

THE POPULATION HISTORY OF THE CHINESE IN THE PHILIPPINES: AN EVALUATIVE HISTORIOGRAPHY

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ABSTRACT

This essay evaluates recent scholarship on the history of the Chinese in the Philippines through a discussion of our current knowledge of Chinese population and migration data during the colonial period. It identifies new sources and argues for the importance of certain frameworks in the study of Chinese population history in the Philippines. It recommends the use of a stronger transnational framework with a sensitivity to anthropological concerns, such as the formation of a Chinese family identity, and finding the translocal within the transnational community.

KEYWORDS: *Chinese, Sources, Transnational, Family, Translocal*

There are four historiographical trends of the past decade that are to a great extent missing in the study of the Chinese in the Philippines. The first and second trends are deeply interrelated. They are 1) the use of a stronger transnational frame and 2) the application of anthropological fieldwork and ideas in studying the history of migrant communities. The last two are related to the task of moving national histories away from dominant discourses of the center and the exclusion of minority groups. They are 3) the movement away from a Manilacentric history and 4) the inclusion of minority groups in general studies of Philippine demographic history. Through a critical evaluation of recent work on the Chinese in the Philippines and our current data regarding their population and migration during the colonial period, this essay seeks to demonstrate why future research should more emphatically focus its analytical lenses through the above trends.

SPANISH PERIOD (16th-19th CENTURIES)

Spanish Sources

Our knowledge of Philippine demographic history during the Spanish period comes mainly from ecclesiastical sources and various kinds of civil records because no house-to-house census was ever conducted until 1903 under the American colonial government (Cullinane, 1998). The use of these sources is no longer unfamiliar to the demographic historian and mining these sources has already produced some interesting data about Chinese and Chinese mestizo populations while promising that future (much-needed) research will unearth even more.¹ There are, however, other sources, less familiar and not Philippine-based, that we can fruitfully mine. The following discussion introduces new research that utilizes these sources and highlights the transnational nature of their findings.

There is much information about Chinese migration to the Philippines that is waiting for the researcher in the archives of Mexico and Spain. Scholarship tends to forget that the Chinese migration network to the Philippines also extends to Latin America where the first Chinese arrived onboard the galleons that traversed the route between Manila and Acapulco. Comparatively, the lack of knowledge about the Chinese in the Philippines before 1850 is mirrored by the deficit of research on Chinese migration to Latin America before the first Opium War (1839-1842). The opportunity to

fill the lacunae in both is demonstrated in the research of E.R. Slack (2009), whose use of sources from the Archivo General de Indias (AGI) in Seville, Spain and the Archivo General de la Nación (AGN) in Mexico City, Mexico is now able to give us more 'tantalizing clarity' about the Chinese passengers onboard the Spanish galleons.²

Using sources from AGN which divulge names, ages, marital status, occupations and ethnicity, Slack (2009) is able to identify the demographics of passengers on these galleons. In the example he provides, the galleon *Santissima Trinidad* in 1760 carried a crew of 370 men of which 84 percent or 310 men (including 27 *chino* artillerymen, 109 *chino* sailors, 174 *chino* cabin boys) came from the Philippines and 68 percent or 250 men specifically from Cavite. There is also information about the occupations in New Spain that the Chinese from Manila entered upon arrival. Laborers and craftsmen who helped in public works constituted the majority followed by slaves and servants. Barbers and vendors were other common professions involving Chinese immigrants. A fascinating trail of material culture also found its way into New Spain including religious artifacts, textiles and porcelain, but what is more interesting to the demographer and the social historian is the amount of matrimonial records that reveal Chinese and Chinese mestizos from Manila acting as witnesses to a wide variety of residents in Mexico, including Spanish and Portuguese elites.

Initial findings of Slack (2009) remain largely on the level of data: that there were certain kinds of Chinese that moved across the Pacific and participated in aspects of colonial life in the Spanish New World. One looks forward to reading more substantial stories about these journeys in future research from Slack and others who would follow his trail. But as of the moment, his data is already forcing us to extend the migration network to Latin America. We ought to also push the study of this network back to its origins in China.

Chinese Sources

Despite sinology's long history and the number of historians trained to read documents written in classical Chinese, sources regarding migration to the Philippines are relatively underused. The Ming and Qing governments did not keep very detailed records of their interactions with foreign places like the Philippines and do not contain information that would allow us to

reconstruct the demographic and social histories of the migrants.³ Thus, the main sources for studying Philippine migration during the Ming-Qing (16th to 19th century) are genealogies, epigraphical materials, and anthropological fieldwork (particularly the collection of oral histories).

