

# THE MANILA CHINESE

FAMILISM IN THE PHILIPPINE ENVIRONMENT

Jacques Amyot, S.J.



Soul tablet of the founding ancestor of the Su surname clan. The inscription reads as follows: "Soul Tablet of Honorable Chuan-yi, primogenitor, and of the ancestors of all successive generations of the Su clan."

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Quezon City, Philippines

standing the conditions in which certain forms of social grouping (types of family; clan, territorial, and dialect associations; economic and occupational groupings; religious and cultural associations; secret societies; and so on) come into being and change. For example, it is important for us to try to analyze the points at which increasing differentiation within Overseas Chinese communities leads to the expression of clan, dialect, and economic interests in formally constituted associations. Here again Father Amyot comes to our aid, showing us how different principles of social organizations have emerged within the ranks of the Manila Chinese.

Finally, we must ask whether we are any clearer about the factors which bear on the reception of the Chinese in the countries in which they have come to settle and on the responses of the Chinese to the institutions and attitudes which represent to them the wider society. We are here in the field of "race relations"; it is certain that readers of this book who are familiar with the literature on the Chinese in, say, Thailand, Malaya, and Indonesia will be able the better to understand the general trends of adjustment and "assimilation" among the Chinese in Southeast Asia.

This last point needs to be elaborated from a political and humanitarian point of view. Asian nationalism and Chinese communism have caught the Overseas Chinese in a vise. Economic jealousy and political suspicion have caused them sometimes to be treated in an irrational and unjust manner. The objective account which Father Amyot has given us of the position of the Philippine Chinese should help us to a general and sympathetic understanding of the problems which Overseas Chinese face.

The author is a priest and a scholar. In introducing his book I congratulate him on his having so skillfully made use for our benefit of the many qualifications which his two roles imply.

MAURICE FREEDMAN

New Haven, Connecticut  
November 1960

## Preface to the Second Edition

TEN YEARS have elapsed since the original offset edition of this study appeared. The essay, published by the Philippine Studies Program of the University of Chicago, was generally well received, and a major revision was contemplated incorporating the many suggestions of colleagues it was sent to for comments. Unfortunately, the pressure of new duties in Thailand made it impossible for me to put this plan to execution. It is with a great deal of humility, therefore, that I present this new edition to the public, for it conforms substantially to the original. However, several more or less important corrections of detail were made. The advice of Professors Maurice Freedman and Edgar Wickberg in this respect is gratefully acknowledged here. I am also grateful to my *confrère* and colleague, Dr. Frank Lynch, S.J., program coordinator of the Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila, for hosting this work. It is appropriate that it be made available again, this time from Asia, when Asian studies are striving to find a base in Asia.

JACQUES AMYOT, S.J.

Social Science Research Institute  
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May 1, 1969

with a fair cross section of the population while serving as part-time chaplain in the Armed Forces of the Philippines in Camp Murphy (Quezon City) and on Corregidor.

Back in Chicago, I was called upon by the Philippine Studies Program of the University of Chicago to write the section on the Chinese in the Philippines for the Human Relations Area Files (HRAF) *Area Handbook of the Philippines* it was then preparing. I was struck by the dearth of published information on the group. The only comprehensive studies were Victor Purcell's *The Chinese in Southeast Asia* (1931) and G. William Skinner's *Report on the Chinese in Southeast Asia* (1951). While these reports were the best available, they were only general surveys. George Henry Weightman wrote a more detailed report in 1952 entitled *The Chinese Community in the Philippines*. It was his master's thesis in the Department of Sociology and Social Welfare of the University of the Philippines, also, admittedly, a general survey. One can add a number of articles by journalists, fairly typical of which are Walter Robb's "I Weep for the Chinese" (1950) and Albert Ravenholt's "Chinese in the Philippines—an Alien Business and Middle Class" (1955). For all of its excellent insights, this type of literature is necessarily impressionistic, not having the benefits of extensive research. As a Chinese journalist friend put it to me: "When you read these articles written by foreign correspondents, you can tell right away whom they have been talking to. So and so would have given a different story." Anyone having done research on the Chinese in the Philippines knows how true this is and how presumptuous it is to try to understand the situation in a few days or even in a few weeks. Weightman, who was aware of this, prevailed upon some of his students in the Department of Sociology and Social Welfare of the University of the Philippines to undertake limited research projects on the Manila Chinese community. This eventually produced Helen Tan-Gatue's study of assimilation in Chinese-Filipino families in Manila and suburbs (1955), Felicidad Chen-SyCip's study of the Seng Guan Temple congregation (1957), and Anita Beltran's study of cultural retention of Chinese students (1957), all unpublished master's theses. More recently, a husband-and-wife team, Harriet and Hubert Reynolds, has done more intensive and comprehensive research on the Chinese in the Ilocos provinces. Both theses are unpublished and represent, to my knowledge, the first really adequate study of a provincial Philippine Chinese community. Also in 1959, George Henry Weightman expanded his earlier study of the Philippine Chinese into a doctoral dissertation based on further research and fieldwork. It was submitted to the Department of Sociology of Cornell University and remains

unpublished. Precise references to these studies can be found in the bibliography.

None of the unpublished material referred to above was available to me in Chicago before leaving for the field in the spring of 1958. The unsatisfactory state of Philippine Chinese studies together with my previous experience with China and I pointed this group out to me as interesting and useful dissertation material. It seemed to me that much of what had been published failed to get to the heart of the Philippine Chinese social organization because it restricted itself largely to the narrative or

## Preface

THIS ESSAY directly incorporates the fruit of 13 months of field research on the Overseas Chinese community of Manila from March 1958 to May 1958, but it has been in remote preparation for many years. I was sent to China by my Canadian home superiors in the fall of 1947 to pursue my training as a Jesuit, there to stay until May of 1952. I had no anthropological training at that time but I was interested in Chinese people and culture. I learned to speak and write Mandarin Chinese in Peiping for 14 months and spent the remaining time in Shanghai where, among other things, I acquired a working knowledge of the local dialect. Except for the first year, I did not do much traveling because of restrictions imposed by the People's Government, but I was in constant contact with Chinese individuals and families and had ample opportunity to observe their way of life and to learn their values at a time when they were being violently challenged by the forces of "liberation." Because of the circumstances, my experience was confined to urban Chinese although I did come into contact with relatively large numbers of rural folk who streamed into Shanghai as refugees from the wars. Unfortunately for my later research, except for a few brief stays in Hong Kong, my only contact with south China was to pass through it by train on the way to Canton and Hong Kong when I was sent out of China in 1952.

