japanese might have joined this insurrection is the appearance of two Japanese boys at Baptista’s trial. “Thither came a Japanese Boy,¹⁵¹ enquiring for Baptist. They

¹⁴⁸ “Complaint of Fray Miguel de Venavides, 1605,” BR 13: 274-75.

¹⁴⁹ Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 87.

¹⁵⁰ Argensola, *Discovery and Conquest*, 216.

¹⁵¹ There is a clear distinction in the sources between “Japanese” and “Chinese.” For example, Morga found the Japanese to be a “brave and high-spirited race” (*Sucesos*, 240). In his edition of the *Sucesos*, J.S. Cummins says that “Morga evidently shared the view of the Jesuit Gracián that the Japanese were the Spaniards of Asia,”

found his pocket full of squibs, and another Boy with a piece of a wax-candle, all which was given them by one of Baptist's slaves. The squibs were all bloody, perhaps it was some Christian's gore."¹⁵² Were these boys just random persons off the street or were they somehow connected to the rebels? There is no evidence at this point to draw any definitive conclusions from this episode but it does suggest Japanese involvement.

In another episode, Talavera, in his complaint against the Chinese refers to Japanese pirates who plunder the coasts and "bring Sangleys as pilots and sailors."¹⁵³ Were there relationships of trust between Japanese and Chinese in Manila built previously on pirate ships? Hints of Japanese-Chinese collaboration further complicate our understanding of the insurrection of 1603 as an ethnic conflict. If Japanese fought on both sides of the conflict, does the label "Sanglely Insurrection" still apply to what happened?

Conclusion

The introduction of Japanese and native groups into the picture gives rise to questions about how Spanish control was maintained in Manila. While colonial laws did emphasize the division of racial groups, these laws could only articulate an ideal vision, one that was often challenged by the intermingling of the groups in practice. One final example from the Insurrection of 1603 illustrates this point. Manila could be divided into two parts: the walled city—*intramuros*—and the area outside—*extramuros*. *Intramuros* was conceived as an

("Introduction," footnote 1, 240). Morga, on the other hand, found the Chinese to be "phlegmatic" (*Sucesos*, 321). This characterization was more than a physical description of them, but rather one linked to their moral disposition if we consider "phlegmatic" to be part of a larger discourse on humors and temperaments. Morga also incorporated the negative views of others concerning the Chinese such as Coronel Fernando de los Ríos who had been to China and the accounts of Blas Ruis de Hernán Gonçales who had encountered Chinese in Cambodia (*Sucesos*, 134 and 151).

¹⁵² Argensola, *Discovery and Conquest*, 221.

¹⁵³ Talavera, BR 13: 280.

exclusively Spanish space¹⁵⁴ and *extramuros*, for the non-Spaniards. After the insurrection, however, Chinese lived in the city as shown by the following passage:

...there live, exist, and reside infidel Sangleys in the houses of the citizens of Manila, or in some of them. It should be known that they are in the house of the master-of-camp Pedro de Chaves, and in the house of the master-of-camp Agustin de Arceo, who is at present exercising the said office and military rank in this camp—and the said houses form one side of the palace, and front on the plaza de Armas—and in the house of the dean Don Juan de Bivero and those of Antonio Spinoza, which are on the plaza of this said city; and in a number of others belonging to the most prominent citizens—that is, those of the highest life and rank in the city. ...I have seen today...the said Sangleys in the said houses, selling their merchandise and being present therein as if in their own homes.¹⁵⁵

It seems incredible that so soon after the insurrection Chinese were allowed to live in the very homes of the most prominent Spaniards. We can gather from this sworn statement denouncing the practice that ethnicity did matter to the Spaniards and that race could be a barrier in colonial Manila. Nonetheless, by 1605, *intramuros* was no longer exclusively a city for Spaniards. The labeling of the Insurrection of 1603 as a Sangleys Insurrection is reflective of intramuros-extramuros thinking. We need to move beyond this bifurcated view to see the complex and multi-dimensional interactions between different groups in colonial Manila. Manila was never only a Spanish, *indio*, Japanese or Chinese city in the colonial era but one where complicated relationships were forged between different groups. These ties bound colonial society together and made empire viable in Manila.

¹⁵⁴ Robert Reed, *Colonial Manila*, 15-69.

¹⁵⁵ “Sworn Statement to the effect that there are Sangleys in Manila in the present year 1605,” BR 13: 285-286.

Chapter Two

Adaptive Strategies of Parián Chinese: Fictive Kinship and Credit in Seventeenth-Century Manila¹⁵⁶

Introduction

Looking down from behind the high stonewalls of Fort Santiago facing north towards the River Pasig, a Spanish soldier would have been greeted by a curious sight: busy “streets and squares” lined with shops adorned with placards printed in strange characters into which people of all sorts disappeared only to emerge again with wrapped bundles in hand. One could only imagine the contents of each package, for it was said “the whole trade of China” could be found in what was in fact a great Chinese market. Closer to the ground, a Dominican priest strolling from the Church of the Three Kings would have seen the familiar faces of parishioners in their shops. As he walked through the streets, he might have frowned upon seeing Spaniards, *indios* and Chinese mingling together, a meal just finished at one of the many Chinese eateries, engaged in a game of chance called *metua*. His attention might then, have been drawn by a little *mestiza* girl tugging at his hand, beckoning him to come with her to see her mother and her brother whom he had just baptized the week before.¹⁵⁷

Much imagination is needed to recreate the vibrant world of Chinese immigrants in seventeenth-century Manila since much of what we know about that world is based upon Spanish

¹⁵⁶ A version of this chapter under the same title was published in *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 61, no. 3 (2013): 362-384.

¹⁵⁷ This re-created description of the seventeenth-century Manila *Parián* is based on Bishop Salazar’s (1590) and Bartolomé de Letona’s (1662) accounts. Salazar’s account entitled “The Chinese and The Parián at Manila,” can be found in BR 7: 212-238. For the original Spanish, see “Carta-relación de las cosas de la China y de los Chinos del parián de Manila enviada al rey Felipe II. Desde Manila, á 24 de junio de 1590” reproduced in W.E. Retana’s *Archivo del bibliófilo Filipino*, Vol. III (Madrid: 1897), 47-80. For Letona’s account, see BR 36: 204-205.

colonial sketches of life in the Philippines, which though revealing in some ways, only leave hints at the social and power organizations and relationships at play in the colony. Furthermore, the difficulty in finding sources on Chinese life in early colonial Manila has discouraged scholarship on the topic.¹⁵⁸ As discussed in the introduction, earlier scholarship has tended to reproduce the concerns of Spanish colonial sources in focusing on the Manila Galleon trade, Chinese threats to Spanish rulership, and the sincerity of Chinese conversion to Catholicism or focused on nationalist fears surrounding Chinese assimilation into the Filipino nation.¹⁵⁹

Between a focus on Spanish colonial preoccupations and Filipino nationalist anxieties, the study of Chinese ties with other residents of Manila in the beginning period of the establishment of a long-term Spanish presence in the Philippines has sadly been neglected, much to the detriment of our understanding of the Chinese role in the creation of the Spanish Empire. Over the past fifteen years or so, the tide has begun to turn ever so slightly. The contours of early Chinese life in Manila and the links that connected Chinese to colonial society have become somewhat clearer thanks to scholars like Nariko Sugaya, Lucille Chia, and José Eugenio Borao.¹⁶⁰ Using mainly

¹⁵⁸ Edgar Wickberg, the preeminent scholar of Chinese in the Philippines, lamented in his important contribution *The Chinese in Philippine Life* that “Information about the internal structure of the Philippine Chinese community prior to 1850 is difficult to obtain,” (36).

¹⁵⁹ Wang Gungwu notes that the “Spanish sources, on which much of our information depends, focus so much on the China-Mexico trade, on the Chinese threats to Spanish authority, and on the potential conversion of the Chinese to Catholicism that they do not mention what institutions the Chinese themselves used to provide solidarity or further their business efforts.” See “Merchants Without Empire: The Hokkien Sojourning Communities,” in *The Rise of Merchant Empires: Long Distance Trade in the Early Modern World, 1350-1750*, ed. James D. Tracy (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 413-414. William Schurz’ *The Manila Galleon* is majestic in its oceanic scope and focus on global connections but his treatment of the Chinese displays many of the Spanish concerns Wang Gungwu points out above. The collection of essays edited by Alfonso Felix, Jr. in volume one of *The Chinese in the Philippines* remains an important contribution to scholarship on Chinese life in early Spanish colonial Manila. Although the essays in this volume are helpful in painting a general picture of Chinese relations with Spaniards, they are preoccupied by questions of Chinese assimilation into the Filipino nation.

¹⁶⁰ Nariko Sugaya has been publishing on the Chinese in the early colonial Philippines since the 1990s. Her work on Chinese marriages and conversion to Catholicism in the latter half of the eighteenth-century and Lucille Chia’s article are the only two works I have found that deal directly with Chinese social networks in early modern Manila. See Sugaya, “Chinese immigrant society” and Chia, “The Butcher, the Baker, and the Carpenter.”

Spanish sources—and Chinese genealogical records in the case of Lucille Chia—these scholars have provided glimpses at the internal workings of Chinese life in early colonial Manila. The good work of these scholars notwithstanding, the information is still sketchy and perceptions of pre-1850 Chinese life have had to rely on inferences from the period after 1850 or from anthropological work done by Jacques Amyot looking at the Manila Chinese in the 1950s.¹⁶¹ Consequently, a gap still exists in our understanding of how the Chinese organized themselves and related to others in early colonial Manila.

This chapter will excavate Spanish colonial documents to look more closely at the construction and function of the social and financial networks that bound the Chinese, indigenous and Spanish communities together in seventeenth-century Manila. The chapter places at its center the seventeenth-century Chinese community of the *Parián* because its role as the linchpin of the Chinese, indigenous and Spanish economies has yielded rare documentation that allows for the study of the intersections between these communities that made empire viable. Based on the baptismal records of the *Parián* of 1626-1700 and lists of non-Christian Chinese in Manila in 1689 and 1690,¹⁶² I contend that the Chinese in Manila adapted to secure themselves and their livelihoods by using two major strategies: (1) ritual kinship in the form of *compadrazgo* (co-parenthood) and *padrinazgo* (god-parenthood), and (2) extending credit. The Chinese used both strategies to create or solidify networks of mutual obligation and aid within their own

¹⁶¹ Jacques Amyot, *The Manila Chinese: Familism in the Philippine Environment* (Quezon City: Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University, 1973).

¹⁶² Both lists can be found at the Archivo General de Indias in Filipinas 202. The 1689 list is that of debts owed to non-Christian Chinese and is entitled “Compulsa de los autos hechos en virtud de la real cédula de 14 de noviembre 1686 sobre la expulsión de los sangleyes infieles.” The 1690 list records members of various non-Christian Chinese occupational guilds or *gremios* and is entitled “Carta de la Audiencia de Manila: Alonso de Abella Fuertes, Juan de Ozaeta, Lorenzo de Avina Echevarría y Juan de Sierra Osorio, sobre lo obrado en la expulsión de los sangleyes. Manila, 25 de junio de 1690.”

community and with other residents of Manila. In so doing, they helped construct the connective ties of Spain's collaborative empire.

Compadrazgo and Padrinazgo

In seventeenth-century Manila, the Catholic customs of *compadrazgo* and *padrinazgo* were used by Spanish, indigenous, and Chinese alike to create networks of mutual obligation. While the relationships of *compadrazgo* and *padrinazgo* were supposed to be—in the eyes of the church—ones of spiritual kinship, binding godparents to each other and to the child or convert as spiritual guides and sponsors in the faith, often the social relationships that came with the customs could not be decoupled from the spiritual ones. This was true in Manila as it was in Spain and much of Western Europe.¹⁶³

The Church's preoccupation with the propensity for social relationships in *compadrazgo* and *padrinazgo* to be of as much concern as, if not take precedence over, spiritual ones did not appear only with the spread of Catholicism to the Philippines. The Western European roots of the concern are abundantly clear in the fact that in the Council of Trent (1545-1563), convened before the long-term Spanish presence in the Philippines had been established, the Church found it necessary to prescribe the allowable number of godparents. "Indeed the council established that 'only one, man or woman, according to the prescriptions of the holy canons, or at the most one man and one woman can be godparents at Baptism' (*Sacred Council of Trent, Session 24,*

¹⁶³ John Phelan points out that in contrast to Spain, the tendency in the Philippines and the Americas "was to expand the number of people involved" in ritual co-parenthood (*The Hispanization, 77-78*). Antonio Irigoyen López, however, provides a different view. His study of ecclesiastical godparenthood in early modern Murcia suggests that the propensity to multiply godparents to establish social ties was an entrenched custom in Western Europe by the end of the Middle Ages and that at the Council of Trent, "in an attempt to restore the exclusively religious nature of baptism, the Church ruled on how the sacrament was to be celebrated and the number of godparents admissible." See Irigoyen López, "Ecclesiastical godparenthood in early modern Murcia," in *Spiritual Kinship in Europe, 1500-1900*, eds. Guido Alfani and Vincent Gourdon (New York: Palgrave, 2012), 74-95 (74).

chapter 2).”¹⁶⁴ Still, in the seventeenth century, this prescription was not fully accepted so that Francisco de Toledo, could still write in 1619 of Spain that “Some of the congregation of the Council say that at baptism, the godparents can be a man instead of the woman, who should be the godmother, and that a woman may replace the man, who should be godfather.”¹⁶⁵ Even as late as 1727, J. Ortiz Cantero could pose the following scenario in his guide for priests:

If it should happen that a number of noblemen all want to be godparents to a child, and the parents had appointed them, and they insist despite the Priest informing them of the Council’s disposition, and should the Priest fear a confrontation as a result of his opposition, he can pretend and with caution appoint one of the men and another woman, those who are the closest, to hold or touch the infant when he is baptized; and despite the rest touching him, only the two appointed persons contract kinship and are truly godparents. . . . And if the Priest, either through ignorance or fear, should accept many godparents, and they all touch the infant, write them all in, as it is very probably that they all contract spiritual kinship.¹⁶⁶

Compadrazgo and *padrinazgo* had a strong social aspect to them in Spain of the seventeenth century and even of the eighteenth century. In that respect, *compadrazgo* and *padrinazgo* in the Philippines differed little from practices in Spain.

While *compadrazgo* and *padrinazgo* in Spain and the Philippines shared the commonality of a strong social component, the context of seventeenth-century Manila did affect the way these relationships played out—specifically, the presence of a large number of male, adult converts. In the setting of a child born into a Christian home, as was almost always the case in Spain, *compadrazgo* was a triangular relationship involving a baptized child, the biological parents, and the godparents. *Compadrazgo*, as described above, was applicable to children with Christian parents residing in the Philippines, but at the baptism of adult converts—whose parents were

¹⁶⁴ Quoted in Irigoyen López, “Ecclesiastical Godparenthood,” 77.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 77-78.

¹⁶⁶ Quoted in Irigoyen López, “Ecclesiastical Godparenthood,” 79.

non-Catholic (*infieles*) and probably based in China—it was not a viable relationship. For these new converts, *compadrazgo* was a triangular relationship involving only adults, and between godparents and godparents—usually godfathers— on the one hand, and godparents and godsons, on the other. It is unclear how co-parents involved in the baptism of adult converts were linked to each other but there is evidence that godfathers and godsons were intermeshed in relationships of mutual obligation. On the other hand, the Western European conception of *compadrazgo*—as one binding a child, biological parents and godparents—is clearer as a mutual obligation strategy when considering the evidence for Chinese-*mestiza* families. While *compadrazgo* and *padrinazgo* are linked concepts, this chapter makes a distinction between the two because of the context of seventeenth-century Manila.

As mentioned above, in Manila, *compadrazgo* and *padrinazgo* were used to create networks of mutual obligation. John Phelan suggests that in the Philippines, the trend was to choose godparents from a “superior social stratum, for the participants in the relationship were under some moral obligation to aid each other.”¹⁶⁷ Phelan’s view is supported by my own examination of the baptismal record of the *Parián* (1626-1700) which contains several clear examples of Chinese seeking powerful patrons using this mechanism. For example, the Spanish Governor Juan Niño de Tavora had at least three Chinese godsons in the 1620s, of whom one was head of the carpenters’ guild, and another was a prominent godfather in the Chinese convert community.¹⁶⁸

The mutual obligation aspect of these relationships forged by ritual kinship was decried by the *Audiencia* or High Tribunal of Manila, which issued an ordinance in 1599 accusing the

¹⁶⁷ Phelan, *The Hispanization*, 77.

¹⁶⁸ Don Juan Niño de Tavora’s godsons were Joseph Tien Chan (baptized May 1627), Domingo Zuiteng (baptized June 1627), and Don Philippe Leong Bia (baptized October 1627). This information comes from AUST Libro.

Chinese of “having a great number of godchildren—both Christian and infidel—in order to use them as false witnesses —to which they lend themselves with great facility, and at little cost—and for other evil purposes and intents, exchanging with them favors and assistance in their affairs.”¹⁶⁹ The baptismal record of the *Parián* does support, in part, the *Audiencia*’s notion that Chinese had a great number of godchildren. The top sponsor or godfather in the *Parián* had as many as 141 godchildren and there were three other godfathers with more than fifty godchildren. Twenty-two other godfathers had ten or more godchildren. While the existence of godfathers with many godchildren does not unequivocally confirm that Chinese godfathers were using their godchildren for non-spiritual purposes, it does lend the *Audiencia*’s perception of the mutual aid nature of ritual kinship some credence. In addition, while the baptismal record of the *Parián* does not explicitly show a proliferation of godparents, it does suggest this phenomenon occurred because of several cases—forty-three to be precise—when godsons had more than one godfather.¹⁷⁰ If some Chinese had “a great number of godchildren,” and others sought out more than one godfather, perhaps they were indeed—as the *Audiencia* chafed—extending the Catholic ritual beyond its spiritual boundaries, suggesting that mutual aid was a primary consideration for certain Chinese in developing these relationships.

If mutual aid was one of the main goals of ritual kinship contracted through baptism, what rules governed when and how ritual kinship was chosen to solidify a mutual aid relationship? Drawing once again on the baptismal record of the *Parián*, I am able to discern

¹⁶⁹ Quoted in Phelan, *The Hispanization*, 77-78.

¹⁷⁰ The data quoted comes from a database I compiled based on AUST Libro. The database contains 3117 names of those baptized and other information connected to baptisms such as place of origin and age of the baptized, parents’ and godparents’ names, occupations of the baptized and of godparents, residence of parents and godparents and caste. Information in the categories listed was not always complete since the baptismal record did not always have details for all the mentioned categories. All other analysis of AUST Libro in this chapter comes from connections I have drawn based on the database I constructed.

three factors that influenced *compadrazgo* and god-parenthood: (i) hometown ties, (ii) trade specialization, and (iii) gender.

The first two factors—hometown ties and trade specialization—mattered most when it came to mutual aid relationships involving converts. In the context of the *Parián* in the period under study, converts were adult males from the Southeastern coast of China. These converts became integrated into kinship networks that linked communities in China to Manila to fill specific niches in the economy.¹⁷¹ Some of the top twenty-five godfathers in the *Parián* sponsored heavily from certain hometowns. The clearest case of this strategy is that of a carpenter called Domingo Zuiteng, who was baptized in June 1627, aged forty-five at the time. He was from *qehue*, a locale which was connected to the county seat of *Tangua*¹⁷² in Fujian province. Of his fourteen godsons, eleven were adults. Of these eleven, seven were from *Tangua* (about three-fifths). Clearly, Domingo Zuiteng was recruiting from his hometown area but how do we know that he was recruiting godsons to be carpenters? After all only four out of eleven working-age

¹⁷¹ My analysis of AUST Libro indicates that the following were the top ten known places of origin for those baptized in the *Parián*: *Tangua/Tong'an* (15%), *Samtoul/Sandu* (13%), *Anhay/Anhai* (7%), *Siali/?* (6%), *Emuy/Xiamen* (6%), *Haicheng/Haicheng* (4%), *Chiobe/?* (4%), *Tiotoa/Changtai* (4%), *Chiangchiu/Zhangzhou* (2%), and *Pe ta/?* (2%). I was able to place most of the top ten known places of origin in Fujian province and have given their corresponding Mandarin names in the above list in the following format: Hokkien place name as perceived by scribe/ Mandarin pinyin place name. The identification of places of origin was not always straightforward and in many cases, is still a work in progress. A catalogue of places found in Martino Martini's *Novus Atlas Sinensis* in volume 3 of Franco DeMarchi and Giuliano Bertuccioli's edition (2002) of Martini's *Opera Omnia* gives place names in Fujian province with their corresponding longitude and latitude and is helpful in understanding the possible Spanish understandings of places in Fujian given the exchange of information between mapmakers and Europeans dealing with China. Lucille Chia also gives a list of Fujian place names in her article. In cases where Chia, DeMarchi and Bertuccioli were silent, I was sometimes able to find a remark in the baptismal book left by the scribe linking a place name unknown to me at the time with a known place name identified by the authors mentioned. When comparing the top ten sending communities for baptized immigrants in the seventeenth century with Edgar Wickberg's (1965, 172) data on nineteenth-century Chinese migration patterns to the Philippines, it becomes apparent that certain communities maintained long-term migration links with the Philippines. *Tong'an* and *Jinjiang* counties (*Anhai* was in *Jinjiang* county) continued to send large numbers of migrants to the islands. On the other hand, *Sandu*, a major sending community in the seventeenth-century, is not listed by Wickberg as a major sending community. Inquiries into the reasons for the persistence and diminution of migration from particular communities should consider conditions in China as well as the Philippines and other possible migration destinations at different points in time.

¹⁷² *Tangua* in Hokkien is rendered in Mandarin as *Tong'an*.

godsons had their occupations listed. Of these four, three were from *Tangua*. Two *Tangua* godsons were carpenters and one was a wholesaler. What were the other *Tangua* godsons doing to earn a living? We cannot be sure but the baptismal record suggests a link between *Tangua* and carpentry in Manila for the years 1626-1633—the years when Domingo was most active as a godfather. When one searches for those listed as carpenters in the record, 23 out of 32 were from *Tangua*. When one looks at the years in which these carpenters were baptized, it is striking that all but one of the *Tangua* carpenters were baptized between 1626 and 1633. It appears that *Tangua* men dominated the niche of carpentry in Manila during these years. Therefore, one could venture a guess that Domingo Zuiteng's godsons who did not have their occupations listed might have been carpenters as well. When we take the case of Domingo Zuiteng together with the scholarship of Lucille Chia¹⁷³, who has found that bakery workers from the town of *Sandu* in Fujian province worked together under a head baker from *Sandu*, one can assert, with some caution, that Chinese patrons created networks linking communities in China to Manila to fill specific niches in the economy. While there is a pattern of sponsorship linking hometown ties and trade specialization, the case of Domingo Zuiteng, with godsons from outside of the *Tangua* area, also suggests that this was not the only strategy that drove god-parenthood.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ Chia, "The Butcher, the Baker, and the Carpenter."

¹⁷⁴ Nariko Sugaya, in a paper delivered at the Intercultural Relations and Cultural Transformation of Ethnic Chinese Communities (ISSCO) conference in Manila in 1998, suggests that in the latter half of the eighteenth century, when selecting witnesses for marriages, Chinese in the Manila area "preferred to select those who lived in the same locality rather than to nominate the people from the same hometown" (*Intercultural Relations* 2000, 560). Although marriage and god-parenthood are not identical rituals, they both revolve around kinship and it might be worth considering that similar concerns entered the equation when Chinese chose ritual kin. Building on this link, Sugaya's article suggests that hometown ties and trade specialization were not the only factors that drove Chinese in kinship relationships. Instead, as Mark Dizon argues—though for missions on the Caraballo Mountains in the early eighteenth century—kinship was not necessarily tied to economic concerns but was "processual and continuously constructed through everyday acts, such as sharing food and living together." See Dizon, "Social and Spiritual Kinship in Early Eighteenth-Century Missions on the Caraballo Mountains," *Philippine Studies* 59, no. 3 (2011): 367-98 (368). Perhaps friendship cultivated through everyday acts was just as important as rational calculation when it came to ritual kinship. After all, slightly less than a third of godfathers in AUST Libro had more than five

Chinese had ties beyond hometown association or trade specialization. A general overview of *compadrazgo* and god-parenthood patterns in the *Parián*, shown in Table 2.1, confirms this.¹⁷⁵ We see that while Chinese godfathers were the main patrons in the jurisdiction of the *Parián* mission, Spanish godfathers also played substantial roles as patrons, though indigenous and *mestizo* godfathers played negligible roles as patrons for the Chinese in the 1600s. However, the overall pattern of *compadrazgo* described does not apply evenly to all

godchildren. For the vast majority of those baptized, no clear reasons tied to place of origin or trade specializations could be discerned.

¹⁷⁵ When trying to determine the legal designations of godparents, my assumptions were as follows: "Spanish" godfathers were determined by the identifiers "*español*", "*criollo*", place of residence (*vecino de Manila*), were members of Spanish nobility, had the title of "*doctor*," or "*licenciado*" or held office reserved for Spaniards (*governor, oidor, aguacil maior, arzobispo* etc.). In a few instances there were no clear indications that a godfather was a Spaniard. In such instances the decision to categorize the godfather as "Spaniard" rested on naming conventions. For example, I assumed a person with a surname containing a preposition of origin such as "de Leon," "del Castillo" or "de Aragon" was a Spaniard given that such surnames were not often associated with non-Spaniards. Article 9 of Narciso Clavería y Zaldúa's 1849 decree on surnames stipulates that "Families who can prove that they have kept for four generations their surname, even though it may be the name of a saint, but not those like **de la Cruz, de los Santos**, and some others which are so numerous that they would continue producing confusion, may pass them on to their descendants, the Reverend fathers and the heads of provinces are advised to use their judgment in the implementation of this article" (translation in Domingo Abella's introduction to *Catálogo alfabético de apellidos*, Narciso Clavería y Zaldúa, ed. Domingo Abella [Manila: Philippine National Archives, 1973], xi). The quoted article implies that leading up to 1849, second names—since surnames were not the norm for the indigenous population, family members usually not maintaining a common family name—of the indigenous population were often linked with saint names or religious imagery, to the point of causing great confusion for Spanish administrators trying to identify individuals for state purposes. Based on Clavería y Zaldúa's decree, I have surmised that those with saint names as second names were "*indios*" unless otherwise stated. Priests did annotate castes at times but not often. I also assumed that those with Basque surnames such as "Olarte," "Arriaga," "Mendiola," "Leuzarte," and "Exguirre" were most likely Spaniards. There were of course exceptions to the rule. Antonio S. Tan points out that a "Don Mendiola" baptized in 1632 was actually a Chinese who had taken his godfather's surname as his own. In Tan, "The Chinese Mestizos and the Formation of the Filipino Nationality." *Archipelago* 32 (1986): 141-621(145). I still see the adoption of Spanish surnames and the dispensation of Chinese names as exceptions in this period given the proliferation of Chinese names in the baptismal record of the *Parián*. The main point to consider when dealing with Spanish second names/ surnames is that there is always the possibility of error when trying to pinpoint someone's legal identity when the sole identifier is a Spanish name. While there are surely errors in identification in my categories, my main conclusions still hold given that many of those I classified as Spaniards had occupations reserved for Spaniards (*oidor, factor*), were of the Spanish nobility (*sobrino del duque*) or had educational or clerical titles (*licenciado, doctor and arzobispo*). Chinese were more easily identified by having Chinese names appended to their Christian ones. There was of course the possibility that some of these were *mestizos* and indeed some were, but only in rare instances could I find someone with a Chinese name identified as a *mestizo*. From example, for 21 March 1657, the godfather was an *Alonso buco mestico*. This suggests to me that unless someone was perceived as or self-identified as a *mestizo*, he was Chinese if he had a Chinese name.

sectors of the *Parián*. There was a clear differentiation in sponsorship patterns when one considers gender.

Table 2.1. Godfathers by Ethnic/Legal Categories in the *Parián*, 1626-1700

Godfathers by Ethnic/Legal Categories	Count	Percentage (%)
Chinese	2326	80.18
Spanish	473	16.3
Indigenous/ <i>Mestizo</i>	102	3.52

The pattern of sponsorship for females differed greatly from the overall pattern of the *Parián* mission already described. For females, there was a tendency to form ties with non-Chinese. For non-Spanish girls, fifty or nearly two-thirds had non-Chinese godfathers and only about one-third had Chinese ones. This proclivity becomes even more pronounced when we consider that most girls did not have godfathers. More than seventy percent only had godmothers. In Manila in the seventeenth century, godmothers were most certainly not Chinese there being almost no Chinese women in the Philippines prior to the mass migrations of the late 1800s and early 1900s.