Genealogies were kept and maintained by various Chinese lineages from the 11th century down to the present and are primary sources in Chinese historical demography.⁴ For the Chinese in the Philippines during the Spanish period, it is the genealogies from the sending communities in Fujian that are of greatest interest. Scholars like Michael Szonyi (2002) have demonstrated how the use of genealogies combined with methods of anthropology, especially oral history, can help us reconstruct village life in Fujian's capital of Fuzhou in late imperial China. Similar methods are being used by the historian Lucille Chia (2005) better known for her work on Ming publishing, to study the impact on Fujian of trade and migration to the Philippines. In a paper presented, she focuses on three occupations (butcher, baker and carpenter) that were common among Chinese migrants to the Philippines using data from genealogies and other late imperial Chinese sources (Chia, 2005). Her work also explores the role of the Chinese in the early development of publishing and printing in the Spanish Philippines.⁵ Genealogies for Fujian can be accessed through the microfilm collection in the Genealogical Society of Utah Family History Library and through patient research in Fujian's many libraries and archives while many more genealogies are kept by lineages in their ancestral halls.⁶ Access to lineage genealogies can only be accomplished through patient fieldwork.⁷

Another source for Chinese migration are epigraphical materials from the sending communities. Many of these materials are found in the temples of the various villages and lineages from where the migrants originate. New research is showing that aside from the traditional business, same-surname and same-place associations (whose documents are also underutilized), the link between the sending community and the migrants was also maintained through the temple networks (especially mother temples in China and daughter temples in the Philippines) and remittances to China were often channeled through temple donations. Lists of donors from the Philippines and information about these donors are often inscribed on these materials and may be used for the purposes of reconstructing demographic and

migration history. Future researchers will be thankful for the work of Kenneth Dean and Zheng Zhenman who have collected most, if not all, of these epigraphical materials into book form.⁸ It should also be pointed out that the sources that Dean and Zhenman (2002-2003) interrogate may also be used for periods later than the Spanish period.

Similar to the discussion of the seminal work on Spanish sources of Slack (2009), the research of these sinologists demands the application of a stronger transnational frame to the history of the Chinese migration to and from Spanish Philippines. Of the works cited above, the one of Chia (2005) is the most clearly transnational. One hopes that this historian of late imperial China can produce a book-length work on the impact of migration to the Philippines on Ming and Qing Fujian. Dean and Zhenman (2002-2003), specialists in the history of kinship, place, society and religion in Fujian are also moving their research into the transnational arena by investigating the history of Chinese temples in Southeast Asia and their links to China.⁹ One also looks forward to the books that will be the product of their fieldwork. Those interested in exploring these fields would need to use the anthropological fieldwork methods, ability to read classical Chinese and transnational sensitivity of these sinologists.

The Emerging Transnational Picture

If we take the limited information from these new studies, we are already faced with a more complicated picture of the migration network to the Philippines in Spanish times. It seems that the sending communities in Fujian were taking advantage of the needs of Spanish Manila through their sending of Chinese equipped with particular occupational specialties and their preparation of future migrants within their lineages. Though most stayed on in the Philippines, returning on occasion and transforming their home communities with the money they had earned and their experiences in Spain's colony, others learned new skills and made their way to New Spain. This is a promising beginning to the task of placing Chinese migration within a truly transnational framework.¹⁰ In the next section, it will also be apparent that the study of the Chinese under the American regime requires a similar framework in order for us to better understand the data available for this period.

LATE SPANISH AND AMERICAN PERIOD (1850-1946)

While much of our knowledge about the Chinese population and migration before 1850 is waiting to be uncovered, the most studied period is the century of 1850-1949 when the first tangible data or estimates of the Chinese population and the numbers that entered and departed the Philippines becomes available. This availability of data presents a different set of challenges to the historian.

Wickberg's half-century

Much of our knowledge of the Chinese in the Philippines from 1850 to 1898 we owe to the late Edgar Wickberg whose classic *The Chinese in Philippine Life* remains the standard text for this period.¹¹ The work of Wickberg (2000) helps us understand the figures presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Net Increase of Chinese Migration to the Philippines from 1876-1886

Register Year	Immigrants	Emigrants	Years	Immigration % Increase	Emigration % Increase
1876	6,410	4,344			
1877	7,582	4,120	1876-1877	18.28	-5.16
1878	11,907	4,338	1877-1878	57.04	5.29
1879	10,352	2,778	1878-1879	-13.06	-35.96
1880	8,994	3,582	1879-1880	-13.12	28.94
1881	9,411	5,203	1880-1881	4.64	45.25
1882	9,903	4,611	1881-1882	5.23	-11.38
1883	16,809	5,188	1882-1883	69.74	12.51
1884	14,881	4,466	1883-1884	-11.47	-13.92
1885	11,893	4,771	1884-1885	-20.08	6.83
1886	5,513	1,899	1885-1886	-53.65	-60.20

