

THE CHINESE IN THE PHILIPPINES: FACTS AND FANCIES

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Two questions are discussed, namely, *what* the Chinese in the Philippines are, and *who* they are. The first is answered by a brief review of the history of the Chinese here, and by an examination of eight popular misconceptions about them. The second question is answered by a substantive description of the Chinese, particularly the Filipino Chinese, or *Pinsino*, who was born and raised in the Philippines and currently accounts for at least 80 percent of the so-called Chinese population. By the diverse criteria of two anthropologists, Amyot and Geertz, Pinsinos are shown to be distinct from the old Chinatown Chinese and well on the way to complete integration into Philippine society. Citizenship is for many of them the only remaining step.

Ecological and political changes, important as they are, are not the only transformations that command our attention. What are perhaps more crucial are the social, cultural, and psychological changes in man, or the lack of them, likely to have an immense effect on our future well-being. Thus we urgently need new methods and approaches, new social relationships, new attitudes and updated values to cope with social reality.

It is in this context of *change* that I shall discuss the evolving Chinese community in the Philippines. To understand the present-day Philippine Chinese community, we should ask ourselves two basic questions: first, *what* are the Chinese in the Philippines? and second, *who* are the Chinese in the Philippines today?

We can best answer the first question by glancing at the history of the Chinese in these islands, and by inquiring how the Filipinos look at them. The answer to the second question, *who* the Chinese are, will be arrived at by focusing on the young Chinese citizens in today's evolving Philippine Chinese community.

It is a well-established historical fact that the Chinese were here before the western world made its so-called discovery of these islands.

After the Spaniards imposed their rule on the Philippines, the influx of Chinese for purposes of trade greatly increased. They helped greatly in building up the Philippine economic system, for instance, by contributing a vital share to the galleon trade. We likewise know that massacres of more than 20,000 Philippine Chinese occurred both in 1603 and in 1639 (Tan 1972: 25). Carnage took place on a smaller scale in 1662, 1686, and 1773, with periodic expulsions especially in the 18th century (Tan 1972: 26). But after each massacre or expulsion, the Chinese invariably came back. Hence their foothold in Philippine socioeconomic life was won at the price of thousands of human lives, countless heartaches — and centuries of human toil. Overall, Philippine-Chinese relations were usually amicable.

The control on the quality and quantity of Chinese migrants was inconstant until the coming of the Americans. However, the Americans applied to this newly acquired territory their Chinese Exclusion Act, drawn up for California in the late 19th century. This move sharply limited the immigration of Chinese into the Philippines at a time when they were streaming into other southeast Asian countries. These strict

curbs were imposed on new Chinese entries until 1935.

In the Commonwealth period, however, when the Sino-Japanese war began to ravage mainland China in 1937, a large wave of Chinese immigrants was admitted to the Philippines. For humane reasons, President Manuel Quezon allowed the threatened wives and dependents of Chinese residents to join their breadwinners in considerable numbers. Thereafter the Chinese immigration quota, like all others, was cut down; in 1941, to no more than 200 a year, and in June 1950, to no more than 50 a year. At that time, a crisis regarding overstaying Chinese developed, and in October 1950 a cabinet decision suspended the granting of any new immigrant visas to citizens of China, a policy still in force.

Myths and Facts

During 400 years of extensive social and economic interchange between Filipinos and Chinese, certain stereotypes took shape. Prejudices arose, discrimination occurred, and a set of myths grew up, out of ignorance or envy, on both sides of the encounter. I shall first touch on some of the major myths or fancies about the Chinese in the Philippines, then proceed to the second question which I asked at the outset.

1. An initial myth to be set straight concerns the *number* of Chinese citizens in the Philippines. Some newspaper reports, or commentators in their columns, have put the number of Chinese in the country as high as three million. In reality, the Philippines has one of the smallest Chinese communities in a southeast Asian country. The latest Bureau of Immigration figures state that there are 118,000 Chinese citizens here; a Philippine Constabulary spokesman recently reported the number as 155,000. The 1960 census (Philippines [Republic], BCS 1960: Table 22) listed 181,626 Chinese among the alien residents in the Philippines.

It seems, then, accurate to say that the number of alien Chinese (citizens of China) now in the country is about 125,000, one-eighth of a million, or approximately 0.7 percent, less than one percent of the total Philippine population.

There are, however, around 600,000 ethnically Chinese people in the Philippines regardless of citizenship (Pagkakaisa sa Pag-unlad 1971: 3). Half a million or 500,000 of these ethnic Chinese are Pinsinos. The term will be explained later.

Regarding this controversy on the counting of Chinese heads, newspapers occasionally carry reports that "warm bodies" have been smuggled into the Philippines, even by the thousands. We are led to believe that thousands of Chinese illegal entrants have been landed on Philippine shores, wave after wave, without being checked. Strangely, however, none of these adventurers has been apprehended and dealt with by the law that requires them to be sent back to where they came from.

2. The most common myth in general circulation is that the Chinese control the economy of the Philippines. It is true that about 35 years ago, the Chinese dominated a big portion of *trade and commerce* in the country, but they never controlled *the economy*. Today the Chinese are still influential in the area of trade, and are of importance in light industry, but they do not *control* either trade or commerce, much less the overall economy. Some statistics which make this fact clear are the following.