To further illustrate the gendered strategies for building social connections through *compadrazgo*, let us now look at a Chinese-*Mestiza* family in the 1600s. The patriarch of this family was Diego de Paciencia Ang Quimco and the matriarch was Petronila de Jesus. Together, they had ten children between 1678-1693, as shown in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2. Godparents of the Children of Diego de Paciencia Ang Quimco and Petronila de Jesus, 1678-1693

Year of Birth	Name of Children	Godfather	Godmother	Godfather's Occupation
1678	Maria Rosa	Francisco Samco	Dionisia Sta Maria	
1680	Ana de Jesus	Juan Felipe Tiam Nio	Melchiora de los Reyes	Headman
1681	Christina de Jesus		Dorothea Mauricia	
1683	Francisco Geronimo	Luis de Gaspar		
1685	Clara de los Santos		Maria de la Concepción	
1687	Juana Florentina		Dorothea Mauricia	
1688	Laura Chitnio	Alonso xue co		carpenter
1689	Apolonia de Jesus		Theodora de la Concepción	
1691	Juan Pacheco	Diego Tiamco		
1693	Pasquala de Jesus		Luisa Sy nio	

All the girls had godmothers, except for one—Laura Chitnio, and the two boys had only godfathers, a pattern which conforms to the overall *Parián* data. While it was not unusual from a religious perspective to have a woman as a spiritual guide for a girl and a man as one for a boy, the exception to the rule suggests that the choice of godparents also involved a social calculation. Laura Chitnio was the only girl without a godmother. She instead had a godfather—Alonso Xue Co, a carpenter. The unusual choice of selecting a godfather for a daughter, coupled with other circumstances such as the social status of the girl's father at the time of her baptism and the name choice for the girl raises some questions concerning the purely spiritual nature of *compadrazgo*—at least for this family. Consider that Diego was registered with the honorific title “Don” for the first time in the record at Laura Chitnio's birth. Furthermore, Laura was the only daughter registered with a Chinese component to her name—Chitnio—translated as seventh

daughter in the Hokkien language.¹⁷⁶ Was Diego in need of forming a strategic relationship with Laura's Chinese godfather, the birth of his daughter providing an opportunity to do so? Was Laura given a Chinese name to emphasize her father's ties with the Chinese community? These questions are unanswerable with the available data and they do not rule out spiritual motivations for kinship, but I would suggest that mutual aid was the focus of *compadrazgo*, at least in this case. The case of Laura Chitnio suggests that being "Chinese" or "*mestiza*" or "*india*" was dependent on familial calculations—Laura's Chinese identity was emphasized in her name while her siblings' *mestizo* identity was emphasized in their names. Racial designations in seventeenth-century Manila were not necessarily determined by biology but socially constructed and based on calculated strategies of mutual aid and obligation.

So far, the patterns of coparenthood and god-parenthood presented have touched on strategies utilized by Chinese converts and their families. It is unclear if these strategies were equally applicable to unconverted Chinese. There is of course the observation of the *Audiencia* members of 1599 which I alluded to earlier—that Chinese had a great number of godchildren both Christian and non-Christian. If we accept the *Audiencia*'s observations as accurate, then one would suspect that similar strategies of using hometown ties and trade specializations would apply to non-Christians. As mentioned, Lucille Chia's work¹⁷⁷ provides some evidence of this pattern obtaining for bakers in the 1680s. Chia does not say that the workers were godsons of the

¹⁷⁶ Even though *chitnio* means seventh daughter, the baptismal record indicates that she was the sixth girl born into the family. In order to resolve this discrepancy, several solutions of an admittedly speculative nature come to mind: an older girl was born and baptized in a different parish and therefore does not show up in the baptismal records of the *Parián* or portions of the record are missing. Alternatively, Diego and Petronila might have suffered the tragedy of a daughter who died before she was baptized and the child's name would not have been recorded in the baptismal book. From interviews with my older Hokkien relatives, I found that according to current Hokkien naming practices, a child who dies young is still considered in the naming order, even if the child dies before the birth of subsequent children.

¹⁷⁷ Chia, "The Butcher, the Baker and the Carpenter."

headmen but taken together with the *Audiencia*'s observations, I suggest that coparenthood and god-parenthood were practices that extended well beyond the confines of the Church and the *Parián* mission.

Credit

In addition to *compadrazgo* and *padrinazgo*, the Chinese utilized credit to secure their persons and livelihoods. The Chinese extended credit to all sectors of society in Manila with an eye towards making a profit as well as obligating debtors to protect them by becoming essential for their daily living or business ventures. By extending credit so broadly, the Chinese made themselves indispensable to the colony—something of which the authorities were aware and the Chinese were wont to remind them. The Bishop of Manila, Fray Domingo de Salazar in a letter dated June 24, 1590, entitled “The Chinese and the *Parián* in Manila” wrote that the Chinese

are so accommodating that when one has no money to pay for the bread, they give him ***credit and mark it on a tally*** [emphasis is mine]. It happens that many soldiers get food this way all through the year, and the bakers never fail to provide them with all the bread they need. This has been a great help for the poor of this city, for had they not found this refuge they would suffer want.¹⁷⁸

Antonio de Morga, a justice of the *Audiencia* from 1595-1603, wrote in his *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* (1609) that the Chinese

are very skillful and intelligent traders, patient and level-headed, so as to do their business the better. They are ready to allow credit and give liberal terms to those whom they know will deal squarely with them and will not fail in paying them in due time. On the other hand, however, since they are a people without any religion or conscience, and so greedy, they commit innumerable frauds and tricks in their dealings, so that it is necessary to be sharp, and to know the goods one is buying, so as not to be cheated. But buyers get even with them by playing tricks in their turn as well as by their faulty payments. So between one side and the other the judges and the *Audiencia* are kept busy.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁸ BR 7: 215.

¹⁷⁹ Morga, *Sucesos*, 307.

In a letter to the King (1633?), Juan Grau y Monfalcon wrote that the Chinese, “besides selling the merchandise for very suitable prices, *gave credit* [emphasis is mine] for them until they came back again. Without spending money, the inhabitants then were benefited, and sent the said merchandise to Nueva España, and made very great profits on it.”¹⁸⁰ From the smallest purchases to the big business of the Manila Galleon trade, Chinese credit seemed to lubricate the economy of Manila and create relationships of mutual aid and obligation that protected Chinese residents in difficult times.

Chinese who extended credit in Manila, put those who borrowed from them in their debt. Governor Tavora noted in a letter to King Felipe IV in 1628, that “There is no Spaniard, secular, or religious, who obtains his food, clothing, or shoes, except through them. Consequently, there is scarce a Sangley who does not have his protector.”¹⁸¹ It was not just the Spaniards who were indebted but also the indigenous and *mestizo* sectors of society. A list of debts owed to Chinese in 1689 included debtors by category: *españoles*, *indios*, *mestizos*, *sangleyes*, and *criollos*.¹⁸²

While it is clear that the Chinese were funneling credit into the economy, the question that is most relevant when it comes to the connection between financial networks and social implications is the impact these credit networks had on the preservation of Chinese persons and

¹⁸⁰ BR 25: 135-36.

¹⁸¹ BR 22: 235. Tavora was referring to Spaniards who vouched for the good reputation of Chinese creditors in court.

¹⁸² I have not uncovered evidence of *mestizos* or indigenous debtors as protectors in times of general crisis for the Chinese population, such as during instances of massacres or expulsions. In times of personal difficulty, however, non-Spanish individuals do show up in court records as witnesses to clear the name of their Chinese creditors. For example, in an eighteenth-century court case, Francisco de la Cruz, a Chinese *mestizo* stood witness in favor of Alonso Quincon, a Chinese government contractor. See AGI Escribania 421 B, N.67. It is unclear if Francisco de la Cruz was in Alonso Quincon’s debt and as such this is not direct evidence of non-Spaniards aiding Chinese creditors but does suggest how *mestizos* and indigenous debtors might have served as protectors.

livelihoods: were credit networks an effective means of ensuring protection as Governor Tavora claimed? My examination of a list of debts owed to non-Catholic Chinese compiled in 1689 and a list of non-Catholic Chinese *gremio* members of 1690¹⁸³ suggests that the governor was correct. Those with broad connections with members of colonial society fared the best and those without strong Spanish connections—meaning those without Spanish debtors—were the most vulnerable in times of crisis.

The year 1686 was such a moment of crisis for the Chinese in Manila. In September of that year, a royal order to expel the non-Christian Chinese from Manila arrived from Spain. A Chinese uprising barely four months prior in May, 1686, a record number of Chinese arrivals onboard ships, and fears surrounding Chinese conspiracies to wrest Manila from the Spaniards as evidenced by the accusations leveled against the bakers of Manila spurred the colonial government to comply with the royal decree which was formulated based on a conceptualized "ideal" number of Chinese of 6000.¹⁸⁴ A group of Chinese merchants quickly responded to the impending expulsion by writing a petition explaining the indispensability of the Chinese to the colony and also requesting time to "collect debts owed them." A postponement of seven months was granted and many Chinese sought to be included in the lists of those owed money to avoid expulsion—if only temporarily.¹⁸⁵ From the lists compiled, I constructed a database of 767

¹⁸³ Both lists can be found in AGI Filipinas 202. See footnote 6 for more details on the lists.

¹⁸⁴ In the uprising of 1686 some Chinese broke into the house of the constable in charge of residence permits and killed him and another Spaniard and attacked the house of the Governor of the *Parián*, who managed to escape. Lucille Chia's (2006) "The Butcher, The Baker and the Carpenter" is perhaps the best account of this uprising.

¹⁸⁵ The merchants had a petition written in Spanish and signed it in Chinese, affixing their red seals at the end of the letter, which can be found at the AGI in *Mapas y Planos: Escritura Cifra 59*. Lucille Chia also makes reference to this petition, as does Lourdes Diaz Trechuelo. See Chia, "The Butcher, the Baker and the Carpenter," and Lourdes Diaz-Trechuelo, "The Role of the Chinese in the Philippine Domestic Economy," in *The Chinese in the Philippines 1570-1770*, ed. Alfonso Felix Jr. (Manila: Solidaridad, 1966). Chia provides a neat summary of the points made by the merchants to delay expulsion. The main points were that the Chinese needed time to "collect debts owed them by Spanish and Chinese who did business with Spanish and they could not pay until the Manila Galleon came in," the indispensability of the Chinese in provisioning the city, the tax of non-Chinese residents for residence permits

names and identified those with strong and broad connections in colonial society and those who did not have such ties.¹⁸⁶

Those with strong connections with Spaniards or with others fared well in times of stress. Some companies even added personnel during the crisis (Table 2.3). The two most dramatic increases were those of the guild of ironsmiths and that of the chicken sellers. In 1689, there were eight ironsmiths and in 1690 there were nineteen. Those listed in 1689 could all be traced in the 1690 record and all had ties with the three main sectors of society: Spaniards, *indios*, and Chinese. Among chicken sellers, seven had contracts in 1689 with Spaniards and no one else. All seven were traceable in the 1690 record. They could possibly have been contractors (*asentistas*) for the Spaniards. The chicken sellers increased their numbers in 1690 to seventeen.

constituting a chief source of income for the colonial government, loans by the Chinese which regularly covered the expenses of the colonial government till the royal subsidy (*situado*) arrived from New Spain and the possibility of trading with others should the Chinese be expelled. I would add, the merchants mentioned that Dutch and English had that year gone to China with much silver and only the care of the Chinese for their debts (figurative and literal?) in the islands drove them to return to the Philippines.

¹⁸⁶ In order to reach these conclusions, I constructed a database of 767 names based on the 1689 and 1690 lists. In the 1689 lists, names of merchants were listed with debts owed by people stated by racial category. For example, an entry might read for the guild of silk merchants: “Dem Bunco has deals with Spaniards, *indios*, *mestizos* and Chinese/ *Dem Bunco tiene tratos pendientes con españoles, indios, mestizos y sangleyez.*” Following Dem Bunco’s name would be a list of other merchants with the annotation “has deals with the same/ *tiene tratos pendientes con los mismos.*” At intervals, the compiler would write that a certain merchant had deals with “Spanish, *indios*, Chinese” or other groups like “*mestizos*” (mixed ethnicity-usually Chinese and indigenous) and “*Criollos*” (Spaniards born in the Philippines). I noticed that the compiler would not state “has deals with the same” even when the categories were the same, even when the categories were repeated after every two or three names. Furthermore, the compiler took the trouble to differentiate between singular and plural when mentioning those with whom the merchant had deals. For example, the compiler would distinguish between “Spaniards/*españoles*” and “Spaniard/*español*” or have an annotation that might read “has deals with a Spaniard, a *mestizo* and *indios/ tiene tratos pendientes con español, mestizo y indios.*” I thus surmised that the compiler was referring to specific debtors even though he did not name them. The preamble to the 1689 list states that the list was compiled with the help of Chinese headmen and also from the books of the Chinese. If this is true, then I imagine the compiler must have worked through the financial books of the various Chinese companies sorting out debtors into the five legal/ethnic categories that appear in the list—Spaniard, *mestizo*, *indio*, Chinese and *criollo*—and then entered them into the list, with the head merchant’s name appearing first and all subsequent junior partners following his name and hence the annotation “has deals with the same.” There were “partners” (*companioneros*) without deals indicated in the list, further suggesting that the list was indeed compiled from actual financial records. The key assumption underlying my ability to judge who the head merchant was and also groupings of merchants forming companies is that the annotation “the same” referred to specific individuals.

Table 2.3. Number of Personnel of *Gremios de Sangleyes Infieles* in Manila, 1689 and 1690

<i>Gremios</i>	1689	1690
Ironsmiths	8	19
Chicken Sellers	7	17

As for the largest *gremio*, that of the silk merchants, in the 1689 list, the shops with the most personnel were the shop headed by Dem Bunco (nine merchants), the shop headed by Un Thonio (ten merchants), and the shop headed by Ong y yocco (twelve merchants). In the 1690 list (Table 2.4), Dem Bunco's silk shop had lost six merchants, Un Thonio's shop had lost three merchants, and Ong Y Yocco's shop had lost four merchants. Others who were in the 1689 list but not in the 1690 list were those from the Leng shop. There were four merchants affiliated with Leng's shop in 1689. All four were not on the list in 1690. All the other silk shops had two merchants each and all were still around in 1690 with the same number of merchants. Despite the hardships surrounding the expulsions, small silk merchants were still able to stay in business. They must have had strong connections to stay in the game. Two of the biggest shops—those headed by Un Thonio and Ong Y Yocco—still maintained far larger numbers of personnel than their competitors but one big shop—Dem Bunco's—lost two-thirds of its personnel and became about the same size as its competitors. This information suggests that bigger shops had the flexibility to adjust the size of operations to keep up with changes in the business environment.

Table 2.4. Number of Personnel of the three largest Silk Shops of *Sangleyes Infieles* in the *Parián*, 1689 and 1690

Owners of Silk Shops	1689	1690
Dem Bunco	9	3
Un Thonio	10	7
Ong Y Yocco	12	8

The expulsions from 1690 to 1700 reduced the number of immigrants to Manila and affected the size of large businesses, as seen in the case of silk shops. Were those from larger businesses opting for other destinations like Taiwan or Batavia? It would seem that larger businesses could afford to reallocate resources to other destinations *without* losing their position in Manila. Those with small businesses had much more to lose. Having attained a certain level of success, they faced a large risk in leaving Manila. The merchants of these smaller shops would have had to rely on their financial and social connections to keep their businesses profitable, especially when the social climate was fraught with danger.

Those without strong Spanish connections became vulnerable to expulsion. As suggested by data shown in Table 2.5, oil sellers, boatmen and fishermen did not have strong financial connections with the Spanish or other communities. For example, no oil sellers had outstanding debts with any sector of society and many in the 1689 list were not listed in 1690. In other words, their financial and social connections were minimal. This pattern suggests that those without such connections were the most vulnerable to expulsion. Similarly boatmen saw a dramatic drop in their numbers from thirty-seven to only six from the years 1689 to 1690.

Twenty-three of those thirty-seven boatmen did not have deals with others in 1689. Most of the ones who had deals did not have Spanish connections and mainly dealt with Chinese and *indios*. Perhaps this is why their names were not traceable to the 1690 list, as having strong Spanish connections appears to have been an important factor in avoiding expulsion. Laborers formed another vulnerable group. Almost all had no outstanding deals with others. As for fishermen, in 1689, there were seventy and of these, twenty-nine had no debt connections with others. In 1690, there were fifty-six left, meaning a decrease of twenty-four—about the same number as those who had no recorded deals with others. Taken together, this information supports the view that those with a lack of financial ties lived most precariously when help was needed. That those who extended the most credit fared best while those who did not fared worst suggests that in colonial Manila one could indeed buy friends—or at least protectors—if one could afford them.

Table 2.5. Numbers of Members of *Gremios de Sangleyes Infieles* in the *Parián*, 1689 and 1690

Occupational Members	1689	1690
Oil Sellers	11	2
Boatmen	37	6
Fishermen	70	56
Laborers	33	20

Those who extended credit were in a financial position to do so. They either were wealthy enough to give credit or had access to capital. In the preamble to the debt list of 1689, the *fiscal* describes a hierarchy of creditors. The relevant parts of the preamble (my translation) are as follows:

A list of non-Catholic Chinese resident in the *Parián* of Manila according to what I have been able to obtain as information in part...from the reports of Catholic-Chinese with more credit and means called the heads of the *Parián*. I have understood that these heads have contracts with Spaniards and Indians and other Chinese who have contracts with Spaniards and Indians. These heads also have contracts with Chinese without contracts with Spaniards or Indians. ...Even though some Chinese do not have deals or business dealings with Spaniards or Naturals, they have such dealings with other Chinese. The Chinese who do have dealings with Spaniards and Naturals cannot terminate business deals with Chinese who do not have such dealings until they have settled their accounts with Spaniards and Naturals. They say they cannot pay their Chinese creditors until they have charged their Spanish and indigenous business partners.¹⁸⁷

What we have here is a hierarchy of creditors. Wealthy Chinese were giving credit to other Chinese who in turn were giving out credit to Spaniards and indigenous people. There seem to be two sources of credit: Chinese headmen, who seem to be the meeting point of credit networks for Chinese, Spanish and indigenous, and wealthy Chinese who dealt exclusively with Chinese, who in turn extended credit to others. The headmen's power likely derived from their intermediary position in the colonial economy. The wealthy Chinese creditors whose point of contact with the Manila economy was through other Chinese would probably have had to resort to other means of securing their investments. Did they work through headmen? Did they rely on Spanish legal mechanisms—courts and contracts—to secure those investments? Did they hold power in China that could affect those who borrowed money? These questions are as yet unanswered but deserve attention. Whatever the answers, the *ability* to extend credit was crucial in gaining political connections. Those who lacked the means, lacked the connections that could be parlayed into protection from crises like expulsion, imprisonment, lawsuits or labor service.

One final point to ponder is why indebted Spanish power holders did not expel the Chinese to liquidate their debts. In the preamble to the debt list of 1689, the *fiscal* stated that the Chinese had given a loan to the Crown in times of need. The reminder that Chinese had extended

¹⁸⁷ “Compulsa de los autos hechos en virtud de la real cedula de 14 de noviembre 1686 sobre la expulsion de los sangleyes infieles, Manila 23 de mayo,” Fols. 168r-173v, AGI Filipinas 202.

credit to the Crown itself suggests that the Chinese had a bargaining chip. The expulsion of Chinese had to be considered in the context of their crucial role in the credit economy of Manila. The *fiscal* seemed to be conveying to the Crown the necessity of the Chinese and that their expulsion could not be carried out with justice or without damage to the reputation of the Crown. If Spaniards wanted to be seen as credible, they had to allow at least the collection of debts owed to the Chinese.

Conclusion

The Chinese extended credit and contracted ritual kinship to create or solidify networks of mutual obligation within their own community and with other residents of Manila. By adapting in this manner, the Chinese participated in transforming practices like *compadrazgo* and *padrinazgo* to suit their specific needs in a particular place and time. In the context of seventeenth-century Manila, the presence of large numbers of male adult converts from Southeastern China meant that *padrinazgo* or godparenthood became exaggerated in ritual kinship relationships and had to take into consideration the Chinese need to recruit fellow tradesmen. *Compadrazgo* or coparenthood became a strategy to integrate children into and connect families to different sectors of colonial society. The Chinese, contrary to nationalist narratives that paint them as unassimilable aliens, were personally invested and connected to the indigenous, Spanish and *mestizo* communities as husbands, fathers, in-laws, godfathers and godsons—in short, they were kin and a deeper bond could not be had.

Kinship was not the only tie that bound disparate communities together in seventeenth-century Manila. Certain Chinese of means were connected to larger colonial society by the purse strings. By giving out loans, the Chinese fed and clothed the city; they filled its coffers with coin

for trade and for the business of government. In exchange, the Chinese called on the protection of debtors in times of crisis.

Through kinship and credit, the residents of Manila negotiated empire, mitigating the restrictions of legal frameworks and identities through which imperial bureaucrats sought to understand and control colonial society. While the intermingling of Chinese, Spanish, indigenous and *mestizos* challenged imperial domination, the relationships that bound the various communities together were, among other things, what made colonial society stable and viable. As a testament to the strength of these bonds, we need only be reminded that colonial Spanish society persisted against great odds in Manila for over three hundred years.

Chapter Three

Contracting Empire: Litigation, Coercion and Insurrection

Introduction

In the city of Manila, on the eighth day of the eighth month of the year 1715, a small crowd gathered before the Crown Attorney, the Royal Treasurer and special judges. The representatives of His Majesty Philip V caused the Crier, Domingo de la Cruz, to be brought forth. In a high and clear voice, Domingo de la Cruz issued the cry “*al almoneda, al almoneda, al almoneda.*” The royal auction had commenced.

The Crier called for bids for the vacant positions of notary public and constables. The position for Constable of the *Parián* drew a bid and was sold for three thousand pesos. The three houses of the deceased Pedro Vazquez were also put up for sale but there seemed to be no takers. Then came the auction for the monopoly for the general licenses (*licencias generales*) for Chinese, with the proposed opening bid of 21,321 pesos per year. Among the terms for the lease of the monopoly was the obligation to pay half of the total amount at the end of each trading expedition sent from China—each expedition lasting six months. The contractor would have to secure surety for the amount of each expedition and renew the lease after the conclusion of each trading cycle. The ability to pay the royal treasury on time was condition for renewal of the lease up to a maximum of five expeditions or two and a half years. The total value of the monopoly would be a little more than 53,302 pesos. It would take a brave man or a wealthy one to put up so much money. To put things in perspective, the total average yearly income of the royal treasury

for the years 1695-1700 was 144,101 pesos.¹⁸⁸ The income from the monopoly would amount to slightly under fifteen percent of the total annual income for the royal treasury.

In the end, the man who plucked up enough courage to tender a bid was bold, for as later proceedings would show, he was not an extraordinarily wealthy one. Perhaps after taking a breath to steady his nerve, Alonso Quincon threw in his bid: 21,500 pesos for the lease of said monopoly—an improvement on the asking price. He would accept the terms put forth by His Majesty’s agents and add two conditions of his own: first, recently-arrived Chinese who took up professions or set up shop would have to pay the license fee even if they left at the end of the six-month trading cycle; second, the distribution of licenses could be done without the imprint and legalizing subscription of the senior notary of the government and on ordinary paper written in Spanish and with Quincon’s signs and characters. These conditions created extra profits for Quincon but would cut into the earnings of Chinese ship captains and the Spanish senior notary of the government. Encroaching on the turf of such formidable figures was risky business and would eventually draw an intimidating response. For the time being, Quincon’s brazen plan did not face opposition and as it turned out, his was the winning bid. At noon, according to the clock of the *Santa Yglesia Cathedral*, with the approval of Don Joseph de Torralba, the interim Governor-general of the Philippines, Alonso Quincon became the new captain in charge of the monopoly of general licenses for the Chinese. Yet in the matter of a few short years Quincon would find himself plunging from this elevated position into the dark depths of a cell in the royal prison of Manila.¹⁸⁹ Quincon’s fall, dramatic as it seems, was not an uncommon one, for many a

¹⁸⁸ Luis Alonso, “Financing the Empire: The Nature of the Tax System in the Philippines, 1565-1804,” *Philippine Studies* 51, no. 1 (2003): 63-95 (74).

¹⁸⁹ The author’s narrative of the auction is based on the document “Autos formados sobre la demanda puesta por Quincon sangley contra el oydor Doctor Don Joseph de Torralba” (Manila: 1721) in AGI Escribania 421 B, N.67.

Chinese intermediary eventually found himself in prison, financially ruined or facing the end of a hangman's noose.

This chapter draws on court cases in the Archive of the Indies that involve debts owed by Chinese contractors to the Royal Treasury in order to draw a sketch of how Chinese intermediaries operated. I argue that in the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries, contractors helped maintain control of a large number of Chinese in Manila by occupying the middle ground¹⁹⁰ between the Spanish regime and Chinese workers. To place themselves in position to profit from controlling this intermediate space, contractors played a game of chance and confidence by bidding for monopolies even though they often had little wealth of their own. Borrowing from others or pooling resources to secure government contracts, these intermediaries gambled that they would succeed where others had failed. The regime enabled such risky ventures by entrusting the control of large segments of Chinese labor to those courageous, reckless or canny enough to enter into such undertakings. Spanish authorities—small in numbers and lacking direct ties to sending communities in China—relied heavily on those who could supply the economic demands of the colony with the labor required to fulfill those needs, and as such were willing to tolerate financially speculative bids. Backed by Spanish approval, contractors served as intermediaries and controllers of Chinese labor and in that way were crucial players in upholding the colonial order.

¹⁹⁰ Richard White's use of "middle ground" is highly nuanced and he gives a multi-faceted definition to the term. White sees the middle ground as a process that involves diverse peoples persuading each other through appeals to perceptions of the values or practices of those whom they seek to sway. These appeals often distort the values and practices of others but create new practices and meanings. White also points to a roughly equal power relationship between parties involved in negotiations, writing "whites could neither dictate to Indians nor ignore them." White also sees the middle ground as "the place in between: between cultures, peoples and in between empires and the nonstate world of villages." For these definitions refer to White's classic work *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), x. For a concise discussion of the "middle ground" as White uses the term, consult Philip J. Deloria's "What is the Middle Ground, Anyway?" *The William and Mary Quarterly* 58, no. 1 (2006): 15-22. My understanding of "middle ground" owes much to White's arguments and my use of the term, while carrying the implications of White's complex argument, refers to his "place in between," where persuasion and collaboration were essential to maintaining peace and meeting the purposes of those involved in negotiation.

Even though Chinese middlemen played the important role of policing Chinese workers, their grip over them was tenuous. As intermediaries, their authority derived from their position in mitigating the demands of the regime. When Chinese middlemen could not extenuate the abuses of Spanish officials or threats to the lives of Chinese workers, violent uprisings ensued, as they did several times in the seventeenth century.

Building upon my earlier analysis of the 1603 insurrection, this chapter further advances the view that the so-called “Chinese” insurrections of the seventeenth century were uprisings by workers, and not ethnic revolts in which the whole Chinese community stood as one against the colonial order. As accounts of these insurrections show, and as argued in Chapter One, the Chinese community of Manila was fragmented. Rich merchants and the menial laborers on whose behalf Chinese contractors mediated did not owe each other loyalty, were not bound by a working relationship, and often had different agendas. Wealthy Chinese merchants had a stake in the Spanish presence in Manila as did intermediaries because both stood to profit financially, the merchants from Spanish silver and the contractors from the opportunities afforded by mediating. In contrast, workers wanted freedom from the abuses of the regime (and perhaps that of middlemen!) and were ready to risk their lives when pushed to it. Workers’ investment in the existence of the Spanish regime was ambivalent at best. It is little wonder that they were the ones who rose up in times of crisis while very few intermediaries or elite Chinese took up the banner of revolt. Sporadic uprisings occurred throughout the seventeenth-century, yet over the long haul, the system that sustained the Spanish presence persisted because Chinese merchants or their agents kept returning for Spanish silver and intermediaries kept supplying the city with labor, sustenance and income.

In over three hundred years of Spanish rule in Manila, Chinese middlemen played a pivotal role in maintaining a system that made the Spanish presence possible in that city. It is to the subject of how these Chinese intermediaries—those most deeply involved in many ways with Spanish authorities—operated and maneuvered in the middle ground of colonial Manila that this chapter now turns.

Maneuvering in Manila's Middle Ground

Contractors occupied the liminal space between the Spanish regime and various sectors of the Chinese community and as such, their ability to thrive and survive was dependent on building and mobilizing connections within the Chinese community as well as with others in Manila. Alonso Quinon demonstrated these qualities even as he languished in jail. Placing a suit against the former governor of the Philippines, Don Joseph de Torralba, he was able to call upon witnesses from both within and outside the Chinese community. Despite the taint of prison, he could muster thirteen witnesses to come to his aid. These witnesses were:

Ysidoro de Contreras—a Spanish sergeant/ *sargento*,

Diego Jurado—a Spanish officer/ *alferez*,

Francisco de la Cruz—a Sangley *mestizo*,

Diego Cunco—a Chinese Catholic who worked as a broker/ *corredor*,

Joseph Manuel Siunio—a Chinese Catholic who worked as a ferryman/ *pasajero*,

Manuel Samora Sianco—a Chinese Catholic who worked as a broker/ *corredor*,

Pablo Chianco—a Chinese Catholic who worked as a broker/ *corredor*,

Gaspar Senco—a Chinese Catholic who worked as a shopkeeper/ *tendero*,

Lorenzo Suco—an illiterate married Chinese Catholic

Manuel Suico—a Chinese Catholic who worked as a broker/ *corredor*,

Liaw Lipco—a non-Catholic Chinese who worked as a boxmaker (?)/ *cajero*,

Bui Yanco—a non-Catholic Chinese who worked as broker/ *corredor*,

Cho Eng Nio—a non-Catholic Chinese who worked as a broker/ *corredor*.