Though the source of these figures is indicated as the United States Report of the Philippine Commission in 1900, their true origins are the few Spanish non-house-to-house censuses from 1877 onwards (Cullinane, 1998). Wickberg

(2000) contends that the figures are probably undervalued but points to the relative increase in the number of Chinese immigrants to the Philippines in the ten-year period of 1876-1886. This increase is remarkable because the Spanish colonial government's general tendency before 1850 was towards limiting Chinese immigration. The increase in migration was brought about in part by Spain's policy after 1850 of developing the Philippines economically and their belief that the Chinese would play a significant role in its success but also by the improvement of transportation between China and the Philippines. This resulted in a population of about 30,000 in 1876 doubling to somewhere between 60,000 to 90,000 in 1886. This, in combination with more liberal Spanish policies concerning Chinese movement outside of Manila, led to Chinese spilling over into practically every other province.¹² This is consistent with the information we have about Chinese population in the provinces during the American period (See Table 4). While Wickberg (2000) and a few scholars of a new generation, namely Andrew Wilson (2004) and Richard Chu (2004), have contributed much to our understanding of the changes in society that occurred as a result of these population and migration changes, there is still a huge lacunae about the Chinese impact in the other provinces (Wilson, 2010). Shifting research agenda towards the Chinese outside Manila should be the priority for scholars working on the late Spanish period. The increased movement out of China also begs the question about the impact of this outmigration on Fujian. This increase is continued into the American period despite the application of laws limiting Chinese migration.

United States Exclusion Law and Chinese Merchants

The Exclusion Act of 1902 was more or less an exact implementation of the immigration policies vis-à-vis Chinese migrating to the United States. As I have shown elsewhere, there were significant consequences to the application of similar laws to places where there were clear differences in the experience of Chinese immigration.¹³ The exclusion laws of the United States were originally meant to check the number of Chinese laborers, the source of conflict in American society, and allow non-laborers like merchants, teachers, professionals, tourists to enter more freely. However, the point of tension in Philippine society was the Chinese merchant who was seen as depriving Filipinos of opportunities to profit from the retail sector of the economy. Table 2 shows that the law did not prevent a steady though small number of Chinese from entering the colony.

Table 2. Immigration and Emigration in the Philippines (1907-1939)

Year Ending	Total		Chinese		% Distribution of Chinese	
	Immigrants	Emigrants	Immigrants	Emigrants	Immigrants	Emigrants
Total	234,290	46,879	159,092	9,312	67.90	19.86
30-Jun						
1907	2,280	nd	1,137	nd	49.87	na
1908	1,706	nd	543	nd	31.83	na
1909	2,059	nd	785	nd	38.13	na
1910	2,308	1,010	937	570	40.60	56.44
1911	2,946	896	1,172	276	39.78	30.80
1912	2,536	729	940	43	37.07	5.90
1913	4,408	768	1,864	44	42.29	5.73
31-Dec						
1914	4,032	1,364	2,383	257	59.10	18.84
1915	4,067	916	2,823	42	69.41	4.59
1916	4,641	974	2,703	122	58.24	12.53
1917	6,939	762	3,094	37	44.59	4.86
1918	8,866	885	4,999	10	56.38	1.13
1919	9,777	1,454	7,931	112	81.12	7.70
1920	10,860	1,361	9,461	89	87.12	6.54
1921	8,581	1,663	7,408	623	86.33	37.46
1922	6,042	1,251	5,369	8	88.86	0.64
1923	7,668	822	6,694	41	87.30	4.99
1924	6,609	1,008	5,265	50	79.66	4.96
1925	8,593	857	5,989	186	69.70	21.70
1926	14,041	969	10,467	87	74.55	8.98
1927	13,915	874	9,828	30	70.63	3.43
1928	11,883	1,281	8,249	57	69.42	4.45
1929	10,879	1,687	6,534	121	60.06	7.17
1930	12,323	1,347	8,143	102	66.08	7.57
1931	7,036	1,258	5,325	207	75.68	16.45
1932	7,427	1,565	6,079	193	81.85	12.33
1933	7,155	2,037	5,641	131	78.84	6.43
1934	7,381	2,166	5,533	129	74.96	5.96
1935	6,046	2,161	4,127	169	68.26	7.82
1936	8,445	1,862	5,485	172	64.95	9.24
1937	10,620	3,955	5,170	1,828	48.68	46.22
1938	9,551	2,839	6,064	851	63.49	29.98
1939	2,670	6,158	750	2,725	28.09	44.69