From 1945 to June 1956, the overall investments of the Filipinos in all industries represented 69 percent of the total; the Chinese put up only 27 percent of the investments for that period (Liao 1964: 229). From 1967 to 1970, the Filipino share was 83 percent of the total new investments; that of the Chinese was less than 6 percent (Philippines [Republic] BCS 1968, 1969a, 1969b, 1969c, 1969d, 1970a, 1970b, 1970c, 1971).

3. Another false notion, related to this matter of economic control, is that all Chinese are rich. Of course much depends on how you define rich and poor. But whatever definitions of rich and poor are agreed upon, certainly there will be Chinese found in both categories. Nonetheless it is true that most of them are members of the merchant class, neither extremely rich nor helplessly poor.

4. A popular concept regards the Chinese as a wonderfully close-knit community, a monolithic group of clannishly cohesive, unified

members. Viewed from outside by an inexperienced observer, the Chinese may look alike; they may seem to think the same way, and always agree among themselves. In fact, however, there are two Chinese Chambers of Commerce in Manila; there are four Chinese newspapers, and they are not saying the same thing. There are hundreds of Chinese surname and hometown associations which are continually splitting up.

Cut-throat competition crops up between business firms in many lines. Envy and jealousy are not strangers to the Chinese here or elsewhere. If the observer is inside the community, he learns soon and sees clearly that no one person or organization really represents the whole Chinese community. Too great a lack of agreement, cooperation, and unity prevails in it.

5. Are the Chinese in the Philippines communist sympathizers? A common belief among Filipinos, especially those who are less well educated, rates the Chinese residing here as communist sympathizers, simply because the Chinese in China live under a communist regime. In fact, however, the Chinese Kuomintang cultural organization has been, and is, very active in this country. The Chinese embassy in the Philippines has exercised considerable effective control over almost all the Chinese schools, which are operating in the Philippines right now. Moreover, as I said earlier, most of the Chinese here belong to the merchant class, the petty bourgeoisie despised by the doctrinaire communist. Given this gap, they are less likely to become communist than, let us say, average members of the peasant or labor groups.

6. An impression exists that Chinese schools are exclusively for Chinese children, and that their students are trained only in Chinese to love China alone. This is next on our list of myths which do not stand the test of facts. It is not true. The Chinese schools were established to educate the young Chinese in both the Chinese and English languages. In the Chinese schools a common educational approach has been to offer a double curriculum. Two sets of textbooks, two groups of teachers, two administrative staffs subject to approval and supervision by two different governments. I think Jenny Huang Go

will elaborate on this subject (see her comment, below).

7. Lack of intermarriage is another area of misunderstanding. Why do Chinese women refuse to marry Filipino men?

Every student of the social sciences is aware that intermarriage is a social problem not confined to Chinese women and Filipino men. For instance, how frequently do marriages occur between Christian Filipinas and Muslim Filipinos?

This preference for marrying within one social group is also found among the Cantoneses and Hokkien, or Amoy, Chinese. Of course, this does not mean that the selection of a marriage partner on racial, religious, political, socioeconomic, or ethnolinguistic grounds alone is justified and should be encouraged.

If one looks at the problem of intermarriage between a Filipino and a Chinese woman from a broader perspective, one can see that the objection is not that he is a Filipino, but that he is an outsider. He could be an American, a German, an Indonesian, or a Hakka Chinese, and the parents would still raise objections, though perhaps to various degrees.

In spite of these social obstacles, there are now more young Chinese girls and boys associating with, and attracted to, young Filipinos.

8. Another myth that has of late been circulated in the mass-media network and in daily conversations is that of 50-million-peso Chinese lobby, allegedly intended to influence the delegates to the Constitutional Convention. This rumor gained volume and speed from two correlated myths, namely that the Chinese are rich, and are well organized. There are undoubtedly wealthy members of the Chinese community, but most of them have already become Filipino citizens by naturalization.

No single person or organization within the Chinese community could unite the whole Chinese population for concerted action, unless their very survival were threatened by an outside force. One clear example of this disinterest in the common good was the campaign to construct in Binondo the Federation Center Building, the main office of the Federation of

Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce. It took the Chinese community ten years to raise enough money for the completion of the five-million-peso building. At the same rate, it would take the Chinese community over 100 years to collect a 50-million-peso fund.

The Pinsino

Now that we have discussed some of the common myths about the Chinese in the Philippines we can return to the second question, namely *who* are the Chinese in the Philippines today?

To answer this question, I must bring up the most significant of the myths about the Chinese in the Philippines, which is that they are still Chinese. I believe that to continue the use of the word Chinese to speak of migrants and their descendants who ceased to live in China 50 years ago, is to employ a misnomer. It prevents us from coming to grips with our sociocultural reality. The so-called "Chinese" in the Philippines are not so Chinese as they once were, and their children and grandchildren have been growing even less Chinese.

