On May 9, 1912, the Manila Times reported that the Manila Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, the leading voice of the local Chinese community, had formally recognized the new Republic of China and had received official greetings from China’s new president, Yuan Shikai. Many in Manila’s Chinese community responded enthusiastically to the overthrow of the moribund Qing dynasty by a modern Chinese republic. Some young Chinese patriots even had a celebratory photo taken unfurling the new republican flag. Given that the leaders of the 1911 Revolution, especially Dr. Sun Yat-sen, would later give great credit to Chinese overseas for their role in the fall of the dynasty, such overt support for the new republic either by the dour heads of the chamber or by the younger generation was completely understandable. Only six years earlier, however, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce had been founded with the direct support of the Qing government and had welcomed the Qing consul general as an honorary member. Moreover, the Chinese merchant elite, who controlled the Chamber of Commerce, had been aggressively emphasizing their loyalty and personal ties to the dynasty for over thirty years. These loyal overtures were reciprocated. In the last four decades of its rule, the dynasty had reoriented its foreign policy agenda to emphasize the protection of Chinese overseas through the establishment of consulates and embassies in major nodes of Chinese emigration—allowing Beijing to develop institutional linkages with its expatriate subjects—and had reformulated its national development strategy to capitalize on the wealth and talent of Chinese overseas. Manila’s Chinese merchant elite had been significant players in
this process, but all these efforts were insufficient to save the faltering dynasty or to guarantee the loyalty of the Chinese overseas.¹

The reorientation of Beijing’s foreign policy agenda had been rapid. Throughout most of the Qing dynasty (1644–1911), the imperial court had problematic relations with Chinese overseas. Various forces loyal to the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) had taken refuge in Southeast Asia in the late seventeenth century and harassed the South China coast in the name of restoring the Ming. Taiwan, once a Dutch outpost, fell to the pirate Koxinga, the most notorious Ming loyalist, whose family held the island until it fell to a massive Manchu-Chinese expedition in 1683. Other Ming loyalists found refuge in Vietnam and Thailand, often blending with established Chinese communities. Ethnic Chinese interaction with the region was therefore suspect in the eyes of the Manchu court. In the eighteenth century, Beijing took various measures to ban emigration for any purpose; while these laws were often relaxed in the case of merchants, it remained illegal for Chinese to travel abroad without official permis-

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sion. In the late nineteenth century, however, the massive and largely uncontrollable flow of Chinese into Southeast Asia and the Americas as well as the dynasty's pressing need for talent and money forced a reappraisal of Qing emigration policy. A series of accords with Britain and France in the 1850s and 1860s sought to regulate labor recruitment in China’s treaty ports. The 1868 Burlingame Treaty, between China and the United States, recognized the right of Chinese to emigrate freely and heralded a new official attitude toward the Chinese overseas. Emigration laws were constantly revised, and the connections between Beijing and the Chinese overseas were continuously enhanced up until the dynasty’s final collapse.

Institutional innovation accompanied this policy reorientation. In the 1870s and 1880s, the Qing established consulates and embassies throughout the world, charged to protect Chinese subjects and thereby improve the dynasty’s international image. Investigative missions sent to Peru and Cuba in 1874 resulted in treaties that promised better treatment of Chinese laborers. Beijing successfully pressured foreign governments to end the abominable coolie trade and made the protection of Chinese overseas the first priority of China’s new ambassadors to the United States, Spain, Peru, and Great Britain. In an era when China’s international position was worsening daily, the Qing dynasty managed to enjoy a few foreign relations successes in the area of overseas Chinese affairs.

Beijing also courted the money and talent of the Chinese overseas for its self-strengthening program. In a reversal of the Confucian hierarchy that placed commercial activity near the bottom of the professions, merchants in the late Qing found their status elevated by a government that needed their skills. Successful Chinese were encouraged to return to China and invest in industrial and infrastructure projects. Zhang Bishi, a wealthy Straits Chinese from Penang, parlayed his overseas accomplishments into official position. His skills as a manager and his cash donations to government enterprises won him an imperial audience, and he was promoted to Director of the Court of the Imperial Stud and a place in the first rank of Qing officialdom. Another Straits Chinese, Wu Tingfang, was trained in English law and later became the Qing ambassador to the United States, Spain, and Peru. Chinese students, trained overseas, also returned to China to take up posts in the imperial government, in state-run enterprises, in the military, and in the foreign service. Those who did not return were still encouraged to invest in China
and to send aid in times of distress, while others were called upon to render service as consular officials overseas. The Qing rewarded its loyal and generous subjects with honorary titles and imperial emoluments, and imperial seals and charters were granted to the benevolent associations and economic institutions founded by Chinese overseas. The establishment of Chinese chambers of commerce, which were at once local but also chartered by the Qing government, further enhanced the linkage. To symbolize these formal and informal ties, the dynasty introduced a new word into its official vocabulary, “huaqiao” or “Chinese sojourner,” a term that emphasized membership in a larger cultural-ethnic Chinese community (hua) and directed loyalty toward the homeland as “sojourners” (qiao) rather than immigrants. Finally, the Qing Nationality Law of 1909 declared, by the principle of consanguinity, that all Chinese, everywhere, were subjects of the emperor. By the beginning of the last century, Chinese sojourners enjoyed a central place in Beijing’s consciousness that they had never known before, and they had access to institutions and the protection of laws that would lead them to identify themselves more readily with the dynasty and as Chinese.

The Qing government, however, was not the only political entity that took an interest in the Chinese overseas. Chinese reformers and revolutionaries also set their sights on Chinese expatriates. The leading constitutional reformers, Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, were well received throughout Southeast Asia (Nanyang) and the Americas after their exile following the failed “Hundred Days Reform” in 1898. Kang and Liang collected donations and established numerous branches of their Protect the Emperor Society (Baohuanghui). Sun Yat-sen, the “Father of the Chinese Republic,” spent most of his life outside of China as both a student and an exile. In 1894, with the help of local Chinese, Sun founded the Revive China Society (Xingzhonghui) in Honolulu. In Tokyo, in 1905, Sun became head of the Revolutionary Alliance (Tongmenghui), which brought together the various Chinese student and political groups, and was later reorganized into China’s first political party, the Guomindang. In many ways, Chinese communities overseas, especially student communities, were the birthplace of Chinese republicanism and the place where many ethnic Chinese first began to identify with the Chinese nation.