On leaving China, I was given a teaching assignment in Manila where my students were Chinese refugee seminarians. Except for one year of absence, I occupied this post until the summer of 1955 when I came to Chicago for graduate studies in anthropology. Although my contacts with the local Overseas Chinese community were rather superficial during these intervening years, I became aware of and interested in its situation in relation to the local population. At this time, however, I got to know the Chinese mainly through Filipino eyes, which was quite revealing in itself. Most of my social relations were with Filipinos. As in China, my experience was largely confined to the urban environment, but I became acquainted

with a fair cross section of the population while serving as part-time chaplain in the Armed Forces of the Philippines in Camp Murphy (Quezon City) and on Corregidor.

Back in Chicago, I was called upon by the Philippine Studies Program of the University of Chicago to write the section on the Chinese in the Philippines for the Human Relations Area Files (HRAF) *Area Handbook on the Philippines* it was then preparing. I was struck by the dearth of published information on the group. The only comprehensive studies were Victor Purcell's *The Chinese in Southeast Asia* (1951) and G. William Skinner's *Report on the Chinese in Southeast Asia* (1951). While these reports were the best available, they were only general surveys. George Henry Weightman wrote a more detailed report in 1952 entitled *The Chinese Community in the Philippines*. It was his master's thesis in the Department of Sociology and Social Welfare of the University of the Philippines, also, admittedly, a general survey. One can add a number of articles by journalists, fairly typical of which are Walter Robb's "I Weep for the Chinese" (1950) and Albert Ravenholt's "Chinese in the Philippines—an Alien Business and Middle Class" (1955). For all of its excellent insights, this type of literature is necessarily impressionistic, not having the benefits of extensive research. As a Chinese journalist friend put it to me: "When you read these articles written by foreign correspondents, you can tell right away whom they have been talking to. So and so would have given a different story." Anyone having done research on the Chinese in the Philippines knows how true this is and how presumptuous it is to try to understand the situation in a few days or even in a few weeks. Weightman, who was aware of this, prevailed upon some of his students in the Department of Sociology and Social Welfare of the University of the Philippines to undertake limited research projects on the Manila Chinese community. This eventually produced Belen Tan-Gatue's study of assimilation in Chinese-Filipino families in Manila and suburbs (1955), Felicidad Chan SyCip's study of the Seng Guan Temple congregation (1957), and Anita Beltran's study of cultural retention of Chinese students (1957), all unpublished master's theses. More recently, a husband-and-wife team, Harriet and Hubert Reynolds, has done more intensive and comprehensive research on the Chinese in the Ilocos provinces. Both theses are unpublished and represent, to my knowledge, the first really adequate study of a provincial Philippine Chinese community. Also in 1959, George Henry Weightman expanded his earlier study of the Philippine Chinese into a doctoral dissertation based on further research and fieldwork. It was submitted to the Department of Sociology of Cornell University and remains

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None of the unpublished material referred to above was available to me in Chicago before leaving for the field in the spring of 1958. The unsatisfactory state of Philippine Chinese studies together with my previous experience with China and the Philippines pointed this group out to me as interesting and useful dissertation material. It seemed to me that much of what had been published failed to get to the meat of the Philippine Chinese social organization because it restricted itself largely to the mercantile organization of the community. After one had mentioned the activities of the various chambers of commerce and trade organizations, described the trade monopolies and the frictions and struggles resulting from them, it seemed that there was not much left to say. Granted that these are important, it appeared to me from what is already known of Chinese culture in general, and of the Southeastern Chinese social tradition in particular, that a study of the role of kinship and clanship in the organization and functioning of this community would be much more basic, providing of course that the Philippine Chinese had not departed radically from their cultural origins. At least, it was worthwhile looking into.

My original research design was modeled on T'ien Ju-kang's monograph, *The Chinese of Sarawak* (1953). Although I later departed from it considerably because it described what seemed too much of an ideal structure, it appealed to me as the sort of thing I would like to produce on the Philippine Chinese. It was directly concerned with social structure and beautifully brought out the role of kinship and clanship in an Overseas Chinese community in a way that was coherent with the cultural background of the Chinese as modified by local conditions. Before going to the Philippines, I was given the opportunity to spend a term at the Department of Anthropology of the London School of Economics to work under Dr. Maurice Freedman. I was able to profit by his experience both in library research on the social organization of Southeastern China, and in practical field investigation on an Overseas Chinese community in Singapore. This proved invaluable in understanding the nature and implication of agnatic common descent groups in China, and in becoming aware of the special problems arising from conditions overseas.

I had decided to center my field research in the Philippines on the Manila Chinese community. This was somewhat unwieldy as a unit of study but it had several advantages. I had enough experience to know that it had characteristics distinguishing it from provincial groups, and—one could not do everything. The Manila community was the hub of all Chinese organiza-

tion in the Philippines and, perhaps more than any other, it had the character of a self-contained community, a society within a society, so to speak, which had full opportunity to evolve according to its own internal dynamism. Then, there was the reason of expediency. My religious order was running a Chinese parish and a highly successful Chinese school in the Manila area so I was assured of any number of contacts with the Chinese population. As I shall explain in due course, this was not easy to come by in the 1958 political climate of the Philippine Chinese community. I arrived in Manila on the last day of February, 1958, to initiate my research and I set up my field headquarters at the Chinese Catholic parish of Pasay City, a suburb south of Manila proper along the bay. This essay attempts to give an account of the observations made in the 13 months that followed.

A few remarks on the essay itself. It is directly concerned with the *contemporary* Manila Chinese community, not with that of the past, or with Philippine Chinese living outside of Greater Manila. References to the China mainland social and cultural background are to conditions existing in the time span of the Chinese Republic, up to but excluding the advent of the People's Republic (1949). Any statements extending beyond these limits will be sufficiently indicated by the context. When no sources are cited in the text or footnotes, it is to be taken for granted that I am drawing from my own field notes which record personal observations and the statements of hundreds of different informants. All Chinese words are rendered in Mandarin Chinese (Kuo Yu). The romanization follows that used by the Fenn dictionary (1947).

The field research this study is based on was prepared with the advice and encouragement of Dr. Fred Eggan, professor of anthropology at the University of Chicago and director of the Philippine Studies Program of Dr. Maurice Freedman and Professor Raymond Firth of the Department of Anthropology of the London School of Economics. I am indebted to the faculty and to my fellow students at LSE for a thorough discussion of my project shortly before going into the field.