In neighboring southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia, specific names are used for the indigenized Chinese: the Peranakan are contrasted with the Totok in Indonesia, and in Malaysia the local-born Chinese are called Baba. In the Philippines we have no special terms for referring to the immigrant community, except that word "alien" which is so commonly used in the mass media. We do use, however, the words *Pinoy* for the Filipino, *Intsik* for the Chinese, *Kano* for the American, and *Tisoy* for the Spanish mestizo. No particular term has taken hold to designate the Filipinized Chinese (except Mestizo-Intsik for persons of mixed blood).

To be able to discuss the problem of identification of the Chinese descendants in the Philippines more clearly, I would propose that a classificatory term, *Pinsino*, be used to designate the Philippine-born-and-raised Chinese and the Chinese-Filipino mestizo. The terms "Intsik" and "Philippine Chinese" I would reserve for China-born Chinese who are permanent residents here; I would employ the term "Chinese" for

people who are residents of Taiwan, Hong Kong, or the China mainland.

The term "Pinsino," an abbreviated form of *Pilipino* and *Sino*, is supposed to mean *Pinoy na Intsik*. From a sociocultural and ethnolinguistic point of view, they have been successfully integrated, to a large extent, and have become Filipinos in more ways than one. They act, speak, and in most cases think like any other Filipinos. However, they may be of pure Chinese or mixed blood, and are not necessarily Filipino citizens.

Most of the so-called Chinese in the Philippines today are *Pinsinos*. Eighty to 85 percent of the Chinese citizens in the Philippines belong in this category. Although they speak Chinese or a limping English, they certainly are different in customs, values, and behavior from Chinese in other parts of the world. They may be considered Chinese citizens by the two Chinas (the People's Republic and Nationalist China) and by the Philippine government, but most of them have never seen their supposed homeland. They do not, nor are they required to, remit taxes to China, report to the Chinese embassy, or serve in the armed forces of either China, nor do they participate in the elections of those nations.

If they decide to go abroad, or pay a visit to their so-called homeland, they are required to prove to the Chinese government that they are Chinese citizens, and they do this by presenting an Alien Certificate of Registration, the ACR document issued by the *Philippine* government. Only then can they be given a Chinese passport and a visa to enter their so-called homeland.

Pinsinos Un-Chinese by Amyot's Criteria

In order to appreciate better their declining Chineseness, let us examine the *Pinsinos* in terms of a set of criteria developed by a social anthropologist for measuring degrees of Chineseness. He gives 11 features (Amyot 1968: 220) that mark the maximum Chineseness of new immigrants, the old-fashioned Chinatown Chinese in southeast Asia. Fr. Amyot rates four of these features as notable obstacles to integration. Let us take them up one by one.

First, "The Chinatown Chinese manifests all

the external signs of Chineseness. He has a Chinese name, dresses as a Chinese, uses Chinese forms of social convention and etiquette, and if he has some knowledge of the languages used in the country, he speaks them with a strong Chinese accent."

When we examine the Pinsinos in the light of this multiple criterion, we see that most of them do not qualify as Chinatown Chinese. True, the Pinsinos generally retain their Chinese surnames (unlike their Thai or Indonesian counterparts who have indigenized their full names). But they have taken Christian personal names, being known, for example, as Henry Ong, James Tan, Anita Yap. The percentage of Pinsinos sporting long hair and bell-bottom trousers just about matches the national average. We see Pinsinos going about town in mini-skirts and pant-suits far more often than in Chionsam (which is hardly found at all these days).

As for the use of Chinese forms of social convention and etiquette, the Philippine Chinese, that is, their China-born parents, would be happy if the Pinsinos even *knew* these Chinese manners; they do not expect to see them *practice* them. Pinsinos generally speak a native language, Iloko, Tagalog, Cebuano, Ilonggo, or whatever, depending on the part of the country they hail from. Besides, they usually speak English with a pronounced regional accent.

Second, "Because of his exclusively Chinese upbringing, the knowledge of indigenous language and culture which the Chinatown Chinese had was minimal; it met only the strict requirements of his business contacts."

Many of the Pinsinos who are over 35 years old, and those who have spent almost all their lives in Manila's Chinatown, can be correctly described in these terms. However, the number of Pinsinos that old and so located is really quite small.

In a 1969 study on Chinese Integration in the Philippines, Gerald McBeath (1970: 76) gave his finding on Pilipino language proficiency among Chinese students in Manila: 36 percent could speak Tagalog fluently, and 63 percent semi-fluently; only one-half of 1 percent had no fluency in Tagalog. Dr. Robert Tilman (1970: 40), who did a study of the provincial Philippine

Chinese in 1970, found that more than 40 percent of the Chinese students he interviewed rated Visayan or English as their first language; fewer than 60 percent had learned Hokkien, (the Amoy dialect of Chinese) as their first language. Dr. Tilman (1970: 41) explained that:

Even children from most Chinese homes become very dependent on Visayan to round out their otherwise deficient vocabularies. The common complaint among the few informants who had ever visited Taiwan was that they felt uncomfortable speaking the Taiwan dialect (although it is very similar to local Amoy) because up there they cannot call on help from familiar Visayan terms and they do not know their Amoy equivalents.