While these witnesses were not necessarily high-powered figures, they represent a diverse group in terms of their occupations, ethnicities and religion. The relationship these individuals had with Alonso Quincon is unclear but they were close enough to come to his defense in his hour of need. One personal relationship does emerge from the court proceedings. Alonso Quincon was the godfather of the son of the Spanish officer, Diego Jurado: “...es compadre de dicho Capitan Don Alonzo Quincon por haverle sacado de pila a un hijo del declarante....”¹⁹¹ In a clear demonstration of the importance of fictive kinship ties for those in the Chinese community, Alonso Quincon relied on the strategy of *padrinazgo* to fight for his freedom.¹⁹² Other contractors must have built similar connections but Quincon’s case is unique in providing a sustained look at contracting practices surrounding a particular monopoly—the documents generated by the case alone amounted to 389 digitalized pages. Nonetheless, a collection of cases of different contractors from 1633-1688 involving debts owed to the Royal Treasury to gather capital to lease the fishery of Bacoran, a riverine fishery just north of Manila, provides further evidence of how such connections were used.¹⁹³

A court case filed in May, 1693 against Pedro Pinco as principal contractor for the lease of the fishery of Bacoran, and Guangco, Pengco, Don Francisco SapSap and others as bondsmen, suggests that contractors used putative kinship or some other personal connections to gather

¹⁹¹ AGI Escribania 421 B: 95.

¹⁹² While Alonso Quincon’s case generated much documentation, the record is silent on the final outcome of Quincon’s bid for freedom.

¹⁹³ AGI Filipinas 33, N.2.

capital for bids.¹⁹⁴ On 14 March, 1685, Pedro Pinco bid 1,000 pesos for the Bacoran fishery. When the authorities claimed he had defaulted on his payments, they put him in prison and went after his bondsmen, of which there were many. Two of his bondsmen proved unreliable—one was in China (Pengco), and the other—Guanco—was rumored to be heading a contract for the slaughterhouse in the Port of Cavite, not far from Manila. He did have other bondsmen. Francisco Sap Sap and Lorenzo Tongco, both Chinese Catholics and residents of the *Parián*, stood surety for 500 pesos each. Three other bondsmen—a confectioner (*azucarero*) named Tatco, and two fish traders called Chico and Dimco; all “heathens”—stood surety for 1,000 pesos in total.

Pedro Pinco probably was skilled at cultivating relationships and possessed of great powers of persuasion, having amassed so many investors, not least because all the property he claimed to own when the collectors arrived was his humble *nipa*-covered, wooden home in the town of Santa Cruz. The other possibility is that he was a front man who would pass on profits to his investors and bear the risk of failure of the venture. Indeed, Pedro Pinco found himself in jail for a while. Had his other bondsmen proven as unreliable as Pengco and Guanco, he would have lost his freedom for a lengthy period of time. As it turned out, the charges against Pedro Pinco were found to be spurious. He and his guarantors had made all necessary payments on time and the alleged sum owed could not be charged to him as he was not in possession of the lease during the time he was said to be enjoying the privilege of the fishery without paying.¹⁹⁵ The point of

¹⁹⁴ How Pinco managed to gain investors for his venture is unclear. Perhaps, putative kinship or some other personal connections linked the investors to Pinco. While it is at this point conjecture to suggest that personal connections linked Pinco and his investors, what is certain is that the contractors I studied bid for monopolies utilizing capital or promises of capital from a group of investors. Assuming that investors were not coerced into putting up capital, bids could be seen as collective risk-taking activity coalescing around the person of the principal bidder. Voluntary participation in such speculative action as a group requires a level of trust. In seventeenth and eighteenth-century Manila, the evidence concerning relationships of trust points to putative kinship (see Chapters One and Two).

¹⁹⁵ AGI Filipinas 33, N.2, D. 11.

this case, however, is that contractors were able to use connections to make bids they otherwise would not have been able to tender, for they were not exactly the wealthiest of men.

The contractors I encountered in court cases were often risk takers who did not have much personal wealth, at least according to Spanish records. If they were hiding their wealth, the Spanish authorities did not find it. What is more likely is that these contractors were indeed living on the edge. Even though many of the purported debts owed by contractors turned out to be unfounded charges, many contractors still went to jail. Time spent in jail was time lost in making money and the royal treasury had ways of extracting value out of delinquents—the galleys and hard labor building city walls or working in the fields of Calamba awaited. It is unlikely that contractors would have risked such dire consequences for non-payment, nor is it likely that bondsmen would have paid from their own pockets what could be collected from the principal bidder. In view of this reasoning, the Spanish officials' notations that contractors were poor should be taken to heart. Often times one encounters the following lines in court cases: “he did not have any property/ *no tiene vienes*,” “/ he said that he was found to be abjectly poor/ *dixo que halla sumamente pobre*,” “has no property to show/ *no tiene vienes que señalar*,” “they were poor without any property/ *eran pobres no tubieron vienes algunos*,” and “he went around asking for alms/ *yba a pedir dineros como de limosna*.”¹⁹⁶ These lines paint a picture of men of modest means or even abject poverty. That contractors were not men of wealth was no secret. In the deliberations on whether to grant Alonso Quincon the monopoly on licenses, the treasurer submitted that the bidder “did not have any property/ *no tener vienes algunos*.” If contractors were risk takers, so were certain agents of the regime. The same treasurer just mentioned above also pointed out that Alonso Quincon had presented a document of surety for the amount of

¹⁹⁶ AGI Filipinas 33, N.2, D.12,155, 11, 99, 17.

11,000 pesos, yet only 3,000 pesos were actually guaranteed/ *por un papel de fiadores que señalo de cantidad de onze mill pesos entre todos solo se podian afianzar tres mill pesos.*” The treasurer was overruled even when he pointed out that there was the option of the royal treasury administering the whole affair on its own as in certain years past.¹⁹⁷ While it is unclear if the majority of Spanish agents usually operated in so cavalier a manner, the willingness of the regime’s representatives to grant a bid to so risky a prospect suggests either desperation or an acknowledgment of the reliance of the empire on intermediaries or perhaps both.

Intermediaries were not only important to those who sought to rule but to those who supplied the labor needed to sustain the empire. In the case of Chinese laborers, contractors served as middlemen, providing a means to derive legitimacy, protection and work. Laborers who were literally fresh off the boat found themselves in an unfamiliar environment governed by foreign rules articulated in a foreign tongue. Failure to navigate the environment could mean a quick trip back to China for these newly arrived laborers with little to show for their troubles. In this world, Chinese contractors with their ties to the regime, linguistic skills—many could function well enough in Castilian to take part in court proceedings without the need for interpreters as attested to by the multiple occurrences of the annotation “without need for an interpreter for being fluent in the Castilian language/ *sin necesidad de ynterprete por ser bastante ladino en este ydioma castellano*” in notarized documents—and control of monopolies could claim to mediate and help laborers achieve their goal of gainful employment.

The case of Chinese working for the Manila-based pork and beef supplier—Favian Sinlao—illustrates the point that mediation of the contractor was crucial for the protection of recently arrived and non-Catholic Chinese laborers. Favian Chinlao held the monopoly for supplying beef and pork to Manila and in his position as chief contractor, mediated for his

¹⁹⁷ AGI Ecribania, 421 B, N. 67.

workers—standing as guarantor for them—protecting them from the prospect of expulsion and harassment by other authorities. In 1689, the commission charged with the expulsion of non-Catholic Chinese noted that the Chinese who worked for the beef and pork supplier of Manila were not included in the list. A notary was dispatched to investigate the matter. When he explained matters to Favian Chinlao, the contractor dutifully presented a list in four segments. The four segments contained a total of seventy Chinese names—all without Christian names. Of these four segments, two had the heading “*Los bagos que vinieron este presente ano del reyno de china con declarazion de que estas fueron de aca y asimesmo son del trato/* The ‘vagos’ who came this year from the kingdom of China and declared to be of here [the beef and pork supply facilities] and with [work] contracts.”¹⁹⁸ The term *vago* is often translated as “vagabond” in Spanish and implies a restless, unrooted sort without employment, but in the context of a list of employees a *vago* was probably a seasonal or temporary migrant worker. Under the rules set up for the expulsion of Chinese in 1689, *vagos* were prime targets for expulsion. Favian Chinlao was able to prevent the expulsion of the seasonal migrant workers he employed and also his non-Catholic Chinese employees—who were also in danger of being deported for heathens/*infieles*—by standing as guarantor for all seventy of them. At the end of the list of workers, the notary wrote the following:

And all of the Sangleys in the said list were put in the charge of Favian Chinlao, a Christian Sangley obligated to the said supplier/ *Y de todos los Sangleies conthenidos en dicha lista se hizo cargo de ellos favian chinlao sangley christiano obligado de dicho abasto, y con obligazion de darquenta de dichos sangleies infieles cada y quando que le sean pedidos.*”¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁸ AGI Filipinas 202: “Auto para que se ponga razon de los sangleyes infieles que se ocupan en las carneserias de baca y Puerco” and “Diligencia de los sangleyes infieles que le ocupan en la carneseria de la carne y Puerco,” (353-355).

¹⁹⁹ AGI Filipinas 202: 353.

Recently arrived and non-Catholic Chinese laborers such as those Favian Chinlao shielded, relied on the mediation of the contractor for their protection.

Furthermore, the presence of Chinese laborers in the colony and their ability to travel from place to place was contingent upon being lawfully attached to a contractor and approved by the Spanish authorities. Without the connection to one's guarantor/ employer, one hazarded harassment from other agents of the regime. Attached to the list of Favian Chinlao's workers is a request that twelve of his non-Catholic workers be given licenses to move about in the provinces of Pampanga, Bulacan and Laguna to seek and procure pigs without "impediment" or "vexation" from the justices of the said provinces.²⁰⁰ Contractors served as guarantors for the presence, movement and legitimacy of Chinese laborers in colonial Manila. As such, contractors must have held great sway over their workers.

Little is known about how contractors controlled their workers but as mediators, contractors could claim to be protectors and in that way claim reciprocity from their wards in the form of service and obedience. Any challenges to their authority could be met with threats to withdraw patronage and perhaps a word to the commission of expulsion (when there was one happening) or the Spanish authorities who were always looking for "vagrants" they could press into labor for wall building, farming or the galleys.

Perhaps contractors—especially those running large operations—had other means of ensuring compliance such as putative kinship (beyond the co-parenthood and god-parenthood

²⁰⁰ AGI Filipinas 202: 355. The request reads in Spanish as follows: Favian Chenlao obligado del Abasto de Baca y puerco de esta republica ante Vssa como Juez de Abastos y de la Expulsion de Sangleies Infieles Digo que para que no falte dicho abasto de carne de Puerco necesito de doze sangleies infieles de los que me asistan para que estos salgan al distrito de esta jurisdision acomprar Ganado de zerdo para dicho abasto y que las justicias de las provincias Pampanga Bulacan Laguna no lo impidan ni vexen a los doze sangleies que fueren a hazer dicha compra por ser cita tan precisa y necesaria por lo qual=A Vssa pido y suplico se sirva de conceder lizencia a los doze sangleies infieles para salir a buscar y comprar Ganado de zerda para el abasto referido, y que las justicias de las privincias referidas no lo impidan ni hagan vexaciones a dichos doze sangleies....”

strategies discussed in Chapter Two) found in other Chinese communities in Southeast Asia. Mary Heidhues, writing on Chinese organizations in Indonesia, found that in 1693, the Dutch discovered that there were associations founded on sworn brotherhood in Central Java, which the Dutch called *vloekverwanten* or “sworn kin.”²⁰¹ Wang Tai Peng, in his study of Chinese *kongsi* in West Borneo with special attention on the eighteenth century, describes collective leadership based on sworn brotherhood as a model for organizing labor.²⁰² It is not clear if contractors and workers in Manila organized using sworn kinship or the *kongsi* model but the 1689 list of *gremios de sangleyes infieles* suggests that for some *gremios* a form of partnership was used. For the *gremios* of fishermen/ *pezcaadores*, gardeners/*verduleros* and dyers/*tintoreros*—all labor intensive occupations and headed by contractors—most of the personnel were listed as *companieros*, which can be translated as “partners” or “fellows.” In contrast, the silk and satin shops did not list any personnel as *companieros*. Neither did the tailor’s guild.²⁰³ Methods of control probably differed according to the type of work done. Most shops were probably family-run affairs and discipline was maintained via the family. Lucille Chia has found, from family genealogies in Quanzhou, instances of two to four generations of men in a lineage sojourning to Manila as merchants.²⁰⁴ Wang Lianmao confirms Chia’s perception in noting that the Zhuangs, a Quanzhou lineage, sent multiple men over generations to maintain their business and property overseas in the Philippines.²⁰⁵ Contractors of fisheries and slaughterhouses often ran operations

²⁰¹ Heidhues, “Chinese Organization,” 68-88.

²⁰² Wang, *The Origins of Chinese Kongsi*.

²⁰³ AGI Filipinas 202.

²⁰⁴ Chia, “The Butcher, the Baker and the Carpenter.”

²⁰⁵ Wang Lianmao, “Migration in Two Minnan Lineages in the Ming and Qing Periods,” trans. and ed. Stevan Harrell, in *Chinese Historical Micro-demography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), 183-214.

that required many workers and as such, a family-based set up would have been impracticable. Most likely, contractors recruited from among the many recently arrived *vagos* with whom they might have had some common background such as the same home village or surname, or whom they had recruited personally from their home community or through ship-captains; certainly the Chinese counterparts of Manila contractors in Batavia, such as Jan Con, did.²⁰⁶ Whether contractors acted as “*dages*”—heads of brotherhoods—in charge of *vagos* turned sworn brothers is not clear but what is clear is that their key strength rested in their ability to mediate and play the dual role of representatives of Chinese workers and representatives of the regime.²⁰⁷

Yet, the regime would sometimes betray them. When taking on an *asiento* (monopoly), contractors tried to maximize their chances of success by dictating conditions but the regime could suddenly change the rules of the game to the detriment of contractors. Alonso Quincon’s seemingly successful business took a turn for the worse when mid-way through the term of his lease, the governor revoked the special conditions Quincon had attached to his bid. In 1716,

²⁰⁶ Leonard Blussé has a chapter in his book *Strange Company* entitled “Testament to a Towkay” that focuses on a prominent contractor and trader called Jan Con who operated in Batavia in the early 1600s. Among Jan Con’s many functions was that of coolie broker. If Manila contractors operated as Jan Con did, they too would have recruited from among the many seasonal workers. A secondary observation we can make from Jan Con’s case is that in many ways, this intermediary extraordinaire was similar to contractors in Manila in that he used his position between colonial authorities and the Chinese community to gain Dutch investment and favor. He borrowed money from the Dutch for various ventures such as buying pepper in the countryside and growing coconuts. From his profits he went into the wood supply business, hiring many lumberjacks and coolies. As his stock rose, he was selected to levy the tax on gambling. His success as a tax collector made him a favorite of the Dutch. Jan Con parlayed that favor into representing the Chinese community, requesting a two-year delay in the land rent of all Chinese in Batavia. His closeness to the Dutch also meant that he was able to influence how the Chinese were administered, suggesting that there be two heads for the Chinese to prevent collusion and oppression. Furthermore, the Dutch trusted Jan Con so much that they took his advice on Sino-Dutch trade in Taiwan. Jan Con suggested allowing Fujianese traders to Taiwan a profit of thirty percent. When Jan Con died unexpectedly in 1639, the Dutch set up a commission to administer his estate. The curators were shocked to discover how much he owed and an investigation ensued, showing that the Director-General of the Company had forwarded massive amounts of money not only to Jan Con but also to other Chinese. These debts could not be collected. In addition, the company found that Jan Con owed many people money. Some of Jan Con’s creditors were subcontractors of tax farms that he had bought. Like Alonso Quincon and Pedro Pinco, Jan Con played a game of chance and confidence, gambling with other people’s money in the hopes of making it big.

²⁰⁷ The evidence from the insurrection of 1603, as discussed in Chapter One, suggests that contractors were possibly heads of brotherhoods. See pages 57-61.

following a petition by eight ship captains led by one Captain Tanquiqua, ostensibly on behalf of recently-arrived Chinese, Governor Don Joseph de Torralba scraped the requirement that recently-arrived seasonal workers— those who stayed only for the duration of a trading expedition—who took up professions or set up shop would have to pay the license fee. The ship captains claimed that Quincon was causing harm by violating well-established practices by taxing seasonal workers: “*contra el estilo in memorial y practica observada, y que cede en notable perjuicio....*” Quincon alleged that the governor had changed the conditions of the bid after receiving a bribe from the ship captains and their passengers. All the witnesses in the case agreed in their testimonies that it was public knowledge in the *Parián* that a collection had been taken for the express purpose of persuading the governor to favor the petition, though none dared claim the governor accepted the bribe. One witness, Cho Eng Nio—a non-Catholic Chinese and broker by trade, said that a relative had told him that ship captains contributed fifty pesos each, merchants contributed twenty and the poor contributed four pesos each (the cost of license).²⁰⁸ The ship captains must have felt strongly about a tax that on its surface would not affect them, having committed fifty pesos each to the cause. Passengers did not stand to gain from paying for the “present/ *regalia*” to the governor. The amount they paid was either more (for merchants) or the same as that of the cost of the license. The tax must have been eating into the profits of the captains and merchants in the long run.

In any case, Alonso Quincon’s attempt to dictate the conditions for entry to Manila did not sit well with a group of his countrymen and faced a legal challenge, probably greased with a

²⁰⁸ AGI Escribania 421 B, N. 67.

generous bribe.²⁰⁹ The effect of this challenge was disastrous for the contractor. Alonso Quincon and his witnesses claimed he would not have bid such a high amount for the monopoly had his conditions not been admitted in the first place. As if the revocation of the condition on taxing seasonal workers was not bad enough, the governor added insult to injury by ordering Quincon to pay back taxes collected from sixty passengers. In addition, the governor ruled that Quincon was to pay 400 pesos to the interim senior notary of the government, the sergeant Don Joseph Hernandez, for contravening his rights as a notary when distributing licenses without the involvement of the notary. In one fell swoop, the governor had nullified the conditions stipulated and approved by the governor in Quincon's bid. Quincon claimed that the governor caused him losses amounting to 6,617 pesos and six tomines. Attached to the suit against the governor was also a claim against Don Joseph Hernandez for extorting money and property worth 617 pesos. Quincon alleged that Hernandez had threatened a fine from the governor, punishment and also to beat him up/ *"dar muchos palos"* if he did not comply with his demands: *"no te metas sangley...porque el señor Gobernador te multara en un mill pesos y te puede haser castigo/ do not meddle Sangley...because the governor will fine you a thousand pesos and can punish you."*

Quincon must have known his options were limited against a Spaniard. He could not proceed violently against a Spaniard but he could go to court. In his claim against Hernandez, Quincon included a long and detailed list of items and money extorted and when they were extorted. The list included items that ranged from money and licenses to wax. If the list had been prepared over the actual period of extortion, Quincon must have been gearing up to take legal action. Despite the abuses of the regime, Spanish courts did provide an arena in which intermediaries stood a fighting chance, as the rules of the game were at least not often

²⁰⁹ Governor Don Joseph de Torralba had a history of financial irregularities. He and other royal officials were imprisoned in 1717 for the loss of 2000 pesos from the royal coffers. For the details on the arrest and estate of Torralba, see "Carta de Bustillo sobre hacienda y prision de Torralba" in AGI Filipinas 131, N.5.

unexpectedly changed. Quincon's suit against the governor was unsuccessful but the judges ruled that Hernandez was guilty. Despite this partial victory, even after the judges' ruling, the case was still not fully decided as Governor Torralba refused to recognize the legitimacy of the judges and appealed to a higher court. In 1721, after the initial ruling and at least six months in jail, Quincon was still no closer to freedom, as his demand made its way across two oceans to the Council of the Indies in Seville.²¹⁰ Justice from colonial courts could be painfully slow but contractors had no other recourse other than revolt or flight, and neither was available to the man in jail.

The case of Alonso Quincon illustrates the possibilities and the limitations of Chinese contractors in Manila. The middle ground was a place of opportunity but also of danger, and contractors had to take the good with the bad as their whole function was enmeshed with maneuvering in the liminal spaces of empire. As controllers of a large sector of Chinese labor in the city, contractors shaped the conditions of immigrant life by conditioning the policy of the regime in matters such as taxation and by serving as gatekeepers, choosing whom to sponsor and whom to leave at the mercy of Spanish authorities. This power, however, required maneuvering in the spaces in between those with the most coercive potential and those who sought protection from this coercion. Contractors gained advantage in providing the regime with labor and by convincing others to support their ventures. Risk taking did not always pay off and dependence on the regime for legitimacy meant that contractors were open to exploitation by unscrupulous authorities. When the liminal spaces of empire within which they operated contracted, contractors found themselves increasingly unable to exert control and they became easy scapegoats for the regime and the very workers they claimed to protect.

²¹⁰ I am unsure when Quincon was imprisoned but if we assume that he was already in prison at the time he sued Torralba in December 1720, he would have been in prison for about half a year, given the latest date in the collection of documents, which was June 1721.

In the remainder of this chapter, I argue that it was the loss of the middle ground that threatened not only contractors but the very existence of a Spanish presence in Manila. The exercise of power through intermediaries sustained the structure of empire in times of peace but when Spanish officials destroyed the public transcript of intermediaries through excessive abuse and unexpected exactions, they nullified the role of the intermediary, and in effect temporarily caused the collapse of the middle ground, a development that potentially put the entire colonial enterprise at risk.

The Manila Chinese: A Fragmented Community

The implosion of the middle ground is a key element for explaining the loss of control by Spanish authorities and Chinese intermediaries during Chinese insurrections because beyond this space, there was no other way to control Chinese insurgents other than through brute force. Manila's Chinese community in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was fragmented into multiple groupings under different leaders. Control mechanisms were different for each grouping. Given the divided methods of enforcing discipline, when one group arose, the others could not enforce control. In addition, there was no central authority in the Chinese community that could quell the fires of unrest. Chinese governors, although they had judicial, punitive and taxation powers, derived those powers only as intermediaries.

The fragmented nature of Manila's Chinese community was first and foremost based on the fact that it was made up of both transient and resident migrants. Transient migrants, to borrow Quincon's definition, were those who stayed for not more than one trading cycle, or six months. They could be wealthy traders, ship captains, petty merchants, laborers or even fugitives. Resident migrants who made the Philippines their base included merchants, artisans,

agricultural workers, fishermen, contractors, interpreters, catechists and notaries. The Spaniards organized all the different occupations into guilds. Guilds could be further divided into those that were run by the merchants, those run by contractors to supply the city with food, and those run by artisans.

To complicate matters even further, the organization of the Chinese community by guilds was not necessarily an accurate reflection of how the Chinese organized themselves. A petition by a group of merchants to delay expulsion orders in 1686 helps support this point. The petitioners chose to sign in Chinese as heads of shops or businesses in the *Parián* and not as heads of guilds. The signatories of the petition were as follows:

“satin shop, cloth (cotton) shop, basket shop, silver smith, sugar shop, candle shop, vegetable shop, fragrance shop, trousers shop, general goods store, hat store, crockery shop, chicken house, pig-house, lumber yard, silk products, hulled rice-house, brass shop, bookstore, silk company and sword (shop).”²¹¹

The shops do not correspond neatly with guilds that appear in lists of guilds and their members²¹² compiled in 1689 and 1690 by the colonial government with the help of Chinese financial records and information from Chinese headmen with the aim of having an accurate count of Chinese slated to be expelled. In addition to those on the colonial list, the petition includes two silk product shops and a couple of shops that specialized in different articles of clothing (hats and trousers). There was no hat makers guild or makers of trousers guild in the lists but only a guild for tailors who made Spanish clothes and a guild for tailors who made Chinese clothes in 1689 and a general guild of “Tailors” in 1690 (Fig. 1 and 2). The point is that Spanish perceptions of Chinese organization need to be taken with caution. We see that Chinese conceptions of their organization and who mattered most in terms of business in the community was based not on

²¹¹ AGI Mapas y Planos: Escritura Cifra 59.

²¹² AGI Filipinas 202.

trade guilds but on individual companies. Furthermore, Spanish conceptualizations shifted from compiler to compiler, even over the short space of one year. One compiler saw a guild of tailors and another saw two guilds of tailors—one for makers of Spanish clothes and one for makers of Chinese clothes. One suspects “guilds” were more an invention of the Spanish mind than a social reality within the Chinese community.

Within the “guilds” run by merchants and artisans, those within the same trade maintained discipline by the threat of lawsuits back in China, which may not have been very effective in the short term. The difficulty of controlling guild members on the spot probably stemmed from the fact that the guild was not viewed by members as essential to their business operations. Those within the same trade who tried to outcompete each other did, however, fear being denounced to the authorities in China. As Tavora wrote, if a Chinese tradesman tried to outcompete others, “the others upon his return to China would bring suit before their mandarins, and thus they would destroy him and all his relatives.”²¹³ It is telling that guild members feared not the power of the guild but consequences in China. Guilds were not effective means of control when it came to merchants and artisans. In that light, the basic unit of competition and discipline for the mercantile and crafts folk was the company.

Guilds headed by contractors, on the other hand, did not have to fear competition from others as they held monopolies/*asientos* in certain niches of Manila’s economy conferred by Spanish authorities. Their worries lay more with changes to the terms of their contracts or extortion as discussed above. Discipline within guilds headed by contractors was then tighter as such guilds functioned as singular entities.

²¹³ Don Juan Niño de Tavora, Governor of the Philippines in “Letters to Felipe IV from Governor Tavora, Doubts in Judicial Matters,” Manila, 1628 in BR 22: 249-255.

On top of this pyramid of guilds, shops and residents sat the Chinese governor and his deputies as the official chief intermediaries between the colonial government and the fragmented immigrant community. The Chinese governor was nominated by the heads of guilds and appointed by the Spaniards.²¹⁴ He was in charge of all the Chinese in the Manila area and had two or three assistants to aid him. He could judge in petty civil actions between Chinese parties and he collected taxes for the Spaniards and kept order. The Chinese governor was immediately responsible to two Spanish officials: the special justice who handled Chinese criminal cases and civil suits involving large sums and crown attorney who was concurrently protector of the Chinese and the Indians.²¹⁵ Governor Tavora describes the Chinese governor as

a person appointed to govern them in their own manner, and to take charge of the suits that are brought before him, written in the Chinese characters, and according, to their custom. ... The usual method of judging them in their country is by a summary and verbal investigation, and an immediate punishment with the bamboo. The latter is the strap or whip which the mandarins always carry with them, as any superior is allowed to flog his inferior, without other justification or authority than that of his own plain reason. By that method is attained greater respect and obedience than in any other nation. ... we shall never obtain that obedience and respect, unless we conform (as far as the Christian religion allows) to the methods practiced by their mandarins in commanding them. This consists in having them punished instantly by the nearest justices whenever they are found in disobedience or fraud--namely, their governor and the alcaldes-in-ordinary--without giving them any opportunity to go from one tribunal to another, or to drag them from one prison to another.²¹⁶

Chinese governors and officials who maintained discipline in the manner described by Tavora, must have been greatly feared by the Chinese community.

The power of Chinese governors and officials, while limited, was great enough for Spanish authorities to fear that these Chinese leaders were becoming a law unto themselves and

²¹⁴ The information on the formal structure of Chinese government in Manila is taken from Wickberg's *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, 37-8.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Tavora, "Letters to Felipe IV from Governor Tavora, Doubts in Judicial Matters," BR 22: 249-255.

ever more distant from Spanish control. In 1619, Fernando de los Ríos Coronel—procurator general of the Philippines—petitioned against the sale of the offices of notary and constable in perpetuity by Chinese governors. De los Ríos’ petition suggests that Chinese governors and officials worked together to solidify their positions. By selling the positions of notary and constable in perpetuity, Chinese governors controlled the selection of key power holders, which would increase the chances of governors at exerting influence for a long duration. In addition, the term of office of notary and constable meant that men who held these offices could not be easily held accountable for abuses.²¹⁷ Interestingly, de los Ríos’ solution to the problem was to shorten the period of office to the term of the provincial *alcalde mayor*—the chief magistrate and administrative officer of the province—or to that of the *alcalde* of the *Parián*.²¹⁸ The linking of limitation of term of office to that of the *alcaldes* suggests an attempt by the procurator general to persuade the Crown to mandate a system of control that would push Chinese/indigenous power holders to work together with Spanish officers.

