Chapter 14
Social Boundaries and the Mental Health of the Lannang: Ethnic Chinese in the Philippines

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Abstract I focus on the Lannang, the ethnic Chinese who first migrated from Fujian province to the Philippines in the early part of the nineteenth century, looking at cultural influences on interpersonal transactions and how these impact on mental health. In the context of relationships between the Lannang and Filipinos, one marked by periods of strong exclusion, if not outright anti-Chinese sentiments, I look at how social boundary making, maintenance, and modification become an important part of Lannang culture and mental health. I look into four core concepts of Lannang personhood – being Chinese, being male, being a filial person, and being a person with a sense of shame – and how these define the management of interpersonal transactions, revolving around boundaries of inclusion (Lannang) and exclusion (huan, foreigner). I also describe the impact of these concepts on mental health. I end with recommendations for improving mental health services, emphasizing language and rituals as providing emotional pathways for the reconfiguration of Lannang social boundaries.

Keywords Lannang · Mental health · Overseas Chinese · Social boundaries · Cultural pathways · Identity

Archaeological findings and Chinese history texts attest to contact between China and the islands of the Philippines from as early as the tenth century (Chu 2010:53), long before Spanish colonization.

There have been several waves of Chinese migration to the Philippines, with earlier ones leading to a complete integration of the Chinese, through intermarriage,

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into Philippine society. My focus will be the wave of the twentieth century, during the American colonial occupation. A US Chinese Exclusion Act passed in 1902 was applied to the Philippines because it was a US colony, restricting the number of migrations, but had an important exemption: merchants (Alejandrino 2015). This opened the doors, however limited, for migration so that by 1939, there were 117,000 ethnic Chinese enumerated in the national census, still less than 1% of a total Philippine population of 16 million (US Census Bureau 1941:3), but not a small number in absolute terms.

Today, the ethnic Chinese in the Philippines are still estimated to be not more than 2% of the total population (Wickberg 1998:187) but comprise the seventh largest overseas Chinese community in the world (Poston and Zhang this volume).

The ethnic Chinese migrants of the twentieth century came mainly from the southern Chinese province of Fujian and spoke Minnan (literally south of the Minnan river), also referred to as Hokkien, Amoy, Southern Fujian. The Minnan spoken in the Philippines is often referred to by the local Chinese as *Lannang Ue*, *Lannang* meaning "our people" and *Ue* meaning "language." More significantly, the term "Lannang" itself is widely used by the twentieth-century wave of ethnic Chinese in the Philippines to refer to themselves.

The main objective of my essay is to give the historical and cultural context to mental health among these Lannang, with a focus on how the diasporic experience maintains and modifies social boundaries, navigating Chinese and Filipino cultures in the definitions of self, class, gender, and social interactions.

The Lannang provide great potential for cross-cultural and diaspora studies in the way the community strongly identifies as Filipino (with terms like *Tsinoy* or Chinese-Filipino) but retains many Chinese traditions, including language, food, religion, and, important for this chapter, beliefs and practices around health and medicine. Contributing to this preservation of culture are Lannang institutions: business federations, banks, schools, hospitals, and even cemeteries.

Analytical Framework and Methodology

There is a stark absence of published articles on the mental health of the Lannang, which led me to first think of simply describing concepts and practices of the Lannang, but I wanted to avoid a culturalist approach that ends up exoticizing and decontextualizing the cultures we seek to understand.

Reading Kleinman and Lin (1981), I decided to look into cultural influences on the management of interpersonal and intercultural transactions and how such transactions affect mental health. For example, Kleinman and Lin, as well as other authors (e.g., Metzger 1981), explore Confucian concepts of selfhood and authority that are so central to Chinese culture and which impact on mental health.

I draw from Alexander (2003:5), who proposes a cultural sociology that looks into "interpreting collective meanings" and "tracing the moral textures and delicate emotional pathways by which individuals and groups come to be influenced by

them." I will do this cultural sociology by drawing on Chinese core concepts of personhood, relating these to emotional pathways marked by boundaries and borders (Lamont and Molnar 2002). I do this to underscore how the diasporic experience is more than a movement across geographic borders; instead, it is one that creates, maintains, and modifies social boundaries which in turn can impact on mental health in terms of well-being as well as risks and dysfunction.

These boundaries, I propose, come out of what Wickberg (1998) calls "oscillations of inclusion and exclusion" of the Chinese over several centuries – one which included massacres and expulsions during the Spanish colonial period. The discrimination has continued through the twentieth century and to the present. For example, acquisition of Philippine citizenship was a very difficult option for the Lannang until 1975 when President Ferdinand Marcos established ties with the People's Republic of China and saw the strategic value of allowing local Chinese to become Filipino citizens.

Certainly, at individual and community levels, there are many opportunities for more positive intercultural interactions and exchanges, which I describe in this chapter, particularly in the creation of emotional pathways and in the modification of boundaries.