From my own experience dealing with Pinsinos the last several years, I have observed that most of those below 25 years of age actually speak Chinese with noticeable Filipino accents.

Third, "He [the Chinatown Chinese] segregates himself locally and/or socially from the indigenous population by choice. He prefers whenever possible to live in a Chinese neighborhood and to associate socially with Chinese."

This is true mostly of Pinsinos above 30 years of age who have had no opportunity to pursue higher education in Philippine colleges or universities. But the majority of the younger Pinsinos have as many Filipino as Pinsino friends. More often than not, they have more Filipino than Philippine-Chinese friends. This is because they are more open or exposed than were their predecessors, especially in the provinces, to the Filipino milieu in their period of socialization. Many of them are, as little children, in the care of Filipino maids; they are early influenced by the Philippine mass media; they grow up with Filipino playmates. Later they go to college with Filipinos. Thus, they feel very much at home with Filipinos, and they use the necessary cultural skills they have acquired to associate with young Filipinos.

The *fourth* feature of the newly arrived Chinese was that "He affiliated to, and participated actively in, Chinese communal organizations, submitting to their directives and turning to them for the solution of all community problems."

Contrary to this, if the Pinsinos are not entirely indifferent to any type of organization,

Chinese or Filipino, they tend to join the Lions, Jaycees, and university student clubs, rather than the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, or Chinese surname or hometown associations. The trend is definitely to greater membership in Filipino groups rather than in the traditional Chinese associations. Most Pinsinos do not know where to find these Chinese clubs, nor do they understand the reason for their existence.

One thing that stands out clearly from the above considerations is that the Pinsinos are being gradually but surely drawn away from the Chinese culture in general, and from the Philippine-Chinese culture of the Philippines' own Chinatowns in particular. Where are they heading? Towards what kind of life are they going?

By Geertz's Criteria, Pinsinos Being Integrated

Unless there is a revival of enthusiasm for Chinese culture through direct influence from either Taiwan or mainland China — which is unlikely in the near future — the Pinsinos will become less and less Chinese. They have every potentiality of becoming good and true Filipinos because in "primordial sentiments" they are closer to Filipinos than they are to other Chinese in other parts of the world. Clifford Geertz has pointed out (1963) that the difficulty of integration in a modern nation-state lies in the conflict between primordial sentiments and civil politics, and the need for reconciliation between different primordial groups. In the case of the Philippines, it would mean reconciliation between groups such as Muslims and Christians, Tagalog and non-Tagalog Filipinos, naturalized and natural-born Filipinos, Pinsino and other ethnolinguistic groups — to mention just a few. Geertz (1963: 127-28) emphasizes that

what the situation demands is an adjustment between them (primordial ties and civil identifications), an adjustment such that the processes of government can proceed fully without seriously threatening the cultural framework of personal identity, and such that whatever discontinuities in "consciousness of kind" happen to exist in the general society, they do not radically distort political functioning.

Now, if we examine the primordial attachments of the Pinsinos by using the six-point

analytical tool offered by Geertz, we shall see the Pinsinos have really come a long way on the road to integration since the departure of their forebears from ports in Fukien and Kwangtung provinces. Geertz (1963: 112-13) enumerated six foci around which primordial discontent tends to crystallize.

The first one is *assumed blood ties* or quasi-kinship, which he defines as a notion of biologically untraceable, yet sociologically real, kinship as in a tribe. Many Pinsinos probably consider themselves of common ancestry in accordance with the traditional belief that people with the same surname, Tan or Lim for instance, descend from the same forebears, and that all Chinese ultimately come from the same parents. A long process of ethnobiological education might be needed to disabuse the Pinsinos and other ethnic groups in the Philippines of this belief.

The second focal point is *race*, which Geertz defines as phenotypical physical features, especially skin color, facial contour, stature, hair type, and so on, rather than any very definite sense of common parental descent as such.

On this ground, I think, most Pinsinos can pass for ordinary Filipinos. Possibly this is because of extensive intermarriage between Chinese and Filipinos in the past, and because other peoples — Indians, Japanese, Spaniards, Americans — and different ethnolinguistic groups of Filipinos have blended into the present combination.

The third point is *language* or linguism. As I have explained earlier, most, if not all, Pinsinos can speak the local language without difficulty.

The fourth point is *region*. This poses a slight problem in the urban centers of the Philippines, Manila particularly, where a relatively high concentration of Philippine Chinese and Pinsinos resides in Chinatown. By and large, however, the Pinsinos are well-scattered throughout the archipelago, unlike the Muslims who are concentrated in Mindanao and Sulu. Moreover, a shift in residential pattern finds the Chinese families of Manila's Chinatown moving out to suburban areas such as Caloocan, Quezon City, San Juan, and Pasay City.

The fifth point is *religion*. Most of the Pinsinos

are Christians. The McBeath sample survey (1970: 78) of 3,000 Pinsino students showed that 78 percent were either Catholic or Protestant; only 14 percent of Pinsinos in the survey identified themselves as Buddhists. This Buddhist religious minority is assuredly not fanatical or disruptive.