De los Ríos also seemed fearful that allowing powerful Chinese/indigenous to hold office for life would give these figures an advantage over Spanish officers who held office for limited terms. A community figure who held office for life could build up deep and extensive networks of control without much dependence on a Crown agent. Indeed, Crown agents rotating in and out of a position would have to rely heavily on Chinese and indigenous power holders to profit from and control communities of Chinese and indigenous. By forcing Chinese and indigenous office holders to renew their authorized positions when Spanish officers were audited, de los Ríos

²¹⁷ AGI Filipinas 27, N.37. Chinese elites were not alone in selling offices in perpetuity. In his petition, the procurator general also observes that indigenous leaders did the same. The sale of offices in perpetuity by Chinese and native elites suggests that both groups worked towards preserving their spheres of influence by putting allies in key positions.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

advocated for a system that would bind the power of Chinese and indigenous office holders to Spaniards. De los Rios saw that such a system would create openings for non-elite Chinese and indigenous to seek redress for abuses. This would potentially weaken the grip of office holders over their communities and place the Spaniards at the center of arbitration.

The procurator general's perceived need to reassert Spanish authority in Chinese communities suggests that Chinese governors and their officials strove to be in sole command within the Chinese community but at the end of the day, their power resided in their position as representatives of the colonial state. Unless these representatives had recourse to significant coercive power of their own, they had to rely on the muscle of the Spanish regime, however much they wanted it to stay out of their affairs. The collaboration of the colonial state with powerful Chinese suggests that those who sought or held power in Manila in the early 1600s found the support of the state or at least the acquiescence of the state to their control of their communities (by coercion) absolutely necessary.

Of those who sought to be in command, Chinese contractors managed the largest and most insurrection-prone segment of the Chinese community but their hold was tenuous.²¹⁹ Contractors might have been able to control their workers in times of peace through their role as intermediaries but they had no credibility with workers once the Spanish regime was deemed to be unusually cruel, and violence seemed a more attractive option than swallowing bitterness. Chinese governors for all their attempts to boost their control were intermediaries too and they did not have the manpower to put down uprisings by workers. Merchants and artisans were not connected to workers by any disciplinary structure that is obvious in the record. Those with wealth might have been connected to workers who owed them money, but such a connection did

²¹⁹ List reproduced in Lourdes Diaz-Trechuelo, "The Role of the Chinese," (190). See AGI Filipinas 202 for the original in Spanish. In this list, menial laborers were the majority.

not count for much in times of chaos, and could even be a liability if workers saw lenders as oppressors. Those who were in a position to extend credit could call on their debtors with whom they had no quarrel, as many did in insurrections. In such times, Chinese lenders sought refuge with Spanish debtors from Chinese worker-insurgents.

If Chinese intermediaries and the trading community of the *Parián* could not control worker-insurgents, they also did not willingly join them because their interests were not the same. The interests of intermediaries and the trading community lay in maintaining peace and upholding the continued presence of the Spaniards who were needed for the silver they provided (for traders and artisans) and protection from competition (for contractors). In the two major uprisings of the seventeenth century—1603 and 1639—it was the agricultural workers who rose up and sustained insurrections. Most traders and wealthy merchants tried to remain neutral, hide, flee or take shelter with Spanish protectors when workers rebelled. Only when they had no choice did they take up arms.

The Loss of the Middle Ground and Insurrections in Seventeenth-century Manila

The major Chinese insurrections in Manila of the seventeenth-century—1603 and 1639—were all started and sustained by menial laborers based in rural areas outside of Manila, such as Calamba, and the Jesuit estates North of the River Pasig.²²⁰ For these rural-based menial laborers, Spanish abuses perceived as excessive, actions seen as life-threatening, and the insistence of the Spaniards on peace only on their terms, destroyed the middle ground and left violence as seemingly the most viable option.

²²⁰ The Jesuits purchased large tracts of land in the North East sector of Quiapo and subleased it to Chinese cultivators who raised poultry and grew vegetables and fruit there. For more information on Chinese settlements in the Manila area, see chapter 6, “Extramuros: Residential and Occupational Quarters for Asians,” of Robert Reed’s book *Colonial Manila*.

In the 1603 insurrection, as discussed in Chapter One, when the regime started fortifying the city with pressed Chinese labor following suspicions of an attack from China, and rumors began circulating that the Chinese would be massacred, laborers from the countryside decided to act first. For these laborers, the middle ground was lost more quickly than it was for many of those in the *Parián*, who were still negotiating with the regime. If the Spaniards were set upon killing Chinese, laborers probably thought it unlikely that an intermediary would be able to sway Spaniards from such murderous intentions. Certainly the suspicions of the governor suggests that in the event of a massacre, workers outside of Manila would be the prime targets, along with “restless and vagabond people.” Inaction would not save those targeted and violent action was due. At the start of the fighting, the insurgents killed their leader who was an intermediary, Joan Ontae, and chose “two heathen Sangleys” to be supreme commanders by “acclamation.”²²¹ An intermediary with links to the regime was suspect in the eyes of insurgents. The time for mediation was over and war required one of their own and not a person with ties to the enemy. Even though the uprising was led by Chinese, they did not hesitate to reach out to indigenous society and Japanese to join their ranks, as described in Chapter One. While the Spaniards saw the uprising as a Chinese one, it would probably be better to see it as an uprising of the disenfranchised in and around Manila.

The insurrection of 1639 lasted from November 21 to March 1640. This insurrection had much clearer rural roots than that of 1603. Due to low silver supplies in Manila in 1638, the royal treasury was unable to pay for armed fleets and contributions were levied from Chinese in

²²¹ Costa, *The Jesuits*, 212. Costa’s account of Ontae’s death is taken from the “Historia General” of Pablo Pastells (1846-1932). In his “Historia,” Pastells quotes extensively from documents related to the insurrection from the Archive of the Indies in Seville. Costa’s interpretation of events is faithful to the passages quoted in the Spanish by Pastells.

money and supplies.²²² Six thousand Chinese laborers were obliged to live in a new village which the governor built in Calamba. These laborers were put under the charge of contractors²²³ and overseen by a provincial magistrate called Luis Arias de Mora. Their job was to produce food for the fortified military settlements in the islands.²²⁴ In performing this forced labor,

many of them fell sick during the past months, and it is said that more than three hundred of them died. Accordingly, they became desperate; and it is well known that the season is an unwholesome one. The time came for the Chinese to pay their license money and rent, which in all was more than twenty-five pesos for each one. The officials harassed them for the pay, and they had not the means to pay what was due; accordingly they have broken loose in this revolt.²²⁵

The rural workers of Calamba killed Luis de Mora, burned the church and destroyed other churches in neighboring villages. With “sickles with which they cut their rice, fastened to poles and some lances” they marched for Manila with those of Calamba and surrounding farmlands who joined either through force or willingly.²²⁶ Upon reaching Manila, they sued for peace but the Spaniards attacked. The uprising of the workers of Calamba seems to have ended by November 28, 1639, when Spaniards with the help of Pampangos, Tagales and Mulattoes dispersed the workers. The rising of the workers of Calamba seems to have been more about redress of grievances and revenge against the abuses of intermediaries. An intermediary like Luis de Mora, with his continual and excessive exactions, was intolerable and paid the price for contravening public transcripts of reciprocity with his life. The worker-insurgents of Calamba

²²² Juan de la Concepcion, “Historia General de Philipinas” Volume V, (429). Also see “Relation of the Insurrection of the Chinese [unsigned and undated; probably in March, 1640],” in BR 29: footnote 50.

²²³ “Events in the Philippines Island from 1639 to August 1640,” [Cavite: 1640]: “The rents from the lands, too, have proved to be unprofitable, from the manner in which they have been let: while, if they belonged to individuals, they would be a source of gain,” in BR 29: 202.

²²⁴ “Relation of the Insurrection of the Chinese [unsigned and undated; probably in March, 1640]” in BR 29: 208-258.

²²⁵ “Events in the Philippines Island from 1639 to August 1640,” in BR 29: 202.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 194-207.

were not unopen to rebuilding the middle ground. Their willingness to negotiate with Manila supports this view. The reluctance of Spaniards to negotiate, however, radicalized workers. Even though the workers of Calamba had been dispersed, the war was still not over.

On November 29, the Chinese of Sagar and Santa Cruz, were said to have reacted to the actions of the Spaniards. Sagar and Santa Cruz were locations of Jesuit estates in the environs of Manila. These new insurgents “summoned the Chinese who were scattered among the other estates, as far as Manila” to join them.²²⁷ On that day, Santa Cruz burned. Still the conflict continued. The insurgents were well organized. According to Casimiro Diaz, the insurgents were divided into tens—six fought, two procured food and another two stood guard over their lodging. These units of ten were overseen by captains and captains reported to field officers who were in charge of ten captains. Each soldier had a “*chapa*” or bronze coin given to him by his captain and each day the coins were counted so that losses were known.²²⁸ Such organization suggests a leadership that either had previous forms to draw from, or was incredibly quick to innovate in the field.²²⁹ Given the speed with which the Chinese organized, the former is more probable. The Spanish mention the discovery of proclamations with Chinese characters on them in the cemetery of Antipolo, which was the quarters of the leaders of the uprising. The proclamations were said to be “fastened to trees, to serve for the proper government of their forces.”²³⁰ What those proclamations said is not known and as such no links can be made with brotherhood organizations. Nonetheless, the organization of the insurgents in the field is indicative of

²²⁷ Ibid., 194-207.

²²⁸ Casimiro Diaz, *Conquistas de las Islas Filipinas* (written 1718, printed in Valladolid in 1890), 250-251.

²²⁹ This form of organization is reminiscent of the decimal system used in China called the “*baojia*.”

²³⁰ Casimiro Diaz, *Conquistas*, 241.

relationships built prior to entering into battle. It is unlikely that insurgents would trust untested leaders or ones they did not know when their very lives were on the line.

In addition to having leaders they could trust, insurgents also required a radicalized view that erased the middle ground and made differences between insurgents and the regime stark. Insurgents committed numerous acts of sacrilege, burning churches in Santa Cruz, Quiapo, Meyhaligue, Sampaloc, San Sebastian and San Fran del Monte. The reason given for burning churches was as such: “According to what many of them said, their chief incentive to setting these fires was what happened to a certain sangley.” This Sangley, a Christian, had an idol which he had buried called “the God of Battles.” He had dug the idol up to appease it and the idol had declared that churches be burned saying “profane all that was sacred, and inflict on the Christians all the harm that they possibly could.”²³¹ By attacking churches and recovering old gods, Chinese insurgents provided themselves with a counter discourse to that of the regime’s.

The Chinese of the *Parián*, did not make any radical movements. In fact, on December 2, when some in the *Parián* finally revolted, it was said that it was recent arrivals who caused the most damages.²³² In fact, when the order to kill all the Sangleys came on that day, many were in the city, in the houses of Spaniards. The religious and many citizens contravened the order of the governor and concealed many of these Chinese.²³³ The Chinese of the *Parián* took their time in choosing sides and even then, it was mainly recent arrivals who decided to fight. The interests of traders and artisans were different from those in the countryside. These traders and artisans still perceived their interests as entwined with the presence of the Spanish empire in Manila. As long

²³¹ Ibid., pp. 238-9.

²³² Ibid., 228

²³³ Ibid.

as the empire remained relevant by making it possible to pursue their livelihoods, they would not oppose it.

The insurrection of 1662 was similar in many ways to that of 1603, in that it was precipitated by a perceived external threat. On the other hand, the uprising of 1662 differed in that both those who rose up and the authorities strove to preserve the middle ground and in doing so avoided large-scale bloodshed. In 1662, the great trader/sea lord, Zheng Chenggong, sent an embassy headed by the Dominican, Victorio Riccio, demanding the submission of Manila. This demand understandably angered the Spaniards and there was a discussion of expelling non-Catholic Chinese from the Philippines.²³⁴ Once again, the Spaniards worried about “the most worthless class”—“the butchers and vegetable sellers”—as the ones most likely to stir up a revolt. Predictably, “those in the *Parián* displayed no courage for any measure” as their “interests are so involved with peace.”²³⁵ The governor’s perception is in line with the view that because of their interests, traders and artisans had much to lose from an insurrection. Despite their interests being so bound up with peace, the *Parián* was the place where the fighting first took place.

The fighting in the *Parián* broke out perhaps because some of its residents feared a destruction of the middle ground with the summoning of ship-captains. The Spanish Governor ordered that a bell be rung to assemble the Chinese ship-captains. When those of the *Parián* saw the ship-captains enter the city gate they regarded their fears as confirmed. Thirty Chinese grabbed a captain at the gate. Spanish soldiers fired and killed some of these Chinese. This was followed by two cannon shots fired into the *Parián*. Pandemonium ensued. Many tried to make it

²³⁴ “Events in Manila, 1662-1663” [unsigned: July 1663?] in BR 36: 218-280: This is my main source for the account of the insurrection of 1662.

²³⁵ Ibid., 222-223.

across the river to Santa Cruz and drowned in the attempt while others committed suicide. “One thousand five hundred merchants and peaceable people” hid in their houses. The Spanish governor acted quickly to calm things down.²³⁶ The reaction of certain Chinese to their ship-captains being summoned is not easily discernible. Were these Chinese *vagos*? If so, their ship-captains would have been their chief intermediaries if they had not yet found employment. The withdrawal of intermediaries was not an assuring sign and sparked panic. The attempt to keep the captains suggests those who reacted feared something foul was afoot. After the massacre in the *Parián*, many made their way to Sagar and Meysilo, round about Santa Cruz, in lands surrounding or on the Jesuit estates. There they set up camp and awaited the worst, while still hoping to negotiate. They sent Father Mesina, S.J., to plead on their behalf.

1662 differs from 1603 or 1639 in that both “insurgents”—fugitives would be more apt a description since those wanted were fleeing and not seeking to fight—and the regime maintained a middle ground to prevent the conflict from escalating.²³⁷ Fighting in 1662 was minimal compared to earlier years because of the measured Spanish reaction to those who fled and the stand-off was more about negotiating a peaceful return to the *Parián* or safe passage back to China. Aside from Father Mesina, ship captains acted as intermediaries for the fugitives. When terms had been agreed, the fugitives returned to the *Parián* and many left on the ships of captains who profited tremendously from the mass deportation at ten pesos a head for passage money. As the profit for captains indicates, when the middle ground held, intermediaries stood to gain and bloodshed was largely avoided.

²³⁶ Ibid., 218-280.

²³⁷ In fact, the writer of the account said that many of the fugitives were anxious and wanted to return to the *Parián*, which he equated with a dove cote.

The 1662 “insurrection” might have concluded relatively mildly compared to previous ones, but not long before that, at the end of 1660, Chinese took part in a large-scale “native” uprising in Pangasinan with many Chinese deaths. The joint participation of Chinese and indigenous in this sublevation challenges the portrayal of violent challenges to Spanish authority as ethnically driven but rather, desperate attempts to remedy perceived abuses of the colonial order. It also suggests that when Spaniards lost the support of intermediaries, Spanish claims to rulership became irrelevant to local society. The insurrection in Pangasinan was “incited by many grievous annoyances unjustly caused by the superintendent of timber cutting” connected to building the King’s ships.²³⁸ The leader of the revolt was the chief of the village of Binalatongan, Don Andres Malong. Malong was the Spanish appointed master-of-camp of Pangasinan and an important intermediary—a status affirmed by a royal grant to the labor of thirty-six tributaries just the year before he turned against Spanish authorities.²³⁹ His ability to take on the Spanish rested on the general sense of injustice felt by not only those in his village but by multiple communities in northern Luzon. The Pampangans had raised the banner of revolt first and had sought the alliance of others to overthrow Spanish rule. Malong’s revolt followed the Pampangan one and continued in its vision of a union of north Luzon—particularly Ilocos and Pangasinan—for the purpose of securing freedom from Spain and to set up a central government.

Malong’s vision found the support of Chinese. In this insurrection, the Chinese were accused of fomenting and maintaining

with aid and cunning the rebellions of the Indians... That is apparent, because, when the alcalde-mayor Don Francisco Pulido was killed in Pangasinan, some Sangleys were

²³⁸ BR 41: 58. See *Historia General de los religiosos Descalzos*, Decade 8, Chapter IV, for the original. This book is available online on Google Books. The translation given in BR is accurate for the most part, though it does leave out some details. For example, the English translation does not mention that the labor requisitioned was for cutting timber for the King’s ships.

²³⁹ See AGI Filipinas 52, n.2. He was bestowed this grant to labor or “encomienda” on 7 May, 1659.

found among the rebels, who contrived that under the cover of the small boats they might capture the large vessel where the alcalde-mayor was defending his life very gallantly; and on the arrival of our naval fleet to explore the beach of Lingayen, there were seen many armed men, consisting of Sangleys and Indians....But it is still more fully shown by the many bodies of Sangleys which were found in the field whenever there was an engagement with the rebels, for on all occasions they served the Indians as auxiliaries. Let us examine the motive for the Chinese taking part in a war that concerned them so little.²⁴⁰

The author goes on to link Chinese participation with Zheng Chenggong's planned invasion but does not give details. Nonetheless, the Chinese participation in this insurrection suggests that they must have shared some grievances with the indigenous insurgents. It is unlikely that one would risk one's life for some supposed invasion. Outside of the *Parián*, the desirability and relevance of a Spanish presence in Luzon was questioned by Chinese, and not alone.

I end my analysis of insurrections in 1662, as the insurrection of 1686 was not one worthy of the name. It was a limited criminal action led by a man called Tingco—a former prisoner turned scribe turned outlaw. His murder of the constable of permits, another Spaniard and an attempt on the life of the Governor of the *Parián*, was swiftly dealt with, ending in the death of Tingco and eleven associates. The *Parián* Chinese did not participate as it was not in their interest to do so. While Tingco's actions were limited, the Spaniards imagined that it was part of a larger conspiracy and drew up expulsion lists and began deporting Chinese. The majority of the Spanish population realized that the Chinese were vital to Manila and tried to mitigate the zeal of more nervous officials or debtors who hoped to be rid of their creditors.

“Chinese insurrections” of the seventeenth-century are misnomers in the sense that this terminology leads to perceptions of these uprisings as encompassing all of Manila's Chinese community, when actually they were driven primarily by Chinese engaged in labor in the countryside. The *Parián* Chinese were not the main actors in these insurrections and in fact had

²⁴⁰ BR 41: 85-6. See *Historia General de los religiosos Descalzos*, Decade 8, Chapter IV, for the original.

much to lose from them. Many merchants and artisans stayed out of the conflicts as best as they could and were even victims of these conflicts. Chinese were not inherently rebellious and subversive elements in colonial Manila. The abuse and irrelevance of those who maintained the colonial order—both Spanish and Chinese—to a certain sector of the Manila Chinese community led to insurrections. In these insurrections, Chinese reached out to other communities for support and were joined, if in limited numbers, by others. Likewise, Chinese fought along side indigenous communities against Spanish authorities in places like Pangasinan, when the middle ground was lost. In Manila and outside it, the Spanish regime managed to exist because it maintained the interests of not just Spaniards but others, many Chinese included. In the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the trading sector of the Chinese community continued to support the Spanish presence in Manila because it needed Spanish silver and patronage. As long as the middle ground existed, Chinese and Spanish could continue to negotiate the shared space of Manila for their own ends.

Chapter Four

The Chinese and the Galleon Trade

“Manila was the Pacific’s linchpin, connecting silver’s American supply-side (and silk’s demand-side) with silver’s dominant Chinese demand-side (and silk’s supply-side).” ~Dennis O. Flynn and Arturo Giráldez, “Cycles of Silver”

“But we argue that, in the absence of Chinese demand for silver, there would have been no Spanish Empire; profit for every entity along silver’s global mercantile chain—including Spain’s central government—depended upon high silver prices offered by end-customers in China.” ~Dennis O. Flynn and Arturo Giráldez, “China and the Spanish Empire”

Introduction

The lucrative Manila galleon trade fires up the imagination, conjuring images of ships heavily laden with silks, porcelain, and spices leaving Manila’s port of Cavite and returning from Acapulco chock-full of silver. The ships of the Manila-Acapulco line were the most coveted prize by pirate and privateer in the seven seas and were known in the Spanish empire as the *Naos de China* or the China Ships.²⁴¹ As the name China Ship implies, in the Spanish imagination, China—a space conceptualized as encompassing the Chinese empire and Asia more broadly—and the Manila galleons were inextricably linked.²⁴² China was seen as the source of luxuries and the galleons truly had a “sensational” impact on consumers in New Spain. A lady of Mexico City wrote

They have brought rich goods better than any to be found in Spain and more finished than anything of its kind in the rest of the world, such as satins, damasks, taffetas, brocades, gold- and silver-cloth, woolen shawls of a thousand kinds; chinaware finer than that of India, quite transparent and gilded in a thousand ways, so that even the most experienced persons here cannot make out how it is

²⁴¹ Only four of these China Ships were actually ever captured in the 250-year history of the line. All were taken by the English: the *Santa Ana* in 1587, the *Encarnación* in 1709, the *Covadonga* in 1743, and the *Santísima Trinidad*, in 1762. See William Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 15.

²⁴² Edward R. Slack Jr., who explores the Asian immigration and the idea of *chino* in his ground-breaking essay “The Chinos in New Spain: A Corrective Lens for a Distorted Image,” writes that in the Spanish colonial period, “travelers from Cathay, Cipango (Japan), the Philippines, various kingdoms in Southeast Asia and India were known collectively in New Spain as *chinos* (Chinese) or *indios chinos* (Chinese Indians), as the word *chino/china* became synonymous with Asia.” See Slack’s essay in *Journal of World History* 20, no.1 (2009): 35-67.

made; an abundance of jewels and chains of gold, wax, paper, cinnamon and quantities of rice.”²⁴³

This sense of wonder continues to permeate studies of the galleon trade. Economic historians in particular, have fixated on the riches that flowed between Manila and Acapulco and most recently have been debating the significance and impact of the galleon trade on the economy of the world. The leading voices in this debate have most notably been the duo of Dennis O. Flynn and Arturo Giraldéz. Building on sophisticated arguments on arbitrage, Spanish profitability and silver cycles, these two historians have provided us with a global perspective on silver flows and Manila’s role in world history. They have also boldly claimed that without the Chinese appetite for silver, there would have been no Spanish empire.²⁴⁴ While much has been made of the Manila Chinese role as suppliers of silk for the galleon trade and of China as the “world’s silver sink,” to date, there has not been a study that has focused on putting the role of Chinese suppliers in the trade into perspective nor one that examines the significance of the trans-Pacific commerce for Manila’s Chinese population.²⁴⁵

The galleon trade has until recently been studied mostly from the point of view of New Spain. Our understanding of this trade rests mainly on sources that focus on the records from the Archivo General de la Nacion (AGN) in Mexico or from the Archivo General de Indias in

²⁴³ This passage is quoted in Kamen, *Empire*, 206. It comes from Enrique Otte’s *Cartas privadas de emigrantes a Indias 1540-1616* (Seville, 1988).

²⁴⁴ For this claim see Flynn and Giraldéz’ “China and the Spanish Empire,” *Revista de Historia Economica* 14, n.2 (1996): 309-38. For their arguments on arbitrage, see “Arbitrage, China and the World Trade in the Early Modern Period,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 38, no. 4 (1995): 429-448. Their argument on global economic integration and the two major cycles in the global silver market are found in “Cycles of Silver: Global Unity through the Mid-Eighteenth Century,” *Journal of World History* 13, no. 2 (2002): 391-427. On the Philippines being a profitable proposition for the Crown see “Spanish profitability in the Pacific: the Philippines in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,” in *Pacific Centuries: Pacific and Pacific Rim history since the sixteenth century*, eds. Dennis O. Flynn, Lionel Frost and A.J.H. Latham (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 23-37.

²⁴⁵ Flynn and Giraldéz use the term “the world’s silver sink” in “Born with a ‘Silver Spoon’: The Origin of World Trade in 1571,” *Journal of World History* 6, no. 2 (1995): 206.

Seville.²⁴⁶ Flynn's and Giraldez' widely discussed work starting in the 1990s has provided a much needed global perspective on the trade by integrating the historiography on silk flows and China's monetary history with world economic history.²⁴⁷ Even so, the focus has remained trained on Spanish Crown profitability and has largely built on New Spanish government records. The view from Manila has largely been confined to eyewitness accounts (reports by government agents and ecclesiastics) or has focused on government records related to the customs duties connected to the junk and country trade from the Chinese coast and from other Asian destinations such as the Coromandel coast.²⁴⁸

More recently, Carmen Yuste López has reconceptualized the galleon trade as a trans-Pacific affair with New Spanish merchants making the bulk of profits, organizing financing and pulling the strings behind the scenes.²⁴⁹ Yuste López emphasizes the inter-colonial angle of the commerce and refocuses arguments on the profitability of Manila to the Spanish Crown by taking attention away from how Manila was a losing proposition sustained by subsidies and missionary zeal and instead showing how the trade that took place in the city was highly lucrative for New Spanish merchants. Her benchmark study on the topic notwithstanding, her

²⁴⁶ See Schurz' *The Manila Galleon*, Pierre Chaunu's *Les Philippines et le Pacifique des Ibériques (XVI e, XVIIe, XVIIIe Siècles) Introduction Méthodologique et Indices d'Activité* (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1960) and Carmen Yuste López' *Comercio de la Nueva España con Filipinas, 1590-1785* (Mexico D.F.: Departamento de Publicaciones, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1984).

²⁴⁷ On silk flows, see Chuan Han-sheng's "The Chinese Silk Trade with Spanish America From the Late Ming to the Mid-Ch'ing Period," in *Studia Asiatica: Essays in Felicitation of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of Professor Ch'en Shou-yi*, ed. Laurence G. Thompson (CMRASC Occasional Series No. 29, San Francisco: Chinese Materials Center, Inc., 1975), 99-117. On China's monetary history see Richard Von Glahn's *Fountain of Fortune* and William Atwell's "International Bullion Flows and the Chinese Economy Circa 1530-1650," *Past and Present* 95 (1982): 68-90 and "Another Look at Silver Imports into China, ca. 1635-1644," *Journal of World History* 16.4 (2005): 467-489.

²⁴⁸ See Serafin Quiaon's "The Sampan Trade, 1570-1770," in *The Chinese in the Philippines, 1570-1770*, ed. Alfonso Felix Jr. (Manila: Solidaridad Publishing House, 1966): 160-174. Also see Lucille Chia's "The Butcher, the Baker, and the Carpenter."

²⁴⁹ Yuste López, *Emporios Transpacíficos*.

reliance on Spanish and Mexican archives and the thrust of her investigation provide only a limited view of Chinese involvement in the galleon trade.

The present chapter complements Yuste López' work and seeks to provide a view of the galleon trade centered on Manila, utilizing private sector records, with the aim of detailing the role of the other group controlling the trans-oceanic trade—the Chinese. The *Protocolos de Manila* or notarial records of Manila, found at the Record Management and Archive Office (RMAO), contain thousands of private business transactions. These notarial records allow one to gauge the volume of trade, patterns of investment, sources of credit and interest rates. While being a potentially rich mine of information, the Manila notarial record is limited chronologically to the eighteenth century. There is one notary book for 1674 but what remains of it does not mention the galleon trade. There is also the problem of the completeness of the notarial record. We do not know how many notaries public operated in Manila in the eighteenth century and any conclusions drawn must therefore take this limitation into consideration.²⁵⁰ For example, if there were two notaries public in a year, with both recording roughly equal amounts of loans taken for the galleon trade, the sum of transactions in one *protocolo* would represent only half the known amount taken for said trade.²⁵¹ These limitations notwithstanding, a more systematic study of the

²⁵⁰ In Manila, by the late seventeenth century, *protocolos* were bound volumes of notarized documents written on official sealed paper (*sello tercero y cuarto*). Felicísimo R. Feria explains that in order to avoid fraud by notaries, on 19 December, 1696, the Governor General of the Philippines ordered that starting on 1 January, 1697, all notaries public of Manila, the *Parián*, Tondo and Cavite record contracts, testaments and other instruments in bound volumes of 150 pages on official sealed paper. See Feria's *Manual de los Notarios Públicos (con fomularios)* (Manila: Tip. Santo Tomas, 1912), 6.

²⁵¹ See Richard Chu's dissertation, " 'Catholic,' 'Mestizo,' 'Sangley,'" 7-8. For the latter part of the nineteenth century, Richard Chu has found eight notaries public operating in Manila but for most of the eighteenth century, the RMAO has only one volume extant per year (1752, 1758, 1755, 1758, 1762, 1765, 1766, and 1770). These volumes belong to only four notaries: Balthazar Xavier Sanchez for the years 1740, 1741, 1752, 1758, Domingo Cortes de Arquiza for 1755, Manuel Jose Vizcarra for 1762 and Martin Dominguez Zamudio for 1765, 1766 and 1770. In the latter part of the eighteenth century, there were a few years when there were extant records for two or three notaries, i.e in the 1790s. The impression one gets is that there were fewer notaries public in operation in the eighteenth century compared to the nineteenth. Nonetheless, without documentation stipulating how many notaries public there were, it is hard to know with any certainty.

Protocolos de Manila can yield a broader picture of the galleon trade during what Flynn and Giraldez have termed the Second Silver Cycle (ca. 1700-1750) and give us a clearer picture of the role of the Chinese in the economy of Manila and the trans-oceanic Spanish empire.