Source: Census of the Philippines: 1939, vol. 2 (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1941)

nd - no data na - not applicable

The figures show steady growth until 1921 when the slight decline could possibly be attributed to the passing of the Bookkeeping Act, which inconvenienced Chinese businesses that did not keep their accounts in English, Spanish or a Philippine language. The numbers increase again until they fall slightly in the 1930s perhaps due to manifestation of discontent over Chinese control of retail trade through riots and the passing of Filipinization bills that helped Filipinos compete with Chinese in the retail trade. The numbers drop significantly in 1939 where the last few years of 1937-1939 reflect an increase in outmigration by the Chinese. The drop in immigration in 1939 can be explained by the outbreak of World War II in the Philippines and the increase in emigration from the Philippines in 1937 coincides with the Japanese invasion of China in the same year and is most likely due to Chinese returning to China to participate in the war against Japan.¹⁴ We know very little about the reasons for emigration before 1937. The background to these figures, the story of the individual migrants (reasons for coming and leaving) and the impact to their communities in Fujian remains a future point of inquiry. We do know what many of these migrants did when they settled in the Philippines.

Those who stayed were more than likely to enter jobs in the commercial sector and an important reason for this choice was not necessarily cultural, or the belief that Chinese naturally prefer to do business, but rather it was a product of the U.S. colonial government's controversial application of its exclusion laws to the Philippines. As an indiscriminate application of laws inappropriate to the Philippine context, the Exclusion Act of 1902 critically affected the demographics and dynamics of Chinese society in the Philippines and resulted in the demographic situation which we see in Table 3a, 3b and 3c.¹⁵

Table 3a. Population Distribution of Chinese under Groups of Occupation in 1902

1902 Census Occupation Group	Total in Philippines	Number	
		Chinese	%Distribution
Total	6,987,686	42,097	0.60
Trade and Transportation	226,555	23,364	10.31
Domestic and Personal Service	571,955	9,803	1.71
Manufacturing and Mechanical Pursuits	959,670	6,710	0.70
Professional Service	25,637	87	0.34
Agricultural Pursuits	1,254,063	602	0.05
Not gainful or known	3,949,806	1,531	0.04

Source: Census of the Philippine Islands, vol. 2 (Washington: Bureau of the Census, 1905)

Table 3b. Population Distribution of Chinese under Groups of Occupation in 1918

1918 Census Population, aged 10 years and over Occupation Group	Total in Philippines	Number	
		Chinese	%Distribution
Total	6,441,150	48,337	0.75
Commerce and Transportation	426,547	28,501	6.68
Unknown Occupation	8,295	198	2.39
Manufacturing and Mechanical Works	865,698	4,684	0.54
Domestic and Personal Services	1,853,804	8,363	0.45
Professional Services	685,507	1,996	0.29
Agricultural Labors	2,601,299	4,595	0.18

Table 3c. Population Distribution of Chinese under Groups of Occupation and by Sex in 1939

1939 Census Chinese Citizens in the Philippines, aged 10 years and over			
Occupation Group	Number		
	Total Chinese	Male	Female
Total	79,463	67,035	12,428
Trade	42,655	41,864	791
Domestic and Personal Service	19,458	8,372	11,086
Manufacturing and Mechanical Industries	11,350	11,112	238
Clerical	2,254	2,188	66
Agriculture	1,335	1,288	47
Professional Service	1,085	892	193
Transportation and Communication	1,069	1,064	5
Public Service	121	120	1
Fishing	82	81	1
Forestry and Hunting	38	38	-
Mining and Quarrying	16	16	-

Source: Census of the Philippines, 1939 (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1941)

It is clear from the three major censuses conducted by the US colonial and Commonwealth government that the majority of the Chinese entered professions relating to trade (specifically retail trade). The work of Wong Kwok-chu (1999) on the Chinese in the Philippine economy during the American period reveals more detail, for example, regarding the growing number of Chinese in clerical and professional occupations, and increased involvement in light manufacturing and service retail.¹⁶ The Exclusion Law's lack of provisions barring merchants from entering the Philippines contributed to the growth of a largely merchant Chinese population. It most likely helped perpetuate the stereotype in the Philippines that to be Chinese is to enter and be interested in commercial pursuits.