Finally, Geertz's sixth focal point is *custom*. Outside their homes, I think, it is difficult to distinguish Pinsinos from Filipinos except when the former engage in a Chinese conversation. The behavior, habits, values, and even the aspirations of the Pinsinos by and large differ only slightly from those of young Filipinos.

Summary and Discussion

To recapitulate, one can safely conclude that most of the Chinese in the Philippines are no longer Chinese; they are Pinsinos or whatever one may finally choose to call them, even though most of them are still classified as aliens or Chinese citizens both by the Chinese and the Philippine governments. According to the criteria of Chineseness set forth by Amyot, the Pinsinos are far forward of the baseline at which the Chinatown Chinese once stood. Progressively, although not completely, they have been desinicized. Applying the six focal points suggested by Geertz, we observe that today's Pinsinos are closer to Filipinos than the Philippine Chinese ever were. The Pinsinos have become part and parcel of Philippine society. From a sociocultural and ethnolinguistic standpoint, the Pinsinos are Filipinos, even as the Muslims, Kalingga, Ilocanos, Visayans, Hanunoo, Bicolanos, Tagalog, Waray, and Tasaday are Filipinos.

The Pinsinos have no home to go back to because their only homes are here in the Philippines. Since they are excluded from the civil identities of their homeland, the Philippines, they have no other alternative but to cling to whatever tenuous and meaningless relationships they have with the land of their ancestors — China.

The survival of a democratic nation-state depends, says Geertz, on its ability to integrate her people by reconciling the varied primordial

sentiments among them and by adjusting successfully between primordial sentiments and civil polity. Hence in the process of integrative revolution, the Philippines has to come to grips with the social reality of existing diverse ethnolinguistic groups. The Pinsinos, being one of the cultural minorities, may be embraced, massacred, expelled, or taken into the fold by the Filipino majority, but they certainly cannot be ignored.

Whether or not the Pinsinos will eventually become full-fledged Filipinos is a big question. The future development of the Pinsinos and the Philippine Chinese community (their process of becoming), will hinge on diverse and complex sociocultural factors. However, it is sure that the future outcome will depend largely on their being fully accepted as equals, or being rejected as aliens by the Filipino majority.

What, then does the Philippines and the future hold in store for them? What alternatives are open to the Pinsinos?

I would say, in concluding, that now is the season for harvest. The fields have bloomed; the fruits have ripened. All that is needed is to gather them in and make them our own. Otherwise, tomorrow they will be rotting in the fields or will have been stolen away to some foreign land.

Note

This is the revised version of a paper read on March 9, 1972, in the public lecture series, "Social Issues '72," at the San Miguel Auditorium, Makati, Rizal, under the sponsorship of the Philippine Sociological Society, Inc. Mr. Go is Executive Secretary of Pagkakaisa sa Pag-unlad (Unity for Progress), Inc., an organization which aims to assist the speedier integration of resident Chinese into Philippine society. A graduate of the Ateneo de Manila, Mr. Go is a candidate for the M.A. in anthropology in that institution.

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Comment on the Bernard Go Paper

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I will limit my discussion to one area touched upon in Mr. Go's paper, namely, certain aspects of the formal educational arrangements of the Chinese in the Philippines which may help or hinder integration. I will start with a discussion of the so-called Chinese schools:

Chinese Schools in the Philippines

Number. The distribution of Chinese schools in the country is as follows: 25 in Manila, 10 in the Manila suburbs, 45 in Luzon, 15 in the Bicol Region, 30 in the Visayas, and 26 in Mindanao. This gives a total of 151 schools in the whole country. All these schools offer the elementary course, but additionally 33 operate at the kindergarten level and 46 at the secondary. Only one school offers a college course. In all, these Chinese schools serve nearly 70,000 pupils

and employ about 2,500 Chinese and 2,500 Filipino teachers.

Double curriculum. A significant trait of the Chinese school is that it offers a double curriculum. The standard curriculum prescribed for the public and private schools by the Philippine Department of Education is offered in the morning by Filipino teachers. After the noon break, Chinese teachers teach the Chinese curriculum. Thus, the Chinese schools are actually two educational institutions combined into a single complex of buildings.

Courses. The normal duration of English primary and secondary education is 10 years, while for the Chinese it is 12. The Chinese diploma qualifying its holder to enter Taiwan colleges is now utilized for that purpose by only about 15 graduates each year.

Textbooks. The material used in Chinese

schools for courses in Chinese originate in Taiwan, much of it produced by the education section of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission in Taipei. Textbooks are marketed through a semigovernment publishing house in Taipei. It would be difficult in most cases to find in these texts any overt political messages, though some passages involve an appeal to Chinese nationalism. Indirectly or by inference, however, much of the textual material is supportive of the Kuomintang cause. The Taiwan texts have been composed and sanitized to suit the goals of a non-Philippine government.

Faculty and administration. The management of many schools has been under boards of trustees compliant with policies of China's Nationalist government and party. The posts of Chinese principals and the tenure of Chinese teachers has depended on their acceptability to the Chinese embassy in Manila. Indeed, at least at the start it was the Philippine authorities who insisted that the Chinese Embassy be responsible for screening out teachers who might be communist sympathizers.