In the Philippines, local Chinese were not immune to these developments. Branches of both Kang Youwei’s and Sun Yat-sen’s
groups were founded in the islands, but these movements developed slowly in the years before 1911. Instead of reformist or revolutionary affiliations, the local Chinese elite usually sided with the dynasty, and Beijing offered them awards and dispensations in exchange for this ostensible loyalty. The merchant elite lobbied successfully for the establishment of a consulate, purchased mandarin titles, dressed themselves in the style of Chinese officials, won imperial honors, and, in 1906, founded the Manila Chinese General Chamber of Commerce. The chamber, chartered in accord with the regulations of the new Ministry of Agriculture, Industry, and Commerce, granted an official Qing seal and, enjoying initially close ties to the imperial consul general, institutionalized the link between the local elite and the dynasty.

The Chamber of Commerce became the dominant Chinese institution in the American Philippines, and its directors took the lead in organizing Chinese community events. The chamber’s members held annual celebrations for the emperor’s and the empress dowager’s birthdays, prepared lavish receptions for visiting imperial dignitaries, and collected funds for relief projects in China. As a reward, the chamber was allowed to select a delegate to represent the Philippine Chinese in China’s new Constitutional Assembly. In every way, these merchants proved themselves to be loyal subjects of the Qing dynasty. How then could they so easily throw their support to a new government and a new president?

In pursuing the answer to this question, it became clear that understanding the dynamics of Chinese expatriate communities is central to understanding the social, economic, and political history of China in modern times. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Manila’s Chinese community underwent dramatic changes. These changes reflected the evolution of colonial Southeast Asia and the dynamics of the global economy. Change among the Chinese in the Philippines also reflected the revolutionary developments taking place in China: a growing sense of Chinese nationalism, simultaneous with a growing regionalism, politicization of Chinese merchants, anti-Manchu revolutionary activity, intellectual and cultural experimentation, as well as a host of social and institutional innovations. In the Philippines, and particularly in Manila, these developments prompted the reorientation of the Chinese community’s social structure, the adoption of new institutional forms, and the aggressive promotion of community and individual identity as Chinese.

Perhaps the most revolutionary event for all Chinese, both at
home and abroad, was the end of China’s dynastic history and the est-
ablishment of a Chinese republic in 1912. With the exception of
Yuan Shikai’s unsuccessful attempt to found a constitutional monar-
chy in 1915–1916, the Chinese entered a prolonged era of experi-
mentation with various forms of republican government. This was a
fundamentally new historical experience for the Chinese people. By
evaluating the overseas response to the Qing collapse within numer-
ous discrete communities, one can go on to better illuminate the pat-
terns of China’s modern history by looking at this seminal event
within the broader history of a transnational migrant community.5
This Chinese community’s response to the 1911 Revolution did not
represent disloyalty to the fallen dynasty, nor did it embody the in-
herent revolutionary or patriotic consciousness or even the appear-
ance of a new generation of Chinese leaders. Such conclusions are ei-
ther insufficient or simplistic. Dynastic collapse was both a crisis and
an opportunity for Manila’s Chinese merchant elite. They seized on
this opportunity by identifying with the new government of China in
an informed and logical manner that best suited their socioeconomic
ambitions. Identifying with the Chinese government, whether impe-
rial or republican, reinforced the community’s Chinese identity, le-
gitimized the elite, and promoted community cohesion: factors es-
sential to the social and economic success of the Chinese in the past
and presumably in the future.

Prasenjit Duara has provided a persuasive explanation for this
phenomenon. By exploring the ways in which three factions of na-
tionalist emissaries to Southeast Asia sought to create a sense of iden-
tification with China by establishing hard boundaries that distanced
ethnic Chinese from their host environments, Duara finds that the
first two factions—imperial officials and constitutional reformers—
were the most successful among the Chinese in Southeast Asia. Chi-
nese merchants in the region responded enthusiastically to the sale
of imperial titles and the Qing empire’s “effort to construct a Confu-
cian nationalism.”6 Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao’s reformist Bao-
huanghui employed a “hybrid philosophy” to recruit overseas Chi-
nese to the cause of constitutional monarchy for China and
furthered their efforts through business activities that both enhanced
the prestige of Chinese entrepreneurs and appealed to them as a
symbol of a prosperous future.7 Revolutionary nationalism, in con-
trast, was less successful before 1911, because participation in Sun
Yat-sen’s Tongmenghui had fewer social and economic benefits. After
the fall of the Qing, however, the first generation of republican historians, responding to Sun’s claim that Chinese overseas were the progenitors of the new China, sought to locate revolutionary activism in overseas Chinese communities where little actually existed. The subsequent politicization of *huaqiao* historiography is what Duara sought to correct and part of what this current work aims to evaluate.8

Among the Chinese merchant elite in the Philippines, the overwhelming appeal of constructing linkages to the Qing government relegated the reformist and revolutionary options to the status of minor political movements. Official certification by the Qing had more currency for a merchant community that was struggling to survive in an often hostile environment and that needed good relations with established authority than the potentially disruptive cause of an anti-Manchu revolution. When the dynasty ceased to be a viable political entity, however, the elite did not hesitate to shift its loyalty to the republic. Since it has been read as indicative of inherent revolutionary spirit among the Nanyang Chinese, this rapid—and opportunistic—shift has subsequently obscured the complexity of the relations between the Chinese overseas and the governments of China. Only by examining how the social and economic ambitions of the Chinese merchant elite in Manila informed their shift in loyalty from imperial to republican China—with little change in personnel or strategies—is it possible to salvage the history of the Manila Chinese community from the nationalist historiography of both China and the Philippines. Moreover, the reorientation of elite political loyalty was part of a greater pattern of skillful handling of shifts in the local and regional environment. Therefore, one must look farther back in time for the origins of merchant-elite strategies.