Much of the credit for this study belongs to the Manila Chinese themselves. It would have been much more imperfect without the cooperation of many Chinese friends who reviewed and appraised my data during the several phases of my research. I shall not name them because I think they prefer to remain anonymous but I have a debt of gratitude to acknowledge them here. I am particularly indebted to Fathers G. E. Beauregard, S.J., pastor of the Chinese parish of Mary the Queen in Pasay City, J. Desautels, S.J., rector, and C. Pineau, S.J., dean of studies of Kuang Chi School for sharing their wisdom and experiences from long association with

the Manila Chinese. I also profited by many fruitful discussions with Chris Carson, formerly of the University of Chicago and of the London School of Economics, at his home in Pasay City.

During the write-up period, I have profited from continuous association with my colleagues in the Philippine Studies Program: E.D. Hester, associate director of the program, Frank Lynch, S.J., L. Guemple, M. Mednick, A. Yengoyan, J. Anderson, and Liao Shu-ch'ing. In his capacity of chairman of my thesis committee, Dr. Fred Eggan contributed more than negative criticism and was most helpful with his advice and editorial comment. I am likewise indebted to Mrs. Frances LaDuke for her typing services.

My own Jesuit order sponsored and supported the field investigation. The Asia Foundation contributed funds for research assistance. Support for the write-up period is gratefully acknowledged from the Philippine Studies Program, Rt. Rev. Msgr. Walter E. Croarkin, and also, from Evelyn and Bill Keane who very literally set the wheels in motion. The shortcomings of and responsibility for these pages, however, are mine alone.

JACQUES AMYOT, S.J.

*Philippine Studies Program*  
*Department of Anthropology*  
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## Foreword

*Preface to the Second Edition*

THIS MONOGRAPH on the Chinese in Manila is published in a series devoted to studies on the Philippines. Its importance for our understanding of certain aspects of Philippine society needs no stressing. I should like, rather, to dwell on the significance of the book in a wider sociological setting.

When we look at the literature on the Overseas Chinese (which in the last few years has been produced by sociologists and anthropologists in ever-increasing quantity), we should ask ourselves several key questions. In the first place, does it throw any light on the society from which the emigrants came? The provinces of Fukien and Kwangtung in southeastern China (the "homeland" of the great mass of the Overseas Chinese) occupy an important place in discussions on Chinese society and in our thinking about the role of unilineal descent groups in complex societies. We can no longer study these sociologically crucial provinces at first hand, and we must accordingly be very grateful to scholars like Father Amyot who, making good use of the data they have collected outside China, help us to grasp the nature of the "homeland" society. In his third chapter, Father Amyot provides us with many facts and interpretations which will need to be fitted into future discussions on local organization in Fukien and Kwangtung.

We should also ask of the literature whether it illuminates the process of emigration. Here again this book helps us, for it forces us to think of the reasons why particular local communities sent their members overseas and of what was implied for these communities by the movement. (I suspect that a fruitful line of inquiry for future workers in this field would be to examine the degree to which, once a community had adjusted itself economically to remittances from overseas, it became obliged for economic reasons to continue—and perhaps increase the tempo of—emigration. Here, as in a host of questions touching the Overseas Chinese, we need the guidance of our colleagues in history.)

As for the overseas settlements themselves, we should pose two chief questions. The first is whether we are further along the road to under-

Spanish, American, or Filipino authorities in this country, the Philippine Chinese community is the least numerous of Southeast Asia (Table 1). It shares with all of its sister communities in this part of the world a vitality and a cohesiveness that set it apart from the host indigenous population.

Table 1  
Population estimates for Southeast Asia, 1930.

Countries	Total population	Chinese population	Per cent Chinese
Burma	17,500,000	300,000	1.7
Cambodia and Laos	3,500,000	250,000	7.1
Federation of Malaya	5,235,000	2,000,000	38.4
Indonesia	72,000,000	2,100,000	2.9
North Borneo	320,000	70,000	21.9
Philippines	20,000,000	230,000	1.2
Sarawak and Brunel	550,000	162,000	29.4
Singapore	1,011,000	790,000	78.1
Thailand	18,000,000	3,000,000	16.7
Vietnam	24,000,000	750,000	3.1

Source: Skinner 1951:79.

In the face of myriad foreign influences, few groups have shown more persistence than the Chinese in maintaining the substance of the traditional way of life of the homeland. On the other hand, the Chinese have always had a remarkable ability to adjust themselves to local conditions, to give and take as circumstances demand, to fit into a situation the better to make a livelihood, and to succeed. In most instances, they have become part of the situation not by a process of identification but by synchronizing the tempo of their own way of life to that of the peoples they came to live amongst, in a truly symbiotic relationship. In the eyes of their critics, the Overseas Chinese of Southeast Asia are parasites working only for their own interests and living off the fat of a land which is not theirs. Frequently,

however—and this is the case in the Philippines in many instances—they fulfill a positive function in developing the economy of the land, thus bringing about the advancement of its people. Granted that it is not always love for the host country that induces the Chinese to work for its progress, they are shrewd enough to realize that, as a rule, what is good for the country is good for them.

## 1 Introduction

The Chinese have settled throughout all of the Philippines. In their economic function of retailers, of middlemen between agricultural producers and the big consumer centers, as processors of crops—rice, corn, sugar

FOR CENTURIES, the Overseas Chinese have constituted the most important and the most controversial minority in the Philippines. Despite various estimates, no one knows exactly how numerous they are. The Bureau of the Census and Statistics, basing its estimate on the records of the Bureau of Immigration for 1958, gives their number as 145,790. But this includes only *registered Chinese aliens*, and everybody admits that this falls short of reality. Skinner proposed the figure of 230,000 for 1950 (1951:79). Chinese sources generally tend to give a lower figure, consistent with their attitude of not wanting to focus attention on themselves to avoid resentment on the part of the Filipino population. Non-Chinese and, in particular, Philippine sources generally give a higher number.