I will present four core concepts of Lannang personhood: being Chinese, being male, being a filial person, and being a person with face (i.e., a sense of shame). I describe each of these concepts in terms of being and not-being, for example, being male as not being female. Not to act on the social imperatives of these concepts is to turn one's back on being Lannang, becoming *huan*, foreign, with its social consequences of social alienation, even excommunication.

I will also refer to the convergences and divergences in Filipino and Lannang values and social organization. For Filipino personality studies, I draw on Church (1986) and Melgar et al. (2018) for excellent summaries.

I end the chapter with recommendations for improving mental health services, emphasizing language and rituals as emotional pathways that figure prominently in the reconfiguration of Lannang social boundaries.

Reflecting my anthropology background, I will use an emic or "native/insider" perspective, writing as a third-generation Lannang, my grandparents on both my father's and mother's side having migrated from China to the Philippines early in the twentieth century.

I am aware of the dangers of generalizing about culture and must qualify that my observations in this chapter are meant to propose a possible research agenda that can further explore mental health among communities in diaspora.

Storytelling marks our diasporas, and I was fortunate I had a grandmother and a mother who were atypical in sharing their experiences, some very personal, with me despite my being male, allowing me to appreciate the gendered aspects of the Lannang diaspora.

I interviewed several Lannang from different generations, including three physicians, and have acknowledged some of them at the end of this chapter. It is revealing that some informants asked to remain anonymous because they did not want to be tagged as being critical of Lannang culture.

My Lannang informants helped me to identify the core personhood concepts and their impact on mental health. Standing out in their stories and in my memories of growing up Lannang were overarching themes of precarity and adversity. Some were very personal, as with my paternal grandmother's memories of her feet being bound as a child in the "lotus feet" tradition. The practice involves tightly binding a girl child's feet, cutting off blood circulation and preventing the feet from growing. Other stories involved collective memories of living in dangerous times: childhood in frontier areas as with my father in the southern Philippines, the Second World War, the uncertain post-war years, the unrest in the countryside from insurgencies and secessionist movements, martial law, and, in the 1990s, a wave of kidnappings and murders of Lannang. The country too is one of the most vulnerable for disasters, typhoons, floods, fires, and earthquakes are very much a part of collective memories and an overwhelming sense of life as being one of constant struggle against hardship.

A Linguistic Note

I give key concepts in Minnan and, when available, their Mandarin (also known as *Putonghua*, the national language of China) equivalents. The absence of a Mandarin equivalent means the term is distinct to Minnan. I also include the Chinese characters or script, which is shared across languages and dialects in China but with great variations in the exact characters that are used, complicated by the fact that Minnan does not traditionally have a written literature.

For the Mandarin I will use *pinyin*, which is a standardized Romanized system used throughout China. The situation is more difficult with Minnan with different orthographies that have been proposed. I use the one of Li and Li (2008), which is based on the International Phonetic Alphabet. I have omitted tonal marks because the Minnan dialect spoken in the Philippines has eight tones, compared to the already complicated four found in Mandarin. I also use Li and Li extensively because their dictionary is a compilation of Minnan terms that are not found in Mandarin.

Being Chinese: *tiong kok lang*

My father sat me down once, when I was a child, took an envelope he had just received in the mail and pointed out the return address to me. The envelope came from China, and the sender's address was written in this sequence: China, followed by the province, the city, and the street and number of the house.

It was my father's way of pointing out that in China, it is country that is central, as in the country's Chinese name: *zhongguo*. We were constantly reminded at home, in schools, that we were *tiong kok lang* (中国侬), which meant observing many

traditions from, in my father's words, "thousands of years of civilization." Being *tiong kok lang* also translated into pressures to excel in school and in the workplace because that was the way of the *tiong kok lang*, to work hard and to be better than others. Being *tiong kok lang* was also tied to other values such as thrift, which seemed to be so well internalized that Filipinos consider the overseas Chinese to be stingy.

Being *tiong kok lang* meant being "othered." While we talked of being Filipino-Chinese (or Chinese-Filipino), we were also constantly warned that we were only second-class citizens, never to be quite accepted. I learned, as a child, of the term *bai hua* (排华, *paihua* in Mandarin) which meant anti-Chinese sentiments. We were the *Intsik*, a term that was originally one of respect for elders but came to be adopted by Filipinos to use as an insult. The *Intsik* were there as easy prey from being taunted in the streets to being targeted for extortion by government workers. In the 1990s, there were numerous kidnappings for ransom of the Lannang throughout the country, and at its height in 1993, there was one month when kidnappings were being reported every other day. Most of the kidnappings were later exposed to have been masterminded by the military and the police. Teresita Ang-See, a Lannang community leader, estimates there were 140 fatalities among the victims, while others involved torture and rape (Ang-See 1997b; Delizo 2019).

The kidnappings stirred paranoia and panic among the Lannang, to the extent that some wealthier families sent their children overseas or would pack up and migrate as a family. The Lannang community lobbied with government, even rallying in the streets, leading to the creation of an anti-kidnapping task force with Lannang members. Kidnappings have decreased since then but continue, with mainland Chinese now the main target.