The subsequent chapters will show that 1911 was not the first time that local Chinese had faced a major crisis or had seized on a historic opportunity. For centuries, the Chinese migrants who traveled to Manila had been aggressively and opportunistically responding to changes within the host community and within China itself. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries these changes were both more dramatic and more rapid. To meet these challenges, the most skillful and successful Chinese employed a complex web of strategies and identities, some of which could be appropriated or dispensed with at will. The Chinese discussed in this work are simultaneously “traditional” and “modern,” monarchists and revolutionaries, merchants and mercenaries, self-serving and community-minded, Confu-
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cian and Catholic, Philippine and Chinese. The rapidly shifting matrix of identities is responsible for the success of the Chinese in Southeast Asia, which, in the words of G. William Skinner, “has yielded a wondrous array of adaptive, acculturative, and assimilative phenomena.” Whereas by the mid–twentieth century the distinctions between all of these categories had become much starker, the three and one-half decades that are the subject of this book were an age in which the totalizing narratives of modernity and nation were still being written. Hence, once we recognize the fluidity that characterized this era, it becomes impossible for scholars of this period to apply Manichean labels to our subjects. Much of this fluidity, in turn, was a product of the place we are examining.

The Philippines as a Historical Setting

Perhaps the greatest appeal of this topic is that the Philippines in general and Manila in particular provide unique historical environments in which to study Chinese community dynamics and the development of Chinese identity that can serve as a comparative case for other Nanyang Chinese communities. The Philippine Islands have enjoyed a long history of intercourse with China because of both their proximity and the value of the Manila trade to the Chinese economy. There has been a distinct and documented Chinese community in the Philippines since the late sixteenth century, and therefore, the evolution of community institutions and socioeconomic strategies can be observed over a much longer period than Chinese communities elsewhere, notably enclaves in the United States, the Caribbean, or Singapore, that appeared only in the nineteenth century. Perhaps the best comparison can be made between Manila’s Chinese and the Chinese in the Dutch East Indies. Those familiar with Leonard Blussé’s *Strange Company: Chinese Settlers, Mestizo Women and the Dutch in VOC Batavia* will see many similarities between the two communities. Both colonies were centered on major entrepôt ports, Manila and Batavia, and both were established early in the history of Asian colonization, 1571 and 1619 respectively. In each case, the Chinese were essential collaborators in the colonial exploitation of regional trade but at the same time had uneasy relations with their European hosts, which resulted in uprisings and massacres. In an attempt to stabilize these alien enclaves, Dutch and Spanish colonial policy initially encouraged Chinese intermarriage with the indigenes...
and the creation of a creole elite (Chinese *mestizos* in the Philippines and Peranakans in Java), but in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries social and economic changes served to encourage the reassertion of Chinese identity. Finally, both colonies underwent a profound economic restructuring in the course of the nineteenth century from entrepôt economies to an agricultural and raw material export focus. This restructuring attracted a new influx of Chinese immigrants, who were recruited and employed through migration networks dominated by “Chinese” elites, but whereas the community superstructure in Java was constructed and maintained by locally born Peranakans, it was almost exclusively China-born elites who controlled these critical institutions in colonial Manila.10

By looking farther back into the nineteenth century for the origins of Chinese adaptability, I am also answering a challenge raised by Claudine Salmon’s work on the reassertion of Chinese identity among Java’s Peranakans. In a departure from the work of earlier scholars,11 Salmon locates the origins of this movement farther back in the nineteenth century and argues that the establishment of various Chinese temples, funeral, and marriage associations in the mid–nineteenth century were part of an attempt to revive Chinese cultural identity in the face of social and economic challenges. Salmon raises the possibility that “resinicization” was a direct result of Dutch colonial policy, which offered both the institutional forms and the economic incentives for the creation of distinct (and self-consciously) Chinese communities in Java.12 The evolution of a distinct ethnic-national identity among the Chinese in the Philippines followed a similarly complex course, being a product of intracommunity dynamics, external forces, and elite ambitions. Yet despite these numerous similarities, there were significant differences in the development of the two Chinese communities. This work will employ comparisons to other Chinese enclaves in Southeast Asia, in particular to Batavia, to highlight the uniqueness of the Manila-Chinese experience and to assess the impact of geographic, economic, religious, and policy factors on the history of Sino–Southeast Asian interaction.

A case study of a Chinese migrant community becomes all the more significant when one can observe how the Chinese respond to dramatic social, economic, and political changes in the host environment. Focusing on the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries offers several revolutionary developments: the reorientation of the Philippine economy in the 1800s, the commodification of Philippine
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agriculture, the emergence of Filipino nationalism, a prolonged turn-of-the-century crisis, and a change in colonial rule in 1898. Beyond the significance of colonial transitions, the economic reorientation of Chinese overseas in this era also coincided with a period of monumental change in Chinese society and politics, and with a dynamic period in the history of Southeast Asia. Change in the host environment, the regional economy, and changes in Chinese politics and society combined to create the unique history of this Chinese community. These factors justify the unique periodization of this study, to which I shall return shortly.

Social and economic conditions in late colonial Manila encouraged the local Chinese elite to construct a distinctive Chinese ethnic identity. The assertion of this Chinese identity abroad through appeals to the government of China were manipulated by that elite to establish and maintain its control over the ethnic enclave and to expand its influence with external sources of authority. Access to external sources of authority, specifically the Chinese government and the colonial administrations, buttressed the power of the Chinese elite and allowed them to respond aggressively and successfully to opportunities in the Philippines. As a result, competition for power and resources within the Chinese community invariably involved appeals to these external actors through the agency of Chinese community institutions. This was a common pattern among Chinese communities throughout colonial Southeast Asia and in China itself. The matrices of trust—native-place associations, surname groups, kinship organizations, guilds, secret societies, and chambers of commerce—that were the sinews of Chinese urban communities required points of connection with external sources of authority to legitimate their functions within those communities. Each venue, however, differed in the number and nature of these points of contact and therefore resulted in unique patterns of state-society relations and elite dynamics. A close examination of this process of adaptation in colonial Manila is not only enlightening in and of itself, but can also form the basis of later studies of the local Chinese responses to life under the American-tutored Philippine Commonwealth, during the Japanese occupation, and in the Republic of the Philippines. By limiting this study primarily to Manila, I am neglecting other Philippine-Chinese communities, but the limitation is justified by the fact that the Manila community was the largest, the most influential, and the best documented. In the period under examination, other Philippine-Chinese
enclaves were still quite small and only developed to significant size and influence later in the American period; therefore, they left much less of an archival imprint. So far, only a handful of other Chinese communities, such as in Iloilo and Negros Oriental, have been the subject of book-length monographs. What is known about these other communities, however, will be used to complement my examination of the Chinese in colonial Manila.