Two of the latest works on Chinese merchants are by Chu (2010) about Chinese and Chinese mestizos in Manila from the 1870s to the 1930s which contains two relevant chapters about merchant families and the creation of reified categories for what it means to be 'Chinese' and 'Filipino' and Wilson (2010) about Chinese merchant elites in Manila (Wilson 2004). Both focus their attention on the late Spanish and American period and improve our understanding of merchant culture among the Chinese. While I agree with both that the era under scrutiny is critical to our understanding of Chinese involvement in Philippine life, a point emphasized to me by Wickberg (2003), there is still a need to provide the evidentiary link between the American colonial period and the near present.¹⁷ Also, though important as a contribution to scholarship on the large Chinese population in Manila, Wilson and Chu's works both fail to move us away from the problem of Manila-centric history. Table 4 demonstrates why.

Table 4. Chinese Population in the Philippines, Manila and More Heavily Populated Provinces, 1903, 1918, 1939

City/Province	Chinese Population						%	
	1903		1918		1939		1939/1903	1903-1939
Manila	21,083	51.38	17,760	41.22	46,233	39.35	2.00	119.29
Cebu	1,164	2.84	1,662	3.86	6,117	5.21	5.26	425.52
Rizal	524	1.28	645	1.50	5,431	4.62	10.36	936.45
Zamboanga	618	1.51	1,340	3.11	4,167	3.55	6.74	574.27
Tayabas	479	1.17	1,274	2.96	4,069	3.46	8.49	749.48
Davao	19	0.05	762	1.77	3,595	3.06	189.21	18,921.05
Iloilo	1,587	3.87	1,693	3.93	3,511	2.99	2.00	121.24
Leyte	1,787	4.35	2,246	5.21	3,076	2.62	2.00	72.13
Philippines	41,035	100	43,082	100	117,487	100.00	3.00	186.31

Source: Wong, *Chinese in the Philippine Economy*, p. 17 (computation for percentage and percent increase is by the author)

Table 4 shows that Manila remained the base for about half of the Chinese population thereby emphasizing the importance of studying the Manila Chinese, but it also demonstrates that the percentage living in Manila decreased over the years as the population increased in other areas. Places in the Visayas like Iloilo and Leyte exhibited small but steady growth with Cebu having the highest increase when population quintupled from 1903 to 1939. In the same time period, two provinces near Manila, Rizal and Tayabas, saw the Chinese post extraordinary increases of 936.4 percent and 749.5 percent, respectively. In Mindanao, Zamboanga had a sizeable but more modest increase of 574.3 percent but pales in comparison to the phenomenon in Davao where a population of only 19, the smallest figure in 1903, burst into 3,595 by 1939, a staggering increase of 18,921.0 percent. These dramatic changes challenge us to do research into these areas to uncover the reasons for and effects of this population growth. Recent works on the Chinese outside of Manila, like Norbert Dannhauser's (2004) study of Chinese in the city of Dagupan, while excellent from the anthropological point of view are lacking in historical perspective and only serve to highlight the dearth in scholarship on the histories of these movements.¹⁸ The focus on anthropological issues like family, culture and identity should, however, not be lost as the next section shows.

The Influx of Chinese Women and the Chinese Family in the Philippines

One of the strengths of Chu (2010) new book is to point our attention to another development during the American colonial period: the formation of a Chinese family identity. This point I foreshadowed in 2003 when I discussed very briefly the key to this development: the increase in the number of Chinese women who migrated to the Philippines from the late American period onwards. The norm before the advent of American rule was for Chinese to intermarry with locals. It was not customary, due to travelling dangers and cultural considerations regarding females travelling abroad, for Chinese immigrants to bring their wives to the Philippines. Improvements in transportation and US policies favoring the entrance of Chinese women to prevent the creation of what were deemed to be less desirable *mestizo* offspring changed Chinese society by creating purist notions of Chineseness within the family (Alejandrino 2003).

The remaining tables in this essay all show a substantial increase in the number of Chinese women entering the Philippines by the end of US rule.

Table 5a. Population distribution of the Chinese in the Philippines by Gender in 1902

Population 1902 Census			
Total Population of Philippines on March 2, 1903		7,635,426	
	Birthplace Philippines	China	%Distribution of Chinese
Total	6,931,548	41,035	0.59
Male	3,443,816	40,518	1.18
Female	3,487,732	517	0.01
Population of Manila	Total Population	Chinese Population	%Distribution of Chinese
Total	190,437	21,083	11.07
Male	104,309	20,699	19.84
Female	86,128	384	0.45

Source: Census of the Philippine Islands, vol. 2 (Washington: United States Bureau of the Census, 1905)

Tables 5a and 5b show that the population of Chinese women increased by a staggering 5,215.3 percent from 517 individuals in 1902 to 27,480 in 1939.¹⁹ Whereas Chinese women constituted only 1.3 percent of the total Chinese population in 1902, it became 23.4 percent in 1939. In Manila, it was 1.8 percent in 1902 and 7.7 percent in 1933 (See Table 7). Increase in female population alone could suffice to encourage more Chinese men to take Chinese wives, but the situation was further facilitated by the youth of the Chinese women who migrated to the Philippines as seen in Table 6.