Chinese Schools and Integration

Integration slow but unmistakable. The double, supercharged curriculum of the Chinese schools is a heavy learning load for students. It limits their learning to activities within the classroom and leaves them no time for outside readings.

Beyond this, however, the Chinese school described above has another effect on its students. It serves more to reinforce a Chinese identity than to foster identification with Filipinos. Its curricular offerings, faculty, texts, management, and its assumption that its students owe allegiance and loyalty to the Republic of China — all these elements lead to a slow-down of integration. Indeed, in a study of Philippine Chinese youth and the struggle to perpetuate a Chinese subculture, Dr. Robert Tilman found that fully private nonreligious Chinese schools were "more Chinese" than religious schools, and consistently produced students with higher scores for sinicity, or Chineseness.

Although this type of school retards integration, still, one would agree that the Chinese

students of today are very different from their parents in terms of "Chineseness." In fact, after reviewing the contents of completed questionnaires and the results of intensive interviews with many Chinese students in 1970, Dr. Tilman found their political thinking almost identical with that of Filipino youths. He states:

It is apparent that the problems, frustrations, prejudices, follies, hopes and aspirations of all the students are about the same, whether they are of Chinese or Filipino origin. They are about equally aware and concerned about political issues and personalities. Most feel strongly alienated now from the national and local administrations, and few think their families have much influence in the formulation of government policy.

An alternative plan. I would therefore like to pose this question. What alternative can be given for the education of these students? We accept that, on the one hand, the average Chinese school today helps to maintain distance between the national community and the Chinese community. On the other hand, we also know that a knowledge of Chinese language and literature provides access to a culture rich in human values; a vast fund of wisdom, human experience, and sound ethics. The cultural assets of a people are imbedded in its language; they are transmitted to and by persons who read and speak that language. If the language and literature are good, should they be banned from the classroom? Is it right to strip either the Muslim or the Chinese minority of its age-old cultural heritage?

Dr. Jacques Amyot in his forthcoming book, *The Chinese and national integration in south-east Asia*, concludes in these words.

Laws aimed at controlling Chinese education and Chinese cultural activity in general need to be determined in the perspective of the requirements of integration. It is not the knowledge of Chinese language and culture which is detrimental to integration, but the inability to speak the local language and to relate to the local culture. Laws need to be aimed at assuring the latter rather than at suppressing the former, which is a cultural asset to any host society.

A desirable plan for the achievement of the greatest possible good would seem to be Filipino (not Chinese) schools which offer a Chinese cultural-enrichment program. Such a program can (a) answer the legitimate desires related to a Chinese ethnic background, (b) retain the Asian dimension of the Philippine nation, and (c) develop some speakers of Chinese among

Filipino citizens, thus assuring a bridge of communication with numerous peoples of other southeast Asian countries and the fostering of that regionalism which the 1980s and 1990s will require for national security and a strong integrated economy.

As the present Chinese school structure is being changed, a vacuum should not be left in its place, but some new institution should be provided, workable and useful for valid needs. If we are eager to establish schools in other countries to give our children there a chance to keep their Filipino culture, would we not show equally great foresight, a clear vision of the future, and a pluralistic frame of mind if we allowed Filipino schools to offer a Chinese Language Arts program if they so chose? Here I would like to emphasize that in such schools students would not only imbed the values and attitudes of loyalty but also be taught allegiance to the Philippines. Chinese Language Arts would be taught as a second-language program.

Practical Steps

Foreseeing this need, a group of educators began as early as 1950 to experiment along this line. As a first step, they did away with the double curriculum. In 1964, they requested and obtained the cancellation of their permit to operate as a Chinese school and obtained a new permit to operate exclusively as a Filipino school with only a Filipino curriculum and an additional requirement of the Chinese Language and Arts Program.

At present, there are 10 such Filipino schools offering a Chinese Language Arts Program. The success of this approach is evident in the large number of students who have gone from them into Filipino colleges where they have performed successfully and found themselves very much at home. They are certainly more acculturated to Philippine society than students from the Chinese school system.

Constitutional Committee on Education

The Constitutional Convention Committee on Education drafted the following stand on the Filipinization of schools.

The ownership, control and administration of all educational institutions shall be limited to Filipino citizens or to corporations or associations wholly owned by such citizens; provided that educational institutions presently owned or operated not in conformity with this provision shall be given ten years after the approval of this Constitution within which to comply with the provisions hereof. No educational institutions shall be established exclusively for aliens, and no foreign nationality or group of foreign nationalities shall comprise the majority enrolment in any school. The social science subjects in the elementary and secondary schools shall be taught by Filipinos.

If this stand is adopted by the Convention, little difficulty will be experienced in phasing out the objectionable and negative features of the present Chinese schools. Their control by a foreign government will cease; the curriculum will be readily rationalized; and their textbooks better suited for the specific acculturation needs of pupils who will live all their future years as part of Filipino society.