Transnational Chinese communities are inseparable from and central to the histories of China and Southeast Asia. Therefore, by observing the evolution of the Manila-Chinese community as an expression of what it meant to be Chinese in a period of revolutionary social, economic, and political change, one gains new insights into the complexities of Chinese community dynamics, national identity formation, and institutional and social change in the era of European imperialism, ethnic nationalism, and dynastic decline.

**Periodization**

Philippine studies, as well as more specific works on the Chinese, usually choose 1898 as their dividing point. Antonio S. Tan’s *The Chinese in the Philippines, 1898–1935: A Study of Their National Awakening* and Edgar Wickberg’s *The Chinese in Philippine Life, 1850–1898* are two illustrative examples of this common periodization. Wickberg’s thesis is that the structure of the Chinese community and the roles played by the Chinese in the Philippine economy and Philippine society in the 1960s were “shaped in large part by the developments of the period 1850–1898.” While Wickberg does not deny that other periodizations are possible, 1898 is for him both a convenient and an appropriate watershed. After that date, community evolution followed paths established in the closing years of Spanish dominion. Tan, in contrast, argues that it was only with the advent of American rule, which he argues differed radically from that of Spain, that conditions in the colonial Philippines allowed the local Chinese to awaken to their Chinese identity and to forge closer ties with China as a nation. Of the two, Tan’s argument is the more problematic because he is too wedded to Manichean notions of nation and identity. But even Wickberg’s overwhelmingly valuable work pays insufficient attention to critical events in the early American period. If anything, the foundations of the community that were laid in the late nineteenth century were only solidified by choices made and institutional
innovations undertaken in the early years of the twentieth. As for Tan, he pays insufficient attention to continuities across the 1898 divide. These included continuities in community leadership, institutions, and strategies. Moreover, even though the advent of American rule brought with it dramatic changes in law and colonial policy, and certainly witnessed the expansion of institutional linkages between local Chinese and the Chinese state, the American colonial enterprise manifested significant similarities to that of Spain.

The year 1898 is certainly a critical watershed that changed much of the course of Philippine history—not least because the settlement of the Spanish-American War fixed the nation-space of the modern Philippines—but it does not represent a neat divide between the old and the new. Imperial Spain undertook significant modernizing reforms in the nineteenth century that, although imperfectly applied, echoed many of the rationalizing and “modernizing” actions of the Americans. The United States, for its part, stumbled into empire and into its role as colonial ruler. The gaps in Washington’s attempts to apply law, order, and good government to the Philippines, exacerbated by ignorance of the locality, allowed significant elements of the pre-1898 colonial dynamic to survive throughout the American era. While Wickberg would likely agree with this characterization, there were still sufficiently dramatic changes both in colonial rule and in the larger region following 1898 that required local Chinese to alter and in some cases displace earlier strategies and institutions. The primary weakness with 1898 is that it is a nationcentric date representing a major turning point in the histories of three nations—the United States, Spain, and the Philippines—and to a lesser extent China, marking the failure of the Hundred Days Reform. Furthermore, while nations are significant actors in this study, to be primarily nationcentric would ignore the communities and localities whose rhythms defy such facile periodization.

In addition to the significant continuities across the 1898 divide, the Philippines, and especially Luzon, were suffering through a prolonged crisis, beginning in the 1890s and only abating toward the end of the first decade of American rule. This crisis was produced by the cumulative effects of peasant immiseration (arising from long-term changes in rural society and economy), crime, urbanization, rebellion, cholera and rinderpest epidemics, market forces, and a host of other factors. No single event, not even one as dramatic as a change in colonial regime, could solely determine the course of Philippine
history. Manila too had its own rhythms, which defy simple periodization. Ever since the Spanish conquest in the sixteenth century, Manila has been a critical node in the global economy. And yet, while it was the center of colonial administration, Manila was, for much of its history, isolated from the rest of the archipelago and remote even from its immediate hinterland. Until the late nineteenth century Manila was “closer” to China, Mexico, and Spain than to the northern Luzon province of Isabela or Nueva Vizcaya. Even when Manila became integrated into the rapidly developing Philippine agro-export economy in the nineteenth century, it was still not completely “of” the Philippines. Thus, even though the change in regime was felt most acutely in Manila, the history of the city was still as much determined by the actions of the metropole as it was shaped by global market forces and the movements of people. This study does not reject the notion of 1898 as an appropriate divide and uses it where applicable, but by examining the Chinese community over a thirty-five-year period that crosses that divide and encompasses several larger trends and critical watersheds, I hope to show how the history of a community and a locality corresponds to and/or transcends this particular national narrative.

Within the field of Chinese overseas history, the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911–1912 is the event usually chosen to begin or end a study. While this is certainly an appropriate choice, it is likewise insufficient in that such an approach threatens to elide significant continuities across the empire-republic divide. The changes in Beijing’s attitudes and policies toward Chinese overseas that began in the 1800s long survived the Qing’s fall. Perhaps even more important, the institutional innovations undertaken by the Qing, especially in the consular movement of the late nineteenth century and the founding of chambers of commerce in the 1900s, created a formal linkage through which all subsequent Chinese governments could (and would) communicate with huaqiao. Choosing the period 1880–1916, in addition to accounting for longer-term developments across the 1898 divide, also corresponds to a clearly defined stage in China-huaqiao relations. Although attempts to formalize ties between Beijing and the Manila Chinese were made earlier, it was only in the 1880s that the opportunity and motivations were present to constitute a real beginning to the relationship between a sufficiently attentive Chinese state and a motivated local elite. At the other end of this period is the collapse of the Yuan Shikai government and with it the
end of the centralized authority of a Chinese state and Beijing’s ability to confer authority on its consuls and to offer Chinese expatriates much of value.\textsuperscript{18}

The two governments that ruled China during the period under study (the Qing and the early republic) were weak, but they were both centrally located and enjoyed, albeit briefly, sufficient domestic legitimacy and international recognition to give them a reasonable amount of leverage over Chinese communities overseas. This recognition was in turn reflected in the relative value and influence that formal ties to Beijing carried for Chinese elite who cultivated such linkages. While the relations between the various Chinese institutions in the Philippines and the local consul general were often acrimonious, that relationship was nonetheless significant during the period when the Chinese state was unified and attentive to its expatriate subjects and when it could satisfy the ambitions of the local Chinese. Since this is a work about the ways in which Chinese in the Philippines began to think of themselves as members of a larger entity, “China,” and to build formal linkages with the Chinese state, it is therefore appropriate to study the period from 1880 to 1916, when these processes began in earnest, peaked, and then receded for a significant period. These dates are themselves nationcentric, but by superimposing a Chinese narrative on colonial Manila it is possible to reconcile the story of a specific ethnic community in a specific location with the numerous national, regional, global, and market narratives that converged at that point. Each of these narratives has its own benchmarks and its own value, but when taken in isolation they are each insufficient and, in some cases, deceptive. Only by negotiating the boundaries of these multiple histories at the points where they converge, as the Chinese merchant elite negotiated the landscape of colonial Manila, can one rescue their history from those who would place them exclusively within one of these narratives.\textsuperscript{19}