Table 5b. Population distribution of the Chinese in the Philippines by Gender in 1939

1939 Census Population of the Philippines in 1939					
	Total	Place of Citizenship		%Distribution	
	Population	Philippines	China	Philippines	China
Total	16,000,303	15,833,649	117,487	98.96	0.73
Male	8,065,281	7,944,158	90,007	98.50	1.12
Female	7,935,022	7,889,491	27,480	99.43	0.35

Population of Manila in 1939		
Total Population	Chinese	%Distribution
623,492	46,233	7.42

Source: Commonwealth of the Philippines, Commission of the Census, 1941

Table 6. Age Groups of the Chinese in 1903 and 1939 by Gender

Age Group	1903			1939		
	(Chinese)			(Chinese Citizen)		
	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Under 10	290(0.7)	171 (0.4)	119(0.3)	21,307(18.1)	11,628(9.9)	9,679(8.2)
10-19	1,789(4.3)	1,551 (3.7)	238(0.6)	21,855(18.6)	16,051(13.7)	5,804(4.9)
20-34	22,487(53.4)	21,948(52.1)	539(1.3)	44,796(38.1)	37,525(31.9)	7,271(6.2)
35-44	11,948(28.4)	11,948(28.2)	84(0.2)	19,205(16.4)	16,463(14.0)	2,742(2.4)
45-54	4,265(10.1)	4,234(10.0)	31(0.1)	5,004(4.3)	3,826(3.3)	1,178(1.0)
55+	1,318(3.1)	1,303(3.1)	15(0.1)	5,320(4.5)	4,514*(3.8)	806*(0.7)
Total	42,097(100)	41,071(97.5)	1,026(2.5)	117,487(100)	90,007(76.6)	27,480(23.4)

*Includes 26 unknown, 21 male, 5 female

Source: Wong, Chinese in the Philippine Economy, p. 20

Table 6 shows a younger Chinese population relative to 1903 in both sexes. The availability of young female partners would have encouraged marriages between so-called 'full-blooded Chinese' and the formation of a 'full-blooded Chinese' family identity after the 1930s. Chu (2010) demonstrates in his book that it was still common before the 1930s for a Chinese man to have a Chinese family in China and a local family in the Philippines, but surely the increase in the female population by 1939 would have encouraged the present phenomenon of Chinese considering themselves to be of 'pure' pedigree.²⁰ If a Chinese man kept another family in China after 1949, it would be for reasons other than a lack of women in the Philippines, and this in itself is an area in need of research (Szonyi, 2005). Overall, the above evidence points to an important area for research: ethnography and family histories that would trace the development of such ideas and the consequences of these under an independent Philippines. The outmigration of Chinese females from China to the Philippines would also have effects on the home communities. In this aspect we know more about the home communities after 1949 and ironically less about the history and the world revolving around the Chinese family in the Philippines (Li, 2005). Table 7 breaks down the data for the increase in female and total population of the Chinese in the provinces between 1918-1939.

Table 7 is the product of Victor Purcell's (1965) work and seems to have been forgotten like his classic but outdated work *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*.²¹ I have kept it as it is and did not include computations for the percentage increases of the female and overall Chinese population in each province. However, a sampling of the numbers is enough to affirm both phenomena and the need to extend the scope of our research beyond Manila and ask the obvious question about the impact these Chinese had on these places and their histories. This is to see the Chinese as not only a transnational community but also a translocal community.

This survey of population data and scholarship on the Chinese in the American period reaffirms the need for a transnational framework. To study the outmigration of more Chinese, particularly Chinese women, is to consider its impact on both the home communities of Fujian and Chinese society in the Philippines. It also demands use of methods and concepts from anthropology and social history, particularly in the analysis of the family unit. Finally, the data on the growth of Chinese population outside of Manila is a reminder to us that when we speak of the transnational we also need to remember the translocal.