The problem with most estimates is that what they are estimating is not always clear. It is evident that sociologically speaking, the Chinese population of the Philippines includes not only Chinese nationals but all those who are culturally Chinese, regardless of actual citizenship or mixed blood. A Chinese does not cease to be Chinese by the fact that for opportunistic reasons he assumes Filipino citizenship. Conversely, a mestizo born of Chinese father and Filipino mother, who has been raised as a Filipino and who has completely accepted Filipino values to the point of rejecting his Chinese origins, can hardly be called a member of the Chinese community. Suffice it to say that I am concerned here with those people in the Philippines who identify themselves with a group that is culturally Chinese and which is distinguishable by social behavior, speech, values, and to a lesser extent, dress, from the general indigenous population. The Chinese thus defined are certainly more numerous in the Philippines than the official figures indicate, but it seems reasonable to assume that those figures give a fair estimate of the relative density of the Chinese population in any given area.

The Chinese have long considered the Philippines a choice land for emigration, but because of constant restrictions on immigration on the part of

Spanish, American, or Filipino authorities in this country, the Philippine Chinese community is the least numerous of Southeast Asia (Table 1). It shares with all of its sister communities in this part of the world a vitality and a cohesiveness that set it apart from the host indigenous population.

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however—and this is the case in the Philippines in many instances—they fulfil a positive function in developing the economy of the land, thus bringing about the advancement of its people. Granted that it is not always love for the host country that induces the Chinese to work for its progress, they are shrewd enough to realize that, businesswise at least, what is good for the country is good for them.

The Chinese have settled throughout all of the Philippines. In their economic function of retailers, of middlemen between agricultural producers and the big consumer centers, as processor of crops—rice, corn, sugar, copra, and tobacco, in particular—there is no province and hardly any municipality of importance in which they are not represented. As can be seen from Table 2, their concentration is heaviest in the provinces of Rizal, Cebu, Davao, Zamboanga, Negros Occidental, Quezon, and Iloilo, in that order.<sup>1</sup>

Table 2  
*Chinese population in the Philippines by province, 1958.\**

Province	Chinese population	Province	Chinese population
Abra	127	Ilocos Norte	551
Agusan	692	Ilocos Sur	699
Albay	1,640	Iloilo	3,214
Antique	491	Isabela	1,493
Bataan	85	La Union	639
Batangas	738	Laguna	1,568
Bohol	656	Lanao	980
Bukidnon	90	Leyte	2,539
Bulacan	525	Manila	67,445
Cagayan	1,074	Marinduque	392
Camarines Norte	844	Masbate	432
Camarines Sur	695	Mindoro	740
Capiz	414	Misamis Occidental	980
Catanduanes	307	Misamis Oriental	1,615
Cavite	550	Mountain Province	1,358
Cebu	10,219	Negros Occidental	3,610
Cotabato	2,991	Negros Oriental	1,363
Davao	4,238	Nueva Ecija	1,051

Table 2 (continued)

Province	Chinese population	Province	Chinese population
Nueva Vizcaya	328	Samar	1,388
Palawan	247	Sorsogon	856
Pampanga	681	Sulu	1,422
Pangasinan	2,361	Surigao	928
Quezon	3,322	Tarlac	1,274
Rizal	10,873	Zambales	898
Romblon	204	Zamboanga	4,113
Total			145,790

\*These figures comprise only alien Chinese registered with the Bureau of Immigration. Except for Manila, cities are included in their respective provinces.

Source: Bureau of the Census and Statistics 1959.

Partly because they have been excluded from direct agricultural pursuit by legislation, but mainly because of voluntary choice ensuing from factors that will be discussed later, the Overseas Chinese in the Philippines are predominantly urban. Based on Bureau of Immigration figures, the Bureau of the Census and Statistics gives the number of Chinese living in cities as 105,378 as opposed to 40,412 living in the provinces.<sup>2</sup> The largest urban clusters of Chinese in order of size are Greater Manila, Cebu, Davao, and Iloilo (Figure 1). Table 3 lists 14 cities which have a Chinese population of 1,000 or more.

Table 3

Philippine cities with a Chinese population of 1,000 or more in order of size of population, 1958.

City	Chinese population	City	Chinese population
Manila	67,445	Naga	1,825
Cebu	7,942	Cotabato	1,577
Davao	3,346	Quezon City	1,460
Iloilo	3,277	Tacloban	1,210
Pasay	3,097	Dagupan	1,154
Bacolod	2,337	Jolo	1,144
Zamboanga	2,157	Baguio	1,071

Source: Bureau of the Census and Statistics 1959.

The Chinese community of the Philippines constitutes a community only in a very loose sense. Too many of its members live dispersed and isolated and have hardly more to tie them together than a shared awareness of common race and tradition. The pattern of organization of a Chinese community in the Philippines, which will be described for Manila in this study, emerges on a smaller scale in provincial cities with a sufficiently large Chinese population. This includes primarily a Chinese chamber of commerce, one or more trade organizations, a school, and an association to support the school. In larger centers it would also have branches of the Chinese Nationalist Party (Kuomintang) and of the Anti-Communist League, perhaps a chapter of the Hung Men Society or of some other fraternity. The larger clan associations would also be represented. The individual communities, say, of Cebu, Davao, or Iloilo are brought together on a higher level by the centralizing influence of Manila.

### Manila: A Social-Historical Perspective

Modern Manila is a far cry from the Bornean sultanate surrounded by a bamboo palisade that Legazpi conquered for the Spanish crown on June 3, 1571. Long restricted in area to the walled city built by the Spaniards at the mouth of the Pasig River, it has spread out along the shores of Manila Bay from Cavite to Bulacan and eastward almost halfway across Rizal. It is located on the world's greatest land-locked harbor, just south of the fertile central plains of Luzon, the rice bowl of the Philippines. The Pasig River branches out within the city in a network of more or less stagnant tributary *esteros*, or streams. It winds its tortuous way across Manila to drain an immense fresh water lake, Laguna de Bay, some ten miles from its mouth to the southeast (Figure 2).

Typical of the "primate cities" of Southeast Asia described by Ginsberg (1955), Manila has nearly ten times as many inhabitants as the second largest city of the islands, Cebu. Besides being the focal center of the country's urban population, it is the cultural, economic, and politico-administrative center of the whole country.

Both in atmosphere and in population, Manila is cosmopolitan. It has traditionally been the funnel for the importation of foreign goods and ideas. It is the link between the hinterlands and the outside world, and as such is characterized by a plurality—the foreign "Great City" and the indigenous village. In a predominantly village and folk society, there are only a limited number of services which cities perform. Manila possesses a virtual monopoly of these services, and thus, it dominates the Philippine scene because of its multiplicity of functions and attractions (Donoghue 1956:398).