\textbf{A Note on Sources}

One appeal of this topic is the wealth and diversity of archival material. When pursuing the study of Chinese overseas, a historian has access to material from numerous sources: the Chinese community itself, the Chinese government, and the local authorities. Chinese materials on the two attempts to found a Qing consulate general in Manila are abundant, as is correspondence between Beijing and the
local Chinese elite. These materials are contained in the Zongli Yamen (the Qing dynasty’s first foreign office) and Waiwubu (Board of Foreign Affairs) archives at the Academia Sinica in Taiwan and at the Number One Historical Archives in Beijing. Other relevant documents have been compiled in the Academia Sinica’s Zhongmei guanxi shiliao (Historical sources on Chinese-American relations). Also in Taiwan, the Guomindang Party Archives stores early documents on Tongmenghui activities in Southeast Asia. The published collections of leading Qing officials likewise contain references to the Philippines and the local Chinese. Among the luminaries who took an interest in the islands were Li Hongzhang, Zhang Zhidong, Zhang Yinhuan, Yang Ru, Wu Tingfang, and Liang Qichao.

Despite decades of war and revolution, a wealth of material has also survived in the Philippines. The leading Chinese community institutions have published histories, and the archival material from the Spanish era, in particular from the Gobernadorcillo de los Sangleyes, the Chinese headman, is extensive, although much of it is in poor condition and often difficult to access. The main repositories of primary sources in Manila are the Records Management and Archives Office and, to a lesser extent, the Archives of the Archdiocese of Manila. Microfilm, yearbooks, newspapers, and personal accounts of the period discussed in this book are also held in the libraries of Ateneo de Manila, the University of the Philippines, and the Kaisa Para Sa Kaunlaran. The Kaisa’s library is perhaps the best single resource for the study of the Chinese in the Philippines.20

Records for the American period, stored at the National Archives II facility in College Park, Maryland, are also excellent and give great attention to the Manila Chinese community in a time when the United States government was wrestling with the issues of Chinese immigration to North America.21 Published collections, such as E. H. Blair and J. A. Robertson’s massive The Philippine Islands and Gregorio Zaide’s recent Documentary Sources of Philippine History, are frequently mined but never exhausted.

A Review of the Existing Scholarship

The history of the Chinese community under Spanish rule is best chronicled in Edgar Wickberg’s seminal work The Chinese in Philippine Life, 1850–1898.22 Produced in the years following G. William Skinner and Maurice Freedman’s pioneering works on other Chinese
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communities in Southeast Asia, *The Chinese in Philippine Life* and Wickberg’s earlier article “The Chinese Mestizo in Philippine History” have had a similarly important impact on Philippine-Chinese studies and all subsequent research is beholden to and measured against that of Wickberg.\(^{23}\) The present work is equally indebted to Professor Wickberg, and one purpose of this book is to build on his extensive research and cogent analysis by extending the temporal focus into the twentieth century through the use of source materials that were not available in the 1960s.\(^ {24}\)

The strengths of Wickberg’s contributions notwithstanding, he remains tied to the 1898 divide, which fails to recognize and illuminate the ways in which local dynamics were and were not affected by events on the larger historical stage. Wickberg further emphasizes that community cohesion and a shared Chinese identity were the product of two countervailing forces. The first were those exogenous factors that set the Chinese apart from the other groups in the colonial Philippines—*indios*, *mestizos*, and Spaniards—that is, discrimination, prejudice, legal distinctions, and imposed institutions. Complementing this external “othering” were the internal—or endogenous—forces of shared language, native-place ties, and the patron-client relations that were so critical to Chinese success in the retail trade and that exercised a kind of cultural gravity on the Chinese community. These were certainly powerful forces shaping the structure and consciousness of the Chinese community in colonial Manila, but they are an insufficient explanation for the relative cohesion of the enclave. The present study introduces a third force that shaped Chinese identity, the Chinese merchant elite, who straddled the divide between the Chinese community and the local environment and who manipulated colonial aspirations and prejudices to satisfy their personal ambitions and further the security and prosperity of those under their leadership. Rather than having institutions and ethnic distinctions thrust upon them by the colonial regime or simply replicating strategies from their native places, these Chinese *cabecillas* (as the merchant elite were known locally) demonstrated a subtle hand and what I call a “liminal virtuosity” in creating the institutions and constructing the identities that largely defined what it was to be “Chinese” in colonial Manila. As Wickberg shows, this was a process begun in the closing years of Spanish rule, but as this work demonstrates, it was only solidified during and after the change in colonial regime. Ironically, the flexibility and virtuosity of the Chi-
nese merchant elite, which had allowed them to manipulate both colonials and mandarins, would later be lost as the institutions and “identities” that their ambitions had created bounded and constrained the Chinese as an ethnic enclave within an increasingly nationalistic Philippines. With the advent of the totalizing tropes of national identity in the twentieth century, the divide between Chinese and Filipino became more stark and served to obscure the more fluid identities that obtained at the turn of the century.

Antonio Tan’s *The Chinese in the Philippines, 1898–1935: A Study of Their National Awakening* is a prime example of how these reified definitions of nation and identity can color a community history and obscure the varied ways in which local Chinese thought of themselves and viewed their place in the colonial milieu. Tan contends that community cohesion arose from a shared set of grievances over discrimination and anti-Chinese hostility. He concludes, however, that communality only manifested as “Chinese” political consciousness under the far more benevolent and rational American rule, which added as well to Chinese cohesion by applying the Chinese exclusion laws to the Philippines.25 “Before the turn of the present century, the Chinese residents in the Philippines, like their compatriots at home, lacked the spirit of national and political consciousness. . . . The Chinese were, if we may use the term, apolitical, or better still, parochial: political sleepwalkers. They had neither knowledge of nor interest in politics and government.”26 Chinese political activism and direct linkages to the Chinese state did increase under American rule, but to characterize the Manila Chinese in the nineteenth century, and especially the merchant elite, as “political sleepwalkers” is wholly inaccurate. The fact that the Chinese were successful local and international merchants as well as the managers of complex recruitment and migration networks demanded tremendous sensitivity to local politics in both China and the Philippines as well as to the politics of the region.