This chapter will focus on the *Protocolo de Manila* of 1740²⁵² to study business deals recorded by the notary public Marcos Gonzalez, with a focus on the following transactions: loans taken expressly for the galleon trade and payments of loans for the shipping trade to Java and China (Emuy, Macao, Canton, Lanquin).²⁵³ The latter transactions are included in this study because in many instances, signatories invested in the shipping trade to Java and China and stipulated that the profits and principal loan be reinvested into the galleon trade. I have collected the information from these transactions and others in the *protocolos* (all transactions involving Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* for the years 1740-1770 were examined) and used it to construct a database containing 504 entries.²⁵⁴ My findings were based mainly on analysis derived from this database and are targeted at answering the following questions: what was the significance of the Chinese in the galleon trade and what was the significance of the galleon trade to the Chinese in Manila?

²⁵² The *protocolo* in question is *Protocolo de Manila* 1740, of the notary Marcos Gonzalez with the signature number SDS0764. There is another *protocolo* for 1740 of the notary Balthazar Xavier Sanchez de Cueva, SDS0765 but in that record I was only able to identify two cases involving Chinese and Chinese *mestizos*—neither of the cases had to do with the galleon trade. For studying Chinese involvement in the galleon trade, the *protocolo* of Sanchez de Cueva is therefore unimportant but a study of all transactions in this volume would have added to the larger picture of the galleon trade. Sanchez de Cueva's volume contains far fewer transactions for the year 1740 than Gonzalez' does. This is because Sanchez de Cueva's volume is split between two years: 1740 and 1741. Gonzalez' volume captures the bulk of known transactions for the year 1740 and accordingly, deserves to be the center of attention for this thesis.

²⁵³ "Emuy" is the Spanish transliteration for "Amoy," or Xiamen in Mandarin. "Lanquin" is given as Nanjing in BR 15: 177-8 and BR 3: 41-2.

²⁵⁴ I studied every document in the 1740 *protocolo* and found 152 transactions dealing specifically with New Spain. Other documents included granting of powers of attorney, statements of surety, dowry contracts, sale of slaves, houses, rights to tax and relinquishing of office.

To address these questions, I have divided my analysis into three main sections: (i) an overview of the galleon trade from about 1600 to 1770 which identifies patterns of investment and provides a larger context within which to understand Chinese participation in the trade, (ii) Chinese participation in the galleon trade via shipping to China and Java, (iii) Chinese as provisioners of merchandise for the silk for silver exchange and (iv) the significance of the galleon trade to the Chinese in Manila.

Following this organizational scheme, I argue that from the late 1720s into the latter stages of the eighteenth century, the volume of the silk for silver trade seems to have shrunk in comparison to that of the seventeenth century and the opening years of the eighteenth. The implications of this decline in silver and silk flows across the Pacific is that silver from New Spain must have found its way to China through other routes. Manila was still an important gateway for silver to China in the eighteenth century but a fading one. Furthermore, the Manila-Acapulco trade while still a rich and significant one in the eighteenth century was likely no longer as lucrative as it was in the seventeenth century, with profits about half what they used to be or even less.

The eighteenth century also saw a shift in the role of wealthy Chinese merchants from being both provisioners and creditors for the galleon trade in the previous century to the more restricted role of being principally suppliers only. In Manila, by 1740, a small group of merchants and bankers representing religious organizations—Manila creole elites, many with New Spanish connections, or agents from New Spain representing Mexico City merchant interests—made up the main investors in the Manila-Acapulco portion of the trade.²⁵⁵ This

²⁵⁵ On creole elites in Manila, see chapters one and two of Ruth de Llobet's "Orphans of Empire: Bourbon Reforms, Constitutional Impasse, and the Rise of the Filipino Creole Consciousness in an Age of Revolution" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 2011). In the eighteenth century, creoles in Manila were those of "Spanish"

powerful group of investors displaced wealthy Chinese as the main sources of credit in Manila for the trans-Pacific trade. A small group of Chinese even took loans from these New Spanish-linked lenders, connecting Chinese and Javanese markets to Manila for the trans-Pacific commerce, but their shipping activities accounted for a small portion of the goods headed to Acapulco. Even though the *protocolos* do not contain documentation of major Chinese transactions related to the galleon trade, we know from lists of customs duties on goods for sale in Acapulco that the bulk of merchandise for the galleon trade in the eighteenth century, as from its inception, still came from Chinese merchants not reliant on Spanish funding. These Chinese merchants, while not as influential as they were in the seventeenth century, still remained important to the galleon trade as its top suppliers.

Powerful as these Chinese merchants were in the trade, most Chinese in Manila were not direct participants in the galleon trade. For the majority of Chinese in Manila—long-term immigrants and those involved in crafts, unskilled labor, farming or fishing—the galleon trade was of no direct importance. Instead, the local economy was of more immediate concern to them. The split in Chinese engagement with the galleon trade suggests that disparate groups in the Chinese community had different interactions with Spaniards. While suppliers of wares for the galleons were mostly able to negotiate from a position of strength, other Chinese dependent on Spanish credit or involved in the local economy had to contend with Spanish authorities on terms that were largely controlled by those authorities, albeit through intermediaries. The varied encounters with Spanish power meant that Chinese collaboration in empire took different forms and is a reminder that the Chinese of Manila were not a homogenous group. Each spoke to power according to his position within colonial society.

status born in the Philippines or long-term “Spanish” residents of the city who had intermarried or become associated with this group.

Overview of the Galleon Trade (ca. 1600-1770)

On the twenty-third of July, 1740, the *Nuestra Señora de Covadonga* left the port of Cavite, near Manila, for New Spain. The months leading up to its departure were probably increasingly hectic ones for galleon traders seeking creditors and securing merchandise from Chinese merchants and others to load onto the galleons. There were one hundred and twenty-seven deals made in the months of June and July alone to obtain credit to underwrite the voyage, a veritable rash of activity when compared to the slow months of January till May, when only twenty-three such transactions were made. Some galleon traders were likely anxiously awaiting the return on investments they had made in Java and farther afield in Emuy (present day Xiamen), Macao and Canton.²⁵⁶ When the galleon finally set sail, the long wait had begun for its investors because the *Covadonga* would only return the following year in August. Within its massive wooden hull lay perhaps as much as half a million pesos worth of goods that could be sold for profit in New Spain, although the captain of the register (*capitan del pliego*) would declare to authorities in Acapulco that only 240,095 pesos worth of effects were onboard.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁶ An example of worried merchants (but for the year 1741) would be two Spanish partners who took out a loan on September, 22, 1740. Don Francisco Carriedo y Peredo and his partner Don Juan Domingo Nebra, a general of the galleon, had taken out a loan of 17,500 pesos at twenty percent interest for trade to Emuy and the conditions of their agreement stipulated that the amount and its profits had to be taken onboard the galleon of the following year. His creditor was Don Alonso Esquibel y Martel. Most Chinese junks took almost a year to return with merchandise and these Spanish merchants would have had to do brisk business and return quickly with the trade winds to make it in time for the galleon's departure.

²⁵⁷ See "Carta del Duque de la Conquista de Llegada del Nuestra Señora de Covadonga" in AGI Filipinas 121, N.3 for details on the declared value of goods onboard the *Covadonga*. In his letter, the Viceroy of New Spain wrote the following: "Este Patache se aseguró en la Bahía del Puerto de Acapulco, el día veinte y siete de Henerom mediante lo qual, y haver llegado a ésta capital Dn. Blas Andres de Oliven. Capn. Del Pliego, rezivi los de oficio de aquellas Yslas, y las diligencias de la visita hecha por el castellano, y thesorero factor, dandome quenta de que quedaban en el alixo de ciento cinco ranchos para proceder a la descarga de los efectos, y mercaderias que ha conducido, que segun rexistro de ella se rrecluze, a dos mill quatrocientos, y noventa y cinco piezas todo su carguio."

Smuggling and underreporting of this sort, as many contemporaries and scholars have claimed was commonplace.²⁵⁸ The question is just how serious these practices were. Answering this question is not only important for clarifying how much silver was crossing the Pacific on its way to China but will also provide a sense of how large the galleon trade with Chinese merchants was.

Throughout the seventeenth century, between two and five million pesos crossed the Pacific from Acapulco to Manila annually. The volume of this trade for the seventeenth century has been thoroughly discussed elsewhere by scholars such as William Schurz, John Te Paske, Ward Barrett, Woodrow Borah, Chuan Han-sheng and most notably by Dennis Flynn and Arturo Giraldez.²⁵⁹ Chuan Han-sheng, based on primary sources in the Blair and Robertson collection (reports by clergy and officials to Madrid) provides the following numbers for silver crossing from Acapulco to Manila for the seventeenth century: 1601 (2 million pesos), 1602 (2 million pesos), 1604 (2.5 million pesos), 1620 (3 million pesos), 1633 (2 million pesos), 1688 (2 million pesos), 1698 (2 million pesos), 1699 (2.07 million pesos). Two million pesos would weigh about

²⁵⁸ See Chapter Four, "City and Commerce" for an account of how the galleon trade functioned in Schurz' *The Manila Galleon*, 154-192. In this chapter Schurz explains that "Each shipper was required to present an itemized account of his consignments with a declaration of the volume and contents of each bale or chest. He was obliged to swear that the goods were as described and that he was the sole and original consignor of the shipment. By the law of 1769, a simple assertion was accepted in lieu of the 'grievous burden' of taking an oath. Over a century before Grau y Monfalcon, representing the interests of the trade in Spain, had protested against the exacting of a sworn declaration by the board of appraisal. On the basis of a light-sitting perjury or a conventional statement the official valuation was made....As so often in Spanish history, the purpose of legislation was defeated by the interference of a scrupulous respect for the individual's word, to challenge which would have constituted a serious affront to his person and his 'honor,'" *The Manila Galleon*, 178.

²⁵⁹ See William Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, Barrett Ward, "World Bullion Flows, 1450-1800," in *The Rise of Merchant Empires: Long-Distance Trade in the Early Modern World, 1350-1750*, ed. James D. Tracy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 224-254, John Te Paske, "New World Silver, Castille and the Philippines, 1590-1800," in *Precious Metals in the Later Medieval and Early Modern Worlds*, ed. J.F. Richards (Durham: North Carolina Academic Press, 1983), pp. 425-446, Woodrow Borah, *Early Colonial Trade and Navigation Between Mexico and Peru* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1954), and Chuan Han-sheng, "The inflow of American Silver into China from the Late Ming to the Mid-Ch'ing Period," *The Journal of the Institute of Chinese Studies of the Chinese University of Hong Kong* 2, (1969): 61-75.

fifty metric tons.²⁶⁰ Chuan's estimates are conservative when compared to silver production figures in Spanish America and exports of Spanish American silver across the Atlantic. Spanish American production for the seventeenth century was more than the amount exported over the Atlantic by 40,000 tons, which is the same as 5.5 million pesos (135 tons) per year.²⁶¹ Flynn and Giraldez reason that this amount crossed the Pacific through Manila since "no comparable silver magnet existed in America."²⁶² To support this view, Flynn and Giraldez invoke a claim made by the Cabildo of Mexico City in 1602 that five million pesos (127.8 tons) went to Manila annually and that in 1597, twelve million pesos (306.7 tons) left Acapulco for that port. If an average of between two and five million pesos crossed the Pacific each year through Manila, the volume of contraband trade was sizable since only 500,000 pesos were permitted to be shipped from New Spain to the Philippines annually for the years 1593-1701.

Even if this amount of silver made its way to Manila, not all of it was necessarily "quickly transshipped" to China, as Flynn and Giraldez claim.²⁶³ The volume of silver exchanged for silk could vary depending on its price in the Americas. Put another way, the galleons could only carry so much silk and the amount of silver needed to buy that fixed quantity of material changed depending on the price of silk. Hypothetically speaking, if the cost of silk remained constant in Manila, a Spanish galleon merchant could invest a smaller sum of silver into buying the same amount of silk he would normally buy if the price of silk in the Americas

²⁶⁰ Chuan Han-sheng, "The inflow of American Silver into China," 79. This information is summarized by Flynn and Giráldez in "Arbitrage, China and World Trade," 436.

²⁶¹ Flynn and Giráldez, "Arbitrage," 435. Flynn and Giráldez point out this discrepancy based on Barrett's observation.

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ Flynn and Giráldez jump too quickly to the conclusion that all the silver shipped from Acapulco to Manila made its way to China via silk sales. They argue that "Throughout the seventeenth century Pacific galleons carried two million pesos in silver annually (i.e., more than 50 tons) from Acapulco to Manila, whereupon Chinese merchants quickly transshipped it to China," in "Cycles of Silver," 398.

was high. Based on this logic, the China-Manila segment of the galleon trade would have been worth between 200,000 and 2,500,000 pesos. I calculated the low end of this range based on the assumptions that silk was worth ten times more in the Americas than it was in Manila and that silk sales generated two million pesos per year for merchants in Acapulco. The price of silk was calculated based on data collected by a procurator of the Philippines for the years 1620-1621 for a proposal to the King to send a two-hundred-ton galleon from Manila with silk goods for sale in Peru. The procurator found that silk bought for 335,000 pesos in Manila could be sold for 3,170,000 pesos in Lima, meaning silk cost ten times more in Lima than in Manila for those years.²⁶⁴ On the high end of the spectrum, Chinese silk merchants sold two and a half million pesos worth of silk in Manila if we assume that the cost of silk in the Americas was only twice that in Manila and that an average of five million pesos was paid each year for silk on the American end. The supposition that silk cost two times more in the Americas is based on the Crown's calculation of the permitted amount of silk to be imported into New Spain and the quantity of silver allowed to be carried to Manila from those sales. For the seventeenth century, the *permiso* was 250,000 pesos from Manila to Acapulco and for the return journey, it was 500,000 pesos.²⁶⁵ As the range of estimates of the amount of silver carried to China by Chinese merchants suggests, the profit margin of these merchants was dependent partly on the price of silk in the Americas and not just on bimetallic price ratios of silver to gold.

The profit margins of Chinese merchants were of course not solely dependent on the price of silk in the Americas. Chinese silk traders adjusted the prices of their wares depending on the availability of silver in Manila. When there was a glut of silver in the city, these canny traders stood to make tremendous gains. It follows that the gains of Spanish galleon traders in

²⁶⁴ Chuan, "The Chinese Silk Trade," 114.

²⁶⁵ For *permiso* rates see Carmen Yuste López' *Comercio de la Nueva España*, 16.

Manila changed based on the adjustments of silk prices by the Chinese. According to Chuan, the profits of these Spanish merchants, at least for the early seventeenth century, were between 100 and 1000 percent. Chuan arrives at this conclusion by citing observations of Spaniards. In 1599, a Spanish official in Manila claimed that the government could make a 400 percent profit from the sale of silk. For the period 1620-21, a procurator calculated that the King could make 200 percent profit from sending a galleon to Peru from Manila to trade in silk. A Spanish naval officer in 1638 also gave a profit margin of 400 percent for the export of low quality Chinese raw silk from Manila to Mexico. “In the early seventeenth century, a South American bishop even said that in the previous twenty years,... 1000 percent profit had regularly been made.”²⁶⁶ Profits fell to less than 100 percent when Mexican and Peruvian merchants went or sent agents to Manila to buy Chinese silks. The competition between Spanish galleon traders from Manila, Peru and New Spain drove the prices of silks up.²⁶⁷

Chinese silk merchants, of course, did not hold all the power in dealings with Spanish galleon traders or have perfect knowledge of prices of silk in the Americas. It is unlikely that the Chinese quickly siphoned off all the profits in the silk for silver exchange and rendered Spaniards in Manila mere automatons, converting all gains dutifully into silk for sale across the Pacific. Some profits were apparently converted into handsome homes, luxurious clothing, jewels and constructing the city. Antonio de Morga writing of Manila in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries described the Spaniards of the city as “carefully dressed and adorned in silks. They wear many ornaments and all sorts of fine clothes, because of the ease with which these are obtained: so that this is one of the settlements most highly praised by all the strangers

²⁶⁶ Chuan, “The Chinese Silk Trade,” 113-114.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 115.

who visit here from all over the world.”²⁶⁸ Morga further described the official state buildings as “extremely attractive” and “roomy” and of “stonework” and the houses of Manileños as “excellently constructed, lofty and spacious, with large rooms and plenty of windows and balconies with ornamental iron lattice-work-grilles.” He added that “More [of these houses] are being built and finished each day.”²⁶⁹ The gains of the galleon trade also formed the financial foundation on which the *obras pias* or “pious works” were established. These charitable organizations often received their start when wealthy individuals left funds to be administered for charities such as those for orphans, providing dowries for poor girls, and for running hospitals.²⁷⁰ These pious works would later become the main source of credit for the galleon trade. Yuste López argues that the *obras pias* came under the control and management of merchants with New Spanish ties who used these organizations to fund dependent merchants in Manila and also their own operations. Her evidence shows that by the eighteenth century this practice was known, but it is unclear if the majority of funds administered by these organizations were controlled by men who served the purposes of New Spanish merchants. How deep New Spanish involvement in the *obras pias* ran is debatable but what is certain is that New Spanish merchant elites profited well enough to reinvest their gains from the galleon trade in consolidating and expanding their commercial operations in New Spain—gaining power at the expense of the State.²⁷¹

²⁶⁸ Morga, *Sucesos*, 286.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 283-286.

²⁷⁰ For a short summary on the role of *obras pias* and their foundations, see Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 167. The *obras pias* were not unique to the Philippines.

²⁷¹ Louisa Schell Hoberman, *Mexico's Merchant Elite, 1590-1660: Silver, State and Society* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1991).

In the seventeenth century, the galleon trade was marked by high profit margins for Spanish merchants and large flows of silver and silk across the Pacific. Another aspect of this lucrative trade was the role that Chinese merchants played in financing it. In the early part of the seventeenth century, Chinese merchants

advanced loans to needy Spanish merchants. These loans were designed either for personal use or to cover the cost of the merchandise a Manileño would transship to Acapulco. Others agreed to deliver the merchandise on credit pending the arrival of the Acapulco vessel. The arrival of the galleon with its rich cargo of silver was always the prelude to the payment of long overdue debts to the Sangley creditors.²⁷²

The role of the Chinese merchant as creditor to “needy Spanish merchants” suggests that not all Spanish merchants in this period were as silver-laden as the New Spanish or Peruvian traders. The galleon trade in this period was still open to every citizen of the colony, who was assigned lading space on those China Ships.²⁷³

The economic details of the galleon trade in the seventeenth century—how much silver was leaving New Spain via Manila to China, profit margins for Spanish traders for the seventeenth century—have all been discussed at length in the secondary literature as described above. These questions, however, are not as well explored for the first half of the eighteenth century, when Mexican production of silver hit highs unmatched even by the earlier boom productions of the 1540s to the 1640s centered in Potosí and Japan.²⁷⁴ The extent to which

²⁷² Serafin D. Quiason’s description of Chinese credit practices relies on seventeenth-century sources: Antonio de Morga (1609) and Juan de Medina (1630), “The Sampan Trade,” 167.

²⁷³ See Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 154. “Citizen” meant “Spanish” resident of Manila (by law a resident was an emigrant who agreed to stay at least eight years in the colony). “Spanish” in the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries did not necessarily mean someone from Spain but was rather a legal and ethnic category that could include Chinese, *mestizos* or others recognized by the King as “Spaniards” through the granting of titles of minor nobility. However, such recognition was rare. Given the trans-Pacific commerce and the monopoly of the trade by merchants from New Spain and Manila, I would speculate that most “Spaniards” in Manila in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries were from New Spain.

²⁷⁴ The exception is Carmen Yuste López’ latest book, *Emporios*, published in 2006. She has tracked the official amounts embarked in Manila and leaving from Acapulco onboard the galleons for almost every year from 1722 to

Chinese participated in the galleon trade, whether for the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, is an even more marginalized topic. Building primarily on data from the *protocolos de Manila* for the years 1740-1770, the remainder of this chapter begins to fill out the picture for the first half of the eighteenth century.

Starting in the early 1720s and continuing for the rest of the eighteenth century, the amount of silver from New Spain known to have passed through Manila in exchange for Chinese silk seems to have declined in comparison with that carried across the Pacific in the seventeenth and the opening years of the eighteenth centuries. As discussed above, Chuan estimates that throughout the seventeenth century, about two million pesos crossed the Pacific annually in exchange for silk. There was continuity in this trend into the opening decade of the eighteenth century. Taking the Archbishop of Manila as an expert witness, Chuan claims that in 1701, “the silk taken by the galleons to Mexico was generally worth about 2,000,000 pesos.”²⁷⁵ How long this trend persisted into the eighteenth century is uncertain but by the early 1720s, yearly silver exports from New Spain to Manila seem to have declined by about 500,000 to 1,200,000 pesos. From 1722 to 1743, silver shipments from Acapulco were generally less than 2 million pesos as Table 4.1 indicates.²⁷⁶

1786. Her impressive research helps fill in many gaps in our knowledge on the galleon trade in the eighteenth century.

²⁷⁵ Chuan Han-sheng, “The Chinese Silk Trade with Spanish America,” 111.

²⁷⁶ For Table 4.1, the amounts for 1728-1743 were taken from Yuste López, *Emporios*, 384-6. These were reported totals onboard the galleons bound for Manila. For the year 1741 (the Covadonga left Manila in 1740 and returned in 1741), Yuste López gives the total of silver shipped from Acapulco as 625,000 pesos. Her estimate is based on the official permitted amount to leave from Acapulco for that year. My lower estimate of 476,100 pesos is derived from the notarial record of 1740. I have chosen to use Yuste López’ higher estimate since I have not tabulated data from another extant notarial book for 1740.

Table 4.1: Official amount of silver reported onboard galleons from Acapulco to Manila for 1722-1743

Year	Name of Galleon	Amount in Pesos
1722	La Sacra Familia	759,000
1723	La Sacra Familia	734,625
1724	Santo Cristo de Burgos	674,400
1725	La Sacra Familia	612,200
1727	Nuestra Sra. de los Dolores	600,000
1728	La Sacra Familia	1,340,880
1729	Nuestra Sra. de Guía	1,248,108
1730	La Sacra Familia	705,454
1731	Nuestra Sra. de Guía	2,258,561
1732	Nuestra Sra. de Covadonga y San Cristobal	1,145,800
1733	Nuestra Sra. de Guía	648,957
1734	Nuestra Sra. del Pilar	1,296,160
1737	Nuestra Sra. de Covadonga and Nuestra Sra. del Pilar	1,176,240
1738	Nuestra Sra. de Guía	1,495,584
1739	Nuestra Sra. del Pilar	1,350,138
1740	Nuestra Sra. de Guía	999,946
1741	Nuestra Sra. de Covadonga	625,000
1742	Nuestra Sra. del Pilar	1,119,936
1743	Nuestra Sra. de Covadonga	828,751

The information presented in Table 4.1 needs to be treated with caution given that the amounts listed are from official port registers which would not record any smuggled silver. For these years, it is likely that the quantity of silver shipped to Manila was higher. How much higher is not known but information from the years 1740 and 1743, derived from notarial records and the capture of a galleon respectively, suggests that silver exports from Acapulco did not regularly top two million pesos and certainly did not exceed the high end of the estimate of five million pesos for the seventeenth century.²⁷⁷ Official port registers at Acapulco for the period 1753 to 1785 also indicate a general pattern of decline in number of pieces—mostly silk—shipped from Manila. The years 1753 to 1762 seem to have been years of flux. Reported exports fluctuated between 3,607 pieces in 1753 and a low of 376 pieces in 1758. Between 1763 and 1766, the years of the British Occupation of Manila and its immediate aftermath, there was a precipitous drop in the number of pieces carried to Acapulco (a high of only 477 pieces). In 1767, exports to Acapulco rose to 1,059 pieces. Exports increased after this year but remained between 1,226 and 1,933 pieces. There were a couple of years when about 920 pieces were sold (1770 and 1785).²⁷⁸ The overall picture that emerges from this discussion is that from the 1720s to 1785, the volume of the silk for silver trade seems to have shrunk in comparison to the seventeenth century and the opening years of the eighteenth.

The picture of decline presented above seems to contradict the expectation that silver flows would go beyond the two-million-peso mark due to dramatic increase in Mexican silver

²⁷⁷ Yuste López lists the total amount of silver leaving Acapulco onboard the *Covadonga* in 1743 as 838,751 pesos. Curiously, Richard Walter, George Anson's biographer, writes in *Anson's voyage around the World* of the amount onboard the galleon when captured by the English: "By this time the particulars of the cargo of the galleon were well ascertained, and it was found that she had on board 1,313,843 pieces of eight and 35,682 ounces of virgin silver, besides some cochineal and a few other commodities, which, however, were but of small account in comparison of the specie." There is a difference of about 475,000 pesos, which is a smuggling rate of slightly more than thirty-five percent.

²⁷⁸ Yuste López, *Comercio*, 47.

production and a sudden increase in demand for silver in China, which was going through enormous population expansion and market growth in the first half of the eighteenth century. Flynn and Giráldez, quoting John Fisher, inform us “more Spanish American silver was produced in the eighteenth century than in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries combined.”²⁷⁹ Following Flynn and Giráldez’ argument that commodities flow to the largest end markets and where they are most valued, China would be the expected destination of increased Mexican silver production. Accepting this argument, the implication of a picture of decline in silver and silk flows across the Pacific for most of the eighteenth century is that silver from New Spain found its way to China through other routes. Manila was still an important gateway for silver to China in the eighteenth century but a fading one.

My tabulation of transactions connected with New Spain suggests that by 1740, the Manila-Acapulco trade while still a rich and significant one was likely no longer as lucrative as it was in the seventeenth century, with profits about half what they used to be or even less. The value of loans for goods intended for New Spain onboard the *Covadonga* in 1740 was about 529,000 pesos. In order to reach this figure I identified 148 transactions that were specifically earmarked by signatories for New Spain which could have been laded on time for the departure of the galleon on July twenty-third. According to Flynn and Giráldez, silver cost fifty percent more in China than it did in Europe in the first part of the eighteenth century.²⁸⁰ If "each million pesos of Chinese merchandise departing Manila became two million pesos of merchandise upon arrival in Acapulco" when the price of silver was one hundred percent higher in China than the rest of the world during the Potosi Cycle in the 1540s to 1640s, then 1 million pesos in Manila

²⁷⁹ Flynn and Giráldez, “Cycles of Silver,” 407-08.

²⁸⁰ Flynn and Giráldez, “Cycles of Silver,” 408.

would become 1.5 million pesos in Acapulco in 1740.²⁸¹ By assuming a fifty percent increase in value for galleon merchandise sold in New Spain, one would be tempted to assume that 529,000 pesos would yield almost 800,000 pesos. Schurz, however, tells us "a person who desired to invest a sum on the galleon would generally borrow about twice as much as he intended to put out in merchandise. He reserved enough to pay the interest in case he might be forced to postpone payment of the principal to another year."²⁸² Granting merchants took out 529,000 pesos in loans and the interest rate was forty percent (the most frequently quoted rate in the notarial records for loans for galleon shipping), they would have had to make at least 740,600 pesos just to break even. Supposing that they kept enough of the money borrowed to furnish the forty percent interest rate (211,600 pesos), they would have had 317,400 pesos to invest. Curiously, 317,400 pesos is very close in amount to what was requested by the galleon traders as representatives of the City and Commerce of Manila as a *permiso* for lading in 1740. City and Commerce had requested 312,000 pesos as a *permiso*.²⁸³ Conceding this amount of goods had been taken to New Spain and sold for a value of 476,100 pesos (a fifty percent increase in value), they would then have had a total of 687,700 pesos (476,100 pesos + 211,600 pesos retained to cover the forty percent interest rate) upon the timely return of the galleon. This would have yielded profits of 158,700 pesos or thirty percent profit. While thirty percent is still a decent profit margin, it pales in comparison to gains of 100 to 400 percent in the seventeenth century. Using the conservative seventeenth-century interest rate of a hundred percent increase in value of

²⁸¹ Quoted in Flynn and Giráldez, "Spanish Profitability," footnote 10.

²⁸² Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 171.

²⁸³ See AGI Filipinas 334, L.14,F.326V-330R: "Aprobación de lo ejecutado a petición del comercio de Manila." "City and Commerce" was a phrase utilized by Manileños to denote the joined interest of the municipality and the privilege of each citizen of Manila to take part in consigning goods on the galleons. Over time, "city" and "commerce" drifted apart so that by the 1700s, a guild of traders called the *consulado* controlled the galleon trade and the majority of citizens were left out. See Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 154-156.

merchandise in New Spain, 317,400 pesos would have been worth 634,800 pesos in New Spain. 634,800 pesos added to 211,600 pesos retained would have yielded 846,400 pesos. The difference between the sum earned from the galleon trade (317,400 pesos) divided by the initial amount borrowed (529,000 pesos) would yield sixty percent in profits for the galleon trader. Given the difference in profit margins between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it is not surprising that galleon traders underreported the value of their consignments. As mentioned above, the *Covadonga*'s captain of the register declared 240,095 pesos worth of cargo onboard the ship, underreporting by 77,305 pesos.²⁸⁴ Underreporting is of course a euphemism for smuggling.