Manila proper has 14 districts extending on both sides of the Pasig River which in some instances determines their boundaries: Tondo, Binondo, San Nicolas, Santa Cruz, Quiapo, San Miguel, Sampaloc, Pandacan, Santa Ana, Paco, Port Area, Intramuros, Ermita, and Malate. The continuous urban complex does not end with the boundaries of Manila proper, however, but includes two chartered cities: Quezon City on the east, and Pasay City on the south. It also includes eight other municipalities in Rizal: Parañaque and Las Piñas to the south of Pasay City; northward, Malabon and Navotas on Manila Bay, and Caloocan; to the east, Makati, Mandaluyong, and San Juan del Monte. This is the urban unit of Greater Manila, bounded on the west by Manila Bay and on the north, east, and south by rural districts, ricelands mainly, which are discontinuous with the city. The central core of this complex is roughly the perimeter extending around Plaza Santa Cruz and comprises the districts of San Nicolas, Binondo, Quiapo, San Miguel, Port Area, Intramuros, Paco, and the inner reaches of Santa Cruz, Sampaloc, Pandacan, and Ermita. The inner suburbs would include the districts of Malate, Santa Ana, and the outward extensions of Tondo, Santa Cruz, Sampaloc, Pandacan, and Ermita. The outer suburbs then include everything else: Pasay City and Quezon City, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Malabon, Navotas, Caloocan, San Juan del Monte, Mandaluyong, and Makati.

The Bureau of the Census estimated the 1958 population of Greater Manila at 1,744,860. Table 4 shows the distribution of this population by district, city, and municipality. This is nearly double what it was before World War II and is largely the result of in-migration due to postwar unrest in many rural areas. This rapidly increasing population has disrupted the Philippine traditional system of social security by which strong familial bonds cushion economic shock during times of stress. It has also produced squatter slums in publicly owned vacant and neglected lots (Donoghue 1956:400).

The largest and dominant cultural-linguistic group in Greater Manila is the Tagalog (60 per cent), followed by the Visayan, Pampango, and Ilocano in that order. Nearly 10 per cent of the population of this area is made up of alien nationals. The Chinese constitute the most important group: 67,444 for Manila proper, according to the Bureau of Census for 1958, but Americans and Spaniards also form appreciable numbers: 4,386 and 1,040, respectively.

Physically, the Filipino population of Manila is not too different from the Chinese. With few exceptions, it shares a common racial ancestry with other peoples in South and Southeast Asia, which stock is generally derived from "Southern Mongoloid" (Fox 1956:257). Philippine culture is oriental

Table 4  
*Estimated population of Metropolitan Manila  
by district, city, and municipality, 1958.*

	Population	
City of Manila		
Binondo	26,369	
Ermita	17,938	
Intramuros	1,186	
Malate	79,991	
Paco	53,164	
Pandacan	27,949	
Port Area	9,259	
Quiapo	32,973	
Sampaloc	281,034	
San Miguel	23,202	
San Nicolas	49,232	
Santa Ana	71,669	
Santa Cruz	168,158	
Tondo	340,666	
Total		1,182,790
Surrounding cities		
Pasay City	106,664	
Quezon City	129,804	
Total		236,468
Surrounding towns		
Caloocan	69,974	
Las Piñas	11,155	
Makati	49,690	
Malabon	55,845	
Mandaluyong	31,627	
Navotas	34,729	
Parañaque	34,723	
San Juan del Monte	37,859	
Total		325,602
TOTAL		1,744,860

Source: Bureau of the Census and Statistics 1958.

in conception, but compared to that of other oriental societies, it is distinctive because it is Christian and Western-oriented as a consequence of the Spanish and American Occupations.

The Filipino family includes the elementary family of mother, father, and children, and the kindred which includes the consanguineal relatives of both mother and father. This is the primary unit of cooperation extending to social, religious, and economic life. The family manifests a great solidarity and much emphasis is laid on loyalty to and support of the kin group. Social relationships are affected by this pattern which makes for solidarity both in giving and receiving offense with respect to all outsiders. The family, on the other hand, provides a secure social environment for its members. Friends are brought within this framework by *compadrazgo*, or "ritual co-parenthood" in baptism, confirmation, and marriage. It is in dealing with outsiders that the loss of "self-esteem" (the Philippine version of Chinese "face") most readily occurs, and many social mechanisms such as marked courtesy, euphemism, and circumlocution are brought into play to prevent this. Filipino women enjoy a high social position. There is a marked development of generational respect which involves deference, not only to the mother and father, but to all individuals older than oneself, regardless of sex. In many ways, family life centers on the child who creates a bond between the families of its parents. Great sacrifices are commonly made for his welfare and education. The place of residence of newly married couples tends to be patrilocal.

Catholicism, both official and folk, has important social functions in Philippine society. The role of ritual kinship has already been mentioned. Much of the social life evolves around and follows the cycle of religious feasts. The annual fiesta of the patron saint of the locality, in particular, reflects the blending of religious, social, economic, and even political activities. Besides local barrio chapels and churches, a certain number of larger centers play an important part in the religious activity of the population in Manila. Most frequented are the church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Baclaran, Pasay City, the parish church of Quiapo, and the shrine of the Madonna of Antipolo, Rizal. There are very few phases of the life of a Filipino that are not marked by some ritual or another. Although introduced to the Philippines from the West, Catholicism has become remarkably integrated and adapted to Filipino temperament. Many folk religious practices tend to be highly emotional in character and not always acceptable to official Catholicism.

The economy of the Philippines as a whole is extractive in character. In 1939, nearly 72 per cent of all the gainfully employed were engaged in

agriculture, fishing, mining and quarrying, forestry and hunting, and in the associated processing industries (Hester 1956:1281). The mechanical industries accounted for only 1 per cent. Manila dominates in the field of banking, insurance, imports and exports, and mercantilism. It is also the center of the domestic manufacture of consumer goods which amount to a large volume and occupies a prominent position in domestic trade. Vegetable margarines and cooking fats, coffee, chocolate, a wide range of confections, beer, and soft drinks flow outward from Manila to wholesale distributors throughout the islands. Dairy products have shown a phenomenal increase in recent years. Most cigars and cigarettes for domestic consumption are manufactured in Manila. Clothing items such as rubber and leather shoes, cotton yardage, finished garments of cotton and rayon, fabricated articles of metal such as nails, aluminum utensils, and hardware products are growing in production. Electronic equipment, radios mainly, is assembled and some parts are manufactured locally, while heavy industry—foundries and the like—is beginning to appear. American and European cars are assembled in Manila plants. A variety of paints and varnishes, matches, and chemical products are also represented. A large part of the soaps, cleansers, and cosmetics is of domestic manufacture, produced in and around Manila. While the extent of the participation of the Chinese in these enterprises has been exaggerated, it is nevertheless true to say that they have gone into most of them with remarkable success. The rest of this story will have much to say to explain it.