Table 7. Chinese in the Philippines. Distribution 1918, 1933, and 1939; and estimated total for 1947

Provinces	1918		1933		1939
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Both Sexes
Abra	18	1	29	3	66
Agusan	59	5	154	25	351
Albay	1,153	82	1,063	210	1,895
Antique	124	2	291	146	215
Bataan	21	..	30	3	55
Batanes
Batangas	318	15	420	64	741
Bohol	255	29	360	109	840
Bukidnon	5	..	34	2	106
Bulacan	207	13	329	64	464
Cagayan	692	53	1,082	441	1,404
Camarines Norte	301	109	1,220	1,037	38
Camarines Sur			990	207	2,087
Capiz	284	41	408	100	715
Catanduanes	227	4	210	28	..
Cavite	456	17	509	36	1,204
Cebu	1,509	153	2,215	482	6,117
City of Baguio	*	*	343	101	*
Cotabato	146	5	567	75	1,591
Culion I. Colony	**	**	36	2	**
Davao	743	19	1,706	213	3,595
Ilocos Norte	105	4	284	31	424
Ilocos Sur	245	6	472	66	717
Iloilo	1,560	133	3,578	321	3,511
Isabela	472	29	635	72	1,778
La Union	160	18	297	84	458
Laguna	946	21	1,171	269	1,939
Lanao	117	27	169	51	567
Leyte	2,147	99	1,986	571	3,076
Manila, City of	16,136	1,624	23,357	5,502	46,233
Marinduque	189	20	263	114	557
Masbate	184	19	299	68	731
Mindoro	108	1	248	49	513

Table 7. Chinese in the Philippines. Distribution 1918, 1933, and 1939; and estimated total for 1947 (continued)

Provinces	1918		1933		1939
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Both Sexes
Misamis Occidental			483	74	1,049
	621	71			
Misamis Oriental			686	142	1,512
Mountain Province	180	10	54	14	1,212
Negros Occidental	824	34	1,481	129	2,679
Negros Oriental	385	7	637	127	1,125
Nueva Ecija	442	34	761	134	1,361
Nueva Vizcaya	10	..	69	14	273
Palawan	128	1	142	36	368
Pampanga	473	28	588	70	1,301
Pangasinan	643	50	823	180	1,800
Quezon (Tayabas)	1,208	66	2,117	627	4,069
Rizal	623	22	1,529	226	5,431
Romblon	113	6	158	48	214
Samar	1,451	57	1,052	135	1,956
Sorsogon	892	26	854	178	1,451
Sulu	687	67	666	391	1,294
Surigao	395	17	522	108	1,115
Tarlac	326	34	677	112	1,359
Zambales	395	30	143	74	581
Zamboanga	1,280	60	1,776	147	4,167
TOTAL	40,699	3,098	59,054	12,584	90,007 males
		43,797		71,638	27,480 females

1939 Total Chinese in the Philippines 117,487

1947 Total Chinese in the Philippines 100,971.

Source: Victor Purcell. *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1965, 2nd ed. pp. 580-581 which claims to have built these figures from data contained in the 1918, 1939 figures from Census of these years;

1933 figures from an unpublished report of the Philippines Bureau of Health, based on house-to-house investigation reported upon by district health officers in the provinces, and the chief of police, Manila; and the 1947 total from an official estimate of the Philippines Bureau of Information.

*included in Mountain Province

**included in Palawan

CONCLUSION

This essay has attempted to review the latest research on the Chinese in the Philippines in a demographic frame. The lack of quantitative data concerning pre-1850 Chinese population and migration can now be mitigated by new sources in Mexico, Spain and China. The greater data available for the American colonial period allows historians to go beyond the search for numbers and to flesh out the effects of increased population, especially female, and migration to other parts of the Philippines. Despite the difference in methodological and theoretical challenges of the pre-1850 and post-1850 Philippines, the discussion for both points to a more transnational frame in any future study of the Chinese in the Philippines.

The new sources in Spain, Mexico and China demand that we expand our understanding of the Chinese in the Philippines to other places and place the Chinese within a larger network of migration. Increase in Chinese female migration to the Philippines and the formation of Chinese families in the Philippines (with the possibility of reducing divided families) would have had profound changes not only in the Philippines but also in China. No future study of the Chinese in the Philippines can excuse itself from the task of seeing things through a transnational framework. Placing the Chinese in a transnational framework is not enough, we also need to remember that as a migrant community they also moved within the nation they settled and thus the transnational network must also include the translocal. This, I believe, is the future of the field, captured prophetically by the late Edgar Wickberg when he wrote in the preface to the republished edition of *Chinese in Philippine Life* that the “[transnational] trend has not yet manifested itself in the Philippine case, but I look forward to future work that may appear as “The Chinese in Philippine and in Southern Chinese Life.” (Wickberg, 2000).