Table 4.2. Calculating Profit Margins for Investments in Galleon Trade for 1740

Amount of money borrowed – 40% interest= amount of investments in galleon trade 529,000 pesos- 211,600 pesos= 317,400 pesos
317,400 pesos multiplied by 1.5 (50% value increase)= value of merchandise in New Spain= 476,100 pesos
476,100 pesos + 211,600 pesos retained to cover the forty percent interest rate= gross profits= 687,000 pesos
Gross profits minus amount borrowed= profits 687,000 pesos-529,00 pesos= 158,700 pesos
Profits divided by sum borrowed multiplied by 100=profit margin 158,700 /529,000 X 100= 30%

Even when smuggling is taken into account, the galleon trade seems to have declined in the eighteenth century in comparison to the seventeenth. Returning to the cargo of the *Covadonga* for the year 1740, if we assume that 317,400 pesos left Manila onboard the *Covadonga*, and 77,305 pesos were not reported, that would mean almost 116,000 pesos of profit

²⁸⁴ The amount underreported could be possibly more than the 77, 305 pesos estimated given that the Crown had authorized 625,000 pesos worth of silver to leave Acapulco for Manila that year, suggesting approximately 416,000 pesos were taken from Manila if we assume a fifty percent increase in resell value for Chinese goods in Acapulco.

was not reported (with fifty-percent profit margins in mind), meaning slightly less than twenty-five percent of profits made were not reported. When taken with the information from the capture of the Covadonga in 1743, when about thirty-five percent of the silver onboard was not reported, we might venture an educated guess that between twenty-five and thirty-five percent of silver onboard galleons was regularly smuggled in the eighteenth century. Given these rates, and Yuste López' estimates of silver exports from Acapulco for the eighteenth century based on official reports, we can conclude that the actual amount of silver crossing the Pacific to Manila in the eighteenth century was normally between 750,000 and 2,000,000 pesos annually.²⁸⁵ Even with contraband added in, the galleons seem to have been carrying less silver in the eighteenth century than in the seventeenth.

With the end of the silver cycle, and the rising prices of Chinese commodities, more and more silver had to be raised by galleon merchants to purchase merchandise for sale in New Spain. Between 1730 and 1770,

there was a great rise in the prices of Chinese merchandise. A chart of comparative prices of oriental goods carried by the galleons for the years 1736 and 1770 gives the aggregate price of a certain lot of similar goods at respectively 1,248 and 3,081 pesos. Governor Anda declared in 1768 that the average increase in prices since 1734 had been about 300 percent. Foreign competition at Canton and Amoy had had much to do with complicating the original simplicity of the Chinese market for the Spaniards.²⁸⁶

Rising legal limits for the *permiso* as mentioned above (footnote 10), also support the view that galleon merchants were needing more and more silver to purchase the same amount of Chinese

²⁸⁵ The figure of 750,000 pesos was calculated based on a low point of 600,000 pesos reportedly carried from Acapulco in 1727 and assuming that the amount onboard exceeded this figure by twenty-five percent. I arrived at 2,000,000 pesos by taking the amount of 1,496,260 pesos estimated to be onboard the galleon in 1776 as the upper limit of silver carried to Manila in the eighteenth century and assuming that the amount onboard exceeded this figure by thirty-five percent. There were very few years when the amount of silver shipped to Manila exceeded 1,500,000 pesos. 1747 was an exceptional year in the eighteenth century when 2,817,020 pesos worth of silver was shipped to Manila. The amounts carried by the galleons were taken from Yuste López, *Emporios*, 384-90.

²⁸⁶ Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 179.

merchandise for trade in New Spain, assuming demand in New Spain did not rise dramatically. As discussed above, registers of goods for sale declared at port in Acapulco for the years 1753 to 1785 show that demand for Chinese merchandise did not increase but actually diminished.²⁸⁷ Squeezed on the Manila end by rising prices of merchandise and on the New Spanish side by a now regular gold to silver ratio, profits dwindled and made the galleon trade less and less viable or desirable.

Even though 1740 was a moment when the star of the galleon trade was beginning to wane, it was still the single largest source of wealth in the Manila economy. The galleon trade accounted for a little more than 549,000 pesos out of 939,000 pesos worth of business transactions in the notarial record of 1740 and this does not include the related shipping trade from Java and coastal China. This enormous wealth made a small group of Spanish²⁸⁸ merchants and bankers of religiously affiliated organizations very wealthy.

The top creditors in the galleon trade were without a doubt religiously affiliated bodies such as various confraternities, the Dominican Order of Preachers, the Society of Jesus and the pious works or *obras pias*. Of these three, the *obras pias* were by far the greatest creditors in the trade. The most prominent *obra pia* encountered in the notarial record was the Brotherhood of Mercy or the *Hermandad de la Misericordia*. The Brotherhood of Mercy was so powerful that it influenced interest rates for the galleon trade. Often times, the interest rate for a transaction was given as “*como se diere el caudal de las obras pias que administra la Mesa de la Sta Misericordia*”/ as given by the funds of the pious works run by the board of the Santa

²⁸⁷ Yuste Lopez, *Comercio*, 47.

²⁸⁸ “Spanish” and “Spaniard” as used in this chapter refers not exclusively to Iberians but to those with the legal status “Spanish.” The Spanish merchants I am referring to did not represent Iberian mercantile interests but were either born in Manila, long-term residents of the city or from New Spain.

Misericordia even when the creditor was not affiliated with the Brotherhood of Mercy. *Obras pias* and other church-related groups provided 297,562 pesos of credit or a little over fifty-four percent of credit for the galleon trade to New Spain. They were the main investors in the galleon trade.

Apart from church groups, the galleon trade was funded in large part by a handful of Spanish men, many it seems with ties to New Spanish merchants.²⁸⁹ Table 4.3, below, shows creditors who gave more than 5000 pesos out in loans.

Table 4.3. Top Individual Creditors in the Galleon Trade for 1740

Creditors	Transactions	Amount (pesos)
Don Francisco Gonzales Quixano	1	26,000
Don Francisco Carriedo y Peredo	4	21,163
Don Manuel Gomez de Bustamente	4	20,800
Don Bartholome de Peon	3	13,000
Don Luis Manso de Velasco	1	11,000
Sr. Marques de Monte castro y llana hermosa General Don Pedro Gonzales del Rivero Cavallero del orden de Santiago	2	10,146
Don Joseph Latur	3	9,000
Don Antonio Gonzales Quixano como albacea de Capn Dn Pedro Perez de Zevallos	1	9,000
Don Joseph Antonio de Memije y Quiros	4	7,530
Don Diego de Orosco y Manrique	2	5,800
Don Domingo Antonio de Ottero Vermudez	1	5,800
Don Juan Manuel Lopez Quixano	3	5,600
Don Francisco Carrasco y Villa senior	1	5,600
Don Antonio Zerviño	2	5,000
Don Lorenzo de Aguila	1	5,000
Don Antonio Romero Lopez de Arbizu	1	5,000
Don Pedro Domingo Gonzales de Rivero	1	5,000

²⁸⁹ From Yuste López' examples of Spanish merchants with ties to New Spanish merchants, I was able to identify the following creditors listed in Table Three: Don Francisco Carriedo y Peredo (born in Mexico) and founder of a pious work with 36,000 pesos as a start-up trust fund (*Emporios*, 95 and 138), Don Pedro Domingo Gonzales de Rivero (*Emporios*, 83), Don Pedro Gonzales del Rivero (*Emporios*, 95), Don Joseph Antonio de Memije y Quiros who had a son, Joaquín Fabian de Memije born in Manila—a galleon merchant in Manila in the 1750s but moved to Mexico City to dedicate himself to the galleon trade in association with his father-in-law, an old Manila trader and then, merchant of Mexico (*Emporios*, 83 and 117), and Don Domingo Antonio de Ottero Vermudez who had a brother and cousin who were merchants of Mexico (*Emporios*, 117). Future research might show that the others in the list had New Spanish ties as well.

These seventeen men gave out credit totaling 170,439 pesos or just below a third (about 31%) of investments sent to New Spain. This enormous amount of credit was concentrated in just thirty-six transactions.

If large quantities of credit were given by a few Spanish men, credit was also taken by a few Spanish men. The top eight debtors accounted for 346,706 pesos out of 549,036 pesos. They also accounted for ninety-seven out of 152 transactions. This means they accounted for approximately sixty-three percent of the number of transactions as well as value of transactions in the galleon trade to New Spain. Table 4.4 shows the top eight debtors in the notarial record.

Table 4.4. Top Eight Debtors for 1740

Don Geronimo Montero: 111,650 pesos
Don Joachin Codallos y Rabal: 55,880 pesos
Don Blas Andres Oliván: 76,406 pesos
Don Ricardo Bagge: 30,834 pesos
Don Ygnacio Martinez de Faura: 18,342 pesos
Don Jazinto de Castro: 22,774 pesos
Don Francisco Xavier Estorgo Gallegos: 19,660 pesos
Don Geronimo de Ytta y Salazar: 11,160 pesos
Total: 346,706 pesos

That eight men could take on so much debt supports the view that the galleon trade was in the hands of a few individuals. Add to that the information on creditors and church related groups and the data support the existing view in the secondary literature on the galleon trade that by the

1700s, a small group of Spanish merchants and religious organizations monopolized the galleon trade.²⁹⁰

If the galleon trade was made up of such an exclusive club of Spanish men, was there room for other participants in the trade? In all the records examined, there were no Chinese involved as consignors or creditors for the trade to New Spain, and there is only one instance when two Chinese *mestizos*—Juan Vizente Coetto and Gabriel de Rosario acted as partners in taking on credit for trade to New Spain. These Chinese *mestizos* were in turn funded by a Chinese *mestizo* called Lucia del Rosario. In other transactions involving non-Spaniards, there was one involving two Armenian debtors funded by a Spaniard, and a transaction where a *natural de madrasta* (someone ostensibly from Madras) with a Spaniard standing surety took a loan from a Chinese *mestizo* creditor. Out of 151 contracts, 148 were exclusively Spanish deals. A select group of Spaniards seem to have had a strangle hold on the galleon trade. Given the negligible direct participation of Chinese in the galleon trade, what role did the Chinese play in the galleon trade?

Chinese in the Shipping Trade to China and Java

While the Chinese did not take part directly as consignors in the galleon trade, one of the ways in which they participated was via the China and Java shipping trades. Chinese participation in these trades was limited to a few individuals who took credit almost exclusively from Spaniards. There was the exception of an Armenian, Constantino Lazaro, who gave a loan of 1,200 pesos to three Chinese, Lim Sinio (principal), Ong Ysay, and Capitan Don Domingo

²⁹⁰ See Schurz, “City and Commerce,” *The Manila Galleon*, 154-190. Also see Yuste Lopez’ *Comercio and Emporios*.

Chay Sen, a Christian (see table 4.6). A study of loans taken and repaid in 1740 supports this view (see tables 4.5 and 4.6).

Table 4.5. Chinese who took Loans for the China and Java Trade in 1740

Loan Destination	Principal Debtor	Bondsman/ Secondary Debtor	Creditor	Amount borrowed in Pesos (Interest %)
Unknown	Tam Poqua	Lim Main, Siusay	Thomas de Guzman	1,000 (0)
Java	Don Miguel Tesali	Capitan Don Antonio Tangqua	Domingo de Neyra	1,000 (16)
Emuy	Vy Tuanqua, Yong Tuanco	Vy Tequa, Yong Vyco	Domingo Antonio de Ottero Vermudez	6,000 (25)
Lanquin	Di Tunqua	Capitan Don Joseph Lopez Bengco	Pedro Domingo Antonio Gonzales de Rivero	4,000 (25)
Emuy	Vy Teco	Vy Tanco	Domingo Antonio de Ottero Vermudez	2,000 (25)
Emuy	Tou Chunco	Vy Tequa, Vy Yanco	Domingo Antonio de Ottero Vermudez	10,000 (20)
Emuy	Chi Tanco	None	Alonso de Esquibel y Martel	2,000 (25)

Table 4.6. Chinese who repaid loans taken for the China and Java Trade, 1738-1740

Loan Destination	Creditor	Debtors	Amount borrowed in Pesos (Interest %)
Emuy	Constantino Lazaro	Lim Sinio, Ong Ysay, Capitan Don Domingo Chay Sen	1,200 (20)
Java	Blas Andres Olivan	Tan Tungco, Ling Quiangco, Toayco, Lim Yangco, Chengco	3,480 (16)
Emuy	Juan Manuel de Barrera	Lim Suanco, Si Ymcon, Si Quinsoy	940 (25)
Emuy	Andres Blanco Vermudez	Juan Baptista Lopez, Capitan Don Joseph Lopez Bengco	4,000 (23)
Emuy	Francisco Carriedo y Peredo	Don Joseph Bengco	4,000 (21)
Emuy	Augustin Garcia de Soares	Tang Sanco, Tan Poqua, Di Jutco	1,000 (23)
Emuy	Thomas de ?	The Chin lay, Siusay, Lun Seng	1,200 (20)
Emuy	Juan de Lanz y Aristoarena	The Chin lay, Siusay, Lun Seng	1,200 (unknown)
China	Carlos Velarde	Don Joseph Bengqua, Vy Vyqua, Vy Tequa	40,000 (unknown)
Canton	Juan Manuel Barrera	Li Main, Chi Tancon	1,000 (17)
Java	Domingo de Neyra	Don Miguel Tezali, Capitan Don Antonio TanQua	1,000 (probably 16)

The data from the *protocolos* suggests that very few Chinese took credit from non-Chinese to engage in the shipping trade, either to Java or to China, and rarely sought business partners from other ethnicities. In 1740, there were only seven recorded transactions where Chinese took loans. In six of these transactions, Chinese were the principal debtors and in only one transaction was the principal debtor an Armenian (see table 4.5, Don Miguel Tesali) with the Chinese, a Christian Sangley, Capitan Don Antonio Tangqua, acting as a bondsman or secondary debtor.²⁹¹ No non-Christian Chinese sought partners outside of their ethnic group. In all transactions where Chinese were the principal debtors they sought fellow Chinese to share the risk and debt. All who took loans were "infielos" or non-Christians and their partners were either Chinese Christians or non-Christians (there seems to have been no preference for Christian or non-Christian partners). All creditors in the studied transactions were Spaniards, suggesting that for a very small group of Chinese, Spaniards were an important source of credit. The amount forwarded to these Chinese was nothing to scoff at, being 26,000 pesos in total for the year 1740 ranging between 1000 pesos and 10,000 pesos per loan. There was also the instance of a loan taken on September 15, 1739 for the incredible sum of 40,000 pesos by Captain Don Joseph Lopez Bengqua, Vy Vyqua, and Vy Tequa from the Spaniard Captain Don Carlos Velarde for trade along the coast of China (Table 4.6). While these sums were not paltry, the small number of Chinese-Spanish partnerships and the one Armenian-Chinese-Spanish partnership supports the view that very few Chinese entered into shipping ventures to China and Java with others in

²⁹¹ The language used in the notarial document suggests that the burden of payment of debt was an equally shared responsibility: "juntos de mancomun."

Manila as partners. If they did, any agreements were either by a handshake, so to speak, or recorded in confidential accounts that do not appear in the extant notarial records.²⁹²

Chinese suppliers of the galleon trade

The *protocolos* of 1740 paint a picture of minimal Chinese participation in the galleon trade as consignors and even in the connected China and Java shipping trades—there were only eighteen recorded transactions involving Chinese in these spheres of commerce. When we break down these eighteen transactions, we find that the Chinese were almost solely involved in the China shipping trade and their role in linking Java and Manila was negligible. Only six Chinese took part in the Java trade.²⁹³ No Chinese ships carried investments to or from Java, the trade being carried by ships captained by Spaniards or Armenians.²⁹⁴ Furthermore, no Chinese extended credit for shipping. Indeed I found no Chinese creditors in the whole notarial record for 1740 except for one instance when a Chinese headman loaned 2,000 pesos to a non-Spaniard.²⁹⁵ The overall picture is one of an insular Chinese minority participating only marginally in the

²⁹² While the evidence presented in this section suggests Chinese insularity, one should keep in mind that those taking loans for the shipping trade only made up a small part of colonial society. In addition, *mestizos* and *indios* do not seem to have been major sources of credit, at least in the first half of the eighteenth century, thus explaining the limited appearance of interaction between Chinese shippers and non-Chinese and non-Spaniards in the *protocolos*. The limited interaction of Chinese involved in provisioning the galleon trade and others should not be applied to the majority of the Chinese population in Manila, who were involved in the local economy and were an integral part of colonial society.

²⁹³ The six Chinese were Tan Tungco, Ling Quiangco, Toayco, Lim Yangco y Chengco who took a loan of 3,480 pesos at sixteen percent interest from Don Blas Andres de Olivan, a Spaniard, on 28 January, 1739. The other Chinese was Capitan Don Antonio Tangqua, who partnered with an Armenian for the Java trade onboard *Nra. Sra. del Pilar y San Francisco Xavier* in the charge of the Armenian captain, Manuel del Sergio.

²⁹⁴ The record shows three ships used for the Java trade: the *Nra. Sra. del Pilar y San Francisco Xavier* in the charge of the Armenian captain, Manuel del Sergio, the *Santa Ana* captained by the Spaniard, Don Joseph de Tagoaga, and the chaloupe *Principe de Asturias* captained by Don Joseph Marino.

²⁹⁵ On 7 November, 1740, the principal Chinese headman, Don Bartholome Chiamqua received payment for a debt of 2,000 pesos made out to the sergeant major (*sargento maior*) Don Fernando Anselmo de Robredo listed as “*actual del Puerto de Ca(vite)*.” I am not sure if Don Fernando was a Spaniard because of the annotation which could be translated as “actually from the port of Cavite” or imply that he was in charge in Cavite.

galleon trade by way of minimal involvement in the China and Java shipping trade. This impression is, however, misleading.

Chinese were in fact actively involved in the China-Manila shipping trade. Lucille Chia has shown, based on Chaunu's data, that an average of about sixteen junks arrived in Manila from China and Taiwan yearly for the 1740s.²⁹⁶ Furthermore, Chinese shipping continued to provide about 41.37 percent of customs duties in Manila for the years 1741-1745.²⁹⁷ The arrival of Chinese junks and payment of customs duties for goods for sale is significant in that the junk fleet was the primary carrier of Chinese merchandise—the bulk of galleon shipments to Acapulco—between China and Manila.

Perhaps the greatest evidence of active and significant Chinese participation as provisioners for the galleon trade is the loans taken and given by Spaniards for the galleon trade. These loans were made for purchase of merchandise to be sold in New Spain. As discussed above, Spaniards borrowed 529,000 pesos for the galleon trade. If they retained about forty percent of this as insurance for interest on loans, they would have had about 300,000 pesos to invest in merchandise. It was well known that the galleons' main cargo was produced in China. By the 1700s, however, the composition of galleon cargo had begun to change. By the 1740s, English "country trade" from the Coromandel Coast was encroaching on the Manila trade. Serafin Quiason tells us that using Indo-Portuguese, Armenians and Muslims as masters of the trading vessels, the East India Company carried on a clandestine trade with Manila. "Indian piece goods of all sorts were soon well received and gained popular favor among both Spanish and

²⁹⁶ See Lucille Chia's compilation of data on ships departing China, Macao and Taiwan in the table entitled "Ships from China, Macau and Taiwan going to Manila and Batavia, ten year period, 1681-1790," in "The Butcher, the Baker, the Carpenter," 524.

²⁹⁷ See Serafin D. Quiason's table entitled "Contributions in Customs Duties in Percent" in "The Sampan Trade, 1570-1770," 173.

local consumers in Manila and in Acapulco as well.”²⁹⁸ “Country trade” products had begun to encroach on the historically Chinese-merchandise dominated galleon trade but we do not know by how much exactly.²⁹⁹ For a rough estimate of galleon cargo composition I look to custom duties in Manila.³⁰⁰ Chinese shipping made up about forty percent of customs duties in Manila and “country trade” shipping accounted for about fifteen percent of duties. Given this information, we could perhaps speculate that about seventy percent of galleon cargo was Chinese and thirty percent comprised of “country trade” products. If so, seventy percent of 300,000 pesos or 210,000 pesos were possibly spent on Chinese merchandise. In other words, Chinese merchants still supplied the bulk of galleon trade in 1740 with merchandise necessary for Spaniards to make profits in New Spain.

Chinese merchants retained their grip on supplying the galleon trade but by the 1700s, they seem to have lost their historical place as suppliers of credit to Spaniards for the trade. The small number of Spanish debtors and creditors in the galleon trade confirms that by the mid-eighteenth century at the latest, a small group of Spaniards controlled the Manila-Acapulco portion of this lucrative commerce.³⁰¹ As discussed above, in the early part of the seventeenth century, Chinese merchants supplied loans to “needy Spanish merchants” for personal use or to

²⁹⁸ Serafin Quiason, “The Sampan Trade,” 172. We also do know that in 1740, the *Covadonga* carried a consignment of 699 churlas of cinnamon, a product coming most probably from Java and the only article the viceroy found worth mentioning in his letter on the arrival of the galleon at Acapulco. See AGI Filipinas 121, N.3.

²⁹⁹ For the period 1760-1785, textiles made up more than ninety percent of goods exported to Acapulco. Most of these textiles were Chinese silks, Indian cottons and some Filipino articles such as *lampotes*, *tarlingas*, and *medriñaques*. After textiles, cinnamon was the most important export. See Yuste Lopez, *Comercio*, 71.

³⁰⁰ Serafin, Quiason, “The Sampan Trade,” 173.

³⁰¹ My findings confirm Schurz’ characterization of the galleon trade as having fallen into the hands of a few. Schurz states that by the mid-1700s, “...actual control of the trade had falleon into the hands of a few wealthy merchants. This class wished neither to endure the virtual dictatorship of the governor in the junta...nor to share its authority with the non-trading part of the citizens. This important stage of the trade was henceforth to be directed by businessmen with as little intervention as possible from the government,” (*The Manila Galleon*, 156).

“cover the cost of the merchandise a Manileño would transship to Acapulco.”³⁰² The small group of wealthy Spaniards and church-related organizations who monopolized the credit and shipping markets for the galleon trade seem to have overtaken Chinese creditors and others who sought to enter the trade directly. Chinese were confined to the role of suppliers of the trade, most of whom do not seem to have taken on credit from Spaniards or others. One would expect that Spaniards forwarding large amounts of credit would have required such loans to be notarized to carry the force of the law. If wealthy Chinese merchants provided an alternative source of funding for the galleon trade in the eighteenth century, they have not left a mark in the Spanish records that I have examined. Debt lists of Chinese like those of 1686 (see chapter two), are rare and I have not yet uncovered any for the eighteenth century.

The evidence from the notarial record of 1740 suggests that Chinese were involved in the galleon trade mainly as suppliers and shippers of Chinese merchandise to Manila for transshipment to New Spain. The vast majority of Chinese suppliers and shippers did not operate on Spanish credit and it is unclear if the Chinese were an alternative source of funding for galleon merchants. Nonetheless, the silence of the record should not obscure the power most of these Chinese suppliers wielded. Their absence in the record potentially speaks to the need for Spanish merchants to seek them out and to come to agreements beyond the control of the state, away from the gaze of the Spanish notary. The clout of these Chinese merchants was, however, mitigated by the growing power of New Spanish merchants as attested to by the concentration of credit in their hands. Negotiations in the eighteenth century, as compared to the previous one, were probably on more equal ground given the shrinking pool of Spanish consignors. Fewer and wealthier business partners limited the power of Chinese merchants and loosened the ties that

³⁰² Serafin D. Quiason’s description of Chinese credit practices relies on seventeenth-century sources: Antonio de Morga (1609) and Juan de Medina (1630), (“The Sampan Trade,” 167).

bound these Chinese with larger colonial society. As this group of Chinese drifted away from the Spanish in the mid-eighteenth century, so did those reliant on Spanish credit.

Business connections between Chinese suppliers of the galleon trade dependent on Spanish funding and their Spanish creditors seem to have suffered in the mid-eighteenth century as evidenced by the dwindling number of loans taken by this element of the Chinese community in those years. When comparing the evidence of 1740 with that of other years (extant Manila notarial books at the RMAO for the years, 1755, 1762, 1764, 1765 and 1770), I found that there were more records of Chinese involved in shipping to China and Java in that year than in other years.³⁰³ For 1755, 1762 and 1764, there were no Chinese or Chinese *mestizos* recorded as taking part in the shipping trade to New Spain, China or Java. In 1765, there were twenty-one transactions for the China shipping trade involving Chinese (no *mestizos* were involved in any shipping and no Chinese took part in the Java trade). These transactions totaled 43,450 pesos and all creditors were Spanish. Thirteen loans totaling 16,200 pesos were given by Spaniards to Chinese for shipping to Emuy and Canton. The Chinese paid back 27,250 pesos (principal) for loans taken for shipping to China. In 1740 the Chinese borrowed 26,000 pesos and repaid 59,020 pesos (principal) taken for the China and Java trade. Information collated for the years 1740-1770 suggests a very limited interaction between Chinese and Spanish creditors for those years. Given this limited interaction, one is tempted to see the bonds that bound Chinese merchants and Spanish together as weakening and culminating in these Chinese withdrawing support of the regime when the British came in 1762.

³⁰³ I looked at all the *Protocolos de Manila* from the year 1740-1770 and targeted all transactions involving Chinese or Chinese *mestizos*, whether they were galleon or China and Java trade related.

The Significance of the Galleon Trade to the Chinese in Manila

While the galleon trade in the mid-eighteenth century (and years before) held immense importance for Chinese merchants who supplied it with Chinese goods, understanding the Chinese community of Manila through the lens of the galleon trade alone is too limiting and provides a skewed perspective for analyzing the Chinese role in Manila and the Spanish empire. We must not be “blinded by silver,” to borrow Edward Slack Jr.’s critique of galleon trade literature. To equate the Chinese community with the merchants involved in the galleon trade, I argue, is to miscomprehend the majority of Chinese in Manila.

For the majority of Chinese in Manila, who were long-term immigrants and those involved in crafts, unskilled labor, farming or fishing, the galleon trade was of no direct importance. Instead, the local economy was of more immediate concern to them. Following Lucille Chia, I divide the Chinese community of Manila into three groups: visiting merchants who stayed for a few months, sojourners who stayed a few years, and those who ended up “staying for most of their remaining lifetimes.” Some merchants and sojourners were either directly or indirectly involved in the galleon trade via the junk trade. Long-term immigrants, who were mainly artisans, unskilled laborers, boatmen, fishermen, farmers, and servants were not directly impacted by the galleon trade and derived their livelihoods from the local economy.³⁰⁴ This three-part categorization of the Chinese community works for the most part, though I would complicate the picture by adding one more category to this typology: short-term workers who were not merchants, some of whom stayed only for a season (*vagabundos*) working for contractors or peddling wares, and others who stayed a few years or became long-term immigrants.

³⁰⁴ Chia, “The Butcher, the Baker and the Carpenter,” 519.

For most of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, long-term immigrants made up the majority of Manila's Chinese community. My study of *Parián* records (1626-1700 Baptismal registries) confirms Chia's observation, based on her study of the same records, that most Chinese in Manila were mainly laborers and craftsmen.³⁰⁵ As Chia points out, perhaps the Binondo records would show wealthier elements from the first two groups mentioned above. As of now, we can say the majority of Chinese in Manila who stayed were laborers and craftsmen not involved in the junk trade or galleon trade in any direct way.

To these long-term immigrants should be added the many seasonal workers or *vagabundos*. Chia traces a steady stream of junks arriving in Manila from China from 1681-1790. Onboard these junks were not only Chinese merchandise but many seasonal workers. Together with long-term residents, these seasonal workers comprised the largest sector of Manila's Chinese population. These artisans, laborers, fishermen and farmers both sustained and periodically challenged the Spanish presence in Manila. In times of peace, contractors kept seasonal workers in line and helped supply the city. In times of unrest, workers threatened to bring the whole edifice of Spanish power crumbling down. At the end of the day, it was the long-term immigrant Chinese workers of Manila who were the most influential sector in terms of their impact on colonial society. As the residents most directly involved in the local Manila economy, those who stayed on ended up shaping colonial society the most by becoming part of the social fabric of Manila and supporting the infrastructure of empire. It was also this group that challenged Spanish sovereignty in Manila during the British occupation and who later provided

³⁰⁵ Our studies are similar in that she uses this set of baptismal records to gauge where Chinese migrants came from, and their occupations. A major difference between our studies of these records is that mine focuses on teasing out fictive kinship relationships in Manila, whereas she is more concerned about tracing migration patterns between Manila and Southern Fujian. For Chia's use of *Parián* records see "The Butcher, the Baker and the Carpenter," 521.

the children of empire who became some of the most important leaders in conceptualizing a Filipino nation.

During the years when the galleon trade was most dynamic, between 1570 and 1770, many Chinese in Manila did not take part in it, nor were they directly affected by it. Yet, as the trade began to fade in importance for the majority of Spaniards in Manila, the Chinese began to feel its absence. As the galleon trade became monopolized by a handful of wealthy businessmen and religious organizations, Spaniards who found themselves shut out of deriving a living from consigning goods to Acapulco began to clamor for positions in the Manila economy long occupied by the Chinese. In the mid-eighteenth century, these dissatisfied Spaniards called for the Chinese to be expelled from Manila. These complaints were not sufficient to dislodge the Chinese grip on the local economy but they reflected greater changes in the socio-economic environment of Manila; changes which precipitated the rise of the Chinese *mestizos* and began a period of uncertainty for the Chinese community of the city, leading to crisis in the aftermath of the British Occupation of Manila.