### *The Manila Chinese in History*

The Chinese have been associated with the history of Manila and the Philippines for a long time as traders, as residents, and even as builders.<sup>3</sup> When Legazpi landed in Manila in 1571, he found there a colony of about 150 Chinese residents. The preceding year, Martin de Goiti had seen four Chinese trade establishments. Although Chinese merchants and travelers came to these shores many years prior to that—at least since the tenth century A.D. during the T'ang period according to archeological evidence (Fox 1959:25)—the colony of 1571 was the beginning of the Chinese community in Manila as we know it. Its population grew rapidly. The Chinese are said to have numbered 10,000 in 1588, increasing to 24,000 in 1596 and to 30,000 in 1603 (Liao 1958).

Very early in the Spanish regime, the pattern of residence of the Chinese was determined by a policy of segregation dictated by an attitude of fear and suspicion following the military expedition of Limahong against the Spanish colony in Manila in 1574. Alarmed by the rapidly increasing number

of Chinese immigrants in the Manila area, the Spanish governor Gonzalo Ronquillo ordered all *sangleyes*, as they were called by the Spaniards, to establish their quarters in an area which became known as the Parián, close to the Walled City.<sup>4</sup> At that time, many were living in the general area of present-day Divisoria market in Tondo. The original Parián was established in 1582 just outside the city walls, by the gate later to be called the Parián Gate. The purpose was to keep the Chinese under surveillance, well within the range of the guns of the fortress, and also, to facilitate the collection of taxes from the Chinese.

The Parián had a troubled history. It burned to the ground no less than seven times. It was moved five times to one of three sites. The first site more or less occupied the northern tip of the present district of Ermita along the banks of the Pasig. The second site was across the river, opposite the first, in the old San Gabriel district, part of which faced Fort Santiago. When the proximity of the Parián was thought to endanger the Walled City, it was moved to a third site, away from the river, well into Binondo, close to the contemporary Divisoria market (Liu 1958: 12-16). In 1860, the Spanish authorities finally abolished it as a distinct settlement. The buildings of the Parián are said to have been demolished at this time. Whatever happened and whatever this implies, the dispersion of the residences and the shops of the Chinese was only relative, for the present "Chinatown" pattern of residence branching out from Ongpin Street in the heart of Manila extends back well into the nineteenth century.

Sino-Spanish relations in the Philippines were anything but smooth during the three centuries of Spanish administration. They were characterized by:

... sullen suspicion and mutual hostility . . . , exploding periodically into bloody massacres in which the wooden buildings of the Parián were committed to flames and the Chinese inhabitants slaughtered wholesale. Such anti-Chinese riots occurred in 1603, 1639, 1662, and 1782. In spite of the deep-rooted racial antagonisms, neither the Spaniards nor the Chinese could get along without the other. After the smoke and fire of each riot had faded away the meaning of this fundamental interdependence asserted itself. These Sino-Spanish classes sprang from the Spaniards' fear that the much larger Chinese colony was planning a revolt. The fear in fact was groundless, but a wave of panic and insecurity periodically seized Spanish officialdom. The Chinese merchants realized that their own prosperity depended upon a continuance of the Spanish regime—only a Spanish governor in Manila could secure that annual supply of Mexican silver which was the life-blood of Sino-Philippine trade (Phelan 1959:11-12).

One can get a fair idea of the composition of the Chinese population of Manila in the second half of the nineteenth century from the testimony presented to the Philippine Commission appointed by U.S. President McKinley in 1899 to investigate affairs in the Philippines. According to

Carlos Palanca, one of the main informants on Chinese affairs, there were 40,000 Chinese in the Philippines at the end of the Spanish regime in 1898.<sup>5</sup> Of the number, from 22,000 to 23,000 were living in Manila. The majority originated from Fukien Province in the region of Amoy. Palanca estimated the Cantonese in the Philippines to number about 3,000.

During Spanish times (Palanca is obviously referring to the period after 1850), the Chinese were free to come and go, provided, of course, that they paid the landing tax. There was in fact a great movement back and forth between China and the Philippines. Every year, 10,000 or 12,000 Chinese would come to Manila while 7,000 or 8,000 would go back to China, many of the latter returning after four or five months. Only a few would bring their wives and children to the Philippines—very few evidently, for there were only 2,000 Chinese women in Manila. The Chinese would marry Filipino women and were said to make good husbands. Between 100 and 200 Chinese children were born in the Philippines every year, while deaths numbered about 300. The mestizo offspring of Chinese by Filipino women were looked down upon by Chinese because the mestizos, it is said, had the reputation of being scheming and untrustworthy (Report of the Philippine Commission to the President 1900 II:219-50; hereafter cited as *Report*).

According to Palanca's testimony, the Chinese immigrants of this period were generally uneducated. The well-educated did not come but only those who had very little to begin with. For taxation purposes, the Spaniards classified the occupations of the Chinese under four categories: (1) wholesale merchants; (2) retail merchants, silk merchants, shoemakers, druggists, indigo manufacturers, soapmakers, barbers, blacksmiths, carpenters, and dealers in notions; (3) water carriers, boatmen, cooks, and dealers in firewood; and (4) workmen and servants (Report 1900 I:156). In 1886 in Manila, there were 15 tax contributors of the first category, 410 of the second, 1,535 of the third, and 871 of the fourth (Report 1900 II:443). This reflects the true proportion of the occupational groups only insofar as there was no extensive tax evasion, but we have no guarantee of that. One thing is certain, though: there was a coolie labor force considerable enough to cause resentment on the part of Filipinos who objected to competition in the field of unskilled labor (Report 1900 I:154). In his testimony to the Philippine Commission, A. R. M. Ongcakwe, a Manila Chinese merchant, estimated that there were 8,000 to 9,000 coolies in Manila in 1899 (Report 1900 II:218). It appears also that the Chinese fairly dominated both the wholesale and the retail business at the time.