Beginning in the 1880s Chinese *cabecillas* consistently demonstrated not merely an awareness of China as a political identity but quite detailed knowledge of Qing foreign relations, domestic politics, bureaucratic personnel, and the bureaucratic process. The elite also showed a keen interest in and knowledge of politics, government, and law in the Spanish Philippines and used that knowledge to protect and enrich the community. Tan’s argument is circular: the manifestations of Chinese national consciousness—measured in
membership in Chinese political parties (which begin to appear only very late in the 1890s), opposition to Chinese exclusion laws (applied by the United States), regular contact with the Chinese state (via the Consulate General or Chamber of Commerce, founded in 1898 and 1905, respectively), Chinese newspapers, Chinese schools, and so on—were only possible under the conditions and timing of American rule. By his criteria, one will inevitably look in vain for Chinese political consciousness in the Spanish Philippines.\(^\text{27}\) If anything, national consciousness was present among the Chinese elite in colonial Manila, but it was complemented by numerous other identities that were gradually lost. Ultimately the options were reduced to two: either Filipino or Chinese, and by the middle of the twentieth century, ethnic Chinese rarely had a choice in the matter of identity.

Tan’s emphasis on a major break occurring in 1898 seems logical but is nonetheless analytically flawed for several reasons. Much of the way Chinese identity was constructed and directed in the colonial Philippines involved institutions. One of the most important of these institutions was the Qing Imperial Consulate, founded at the end of a protracted negotiation that began in the 1880s and culminated only in 1899. Therefore, to use the founding of the consulate as a watershed in the emergence of national consciousness ignores the fact that the local elite had been trying to get Beijing’s attention for nearly two decades. Moreover, even though the consulate was a Qing institution, it ultimately replicated many of the functions of its predecessor, the Spanish office of Gobernadorcillo de los Sangleyes, and thus change in institutional form and name did not represent a dramatic change in strategies or identities after 1898.

Tan’s contention that there was a significant generational change in the early 1900s is equally forced. He argues that generational change was reflected in new institutional developments, specifically the replacement of the apical Gobernadorcillo with a dyarchy of consul general and chamber of commerce. His evidence is that the dominant figure of the late Spanish period, Carlos Palanca Chen Qianshan, was replaced by a broader leadership cadre of politically conscious and much more strictly “Chinese” leaders. By Tan’s calculus, Chen had compromised his “national” consciousness. As the last Gobernadorcillo Chen was a subject of both the Spanish king and the Qing emperor as well as both a practicing Catholic and a Confucian. Tan argues from the perspective that Philippine Chinese are first and foremost Chinese and thus have only one natural locus of national
identity: the Chinese state. Therefore, such a multiplicity of identities would have invalidated Chen as a community leader in the twentieth century. But for Chen, his peers, and his protégés—many of whom continued to lead the community well into the American era—multidirectional loyalties were part and parcel of their socioeconomic strategies and a key ingredient of their financial success. While the advent of American rule certainly altered the landscape of colonial Manila, the effects were not nearly as dramatic or rapid as Tan concludes. Generational change occurred far more gradually and did not begin to affect the Chinese community significantly until the 1910s. Likewise, it was not until the passage of the Payne-Aldrich Act in 1909 that the Philippine economy began to recover from the prolonged crisis that had begun in the closing years of Spanish rule. Therefore, in terms of both community leadership and economic activity, a complete turnover only came to fruition a full decade after American annexation, and thus continuities in community leadership and business strategies across the 1898 divide were more significant than Tan admits.

With regard to the inability of Chinese to assimilate into indio (native Filipino) society, Tan concludes that this was a result of a powerful “culturalism” among the migrants. These factors in turn explain the familialism of local Chinese, their consistent use of the Chinese language, failure to learn the local languages, retention of Chinese styles of dress, and so on. In this assertion he shares many of the culturalist biases of Chinese huaqiao historians, but he is also echoing the conclusions of Jacques Amyot, John Omohundro, and more recently S. Gordon Redding. These writers explain the successes and the structures of Chinese communities as products of powerful cultural forms and, most important, a unique Chinese business culture. While a culture as varied and rich as China’s does have tremendous power, the endurance of uniquely “Chinese” ways of dressing, speaking, and conducting commerce was also a function of the utility of these cultural forms to the type of business the Chinese did in the Philippines. The cultural forms practiced by Manila’s Chinese merchants were the product of commercially sophisticated coastal Fujian, which had long been sending its sons to trade in the cities of China and Southeast Asia, and therefore many (but not all) of these “Chinese” attributes—which were essentially commercial common sense—were readily transplantable to Luzon. Here it is important also to keep in mind that, with the exception of a small Can-
tonese population, to be “Chinese”—or chino or Chinaman—in colonial Manila meant that one was Hokkien, that is, from one of the counties around the port city of Xiamen on the southern Fujian coast. And even narrower native-place distinctions were in play, as many of the Chinese in Manila were from a handful of villages. Hence, while these migrants were “Chinese,” because of their origin within the geographical entity known as China and the fact that they spoke a dialect of the Chinese language, it would be problematic to conflate the much narrower identity of Hokkien with the broader category of Chinese, and yet that is exactly what colonials and the Chinese merchant elite did. To be “Chinese” in colonial Manila differed in many subtle (and a few not-so-subtle) ways from what it meant to be “Chinese” in Chicago, San Francisco, or Havana. Nor should the Chinese in Manila be viewed as a “group-apart,” isolated from indio or colonial society. Every Chinese in Manila, from the wealthiest cabecilla to the poorest coolie, interacted with indios, Europeans, Japanese, and Americans on a daily basis.