Chapter Five

Rethinking the Chinese Community of Manila: 1750-1800

The middle of the eighteenth century saw the beginning of great changes in Philippine history. Notable transformations included the rise of the Chinese *mestizos* as landholders and wholesalers of imports and Philippine cash crops. This period also saw the Bourbon reforms, which brought among other things the secularization of the clergy and the ordination of increasing numbers of Chinese *mestizo* and *indio* priests, the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Spanish Empire, the formation of militias which created opportunities for Chinese *mestizo* political participation, the beginning of *Comercio Libre* (liberalized trade starting in 1765 when the King approved direct trade between Manila and Cadiz) which distressed those who controlled the galleon trade on both ends of the Pacific (Creole elites in Manila and merchants of New Spain), and the growth of intra-island trade.³⁰⁶ In the midst of this time of opportunity as well as uncertainty, the Chinese community of Manila entered into a period of crisis in the years 1767-1772 as a result of expulsions that occurred in the wake of the British occupation of Manila (1762-1764). This was followed by a long stretch of relative peace and stability from 1778 until 1850. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Chinese population grew dramatically as more efficient modes of transport (steamships) linking China (Hong Kong in particular) with the Philippines and the rest of the world came on-line, as restrictions on Chinese geographical mobility within the archipelago were lifted, and as Chinese gained the legal freedoms to engage in trade in the provinces and as new economic opportunities opened up as Chinese came to serve

³⁰⁶ See Edgar Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life*. See chapter one of Richard Chu's "'Catholic,' 'Mestizo,' 'Sangley'." See chapters one and two of Ruth de Llobet's "Orphans of Empire." See Salvador P. Escoto's "Expulsion of the Chinese and Readmission to the Philippines: 1764-1779," *Philippine Studies* 47, no.1 (1999): 48-76.

as middlemen in the Philippines cash-crop economy which linked island production with global markets in Europe and North America.³⁰⁷

The situation of the Manila Chinese community from the mid-eighteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century as delineated above is one that scholars generally agree upon. Most historians who have studied the Manila Chinese during this period argue that following the expulsions of Chinese in 1755 (non-Catholics) and the 1760s (non-Catholic and Catholic), the Chinese community became a shadow of itself until the 1850s. In the absence of Chinese competition, they assert, Chinese *mestizos* flourished.³⁰⁸

In this chapter, I question this long-accepted understanding of the rise of the Chinese *mestizos* as a direct consequence of the lack of Chinese competition following the mid-century expulsions. I also suggest we need to rethink the characterization of the Manila Chinese community as stagnant, insular and much reduced in size after these mid-century events. Instead, I argue the 1755 expulsion was limited in its impact on the numbers of Chinese residing in Manila and that even though the expulsions of 1767-1772 did cause the Chinese community in Manila to enter a relative slack period in terms of numbers for about fifteen years, the Chinese

³⁰⁷ Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life*. See chapters one, two and six, in particular for his delineation of the position of the Chinese. On the Bourbon reforms and intendant opportunities for Chinese *mestizos* to form a militia, see Ruth de Llobet's "Orphans of Empire," chapter two.

³⁰⁸ See Wickberg's *The Chinese in Philippine Life* and "The Chinese Mestizo in Philippine History," Nariko Sugaya's "The Expulsion of the Non-Christian Chinese in the Mid-18th Century Philippines: Its Relevance to the Rise of Chinese s," *Philippiniana Sacra* XXVII, no. 80 (1992): 305-312, Salvador P. Escoto's "Expulsion of the Chinese and Readmission to the Philippines: 1764-1779," *Philippine Studies* 47, no. 1 (1999): 48-76, and Ruth de Llobet's "Orphans of Empire." Richard Chu is an exception to the adherence to the claim that the Chinese *mestizo* ascendancy owed much to the absence of Chinese following the mid-century expulsions. He does state the Chinese *mestizos* took over the retail trade left by the Chinese after the expulsions but is at pains to point out that the relationship between Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* should not necessarily be conceived as an antagonistic one. See "'Catholic,' 'Mestizo,' 'Sangley,'" 57-58. One of the main points in Chu's dissertation is that Chinese *mestizos* were not only "hispanized," and "Catholicized" but also "sincized." Chu is especially sensitive to the nuances in the multiple identities Chinese *mestizos* assumed and provides examples of Chinese *mestizos* who spoke Chinese (Hokkien) and maintained familial ties with Chinese relatives, as well as partnered with Chinese in business ventures. In questioning the reification of colonial classifications of ethnicity, Chu's dissertation is truly a pioneering work and one I have relied upon in rethinking the position of the Chinese community in Manila in the mid-eighteenth century.

community did not become isolated from others in Manila or in the provinces.³⁰⁹ The diminished number of Chinese in Manila following the expulsions meant that Chinese *mestizos* did have more opportunities to enter into economic niches historically monopolized by Chinese but such movement was not necessarily at the expense of the Chinese but rather, in certain instances was in partnership with the Chinese.

Moreover, the expulsions were not responsible for thinning the Chinese presence outside of Manila because authorities in the provinces either did not cooperate or were not able to round up the Chinese despite orders from the governor to do so immediately following the British Occupation. Geographically, the small numbers of Chinese in areas where the Chinese *mestizos* already dominated the economy—outside of Manila and in inter-island trade—owed less to supposed Spanish enforcement of restrictions stemming from the mid-century crisis than to Manila Chinese preferences for mercantile pursuits in Manila and its environs. Chronologically, the mid-eighteenth century was not the moment when commercial agriculture began to take off and thus, the Chinese *mestizo* ascendancy should not be seen as a result of the expulsion of Chinese. If the Chinese presence outside of Manila was light in the last two decades of the eighteenth century when certain Chinese *mestizos* became major landholders and wholesalers, this state of affairs did not stem from restrictions put in place because of the expulsions. In fact, instead of putting new restrictions on Chinese movement, as early as 1788, official Spanish policy was to encourage Chinese to move into the provinces as agricultural workers.

³⁰⁹ The shrinking role of wealthy Chinese merchants as providers of credit for the galleon trade diminished their influence with those dependent on the trans-oceanic trade but that does not mean the majority of Chinese in Manila—pursuing activities not directly connected to trans-Pacific commerce—became isolated.

The Impact of the Mid-eighteenth-century Expulsions

Edgar Wickberg's 1964 essay, "The Chinese Mestizo in Philippine History," remains the most influential historical narrative chronicling the ascendance of the Chinese *mestizos* in the mid-eighteenth century. Those who study Philippine history have relied on this account to understand the upsurge of the Chinese *mestizos* in the transition from the Manila Galleon trade system (1560s to mid-1700s) to the cash crop economy (beginning in the 1780s with tobacco and the subsequent growth of sugar, hemp and indigo as cash crops in the 1800s) with very few new details added to this story since the article first appeared. In brief, on the basis of Wickberg's study, the rise of the Chinese *mestizos* has long been understood as one of economic opportunities seized at the expense of the Chinese. The expulsion of Chinese in 1755 and the 1760s following the end of the British Occupation of Manila (1762-1764) supposedly opened up opportunities for Chinese *mestizos* to take over niches of the economy historically dominated by Chinese such as retail trade. This pattern obtained not just in Manila, but all over the Philippines. As commercial agriculture began to grow, landholding became a lucrative way to earn a livelihood but one that remained out of the reach for Chinese who were restricted both by government rules and by their smaller numbers following the mid-century expulsions. The Chinese community, so prominent in Manila and the Philippines' economic life in years past, was now a mere shadow of itself, confined geographically to Manila and without access to the economic opportunities afforded by landownership and the growing intra-island trade in agricultural products.

This standard narrative is an elegant explanation of why the Chinese *mestizos* were able to rise socially and economically but it fundamentally rests on flawed reasoning when the actual effects of the expulsions of 1755 and 1767-1772 are taken into consideration. The expulsion of

1755 was a failed attempt to deport non-Catholic Chinese because many non-Catholic Chinese were able to stay in the islands by strategically becoming catechumens. The expulsions of 1767-1772, while severe in the short-term, also did not affect the overall size of the Chinese community in Manila for very long. Ultimately, these claims that the numbers of Chinese residing in the Philippines was not adversely affected by the expulsions must be supported with population figures. The size of the Chinese community in Manila prior to the nineteenth century is difficult to ascertain because not all Chinese who entered Manila did so legally, making government records and eyewitness accounts unreliable. Exacerbating the problem with these sources is the fact that officials needed to maintain a semblance of compliance with limits set on the size of the permitted Chinese population in Manila (there were repeated complaints over the years about greedy officials issuing permits with more of an eye towards profit than government stipulations) and eye witnesses often exaggerated their estimates based on personal agendas. Nonetheless, even keeping these difficulties in mind, rolls taken in connection to the expulsions suggest that Chinese managed to maintain their position in Manila over these years.

A comparison of government rolls of the non-Christian Chinese collected before and after the expulsion shows that most non-Christians in the *Parián* became catechumens. This suggests conversion was a strategy many used to stay in the Philippines in this instance.³¹⁰ In June, 1755, the governor general of the Philippines, Don Pedro Manuel de Arandia, sought to banish all non-Christian Chinese from the Philippines. He ordered a roll of non-Christian Chinese residing in the *Parián*, Cavite and other places to be taken. All in all, there were 406 non-Christian

³¹⁰ According to Nariko Sugaya, "A report submitted to Governor Arandia in July 1755 listed by month the numbers of catechumens and those who were baptized either in the Church of *Parián* or Santa Cruz from September 1, 1754 to June 30, 1755. Among 1,824 catechumens, only 715 actually received baptism. The governor further noticed from that report that the number of catechumens rose remarkably toward the end of May (58.8 per cent). ...The governor concluded that many of the Chinese had become catechumens just in the hope of remaining in the Islands; and that, therefore, the Catholic church should be blamed for allowing the Chinese to become catechumens without paying proper attention to their sincerity about their Christian faith," "The Expulsion of the Non-Christian Chinese," 306.

Chinese.³¹¹ After the expulsion orders were carried out, Governor Arandia claimed that “as soon as the expulsion began the natives immediately took the place of the Chinese in supplying the City and in the practice of the liberal and mechanical arts.”³¹² Arandia’s claim should, however, not be taken at face value. Shortly after the expulsions, a new roll was carried out and the results show that out of 1,181 residents in the *Parián*, 690 were Christians and 491 were catechumens. As Lourdes Diaz-Trechuelo correctly points out, the number of catechumens suggests that many non-Christians had converted to avoid expulsion and that nothing much had changed in terms of the actual number of Chinese or who controlled the economy. She goes on to observe that the only ones who were supposedly affected by the expulsion orders were the silk-cloth merchants.³¹³ I would say that a closer look at the data she has compiled suggests that even these merchants were unaffected. The number of wholesalers in cloth who were catechumens (forty-six) is close to the number of non-Christian cloth merchants from the previous roll (forty-seven). The data provided by Diaz-Trechuelo casts doubt on how important the expulsions were for the rise of the *mestizos* and should give us pause when considering the claims of Governor Arandia on the absence of Chinese competition being a prerequisite for others to seize economic opportunities. Three years after the expulsion of 1755, there were still attempts to dislodge “non-Christian Chinese” competition.³¹⁴

³¹¹ This information can be found in Diaz-Trechuelo, “The Role of the Chinese,” 206-7. See AGI Filipinas 481 for the original in Spanish. For more details on the 1755 expulsion of the Chinese, see AGI Filipinas 160.

³¹² Diaz-Trechuelo, “The Role of the Chinese,” 208.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, 209.

³¹⁴ There is a petition from the city of Manila to the Council of the Indies asking that *gremios* be established for the natives, *mestizos* and Christian Chinese and that the non-Christian Chinese should be expelled. See AGI Filipinas 189B, N.23.

While the expulsions of 1755 do not seem to have had much of an impact on the size of the Chinese community, the expulsions following the British Occupation (1767-1772) did appear to have reduced the size of the Chinese community in Manila significantly, but this reduction cannot be directly linked to the prolonged dip in population numbers, which lasted till the end of the eighteenth century. In order to assess the immediate impact of the expulsions on the size of the Chinese community, we first need to establish an estimate of the number of Chinese in Manila before the expulsions. Two months prior to the British Occupation, according to the last report on residence permits made in July 1762, the number of Chinese reported was 6,200.³¹⁵ A further 1,000 immigrants arrived during the British Occupation.³¹⁶ If we compare a population prior to expulsion of slightly over 7,000 persons with Salvador P. Escoto's calculations of the number of Chinese who remained after 1772, when the expulsions ended, we find that indeed, the effects were rather profound—2,460 Chinese Christians were deported by 1772 and an estimated 3,000 fled to China, Sulu, and Sumatra. Escoto further estimates that perhaps 1,000 or more Chinese died in the war between the British and the Spanish and he concludes that only about 500 Chinese remained in the islands.³¹⁷ Immediately following the expulsions, the Chinese community of Manila appears to have become much smaller than it previously had been for most of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century.

The drop in the average number of junks arriving from China, Macao and Taiwan in Manila for the period 1764-1780 (about nine ships a year) as compared to the period 1731-1760

³¹⁵ Diaz-Trechuelo, "The Role of the Chinese," 210.

³¹⁶ Escoto, "Expulsion of the Chinese and Readmission to the Philippines: 1764-1779," 72.

³¹⁷ Salvador P. Escoto, "Expulsion of the Chinese and Readmission to the Philippines: 1764-1779," and "A Supplement to the Chinese Expulsion from the Philippines, 1764-1779," *Philippine Studies* 48, no. 2 (2000): 209-234. Escoto is the only author I have found who has done an in-depth study of the expulsions following the British Occupation of Manila. He utilizes mainly Spanish primary sources found at the Archive of the Indies (AGI).

(about fifteen ships a year) also indicates the Chinese population in Manila was much reduced and that for about fifteen years (in 1787 junk traffic returned to pre-1764 levels), the Chinese presence in Manila was greatly diminished.³¹⁸ The reduction of junk traffic to Manila for the five or six years following the expulsions seems linked to the hostile environment emanating from the British Occupation but the maintenance of the junk traffic from China to Manila at lower levels for about a fifteen-year period cannot solely be attributed to the expulsions. Spanish hostility towards the Chinese seems to have been short-lived for as early as 1772, the mood had changed sufficiently such that advocates defended the Chinese before the Council of Indies and called for the end of expulsions. There were likely other causes external to the Philippines for the slow down in Chinese migration to the archipelago from 1772 until about 1787. The increased participation of Spanish and other European vessels in the carrying trade between China and Manila in this period should be taken into consideration as should the larger regional picture. Taiwan was a recipient of a large volume of Chinese migrants from the Minnan region as was Siam in the mid to late-eighteenth century.³¹⁹

³¹⁸ Lucille Chia, "The Butcher, the Baker," 524-525. The information for junk arrivals is taken from a table she compiled for junk arrivals in Manila and Batavia for the period 1681-1790, based on Chaunu and Blussé's figures. In 1787, the number of junk arrivals in Manila jumped to sixteen vessels, which might indicate the beginning of recovery of Chinese numbers.

³¹⁹ It is still unclear how Siam and Taiwan affected migration to Manila, but perhaps investment opportunities in the form of Siamese royal trade attracted Quanzhou merchants to Siam and the opening of Taiwan pulled agrarian workers to that island instead of to Manila. Wang Lianmao in his study "Migration in Two Minnan Lineages in the Ming and Qing Periods," suggests that lineages which depended on trade for their livelihood like the Yans of Anping in Quanzhou prefecture were affected mostly by having capital and opportunities for investment, whereas lineages which came from agricultural communities such as the Lins of Pushan in Longhai county were most affected by labor markets. The opening of Taiwan for agriculture saw many Lins head to that destination. Did opportunities for investments in the form of the Siamese royal trade attract Quanzhou merchants such as the Yans to Siam as the galleon trade's reliance on Chinese products began to wane? Was the proximity of Taiwan to Zhangzhou agriculturalists such as the Lins a more attractive option than Manila and its surroundings in the mid-eighteenth century? These questions are unanswered for now but more studies like Wang Lianmao's could shed more light on the connection between Minnan sending communities and different migration destinations around the South China Sea. See Ng Chin-Keong's *The Amoy Network* on the expansion of Chinese coastal trade to ports all over China and to Taiwan and Nanyang and John Shepherd's *Statecraft and Political Economy on the Taiwan Frontier, 1600-1800* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993) on Chinese migration to Taiwan. For the Chinese junk trade to Siam in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries see Jennifer Cushman's *Fields from the Sea*:

Contrary to the view forwarded by Wickberg, the post-occupation expulsions did not carry long-term consequences in terms of creating more restrictions for the Chinese population.³²⁰ Shortly after the expulsions ended, government policy turned relatively quickly towards encouragement of Chinese immigration. As early as 1772, Pedro Calderon, a one-time judge (*oidor*) of the Manila *Audiencia* in the mid-eighteenth century and *fiscal* (crown solicitor) to the Council of Indies was already arguing the case for the continued Chinese presence in Manila.³²¹ By 1778, rosters listing Chinese in Manila showed 576 Christian Chinese in Manila and 138 non-Christians. The age difference between the Christian immigrants and non-Christians suggests that most of the Christians were returnees or had managed to escape deportation—almost all Christians were between thirty and eighty years old and non-Christians were mainly in their twenties and thirties.³²² In 1778, the new governor, José Basco y Vargas was instructed by

Chinese Junk Trade with Siam During the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993). According to G. William Skinner's work, *Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1957), Chinese shipping between Siam and China increased with royal and private trade between 1710-1855 and the exclusion of European shipping. Within these years, the fourteen years from 1767 to 1782 were particularly good ones for Chinese traders as King Taksin, the son of a Teochiu father and a Thai mother, encouraged Chinese shipping and settlement in Siam. Indeed, there was an upward trend of Chinese immigration starting with Taksin's reign, which continued into the nineteenth century. Taksin favored Teochius who were called jin-luang or "Royal Chinese" but he had close ties with other Chinese as well, as the case of Wu-Yang, a Hokkien from Hsi-Hsing village in Chang-chou, shows. Wu-Yang was made excise officer for bird's nests and ennobled, finally becoming governor of Songkhla in Southern Siam. In Batavia, junk arrivals also diminished starting from 1741 to 1780. From 1741-1750 there was at an average of about fifteen ships per year for the period and from 1751-1780, the average was approximately eight to eleven junks a year. This is in stark contrast to the period 1721-1740, when more than twenty junks arrived each year. Leonard Blussé explains that the decline of the junk trade to Batavia was in large part due to the "venality of local officials, ...coupled by interference of Dutch authorities with shipping routes" and the curtailment of silver coin exports, which wracked havoc on how junk traders carried profits back to China, in "The VOC and the Junk Trade to Batavia," in *Strange Company: Chinese Settlers, Mestizo Women and the Dutch in VOC Batavia* (Dordrecht-Holland, Riverton-U.S.A.: Foris Publications, 1986), 97-155 (151). The Chinese massacre of 1740 was only a transient reason for the decline of the junk trade to Batavia. The case of Batavia should caution us against attributing the decline of the junk trade to Manila solely to the expulsions of 1767-1772.

³²⁰ Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, 41.

³²¹ Escoto, "Expulsion of the Chinese," 66.

³²² *Ibid.*, 68. Of 576 Christians, 307 were married in locations in the Philippines. This is strong evidence that these were returnees from the expulsions of the 1767-1772.

the king to permit the entry of a small number of Chinese, preferably farmers and artisans. As part of the program encouraging Chinese immigration mentioned above, the government called for a “limited number” of 4,000 Christian Chinese settlers to fill the roles left by Christian Chinese who had been expelled (“especially porcelain manufacturers, dyers, foundrymen, blacksmiths, miners, master artisans in lacquer production, and those skilled in mulberry silk culture”). The government sent the Chinese *cabecilla*, Bartolome Pitco, to Canton, Lanquin and Amoy to recruit these settlers. Some came, but the effort was decidedly a failure since those who migrated were mostly not from the target group of artisans and farmers but mainly merchants.³²³

The failure of Pitco’s mission would seem to indicate that Manila was no longer an attractive destination for the Chinese five or six years after the forcible ejection of Chinese from the Philippines but perhaps, the stipulation that the recruits had to be Christians narrowed the pool of potential immigrants. Despite the unsuccessful attempt to woo Christian Chinese to return to Manila, it is significant that the Spanish government took the initiative in encouraging migration. In six short years, government policy had done an about face and surely this new stance contradicts the claims that because of the expulsions, Chinese had been shut out of the provinces. Furthermore, after 1790 Spanish policy became even more liberal than it had previously been when it permitted Chinese, regardless of religion, to settle in the provinces if they were engaged in agriculture (Chinese who were non-Christians were prohibited from settling in the provinces up until 1790).³²⁴

³²³ Ibid., 67.

³²⁴ See the Real Decreto of May 14, 1790 in the National Archives of the Philippines. Wickberg cites this decree in *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, footnote 58 on page 24. It is strange that Wickberg highlights the increasing freedom of Chinese in the Philippines while clinging to an argument which views the Chinese as inhibited by Spanish restrictions.

The post-British occupation expulsions might have caused a sudden slump in Chinese numbers in Manila but they did not create any new long-term impediments to Chinese immigration or movement. In fact, Chinese numbers began to pick up by the 1780s and seem to have stabilized at around 5,000 persons by the end of the century. In 1788, official statistics put the number of Chinese at 1,500 in Manila and its environs, of which 1,200 were catechumens.³²⁵ By 1800, the number of Chinese in Manila was at least 5,000 persons and very possibly more, perhaps as high as 10,000.³²⁶ A figure of between 5,000 and 10,000 persons is close to the pre-deportation estimate of about 7,000 persons and thus, the Chinese community of Manila seems to have returned to its previous strength by 1800, right in the middle of the period of Chinese *mestizo* ascendancy (1750-1850). If one subscribes to the notion of Chinese versus Chinese *mestizo* competition in the economy, would a robust Chinese community not have given the Chinese *mestizos* stiff competition, at least in Manila? Proponents of the rise of the Chinese *mestizos* in the absence of Chinese competition would probably interject at this juncture and point to the emptying of the provinces of Chinese following the expulsions as the main reason why Chinese *mestizos* had room to enter into wholesaling and landholding. Yet the Chinese presence in the provinces appears not to have been curtailed by the expulsions after all.

The expulsions did not affect Chinese numbers in the provinces primarily because provincial authorities ignored the orders to round up the Chinese and send them to Manila for

³²⁵ Ibid., 69.

³²⁶ Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, 24. Wickberg says that official statistics of the period (1750-1850) put the Chinese population at 5,000 but suspects the number was higher but somewhat less than the 20,000 to 30,000 of earlier years. See Wickberg, "The Chinese Mestizo," 32. 5,000 is also the number given by Escoto but he makes it clear that no one knows for sure how many Chinese remained after 1772: "How many Chinese remained after 1772 can be debated for years. There is usually a miscount of the number of Chinese in the Philippines, especially during this period," in "Expulsion of the Chinese," 71. Chu gives an official figure of 5,000 but is the most generous with his estimate of the overall size of the Chinese population, putting it at 10,000 persons. He does not explain why he believes the number to be as high as he asserts. See Chu, "'Catholic,' 'Mestizo,' 'Sangley,'" 37-8.

deportation. The alcalde mayor of Iloilo made excuses for sending only thirty deportees to Manila citing shortages of ships, weapons and available soldiers to escort said deportees during the voyage. A friar on the island of Samar sent six Chinese to Manila but said he was unable to track down the rest of the Chinese on the island since they were in remote places.³²⁷ Wickberg, building on population estimates given by Victor Purcell and Blair and Robertson, estimates that up until 1766, there were as many as 10,000 Chinese in the provinces but that by 1787, there were only 427 Chinese outside Manila.³²⁸ While Wickberg is almost always critical of official estimates in his work, he seems to have accepted that between 1766 and 1787, more than 9,000 Chinese left the provinces leaving only a token presence in those parts. If a seemingly zealous commissioner of the expulsions such as Antonio Uruñuela, who favored deporting all Chinese regardless of conviction of guilt, under the eye of the strongly anti-Chinese governor Simon Anda, who had led the resistance against the British and their Chinese allies, claimed that only 2,180 Chinese had been deported, what happened to the thousands of others left in the provinces?³²⁹ Either the estimate of 10,000 Chinese outside of Manila is horribly wrong or the supposed impact of the expulsions on the Chinese presence has been severely overstated. Given the non-cooperation or simple inability of authorities in the provinces to comply with orders from the center to round up the Chinese and the historic propensity of Chinese in the Philippines to concentrate in urban environments, I suggest both possibilities were likely true. There were probably fewer Chinese in the provinces than estimated, and provincial authorities could not or

³²⁷ Cited in Escoto, "Expulsion of the Chinese," 58. For the originals in Spanish, see Antonio Arguelles, *alcalde mayor* of Iloilo's correspondence with Governor Raon, dated 12 March, 1769, and Fray Juan Miguel de Castillo's letter to Raon, dated 10 January, 1769 (AGI Filipinas, 715).

³²⁸ Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, 11. Victor Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, (London and New York, Oxford University Press: 1951), 576-79, and BR 29: 209, n., 257. For the number of 427 Chinese in the provinces, see Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, footnote 57 on page 24. Wickberg actually sees the emptying of the provinces of the Chinese starting in 1755.

³²⁹ Escoto, "Supplement," 215.

did not find it necessary to expel them. A caveat should be inserted at this point: the numbers of Chinese in the provinces in the eighteenth century is a little studied subject and as such, we should be cautious about assuming that there were thousands of Chinese in the provinces to begin with. Nonetheless, if the Chinese presence in the provinces was not much affected by the expulsions, how can the Chinese *mestizo* rise, so intricately bound to the rural setting in the pursuits of landholding and inter-island wholesaling, be attributed to a Chinese vacuum created by the expulsions?

Even if we grant that there were few Chinese in the provinces, it was not Spanish restrictions stemming from the expulsions that kept these numbers low but Chinese preferences for exploiting economic niches linked to urban settings established by Chinese in prior years which took them out of the competition with Chinese *mestizos* to become middlemen wholesalers of raw products or landholders. If patterns of Chinese settlement in the nineteenth century are reflective of Chinese settlement patterns in earlier years, then we should expect a small Chinese presence in the provinces. In 1828, out of 5,708 Chinese in the Philippines, 5,279 (roughly 93 percent) were in the Manila area. In 1839, the law gave the Chinese complete freedom to choose their occupation regardless of their place of residence. Yet, in 1849, out of 8,757 Chinese, 92 percent (8,064) were in the Manila area.³³⁰ Why did the Chinese not suddenly flood the provinces? Here I will use Wickberg's own argument against him. Wickberg tells us that one of the major impediments to Chinese outcompeting Chinese *mestizos* in the inter-island wholesale trade was that Chinese *mestizos* of Cebu owned ships and therefore could forward goods to Manila more cheaply than the Chinese could since the Chinese did not own ships. The

³³⁰ Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, 53. The figures given by Wickberg are taken from Días Arenas's *Memorias históricas*, cuad. 5: "población," who obtained those figures from official guides (*Guías Oficiales*). According to Wickberg, these official figures are in all likelihood more accurate during the 1830s and 1840s than for later periods when mass immigration and illegal entries were common.

Chinese got around this problem by consigning goods onboard Spanish ships, a move which sufficiently alarmed Chinese *mestizo* wholesalers to spur them to protest such a practice.³³¹ This case of Chinese attempting to break into the inter-island wholesaling trade suggests that the mere presence of Chinese in the provinces was not a sufficient prerequisite for the demise of Chinese *mestizos*. Chinese success in business pursuits in Manila owed much to the advantages they had in that particular environment and not to essentialized notions of Chinese superiority and industry in business. It is important to view the role the Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* played in the Philippine economy in historical perspective in order to debunk the myth of Chinese as default apex predators in the environment of the Philippine economy. The *mestizo* rise owed much more to their ability to outcompete Chinese and the provincial governors in collecting and transporting Philippine produce, and the Bourbon reforms which allowed Chinese *mestizos* to participate as full subjects as members of the royal militia (*Real Príncipe*), then to the absence of the Chinese due to the expulsion.³³²

Rethinking the Manila Chinese Community: 1750-1800

One of the main reasons for offering a counter argument to the long established narrative that explains the rise of the Chinese *mestizos* by the lack of Chinese competition in the wake of the mid-eighteenth-century expulsions is to rethink the position of the Chinese community in Manila from 1750 till the early 1800s. As discussed above, scholars like Wickberg, Sugaya, Escoto and De Llobet to varying degrees paint a picture of the Chinese community in these years

³³¹ Ibid., 54. The protest of the Chinese *mestizos* of Cebu was launched in 1859.