During the Spanish regime, the colonial government had the policy of

controlling the Chinese through the Chinese themselves. At first they were very much left to their own devices and they governed themselves through a council which seems to have had a great deal of authority. As the number of Chinese increased and because the Spanish authorities feared trouble should they be granted too much political autonomy, this authority was abolished and a new system inaugurated to deal with the Chinese. A representative was selected by the Spanish governor from the Chinese population to act as their spokesman and leader. To qualify, he had to be a Catholic, and he was responsible in his functions directly to the governor himself. This person became known as the *capitán* and the system organized around him was in use throughout Spanish times, abolished by the Americans only at the beginning of this century.

The function of the *capitán* was twofold (Chinese General Hospital Souvenir Program 1956:50): he was an intermediary between the Spanish authorities and his countrymen, acting as a kind of consul in the absence of a formal Chinese diplomatic representative, and he was a leader for his own community. Orders of the governor were transmitted through him to the Chinese community. Conversely, all petitions of the people to the governor had to be presented by the *capitán* to be acceptable. He was also expected to defend his community in the eyes of the authorities and clear up misunderstandings when they arose. He was called upon to handle immigration and customs as far as the Chinese were concerned. He collected the head tax which the Spaniards exacted of the Chinese, and all of those either entering or leaving the Philippines had to register with him (Liu 1958:30-32).

The *capitán* functioned somewhat as an elder. Originally he was granted some authority and coercive powers over the Chinese, but by 1957, all official authority was withdrawn from Chinese leaders (Liu 1955b:20). A Spanish *alcalde mayor* is mentioned in connection with the *Parián* at this time (Liao 1958). It would seem that the *capitán* was not a mere figurehead or a Spanish puppet in the eyes of the Chinese. He had enough authority on his own to command respect. It is interesting to note that even at this early date, few cases involving Chinese were brought before Spanish courts of justice. Then as now, the preferred solution was to settle their difficulties among themselves with the help of a mediator respected by all. The *capitán* exercised such a function and his authority was said to be considerable (Ch'en 1940). Grievances, no matter how unimportant, could be presented to him directly without any formality or fee. When the cause of the complaint was heard, the litigating parties were confronted. Most of the time, an acceptable solution was agreed upon without there being any necessity to institute further proceedings. On the whole, there seemed to be

little dissatisfaction with the *capitán* himself. He supplied the leadership in time of emergency. Should a fire break out in the *Parián*, he would organize the fire fighting to supplement the efforts of the inefficient fire brigade organized by the Spaniards (Liu 1958:33-34).

There is no record of the names of the *capitanes* during the Spanish regime, except those who held office toward the end of the regime. In the late nineteenth century, the *capitán* was known to have 12 assistants, aldermen of sorts, known as *She Li Lao Yeh* (社里老爺) or district elders, who were responsible each for his own district. This is perhaps the local version of the *Pao Chang* (保長) of the Chinese homeland.<sup>6</sup> All of these officials wore distinctive insignia. At least during the last half of the nineteenth century, the Spaniards allowed the Chinese to elect their own officials. When formal diplomatic relations were established between China and the Philippines in 1899 at the request of the Chinese community which had been petitioning since 1880, the Ch'ing consul gradually assumed the functions of the *capitán*.

The pattern of leadership and organization of the Chinese community, even at that late date, remains somewhat obscure. For a long time, Spanish controls made it very difficult for the Chinese openly to organize and maintain any kind of an association. The earliest associations were clan and regional associations (Fu: 1956:44). Except for the Cantonese Association (*Kuang Tung Hui Kuan* 會館廣東) which dates back about 100 years, we know practically nothing about how they started, what their form of organization was, or what their activities were. Their present form will be dealt with in detail in Chapter 7. A number of secret, religious, and quasi-religious organizations were also functioning very early. Two societies, the *Lang Chun Hui* (郎君會), or the Gentlemen's Society, and the *Ch'ang Ho She* (長和社), or the Society of Lasting Harmony, date back to the first quarter of the nineteenth century. They appear to be mutual-aid societies. Triadic societies also appeared in the Philippines at a time when they became widespread throughout Southeast Asia in Overseas Chinese communities. Recorded occupational associations appear at a much later date. The first to be formed in Manila were the lumber merchants' association in 1888 and the textile merchants' association in 1894. The first was called the *Ch'ung Ning Hui* (崇寧會). This name was later changed to *Kuan Fu Tse Hui* (關夫子會), conforming more to the custom of Chinese guilds being named after their patron protector, in this case, Kuan Fu Tse (關夫子) or Kuan Kung (關公), the god of war. It was only during the American era that the trade association movement characteristic of Overseas Chinese communities really began to proliferate in the Philippines (Ch'en 1940).

The first Chinese community-wide organization was what has since been called the *Hua Ch'iao Shan Ch'ui Kung Suo* (華僑善舉公所), "Chinese Community," by its English name, the predecessor of the Chinese chamber of commerce and of the Chinese schools association. It was started in 1870 and was known as the *Gremio de Chinos* or Chinese Guild (Chinese General Hospital Souvenir Program 1956:51). The relationship of this organization with the original *Gremio de Chinos de Binondo* was not clear. The latter consisted of a privileged group of Chinese Christians which had its origin in a grant of land with attached rights made in the 1590s. The nineteenth-century organization was originally under the direction of the capitán but the attribution of responsibilities was rather vague. Its purpose was to protect the interests of the Chinese merchants and to make Chinese schooling available to the younger generation. Intimately connected with this organization was the name of Ch'en Ch'ien-shan (陳謙善[最良]) who was known to the Spaniards as Don Carlos Palanca and who had been awarded the Grand Cross of Isabel I.<sup>7</sup> He filled the office of capitán in the Chinese community for two terms and was the last to hold that post. He consolidated the Chinese hospital, cemetery, and the original Anglo-Chinese school. He headed a delegation of four Chinese leaders representing 290 merchants in the Philippines (Wickberg 1959) to Chang Yin-huan in Hong Kong to present a petition to open a Chinese consulate in the Philippines. Chang, in early 1886, was on his way to assume his post as Chinese ambassador to Spain.

When the post of capitán was abolished with the American Occupation of the Philippines in 1898, the Chinese hospital and cemetery were placed under the jurisdiction of the Chinese acting consul who, incidentally, was none other than Don Carlos himself. The Chinese community was formally organized in 1900 to administer these institutions and to assume the functions of the *gremio* more effectively. A board of directors was chosen consisting first of 24 members, then of 15 members in 1906. Consistent with the composition of the Philippine Chinese community, 12 of the directors were Fukienese and three were Cantonese. The Fukienese were chosen from contributing merchants while the Cantonese were delegated directly by the Cantonese Association (Chinese General Hospital Souvenir Program 1956: 52-53).