Tan’s work demonstrates the limitations of trying to fix the Philippine Chinese as exclusively “Chinese”—with only one natural locus of identity—and to characterize the post-1898 Philippines as uniquely American. He is resorting to overly determined views of cultures and identities. Yet he is not alone in this shortcoming. Despite the trend toward challenging these totalizing tropes of nation, especially in colonial studies, much of the scholarship on the Chinese in the Philippines continues to be dominated by individual national narratives. Given the biases within Philippine historiography, those who have studied the Philippine Chinese in the archipelago are often constrained to massage the community’s history into that of the nation. To tell the story of the Chinese in this context, one must often demonstrate how the Chinese shared the sufferings and achievements of the Filipinos, for example, as fellow victims of Spanish discrimination or as coparticipants in the Philippine Insurrection or in the anti-Japanese resistance.

Showing the Chinese as fellow victims also explains away the cohesiveness of the Chinese community. Similar to much of the scholarship on the Chinese in America written by Chinese Americans, the literature on the Philippine Chinese produced by Philippine Chinese has located the causes of Chinese community cohesion in the hostility of the host environment, rather than emphasizing the continuities of particular migrant strategies and the obvious utility of com-
munity cohesion in exploiting the export economy of the late colonial Philippines. Absent the hostility of the local environment, the Chinese are portrayed as being exemplary Philippine citizens. A heightened sense of historical self-consciousness among contemporary Philippine-Chinese community leaders and historians is entirely understandable. Chinese in the Republic of the Philippines are alternately praised and damned in the chaotic political environment of that country. The implication that prosperous Chinese are sojourning parasites or the willing lackeys of corrupt regimes haunts the Chinese community. Therefore, while not dismissing their distinct cultural background, the primary locus of loyalty of the Philippine Chinese emphasized by these authors is to the Philippines as nation-state. This characterization therefore ignores the far more fluid environment in which the Chinese moved in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a time before the Philippines was a fully constituted nation-state and a time when, in the words of Adam McKeown, a Chinese immigrant could be both “here and there.” And yet it was the eminently practical and practicable pattern of sojourning in the Philippines that was the cornerstone of Chinese economic success in the late Spanish and early American periods. Being both “here and there” was how Chinese recruited talent, moved money, researched markets, sired heirs, and invested in real estate. Before the nation-spaces of both China and the Philippines became so reified in the twentieth century, steaming from Xiamen to Manila was perhaps as mundane as my morning commute and probably carried about as much political consequence. Yet in the twentieth century—and even now—to show the local Chinese as possessing divided loyalties and divergent localities was suspect. The key is therefore to show the Chinese as “Chinese” but essentially “of” the Philippines—which satisfies local Chinese advocates—and to avoid showing them as essentially “of” their motherland.

A notable exception to this trend is the work of Richard Chu, himself a Philippine Chinese, whose exploration of late–Spanish era legal documents has shown a significant degree of interaction between Chinese and non-paisanos—people of other nationalities—including business partnerships. Thus, he challenges the notions of hard boundaries between Chinese and others in colonial Manila and the familial exclusiveness often attributed to the Chinese. In addition, Chu shows that the chino-mestizo dichotomy, so often pointed to as indicative of the divergence between Filipinos and Chinese, is
equally overplayed. In fact there were numerous Chinese *mestizos* who were very much part of the “Chinese” community, as well as Spanish- and Tagalog-speaking *chinos* who were part of *indo* and *mestizo* society, all of whom could move across ethnic boundaries with considerable ease. Chu has made a major contribution to our understanding of both the fluidity of colonial Manila and the contingent nature of ethnic identity in this period.38

The Chinese community was indeed dominated by the *cabecillas* who controlled the majority of the critical external linkages, but given the nature of the *tienda de sari-sari* system, which sent young Chinese alone out into the provinces as retailers and agricultural purchasing agents, not to mention the streets of Manila, where individual Chinese could fight, fornicate, gamble, and trade with locals and colonials, the Chinese elite could not possibly exercise total control over the community. Clearly, there were numerous contacts between Chinese and non-*paisanos*, and there were numerous opportunities to forge such linkages, either with *cabecilla* blessing or without. Thus, the construction of Chinese identity and the perceived insularity of the Chinese community were more the product of migration strategies, community institutions, and elite ambitions than they were the result of spontaneous ethnocultural affinity or innate “Chineseness.” The ambitions of Chinese *cabecillas* led them to construct an institutional superstructure for the Chinese community as a distinct ethnic enclave, and although the Chinese, even the transients (*invernados*), could never be completely isolated from local society, that superstructure had a great, but not quite hegemonic, influence on the ways in which they interacted with that society.

Gregory Bankoff’s *Crime, Society, and the State in the Nineteenth-Century Philippines* demonstrates that, while the Spanish were hard-pressed to reform the colonial legal system systematically—lacking the means and personnel to do so—they nonetheless endeavored to implement a series of egalitarian and rationalizing measures in the late nineteenth century that echoed many of the legal reforms implemented in the American period. Thus, there were numerous continuities in the legal realm that have been heretofore ignored. Taken in tandem with Chu’s work, Bankoff’s study provides a clearer picture of the juridical environment of the late Spanish Philippines and the place of the Chinese within that system. One of the most significant revelations in this book, probably because of its broader treatment of criminality and justice in a multiethnic setting, is that the Chinese
had a varied intercourse with *indios, mestizos*, and Spaniards that was both licit and illicit. These relations show again that, while the Chinese community was relatively cohesive, it was far from insular. Furthermore, the Chinese litigiousness of the American period, which seemed to be a new phenomenon, in fact had its origins in the 1880s. Finally Bankoff’s evocative descriptions of the various and varied neighborhoods of Manila, their denizens, and their attractions exposes that the Chinese were distinguished within the mix not simply by their language, their features, or their dress, but by their “characteristic” appetites for opium, cards, and prostitutes.39

The aforementioned works on the Philippines are but a small sample of the recent flood of works that address the history of the Chinese overseas. David Ownby and Mary Somers Heidhues’ *Secret Societies Reconsidered* was one of the first works to draw together a cadre of talented Chinese and Southeast Asian historians who emphasized the interconnectedness of Chinese and Southeast Asian history and offered up a wealth of comparative case studies. Equally valuable is *Sojourners and Settlers: Histories of Southeast Asia and the Chinese*, edited by Anthony Reid, which gives needed attention to the diversity and vigor of Chinese interactions with the peoples and polities of the region. Three of the essays in this volume deserve special note: Wang Gungwu manages to rescue “sojourning” from its twentieth-century pejorative and political connotations and restores it as a valid analytical device for understanding the ways in which Chinese did business, recruited talent, and moved through Southeast Asia. G. William Skinner’s comparison of creolized Chinese demonstrates the ways in which colonial policy, demographics, and economic opportunity influenced the construction and assertion of ethnic identity in colonial Southeast Asia. Finally, Anthony Reid takes a macrohistorical approach to Chinese emigration and shows the critical role that migration networks—active even in times of significantly reduced emigration—played in directing and shaping the massive outflow of Chinese in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.40 This macrohistorical approach provides a much better picture of the extent of Sino–Southeast Asian interaction and the degree of China’s connection to the global economy before the so-called “opening” of China in the middle of the nineteenth century.