Provision can be made within the framework of this clause for good-quality courses in the Chinese language, available both to young Filipinos and to youngsters in Chinese families. The recognized rights of parents to choose the kind of education their children will receive can be respected, along with the State's responsibility to promote in positive fashion a healthy political and social integration of all who reside permanently within the nation's borders. It is my personal belief and hope that this will add new vigor to both the cultural enrichment and the development of the Philippine nation.

Note

This is the revised version of a comment read on March 9, 1972, in the public lecture series, "Social Issues '72," at the San Miguel Auditorium, Makati, Rizal, under the sponsorship of the Philippine Sociological Society, Inc. Mrs. Go (who is *not* the wife of the main speaker), is the principal of Xavier Grade School, San Juan, Rizal. She received the M.S. in education from Fordham University (1959).

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Comment on the Bernard Go Paper

TANG TACK

March 13, 1972

Our main speaker, Mr. Go, mentioned that the most common myth in general circulation is that the Chinese control the economy of the Philippines. In fact, when Father Michael McPhelin, economics professor of the Ateneo de Manila, once asked a small group of graduate students in his class how many of them were convinced that the Chinese controlled the Philippine economy, not one of them doubted it.

On March 8, 1972, the Manila *Chronicle* carried a news item with the headline, "BIR SAYS CHINESE DOMINATE R.P. BUSINESS." The article was based on a report made by Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) National Coordinator Bernardo Carpio to BIR Commissioner Misael P. Vera. Bristling with alleged facts and figures taken from Mr. Carpio's report, the *Chronicle* story gives the unwary and unsuspecting reader the impression that the Chinese truly dominate Philippine economy.

But do the Chinese really control the economy of the country? To my mind, that the Chinese control and dominate the economy of the Philippines is more apparent than real.

I say that this situation is more apparent than real because while it may be true that wherever you may be in the Philippines — whether in the barrios, municipalities, or cities — you are likely to see many Chinese-owned and operated sari-sari stores, grocery stores, hardware stores, bakeries, restaurants, bazaars, department stores, and hotels, yet, on the whole, these stores and establishments are small and moderate-sized, and their total investments will not even approximate the equity of just one giant Filipino company — the Manila Electric Company.

Some 30 or more years ago, the Chinese may have dominated a big portion of the retail trade but, as Mr. Go has emphasized, they never did control the economy of the nation. With the Retail Trade Nationalization Law in full force and effect for the past 18 years, Chinese

domination of this facet of our economy has become a thing of the past.

Let me prove this point. In 1951, three years before the enactment of the Retail Trade Nationalization Law, there were still some 17,420 Chinese establishments engaged in retail business, with combined assets of around ₱134.3 million. At that time there were no less than 119,352 Filipino retailers with total assets of some ₱224.1 million. Percentage-wise, in 1951 Chinese retailers represented 12.7 percent, and Filipino retailers, 87.0 percent of those engaged in retail business in the country.

As of June 1971, or 20 years later, the number of Chinese retailers in this country had dwindled to only around 8,000, with total investments of only about ₱29.8 million, representing a measly 3.9 percent of those engaged in the retail trade. Meanwhile the number of Filipino retailers had zoomed to 237,000, with total investments of over ₱522.3 million.

At the rate Filipinos are taking over retail business in the Philippines, it would not be presumptuous for us to assume that, perhaps 10 years from now, Chinese retailers in the Philippines will have been reduced to a minimum number, or entirely wiped out.

Our economy is like an organism. It is made up of interdependent parts. It includes commerce, industry, agriculture, mining, servicing, and other sectors. Commerce alone embraces the retail and wholesale market and import and export trade. In industry, we have foodstuff canning, softdrink bottling, rubber, paper, wood, glass, steel, textile, and plastic manufacturing, just to mention a few. Every component is an important part of the whole organism, but I believe it would be an exaggeration for anyone who has a bigger share than others in any line to claim that he controls the whole economy.

Let us take the case of Meralco, with assets of almost ₱2 billion. Its power dynamizes the industries in Manila and its environs. Though

fundamental and important, it cannot control the economy, for if Caltex were not supplying its gasoline and fuel, Meralco would be helpless.

The Chinese investments in this country are mainly in commerce, including retail, wholesale, import, and export. Since retail trade and the rice and corn business have already been nationalized, some of the dislodged retail capital has been channeled to manufacturing, mostly small-scale industries.

According to the Bureau of Commerce, the Bureau of the Census and Statistics, and the Securities and Exchange Commission, from 1945 to 1970 Chinese investments in the Philippines totaled ₱1,153.9 million, broken down as follows: ₱488.6 million in single proprietorships and ₱665.3 million in partnerships and corporations, together constituting only 4.5 percent of the total investments of ₱25,594.5 million.

From these figures and data gathered from government sources, it is quite clear that the Chinese do not dominate commerce and industry in this country.

In the face of a changing world, it is high time that we shattered the myth of Chinese control and erased the erroneous belief in an alien stranglehold on the Philippine economy.

The Philippines today is no longer the Philippines of the 1950s. The country has developed and progressed so fast that the national income has risen steadily, industrial as well as agricultural production has expanded, and foreign trade has grown considerably. What is more heartening is the fact that Filipino participation in business is now far-reaching and wide-embracing, dominat-

ing not only commerce and industry, but all sectors of the economy, especially agriculture, mining, financing, transportation, utility, and servicing.