In view of the growing complexity of Chinese society in the Philippines, a separate organization was created to protect the commercial interest of the Chinese merchants in 1904. This was known as the Chinese Commercial Council (小呂宋中華商務局). The council eventually became the Manila Chinese Chamber of Commerce which gradually eclipsed the Chinese com-

munity from the point of view of leadership of the Chinese population. This hegemony is reflected in the English title of the present chamber, the Philippine Chinese General Chamber of Commerce (Liu 1955:64). Since 1954, however, and not without protest from the Manila Chinese chamber of commerce, the role of spokesman for the Chinese community in the Philippines has passed to a new organization, the Federation of Chinese Chambers of Commerce in the Philippines. The Philippine Chinese school association grew out of the Anglo-Chinese School which for a time operated out of the quarters of the Chinese community on Ongpin Street in Manila. It became an independent organization in 1914. The association known as the Chinese Community still subsists but it is purely ministerial in nature. It is listed in the 1955 Philippine Chinese Commercial Directory as The Chinese Community, Proprietors of the Chinese General Hospital and the Chinese Cemetery.

Due to rigid immigration laws, the Chinese population of the Philippines increased very slowly during the first two decades of American administration. From 41,035 in 1903, Chinese population went up to 43,802 in 1918 to 117,487 in 1939 (Weightman 1952:23). As early as 1899, the American "Exclusion Act" of 1894 regulating the immigration of Chinese in the United States had been applied to the Philippines. Designed to bar shiploads of Chinese coolies who would displace Filipino workers, the act nevertheless permitted the entry of students, teachers, clergymen, traders, and dependents of resident Chinese. Many, including the undesirable, presumably entered the country under this last category, but by and large, this American policy encouraged the emergence in the Philippines of an Overseas Chinese community with higher literacy and cultural attainments than those found in most Southeast Asian countries. Coolie labor virtually disappeared. Controls and limitations on Chinese immigration were made increasingly stringent after Philippine independence in 1946 to the point where it was practically at a standstill 15 years later.

The years of American administration were years of great economic opportunity and success for the Philippine Chinese. For people who had schooled themselves to survive under so many forms of oppression, American enforcement of rule by law and the creation of a relatively honest and efficient administration which afforded equal rights to do business and to own property were a real boon which the Chinese rapidly capitalized on. Although the postwar era brought its crop of problems, the pace was set.

The present community has no formal overall political organization. Theoretically, leadership comes from the Nationalist Chinese embassy.<sup>8</sup> The Chinese ambassador is considered to be an important person in this com-

munity, but his influence with the Philippine government is limited as far as alleviating the difficulties of his compatriots is concerned. And though many do not particularly favor the Communist regime in Mainland China, they are reluctant to commit themselves firmly to Formosa, preferring instead the prudent wait-and-see attitude. As a result, the ambassador is listened to politely but gets very little action. The Chinese would rather rely on their own locally organized associations to coordinate their activities and protect their interests. In this society of merchants and traders, the many chambers of commerce and trade organizations have a huge influence that goes beyond purely economic concerns. At present, the Federation of Chinese Chambers of Commerce in the Philippines coordinates the activities of these individual groups and provides most of the overall leadership.

On a lower level of organization but much closer to the individual are the clan and regional associations which group people for mutual assistance and social interaction according to regional origin in China and/or clan affiliation by surname. Parallel to the clan associations in purpose, but reputedly less respectable, are the sworn brotherhoods: the Hung Men Society and the so-called musical associations. These "tongs," as they are called, are fewer in number and have smaller overall membership than the clan associations, but they tend to be very active.

Most of the community life of the Manila Chinese is organized around all of these associations. Their multiplicity indicates that the pattern of community life is not a uniform web of interaction, spreading evenly over the length and breadth of this community. It can better be described, I think, in terms of ingroups: a juxtaposition of many webs of interaction, many groups jealous of their individuality and united from the outside by the common concern of preserving their Chinese identity in this foreign land and withstanding the pressures of the dominant society.

## 2

*Research Among the Chinese*

forms do they take? The second broad category related to the Philippine environment: What elements in the new environment were similar to and what elements different from the home communities? What problems do immigrants face in adjusting to this new society and in making a livelihood in the new environment? The third category was the culture of the Manila Chinese community itself as an emergent society, the culture of which was derived from the mainland heritage of its population but transformed, presumably, under the influence of new contacts and a new situation. What in particular had become of the traditional kin-oriented institutions—the lineage organization, the "circle of mourning relatives," the ex-

FEW PEOPLES are more sensitive about their privacy than the Chinese. The walls of their compounds and the heavily padlocked doors of their institutions are not only intended as protection against bandits. They also assure the privacy of a sanctum against outsiders. To the Chinese, any non-Chinese is a barbarian to a certain extent. Unless that barbarian can make himself personally acceptable, he will always remain on the outside, not knowing what really goes on in the family or group. Thus the Western fieldworker who sets out to investigate Chinese society anywhere is faced with the tremendous practical problem of "getting in." Friendships of convenience can be established fairly easily but one is not really "in" and one cannot really get at the undisguised facts until one gets a spontaneous invitation to a Chinese home or club.

In the Philippines, this difficulty is compounded by the pressures that are brought to bear on the Chinese by the host people. To a Chinese, all Filipinos are out to take advantage of him. Any nonauthorized foreigner who becomes curious about him is suspected of being a spy of some sort for Filipino officialdom which is considered to be ever seeking new ways of exploiting the Chinese. As a result of this attitude, exact statistics on Chinese personnel, institutions, enterprise, income, and the like are extremely unreliable. Another consequence is that one is not free to organize interviews as one pleases; one is often reduced to being very happy to get whatever one can. Random sampling is a near impossibility.<sup>9</sup>

Although I could not speak Hokkien (Fukienese), the native dialect of the majority of the Chinese in the Philippines, I was relieved to discover that I could operate adequately in Mandarin or in English. What could not be handled in either languages could be taken care of by a competent interpreter whom I later acquired. The obvious advantage of being able to communicate with the population in a dialect more familiar to it had to be weighed against the loss of time for fieldwork that my study of Hokkien would necessitate. Because my time was limited, I decided against it.