One academic discipline that has taken an increasing interest in the Chinese overseas are postmodern historians and social scientists. They generally critique much of the earlier scholarship on Chinese
overseas as trapped within the dominant narrative of republican Chinese historiography and cultural determinism, or informed by the “metanarratives” of highly nationalistic postcolonial host societies. Aihwa Ong and Donald Nonini’s *Ungrounded Empires: The Cultural Politics of Modern Chinese Transnationalism* aims to link the flexible repertoire of Chinese sojourner strategies of the early modern world, such as the period that is the subject of this work, to those employed by the transnational diaspora of ethnic Chinese in the contemporary era of globalization. These strategies are transnational—also read transregional—linkages, mobility, diversification, adept role playing, manipulation, and adaptability. While I would not say that there is a perfect resonance between my subjects and today’s ethnic Chinese, the critical emphasis of postmodernism, especially in challenging the totalizing tropes of nationality and ethnicity, is a necessary tool in the study of both historical and contemporary Chinese migration and adaptive strategies. In this work I seek to employ these recent contributions judiciously in concert with the classic works of Wickberg, Freedman, and Skinner.41

Christine Dobbin’s comparative study of five “conjoint communities,” Chinese mestizos in the Philippines, Peranakan Chinese in Java, the Parsi in Bombay and China, the Ismaili in East Africa, and the Nattukottai Chettiars in Burma, is yet another important addition to the field. Dobbin emphasizes the centrality of Chinese and South Asian capital and talent in the development of the world economy in the early modern era. Although trade may have been facilitated by European entrance into Asia, it was the preadaptation and flexibility of the local entrepreneurial minorities that provided the talent necessary for the colonial enterprise. At the root of this entrepreneurial success has been the ability of these middleman minorities to construct or appropriate multiple identities while at the same time maintaining a link to a unifying spiritual source that, in turn, is fundamental to their economic advancement.42 The significance of this approach is the revelation, corroborated by both Skinner and Salmon, of the contingent nature of ethnic identity in the early modern era, especially on the fluid peripheries of empire.43

Thanks to these comparative and postmodernist volumes, the concept of transnationalism has recently gained currency in the study of Chinese overseas.44 As much as Chinese migrants overseas are physically transnational, moving back and forth from one nation-space to another and relying on familial and commercial linkages
that cross boundaries, they are also historically transnational, because their individual and community histories transcend and interconnect numerous national histories. Adam McKeown has provided, to date, the best application of the transnational concept in his study of three Chinese enclaves, Peru, Chicago, and Hawai‘i, which were each situated at the nexus of various global, regional, national, local, and individual histories. In *Chinese Migrant Networks and Cultural Change*, McKeown demonstrates how the value and utility of transnational linkages (especially of migration networks), the type and relative power of community institutions, and the construction of ethnic identity all varied from one community to another depending on the nature of the local economy, the political scene, elite ambition, and even the physical environment. This comparative and local approach is an important corrective to more essentialized and totalizing portrayals of Chinese migrations and Chinese communities. The present work provides yet another local history of a distinct Chinese community that in some ways challenges but in other ways corroborates McKeown’s conclusions.

To date, few of these new trends in scholarship have been able to penetrate the field of *huaqiao* studies as it is practiced in China. As has been thoroughly discussed in other works on the Chinese overseas, much of the scholarship on *huaqiao* produced in Taiwan and mainland China has been highly politicized and highly problematic from a scholarly perspective in that it has placed disproportionate emphasis on the natural affinity of Chinese overseas for the motherland. In the twentieth century the essentialist rhetoric of ethnic commonality and cultural affinity demonstrated its utility in casting a unifying national veneer over competing and complementary local, regional, and national interests and identities. Thus, it has been nearly impossible for Chinese scholars, either on Taiwan or on the mainland, to extricate their studies of *huaqiao* from historiographical biases that portray Chinese overseas as instinctively and overwhelmingly “Chinese” and only assimilating into local society when all bonds to China—be they new migrants, mail, or family—are completely severed. The reality, as I will show, was far more contentious and contingent.

Finally, in pursuing the present study, I have also benefited from the high caliber of contemporary scholarship on local elite and merchant communities in late imperial and republican China. Such works, especially those concerned with regional “sojourner” commu-
nities within China, such as Shanxi bankers in the great commercial nodes of Hankou and Shanghai, provide an analytical platform from which to view Chinese migration history. Given the sophistication and diversity of China’s domestic economy, it should not be surprising to discover that many of the commercial strategies employed in China’s cities worked equally well in overseas entrepôts. Moreover, one should also expect to find that the increasing levels of social mobilization and political sophistication that characterized elites in late imperial and republican China were reflected among Chinese elites in colonial Southeast Asia. As more recent works, such as those of Prasenjit Duara and others—all formally trained as historians of China—attest, this foundation of local and elite histories of communities in China can be applied profitably to the study of Chinese communities overseas.

The breadth of scholarship and historical disciplines that are applicable to this topic should by now be readily apparent. In fact they are as diverse and yet as complementary as the historical forces that converged on colonial Manila. Therefore, as impossible as it is to confine the history of a place as unique as Manila within a single national or even regional history, it is equally impossible to shoe-horn the story of Manila’s Chinese community conveniently into a linear narrative. Likewise, to limit the analytical tools that one applies to this task to a single historical discipline or a particular historiographical epistemology does an injustice to one’s subjects. The Chinese merchant elite of colonial Manila survived and thrived in an era of war, revolution, and economic upheaval because they were able to deploy a flexible web of identities and employ a complex repertoire of social, economic, and political strategies. The remarkable degree of virtuosity that they demonstrated at this liminal point—the place where numerous global, regional, market, national, and personal histories converged—demands a multidisciplinary approach that is as flexible and complex as the historical actors to whom it is applied.