NOTES

¹ See for example, Francis Gealogo's discussion of social and ethnic relations between Chinese mestizos and the local population of Cavite (Gealogo, 2005)..

² The following discussion is based on Slack (2009). The quoted text is from page 24. See also Zhang (2003)..

³ See Wilson (2004), pp. 90-94 , for the reasons why the imperial governments kept such poor records. However, there are official documents still worth considering if one chooses to do research on state relations between China and the Philippines. A small sampling of the possibilities can be found in *Qingdai Zhongguo* (2004). See also Geoff Wade's very useful *Southeast Asia in the Ming Shi-lu: An Open Access Resource*. <http://epress.nus.edu.sg/msl/>. Accessed on March 8, 2010.

⁴ Introductions to the uses of genealogies in Chinese history and demography are Meskill (1970) and Telford (1986). For the history of Chinese genealogies and the reasons why they became common in late imperial China, see Ebrey (1986). See also Lee, Campbell, and Feng (1993).

⁵ Lucille Chia delivered a talk at the University of Michigan about this topic on November 10, 2009. See <https://www.lsa.umich.edu/umich/v/index.jsp?vgnextoid=a37a393cdb253210VgnVCM100000a3b1d38dRCRD&vgnnextchannel=ee04045d0e572110VgnVCM1000004b01010aRCRD>. Accessed on March 8, 2010.

⁶ See Thatcher (1998); useful finding aids include *Zhongguo jiapu* (1997) and Chen (1996). A very useful guide to the Fujian regional archives is Ye and Esherick (1996).

⁷ See Szonyi (2005) for an excellent example of historical work using anthropological fieldwork. The present author was informed about stacks of genealogies housed in the ancestral hall of his ancestral village in Jinjiang, Fujian, one of the key cities that consistently send Chinese to the Philippines. Such sources remain underutilized to this day.

⁸ There are volumes dedicated to each major region in Fujian but for those interested in Chinese migration to the Philippines, the three Quanzhou volumes are the most relevant.

⁹ The present author was able to meet and join them during the Manila leg of their fieldwork trip in July of 2008.

¹⁰ The classic study of the Amoy network connecting Fujian, Taiwan and the Philippines is Ng (1983). The standard text discussing the transnational and complex nature of Chinese migration networks is McKeown (2001).

¹¹ Wickberg (2000). The following discussion follows Wickberg.

¹² Wickberg thinks that 60,000 is a more realistic figure compared to the 99,152 given in the Report of the Philippine Commission because the Spanish figures for 1891 and 1894 are at 59,000 and 50,000 respectively. The absence of evidence for the early 1890s for a major epidemic, famine, war, an event of great human casualty or out-migration seems to indicate that the decline in numbers could not be as drastic as 99,152 turning into 59,000.

¹³ The following discussion is based from Alejandrino (2003). Chu (2006) formulates the same research question and arrives at the same conclusion, albeit using different sources, about the exclusion law's application, but unfortunately fails to cite the former study. Cf. Alejandrino (2003: 1-3, 47-50) and Chu (2006). A very underused but important article that argues against the conventional belief that Chinese forced their way into remunerative sectors of the economy to the detriment of Filipinos is Murray (2002).

¹⁴ Cf. Table 2 with the data provided in Wong (1999:12). Wong has data for the years 1899-1906 from his research in customs and statistical yearbooks. His data, while overall more accurate than what the Philippine Commission provides, basically reflects similar trends. For Philippine Chinese participation in China's war against Japan before 1939 see Yung (1996:22-26).

¹⁵ For Tables 3a and 6, the United States Census all used the term Yellow Race to refer to the Chinese. I have replaced the term with Chinese in these tables.

¹⁶ Wong (1999: 71-73). Cf. the data found in p. 72 regarding occupational choices of the Chinese.

¹⁷ Wickberg, personal e-mail communication, October 2, 2003.

¹⁸ Dannhauser (2004) is the latest book-length study of a Chinese community outside of Manila. However, the approach is less historical than anthropological and one feels a disconnect between the events described in the book and the historical origins of the community described.

¹⁹ There is surprisingly no comparable data on Chinese women in the 1918 census. See, however, Victor Purcell's reconstructed data in Table 7 (Pucell 1965).

²⁰ Chu (2010), chapters 8 and 9. The quote about 'full-blooded Chinese' is from Wong (1999:19).

²¹ I would like to thank Teresita Ang-See for reminding me of the data still unused in Purcell.

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