³³² Ruth de Llobet points to the Bourbon Reforms at the end of the eighteenth century as launching the gradual rise of the *mestizos*. Of particular note is the entry of wealthy *mestizos* into the political arena via their *gremios* and funding and participation in the militia—becoming full vassals of the King. Antonio Tuason, who funded the Real Príncipe militia of the Chinese *mestizos*—was given the title of *Hidalgo*, making him a Spaniard. See De Llobet’s “Orphans of Empire,” especially the section, “Chinese Mestizos: An Emerging Bourgeoisie” in chapter two, 61-69.

as small, restricted and missing in action in relation to the changes taking place outside of Manila due to Spanish intervention. I find this characterization too grim and question just how effective Spanish surveillance and control of the Chinese actually was. While acknowledging the dislocations and adverse effects of the expulsions of 1767-1772 on the size of the Chinese population in Manila, it is important to note that the Spanish authorities did not place new impediments on Chinese movement into the provinces. In fact, the Chinese on the whole found increased freedom of movement from Manila to the provinces after 1790 with new laws that permitted Chinese settlement in the provinces for agricultural purposes regardless of religion.

Within Manila, non-Christian Chinese arriving onboard Chinese vessels were able to interact more closely with their Catholic counterparts as well as Chinese *mestizos*, *indios* and others when the *Alcaicería de San Fernando*, a customs house cum wholesale mart cum living quarters for non-Christian Chinese traders, was relocated in the 1750s to a site adjacent to Binondo, that great Chinese *mestizo* and Chinese Catholic settlement. The dismantling of the *Parián* in 1790, and the resulting move of Chinese from the *Parián* to Binondo and Santa Cruz further solidified this close interaction. It would have been nearly impossible to keep non-Catholics from Catholics with the customs house and Chinese market in such close proximity with Binondo; nor was it the intention of the authorities to separate Catholics from non-Catholics given the disillusionment of the Spanish with ascertaining loyalty based on religion following the participation of many Chinese Catholics on the side of the British in the occupation of Manila. The authorities did try to segregate Chinese based on “transient” or “resident” status—this new division replacing the old one based on religion—but were ultimately unsuccessful for the same

reason they could not separate Catholics from non-Catholics with the new living arrangements in Binondo.³³³

The picture I have painted above of a Chinese community in interaction with Chinese *mestizos*, and *indios* is based on information that is not new. In fact, it is taken from Wickberg's own descriptions of the Chinese community in Manila. Why then have scholars, including Wickberg himself, so readily accepted the characterization of the Chinese community as restricted and the success of Chinese *mestizos* as built upon the lack of Chinese competition? One reason, I believe, is failing to question the conceptualization of Chinese as an "enclosed ethnic enclave," to borrow Richard Chu's term, and also the assumption that Chinese *mestizos* had little to do with Chinese migrants. The effects of the conceptualization of the Chinese as an enclosed ethnic enclave have rippled through subsequent scholarship.³³⁴ Even a scholar like De Llobet, who is sensitive to the malleability of identities, as evidenced by her discussion of Chinese *mestizos*, seems to have accepted the division between Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* as forwarded by Wickberg without questioning the underlying assumptions of the claim.

Richard Chu's dissertation, completed in 2003, and entitled "Catholic," "Mestizo," "Sangley": Negotiating Chinese Identities in Manila, 1870-1905," marks an important turning point in the way scholars envisage the relationship between Chinese and others in Manila and

³³³ Wickberg conceptualizes the Chinese community from the 1750s to the 1790s as one that was increasingly in interaction with larger society: "Transient traders were housed in the Alcaicería de San Fernando...erected in Binondo in the late 1750s. Strict legislation attempted to keep them separated from the resident Chinese. But in fact, from the 1790s onward Binondo became a great Chinese and *mestizo* town in which permanently residing Chinese, mestizos, and indios rubbed shoulders with newcomers from China," *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, 23. Elsewhere he also acknowledges that the Chinese "enjoyed somewhat more freedom of movement and confidence of personal safety than hitherto. The low level of Chinese population and increased size of Spanish military forces lulled Spanish fears of a Chinese insurrection," *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, 146. Nonetheless, Wickberg sees the increasing freedoms and confidence of the Chinese in this period as arising from a diminished community which was controllable by the Spaniards ("the Spaniards had finally realized their official objective of the seventeenth century: the reduction of the Chinese population to only those 'necessary' to maintain essential economic services," 147) and "geographically and occupationally limited," 146.

³³⁴ Chu, "Catholic," "Mestizo," "Sangley," 115.

how “Chineseness” is perceived by these scholars in the context of the Philippines.³³⁵ Wickberg, has also veered away from his earlier stance and credits Chu’s work with challenging his assumptions that “*mestizos* were a cohesive and totally localized group that had little to do with Chinese migrants.”³³⁶ Building on Chu’s pioneering perception, I propose that in the mid-eighteenth century, the relationship between Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* was not necessarily an antagonistic one but a symbiotic one.

The *Protocolos de Manila* for the mid-eighteenth century provide glimpses of Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* collaborating in representing their communities. In a document dated 14 August, 1765, the *Audiencia* asked for testimony to be taken of the privileges of the community of Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* in Binondo given by Governor Don Luis Peres Dasmariñas in the sixteenth century. To comply with this request and to assert their rights, Chinese and Chinese *mestizo* “representatives/ *diputados*” gathered at the house of the “brother superior/ *hermano maior*” of “the community of the *mestizos* and Chinese of said settlement,” Ygnacio Mayoralgo GouQuico, “as was customary in such situations.”³³⁷ While this document recognizes the existence of both Chinese and Chinese *mestizos*, it also places them within the same community. The envisioning of Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* as one corporate body cast doubt over the conceptualization of these groups as having become separate in Binondo. Furthermore, the document contradicts the claim that the Chinese *mestizos* had become the leading element given the recognized leader of the community was the Chinese Christian, Ygnacio Mayoralgo

³³⁵ Chu’s dissertation has since been published as *Chinese and Chinese s of Manila: Family, Identity and Culture, 1860s-1930s* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010).

³³⁶ See Wickberg’s introduction to Richard Chu’s *Chinese Merchants of Binondo in the Nineteenth Century* (Manila: UST Publishing House, 2010), xix.

³³⁷ This case can be found in *Protocolos de Manila*, RMAO, for the year 1765. All translations are my own.

GouQuico.³³⁸ While the document does provide evidence for a close relationship between Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* under Chinese leadership, this does not mean there were no differences between the two. Both parties insisted on using interpreters—Tagalog and Chinese—even though many were fluent in Spanish, as the notary remarked. All the Chinese *mestizos* signed their names in Latin script, with the exception of Antonio Tuason, whose signature I could not identify in the document, and the Chinese all signed in Chinese characters. The language divide can be interpreted as a marker that distinguishes the two groups. These differences notwithstanding, the agreement of Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* to present a public face in which they appeared as one community under one leader, suggests that in 1765, the interests of Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* were still closely intertwined.

There are also a few cases in the *Protocolos* which suggest that Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* took risks together. In one case from 1766, a Chinese Catholic—Juan Diulo, and a Chinese *mestizo*—Andres Tuason, stood surety for a business deal involving the sale of a boat/*champan*. In this deal, Juan Chingco, a Chinese Catholic, representing another Chinese Catholic, Francisco Lionsay, who was residing in Ylocos, received authorization in a letter to sell Francisco Lionsay’s boat to the Spaniard Don Vizente Díaz Conde, the *alcalde maior* of the Province of Camarines. Juan Chingco received payment for 750 pesos from the representative of Don Vizente, Don Antonio Ruano. Andres Tuason and Juan Diulo agreed to pay damages should the boat not be in as good a condition as advertised.³³⁹ This case, which involved multiple parties

³³⁸ Wickberg writes “Later as the mestizos became the leading element in Binondo, they broke away from the Chinese, forming their own *Gremio de Mestizos de Binondo* in 1741,” in “The Chinese Mestizo,” 11. Previously, there had only been one *gremio* in Binondo for both the Chinese and Chinese *mestizos*, formed in 1687. I am unsure when the Chinese *mestizo gremio* for Santa Cruz was formed but by 1741, the Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* had separate organizations there. Wickberg tells us that the *gremios* of Binondo and Santa Cruz were “a kind of combined municipal governing corporation and religious sodality,” *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, 19. For the formation of the Chinese *gremio* of Binondo, see “Ordenanza de 10 julio 1687 para Binondo,” in the PNA.

³³⁹ See *Protocolos de Manila*, 1766, in RMAO. The date of the document is 4 June, 1766.

and connected people in disparate locations from the North to the South of Luzon, is another hint that collaboration existed between Chinese and Chinese *mestizos*.

In yet another case from 1770 involving residents of Santa Cruz, a Chinese Christian, Don Joseph Thadeo Gouquico, and his wife, Maria Victoria, borrowed money from a Chinese *mestizo* called Don Gregorio de los Reyes. Don Joseph was in the process of being deported and wanted to negotiate a deal whereby his wife could keep their house if they found a way to make the payment. While the relationship between the Chinese *mestizo* creditor and the couple was not exactly cordial at the point the document was notarized, there must have been enough trust between the parties at some prior time for a loan to have been taken. There is also another case from 1770, where a Chinese *mestiza*, Doña Thereza Sarmiento, received payment of a loan given in 1768 to a Chinese, Don Pedro Chamque and his bondsman Don Antonio Pacheco, for investment in the galleon trade to New Spain.³⁴⁰ In this instance, we see a Chinese *mestiza* acting as a source of credit for a Chinese and most likely, a non-Chinese partner. This and the other examples highlighted serve as a reminder that the relationship between Chinese *mestizos* and Chinese was not necessarily an antagonistic one but one which was at times characterized by partnership.

That partnership was especially close between Chinese *mestizas* and the Chinese community. The case of Maria Pasquala, a Chinese *mestiza*, illustrates the closeness of that relationship. Maria Pasquala was a resident of Santa Cruz and originally from the settlement of Angat/ “*natural del Pueblo de Angat*” in the province of Bulacan. She was the legitimate

³⁴⁰ See *Protocolos de Manila*, 1770, in RMAO. The date of the document is 21 August, 1770. The document does not state that Pedro Chamque was a Chinese but based on naming patterns (discussed in chapter two), I am fairly certain he was a “*sanglely cristiano*.” It is unknown if Antonio Pacheco was *mestizo*, *sanglely*, *indio* or a Spaniard. Naming conventions would suggest he was not Chinese.

daughter of Juan Tiatco, a Catholic Sangley and Maria Chionio, a Chinese *mestiza*.³⁴¹ The marriage of Maria Pasquala and her mother to Chinese men is similar to the preference of *mestiza* women for Chinese marriage partners and vice versa, which obtained in the nineteenth century. Richard Chu, based on data collected from marriage records for five years in the nineteenth century found that out of a data pool of 146 intermarriages examined, fifty percent of the marriages of Chinese men were with Chinese *mestizas* whereas forty seven percent were with *indias* and the remaining three percent were with Spanish *mestizas* and Chinese women. Given that there were more indigenous women than Chinese *mestizas* in the Manila area, Chu concludes that Chinese men preferred Chinese *mestizas* as marriage partners. Chu has also found that for the nineteenth century, “within Chinese-mestizo families, a mestizo daughter would marry a Chinese, repeating a pattern started by her own mestizo mother” and in that way reinforce or reintroduce these *mestizas*’ orientation toward their Chinese heritage.³⁴²

Maria Pasquala’s close association with the Chinese supports the view that the pattern of intermarriage described above solidified the closeness of the bond between Chinese *mestizas* and Chinese culture, and by extension, that of their children with their Chinese heritage too. The closeness of that bond becomes apparent when we consider that when Maria Pasquala was taken gravely ill, she designated three Chinese men—Thomas Gingqua, Nicolas Sengjong and Joseph

³⁴¹ See *Protocolos de Manila*, 1766, in RMAO. The date of the document is 12 November, 1766. The document does not mention if Maria Chionio is a *mestiza* but she most certainly came from a family with a Chinese ancestor given her name. The Hokkien word “nio” in this context could be translated as “daughter.” “Nio” is usually a designation given to young women, much like the mandarin “guniang.” The translation is mine, as a native speaker of Hokkien. The meaning of “chio” is unclear from the context. According to Wickberg, “the son of a Chinese father and an *india* or mother was classed as a Chinese *mestizo*. Subsequent male descendants were inalterably Chinese *mestizos*. The status of female descendants was determined by their marriages. A *mestiza* marrying a Chinese or Chinese *mestizo* remained in the *mestizo* classification, as did her children. But by marrying an *indio* she and her children became of that classification,” in *The Chinese Mestizo*, 5.

³⁴² See Chu, “‘Catholic,’ ‘Mestizo,’ ‘Sangley,’” 197-8. G. William Skinner has found that “locally born mestizo women, in demand by both Chinese and mestizo men, seldom married indigenes.” See Skinner’s “Creolized Chinese Societies in Southeast Asia,” in *Sojourners and Settlers: Histories of Southeast Asia and the Chinese in Honour of Jennifer Cushman*, ed. Anthony Reid (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1996), 51-93 (52-53).

Congqua—to execute her will. Such was her trust in these Chinese men that she relied on them on her deathbed to see to collecting debts and providing for her godson/ “*hijado*,” Ygnacio Joseph, whom she had raised from childhood (her marriage with Joseph Yoco had not produced any children). The closeness of her ties with the Chinese community are further demonstrated when we consider that her husband was in China, and seemed to have been away for quite some time—his absence giving rise to questions if he was still alive. Maria Pasquala said “he was found to be alive, according to letters and news/ *segun cartas, y noticias, se halla vivo*.” Even with her husband away for an extended period of time, she still maintained relationships with the Chinese community. The maintenance of ties with the Chinese in the face of the prolonged absence of her spouse suggests that her Chinese connections were not superficial.³⁴³

Another area in which Chinese and Chinese *mestizas* kept close ties was in the area of business. As mentioned above, Maria Pasquala was running a business as evidenced by her list of debtors. This business could have been one that she started on her own or one in which she acted as the partner of her husband. In any case, she entrusted it to the three Chinese executors of her will. Other *mestizas* were also involved in business dealings with the Chinese. I found two cases in which the Chinese husband left the business in the hands of the *mestiza* wife. For example, the Chinese headman Bartholome Chamqua named his wife, Sebastiana Felizarda, as

³⁴³ Having a Chinese father and Chinese relatives on her mother’s side of the family, living in Santa Cruz amongst many Chinese, she must have been quite at home in the Chinese community. It could have been possible that Maria Pasquala spoke Hokkien but this is indiscernible from the record. She must have communicated with Chinese conduits to receive letters and news of her husband in China. The notarized document states that she did not sign her name because she did not know how to and that she made use of a Tagalog interpreter. The letters she received were most likely written in Chinese and she would have then had to consult someone who could read Chinese to tell her the contents of the correspondence. Any communication between a reader and Maria Pasquala would have taken place in Tagalog, Hokkien, or some hybrid language which both parties could understand. While I suggest that Maria Pasquala was strongly influenced by her Chinese environment, her use of a Tagalog interpreter indicates that she was equally at home in an indigenous context. As the sponsorship patterns of girls discussed in Chapter Two indicate, girls tended to form kinship ties with non-Chinese when it came to godparenthood. While marriage to Chinese men kept *mestizas* in the Chinese community, their kinship ties formed through baptism connected them to non-Chinese. For *mestizas* like Maria Pasquala being Chinese *mestiza* did not have to be at the exclusion of one or another community.

his testamentary executor. When he died, he owed 13,500 pesos for loans taken together with other Chinese for the Emuy trade. Sebastiana Felizarda managed to settle the debts of her husband. In another case from 1770, Domingo Can Leong, a Chinese Christian, left his business and possessions to his wife, Maria Ygnacia, and son, Matheo Apostal, in Cebu.³⁴⁴ For at least two of the three cases examined above, it can be said that “Chinese” businesses were also Chinese *mestiza* enterprises.

If Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* collaborated closely in business and communal representation, is it possible that Chinese merchants might have extended their operations into the provinces via their *mestizo* families or through partnership with other Chinese *mestizos*? Chinese businessmen in the late nineteenth century did extend their businesses to the provinces via their *mestizo* children and perhaps we might speculate that the same was done in the mid-eighteenth century. There is no evidence, at present, to support this view but the closeness of the relationship between Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* in Manila suggests this possibility existed.

The cases I have presented above represent only a small portion of the notarial records found at the Records Management and Archives Office (RMAO) but unfortunately Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* do not appear frequently in such documents for the mid-eighteenth century. These cases, while few, nonetheless provide us with a glimpse of the relationship between Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* and provide us new perspectives on the two communities, which were at times so entangled that they were considered one at the time, if not subsequently by later historians.

Community entanglements were sometimes corporate as in the case of the Chinese and Chinese *mestizo* communities conceived of as unified by Spaniards in 1765. They could also be

³⁴⁴ See *Protocolos de Manila*, 1765 and 1770, in RMAO. The dates of the cases are: 6 November, 1765 and 20 December, 1770, respectively.

personal as business dealings and marriage choices indicate. For some individuals, the intermeshing of these two communities meant that they came to hold multiple identities.

In the mid-eighteenth century, legal identities could be fluid. The case of Domingo Pedro Perea is illustrative of this point. There are two separate entries for Domingo Pedro Perea in the notarial record of 1765, both dated 20 September. In one entry, the notary listed Domingo as “vezino,” or resident of Manila, which made him a “Spaniard” given that only Spaniards were allowed to reside in Manila. In another entry, Domingo was listed as a “*mestizo de sangley*” or “Chinese *Mestizo*” and a resident of Binondo. Apparently, there was confusion over his status.³⁴⁵ Another example of such border crossing is that of Antonio Tuason, a Chinese *mestizo* whom we encountered earlier. He was one of the representatives of the community of Chinese and Chinese *mestizos*. For his services to the King, Tuason was given a title of minor nobility known as *hidalguía*. This made him a “Spaniard.” When in 1803, his son Vicente Dolores Tuason, also an *hidalgo*, tried to buy an aldermanship in the Manila City Council (*Cabildo*), the incumbent aldermen accused him of being more Chinese than *mestizo* and alleged that he had hardly any native and no European blood in him.³⁴⁶ These cases suggest that “Chinese,” “Chinese *mestizo*” and “Spaniard” were interchangeable identities for some in mid-eighteenth-century Manila.

Being able to assume multiple identities could be used to one’s advantage in that one could present a particular persona in a particular context to best suit one’s interest. As Wickberg has pointed out, some scholars such as Andrew Wilson who dealt with Chinese elites in colonial Manila for the period 1880-1906, and Flemming Christiansen who studied Chinese entrepreneurs in Europe in the 1990s argue that the use of flexible identities could be instruments of control

³⁴⁵ See *Protocolos de Manila*, 1765, in RMAO. The date of the document is 20 September, 1765.

³⁴⁶ See De Llobet, “Orphans of Empire,” 64, 67-8.

and ambition.³⁴⁷ But as Wickberg observes, it is very easy to “fall into the trap of seeing the behavior of Chinese overseas leaders as purely instrumental, with no personal cultural belief and subject to no uncontrolled cultural influences from their local environment.”³⁴⁸ I find this warning to be most apt, especially when considering the multiple points of contact Chinese *mestizos* had with Chinese. Just because Chinese *mestizos* were comfortable in various contexts does not mean their “Chineseness” was only instrumental.

For the mid-eighteenth century, I have only uncovered evidence for malleable identities and can only infer that *mestizos* being raised in or in close proximity with the Chinese community or by *mestiza* mothers who pointed them in the direction of Chinese acculturation could have been just as “Chinese” as they were “hispanized” or “indigenized.” For the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there is much richer documentation to answer questions on the relationship between Chinese and Chinese *mestizo* identity.

Studies of famous Chinese *mestizos* from these later centuries, such as Mariano Limjap and Idefonso Tambunting, show that some *mestizos* were so close to the Chinese community that they were considered Chinese and probably saw themselves as such, among the other identities they held. Mariano Limjap donated money to relatives in China and was cast as a prominent “Chinese” businessman in newspapers of the time.³⁴⁹ Idefonso Tambunting, another prominent businessman, had Chinese business partners, spoke Hokkien, founded the Tan Family Association, traveled frequently to China and according to anecdotes, was reported to have gathered friends and relatives on the anniversary of his father’s death for fifty consecutive years

³⁴⁷ See Wilson’s *Chinese Merchant Elites* and Christiansen’s *Chinatown, Europe: An Exploration of Overseas Chinese Identity in the 1990s* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003).

³⁴⁸ Wickberg, “Introduction” to Richard Chu’s *Chinese Merchants of Binondo in the Nineteenth Century*, xi.

³⁴⁹ On Mariano Limjap, see Chu “‘Catholic,’ ‘Mestizo,’ ‘Sangley,’” 178-185.

to tell stories about his father. He had to have his legal identity confirmed before the court, perhaps because he was so close to the Chinese community that he was considered a Chinese by the authorities.³⁵⁰ Whether Idefonso Tambunting or Mariano Limjap conceived of themselves as Chinese first and foremost is difficult to ascertain but their actions and the perceptions of contemporaries observing their actions suggest that for these two Chinese *mestizos* at least, being *mestizo* did not mean having to deny being Chinese in a personal and cultural sense. While realizing the dangers of extrapolating observations from one period to another, the observable similarities in environment and practices for Chinese *mestizos* in the mid-eighteenth and the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—*mestiza* mothers, deep involvement in the Chinese community, and multiple identities—should permit us to speculate that for certain Chinese *mestizos* in Manila in the mid-eighteenth century, one could be culturally “Chinese,” “Mestizo” and “Hispanic” at the same time.

In the period after the mid-eighteenth century, the Chinese did find new economic opportunities in Manila and beyond (especially starting in the mid-nineteenth century) as commercial agents, collecting cash crops to resell to Europeans for shipment to world markets. They also found positions as government tax-collecting farmers. Backed by government troops, the Chinese expanded beyond Manila and extracted revenue for Spanish authorities. Another development in the late nineteenth century was that the Chinese community sought consular protection from the Qing and found government officials receptive to that request.³⁵¹ All this was new but at the same time, familiar, paralleling as it did patterns established in an earlier era.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., 185-191.

³⁵¹ Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life*, 59, 209-244.

In the midst of the great changes starting in the mid-eighteenth century, the Chinese community persisted, employing strategies cultivated during the two and a half centuries when the galleon trade dominated Manila's economy such as extending credit to others and growing mutual obligation networks through fictive kinship. Certain Chinese continued to find advantage mediating between the regime and workers. The role of Chinese as tax collectors was hardly new, even though their territory became enlarged. In addition, Chinese men continued to marry Chinese *mestizas* and indigenous women, forming familial ties with local society. The request for consular protection from the Qing was new but the resulting reality of living in overlapping spheres of influence and demands was not. Chinese in Manila, from 1570 to 1770, had contended with Chinese authorities who sought to assert their influence over them and their nineteenth-century countrymen were wary of "consulate personnel" who "would make demands of local Chinese under the guise of 'consular expense.'"³⁵² The period between 1750 and 1850 was a time of change and transition for the Philippines, but this period did not see a significant break in Chinese adaptations to colonial society. It was only with the rise of Filipino and Chinese nationalism in the latter part of the nineteenth century that the Chinese community of Manila began to associate itself increasingly with a Chinese identity which denied the possibility of assimilating into local society.³⁵³ The effects of these new attitudes should not be overstated, however, for there were prominent Chinese *mestizos* in this period who were so close to the Chinese community that they were considered Chinese. Nonetheless, the end of the nineteenth century marks a turning point in Chinese-Filipino relations, when the divide between these two groups began to widen.

³⁵² Ibid., 225.

³⁵³ Ibid., 237.

Conclusion

The intersection of the narrative histories of Chinese *mestizo* and Chinese in the Philippines from the mid-eighteenth through the early nineteenth centuries has often focused on the rise of one group at the expense of another. While Chinese *mestizos* and Chinese did compete with each other, they also lived, worked and had children together. The points at which their lives intertwined complicate our understanding of ethnicity and identity and raise questions about the way the history of these two communities has been written in the past. In emphasizing the connections between Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* for the second half of the eighteenth century rather than their differences in this revisionist account, I have sought to replace the image of the Chinese community as an enclosed, ethnic enclave in competition with all others. In that sense, this chapter is the last bead in a narrative chain, which envisages the Chinese as an integral part of colonial society in Manila across the two hundred years or so of Spanish rule covered in this study and beyond this temporal scope into the waning years of the Spanish empire.

Conclusion

The history of the Chinese in Manila in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has often been written as one of unending cycles of ethnic violence. Bloody episodes from the 1603 uprising to the expulsions of 1767-1772 have been both the entry point and the fixation of scholars. The documents generated as a result of these episodes have skewed our view of the role of the Chinese in Manila, casting the community as disruptive, alien and a threat to local society and empire.

This study presents a different view, one that sees the Chinese as part of the fabric of colonial society, as well as essential to Manila and the Spanish presence in the city. From 1570 to 1770, the Chinese and others in Manila negotiated relationships of power, which carried over into the nineteenth century. In the process, the Chinese shaped the ecology of Manila to their purposes, albeit within the confines of Spanish sovereignty. As large as their impact was on colonial society, not all Chinese interacted with Spanish power or others in Manila in the same way. Close reading of Spanish colonial reports on periodic eruptions of conflict, often seen as ethnic in nature, reveal that the Chinese community was one internally divided by different interests tied to varied niches in Manila's economy.

Members of Manila's fragmented Chinese community collaborated with or resisted Spanish authority according to their position in Manila's economy. Artisans, the *Parián* merchants, junk traders and government contractors were often reluctant to participate in uprisings because their livelihoods were dependent on the Spanish presence. Artisans needed Spanish patrons, merchants and junk traders needed Spanish silver and government contractors

needed Spanish authorities to legitimate their control of Chinese labor and to protect their monopolies. Those who rose up in revolt tended to be laborers, the most numerous and vulnerable segment of the Chinese community. When this segment of the community perceived the mediation of contractors as unable to serve as protectors, they rebelled and sought to build alliances with others in and around Manila—indigenous society, Chinese merchants and artisans and the Japanese.

The Spaniards did the same, relying heavily on indigenous leaders and their fighting men, supplemented at times in the early seventeenth century by groups of Japanese, and later by certain Chinese and Chinese *mestizos*, to quell challenges to Spanish authority and rulership. Alliances with larger colonial society were needed to maintain power. Empire rested on the Spanish ability to provide silver and livelihoods and to create alliances. Coercion was sometimes necessary to put down challenges to Spanish power but the threat of force could not hold colonial society together over the long term.

Kinship and credit networks provided the threads that crisscrossed colonial society and held it together. The Chinese together with others created webs of mutual obligation through borrowing and lending. In times of danger, Chinese who were part of such relationships could call for protection. Baptism and marriage connected Chinese and others to each other through kinship and also provided a means of recruiting labor. Contracting kinship and extending credit were strategies the Chinese used to secure their livelihoods and safety in Manila but these were not exclusively Chinese methods to gain advantage. Viewed in this light, the Chinese could not be said to be deviants but rather proficient users of means employed by larger colonial society to safeguard itself and thrive.

The ties that bound colonial society together for the first two hundred years of Spanish rule continued to be relevant beyond this period, even in the face of the great socio-economic changes in Manila and the Philippines starting in the mid-eighteenth century. The changes in the economy of Manila from highly dependent on the Fujian-Manila-Acapulco trade nexus to one which linked island-wide cash crop production with the global economy saw the rise of the Chinese *mestizos*. The rise of this group to social and economic prominence has often been claimed as at the expense of the Chinese community. Such arguments are based on the assumption that the Chinese community was insular and in competition with all others. Yet the intertwining lives of Chinese and Chinese *mestizos* in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries suggest that the ties forged between Chinese and others continued to be perpetuated beyond the formative two-hundred-year period from 1570 to 1770.

Finally, the Chinese were key partners of the Spanish in transforming Manila into and maintaining it as a center of world trade. Chinese merchants and shippers provided the bulk of merchandise necessary to keep the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade system alive. This trade system dominated the economy of Manila from its inception in 1565 until the late eighteenth century. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, wealthy Chinese merchants provided not only the goods for the trans-oceanic trade but also loans to Spanish consignors. By the early eighteenth century, with the emergence of a small group of powerful Spanish investors based in Manila and linked to New Spanish commercial interests, Chinese merchants seem to have been displaced as creditors in the Manila-Acapulco portion of the galleon trade. Even though they continued to be the premier suppliers of goods for the trans-Pacific commerce, as a result of losing their role as creditors to residents of Manila for the galleon trade, these Chinese merchants seem to have become more distant from larger colonial society. Nonetheless, these merchants

only constituted a small portion of Manila's Chinese population. The majority of Chinese in Manila maintained close ties with local society.

While the galleon system was of utmost importance for merchants involved in the trade, it was not of direct significance to the majority of the Chinese population in Manila who pursued activities unrelated to the junk trade or the consignment trade to New Spain. Given the varied interests of the Chinese community, viewing the community through the prism of the galleon trade is to relegate to obscurity the pursuits of a significant part of the Chinese population. The majority of the Chinese population in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was connected to the local economy of Manila. For many of these Chinese, Manila became home. They built the city, they supplied the city; they lived in it and they died in it. They invested their lives in it. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Manila was not only a Spanish, *indio* and *mestizo* city, it very much was a Chinese one as well.

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