But the country's population has increased so rapidly that it might even outstrip the national gain in production, perpetuating the problem of providing jobs for the growing number to be employed every year. At the present rate that investments are being made in new industries, we feel that not enough job opportunities are being created to meet this great demand.

The Philippines undoubtedly needs more capital, foreign as well as domestic, for the development of its untapped natural resources and for the acceleration of its industrial program.

In this light, consider the following preliminary finding of a study of the Philippines' 1,000 largest companies as of 1971, conducted by an interagency team of the Board of Investments: while Chinese capital in the country may be relatively insignificant, among foreign investments it still ranks second, topped only by the American percentage.

Given the opportunity and the just protection of our laws, I believe that local Chinese capital can be profitably channeled towards the acceleration of Philippine economic development.

Note

This is the revised version of a comment read on March 9, 1972, in the public lecture series, "Social Issues '72," at the San Miguel Auditorium, Makati, Rizal, under the sponsorship of the Philippine Sociological Society, Inc. Mr. Tang is Secretary General of the Federation of the Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce.

Comment on the Bernard Go Paper

ANTONIO TAN

March 18, 1972

I find myself in substantial agreement with many of Mr. Go's conclusions, notably with his statements that the Chinese no longer dominate the Philippine economy nor do they control it, that not all the Chinese in the Philippines are rich, that the Philippine Chinese community is not a fertile ground for the spread of communist

ideology, that Chinese girls are willing to marry Filipinos, that never before in our history, because of the changes that have taken place, has the prospect of integrating and assimilating the Chinese into the mainstream of Filipino society appeared brighter than it does today.

I agree with Mr. Go's observation that the

Chinese in the Philippines are far from homogeneous. Because of the existence of disparate factions sometimes working at cross purposes, the Chinese are not a monolithic group, nor are they united. However, we cannot deny the fact that the Chinese, especially the China-born, are clannish in the sense that they continue to cling to their family, clan, village, and district associations. The fact that they are clannish, however, does not mean that they do not wish to associate or live with Filipinos.

The clannishness of the Chinese in the Philippines has both a cultural root and an historical explanation. South China, from which the Philippine Chinese came, is divided into numerous small communities, each of which has its own clannish loyalties. These clans seem to have distinguished South China from the rest of the country until the 20th century. Intended to provide mutual aid and protection, these associations embodied a feeling of loyalty and obligation to the kinship group and to the town or village where the lineage was localized. When the Chinese came to the Philippines they brought their clannishness with them.

Historically, the clannishness of the Philippine Chinese was promoted and fostered by their lot in this country, especially during the Spanish colonial regime, which was not always a happy one in social, economic, political, and legal terms. Under Spanish rule the Chinese lived rather precariously, suffering various indignities, including occasional massacres. They lived under repressive measures. These repressions in turn made them more conscious of their ancestral ties, aroused a sense of responsibility for assisting other Chinese in trouble, and stimulated a sense of identity and community. Drawn together by a common grievance and a common desire to better their position, they founded institutions in which they could feel secure. As O. D. Corpuz puts it (1965: 74): "Life in a country where they were tolerated but not truly welcome naturally led the unassimilative Chinese to develop ingenuity and cohesion for self-defense."

In fairness to Mr. Go, the clannishness of the Chinese applies only to China-born Philippine Chinese. Philippine-born Chinese are not familiar

with the nature and function of these associations.

In his paper, Mr. Go surveys the present position of the important Chinese population in the Philippines and arrives at conclusions which should be of significance for Philippine policy. I agree with Mr. Go's observation that the Chinese community in the Philippines is not a fertile ground for the spread of communist ideology because in its make-up the merchant class prevails.

In the light of the admission of the People's Republic of China into the United Nations, of President Nixon's visit to Peking, and the increasing diplomatic isolation of Nationalist China on Taiwan, there is much concern over the degree to which Chinese in the Philippines may shift their allegiance. It is assumed that the ultimate loyalties of these Chinese will be either to the People's Republic or to Nationalist China. There are some who believe that the Chinese might become supporting citizens of communist China once the Philippines establishes diplomatic relations with that country.

Mr. Go suggests, however, that the Chinese born in the Philippines are in fact manifesting a capacity for assimilation into Philippine society and are no longer engaged in the old politics of communist China versus Nationalist China. He pointed out that 80–85 percent of the Chinese in the Philippines were born in this country and have left behind them much of their identification with the ancestral homeland. For the Philippine-born Chinese (the so-called Pinosinos) Mr. Go foresees an increasingly rapid integration and assimilation into Philippine society.

Note

This is the revised version of a comment read on March 9, 1972, in the public lecture series, "Social Issues '72," at the San Miguel Auditorium Makati, Rizal, under the sponsorship of the Philippine Sociological Society, Inc. Dr. Tan (Ph.D. in Chinese studies, University of California at Berkeley, 1969) is associate professor of Chinese studies, Asian Center, University of the Philippines.

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