Chua (2002), a third-generation Lannang who spent part of her childhood in the Philippines and whose aunt was murdered in the Philippines, has written about the roots of ethnic tensions in various countries, with "ethnonationalism" as the response to "market-dominant minorities," the Lannang being that minority in the Philippines.

The memories of the kidnappings in the 1990s and early part of the twenty-first century remain. Recently when I invited a young Lannang businessman to a groundbreaking ceremony in our university, he smiled politely and said he was not sure if he was psychologically prepared to attend. He had not gone back to the university since 2003, when, as a student, he was nearly abducted by armed men right in front of his college.

Being Filial: *yuhaolang*

Confucian ideology emphasizes hierarchies governed by obedience, which is epitomized by the Lannang word *hao* (孝xiao Mandarin) or filial piety. One strives to be a *yu hao lang* (有孝侬), obedient and loyal to parents, which means a greater assurance that the elderly will be well cared for; in fact, it is considered a source of shame

to have to go to a home or a facility for the aged because it speaks of offspring who are not filial, *put hao* (不孝).

Hao is invoked to justify rigidity in social relations, the young having to give way to older people and women to men and, within families, even with sibling order. Absolute obedience may be required in some families, extending even to choices around career and marriage, and even where there is room for negotiation, this is fraught with tensions. Where the child makes a decision contrary to parental wishes, there may be strong guilt feelings. Unresolved disagreements, on the other hand, can turn into outright hostility and estrangement.

Hao amplifies unequal power relations, for example, younger daughters having to take on caregiver roles for the elderly instead of an elder brother or sister, with tremendous social costs in terms of giving up one's career and family life.

Hao also translates into a reproductive imperative: one must marry and produce children, preferably sons. Matchmaking continues, and people may be pressured into marrying, out of filial piety.

The diasporic experience in the Philippines has modified *hao* in that the filial piety obligation now includes mothers and other women elders in the clan. The Lannang have also adopted Filipino bilateral kinship, recognizing relatives on the paternal and maternal sides. These modified arrangements of a larger network have advantages (support and coping) as well as disadvantages (heavier responsibilities and obligations as well as a much more complicated decision-making system).

Being Male: *Tapolang*

Minnan has specific terms for male and female, not used in Mandarin. Men are *ta po lang* (丈夫侬) and women *tsa bo lang* (查某侬), with very strict differentiation when it comes to statuses and roles.

Child-rearing is characterized by many references to what is appropriate for males and females, from the color of clothing to the division of household duties. To deviate from these roles brings a sharp rebuke, for example, when a male behaves in a way that is considered gender-inappropriate. The boundaries can be rigid and comments cruel, Lannang fathers declaring girls are *bo lo ieng* (无路用, useless) and *tsa bo tsat* (查某贼, women thieves), because they marry out and take with them family resources as their dowry.

Lannang machismo may be aggravated by its reinforcement with the Latin variety found in mainstream Filipino society. An example comes with the *querida* (mistress) system among Filipino men, which converges with de facto polygamy among the Lannang following older Chinese traditions of a "big wife" and concubines. Although illegal under Philippine laws, both the *querida* system and Lannang concubinage are still socially accepted, even seen as a sign of both masculinity and social status, oblivious to the turbulent, even violent conflicts that can arise among co-wives and half-siblings in these relationships.

The diasporic experience has allowed Lannang women to carve out spheres of autonomy. Carino (2015) describes many of the changes among Lannang women who, with the benefit of higher education, found ways to become more independent, especially by becoming businesspeople themselves in the footsteps of their parents. I also find Lannang women who study in non-Chinese schools managing to retain a Lannang identity but with an ability to speak out when oppressed.

Lannang gay men are not as fortunate, Lannang machismo engendering a much more powerful combination of misogyny and homophobia, exemplified by the term *tsa bo tueh* (查某体), to be "like women" or effeminate (Li and Li 2008:147), used against gay men. For Lannang LGBT who cannot come out in the open, this can lead to a double life, including marrying for show and having extramarital affairs along one's sexual preference.

Being a Person with a Sense of Shame: *bin*

East Asian societies, including Chinese, tend to be shame-based, with a core concept of face or *bin* (面, Mandarin *mian*). To be shamed is to lose one's face, *bo bin chu* (没面子), or to be disgraced as in *sia pai* (泻败), a dramatic term that means a "torrent of defeat."

The shaming comes from an individual not living up to collective norms, some of which are moral (particularly sexual behavior), but applies as well to the failure to reach high standards in academics or even in wealth. To fail to meet expectations can elicit extreme shaming comments, like being called garbage or *pun soo* (粪扫, *fen sao* in Mandarin, which literally translates as swept manure).

The Lannang emphasis on face is reinforced by *hiya*, a Filipino term often translated as "shame" but which is more of a semantic complex that includes a sense of propriety, a keeping of one's place (*lugar*) in hierarchical relationships. *Hiya* and the Lannang notion of preserving face can be a double burden, applied to many different situations, from a perceived moral deficiency, as in being openly gay (read effeminate) to, simply, being poor, which might be seen too as not being hardworking, as is expected of a Lannang. While suicide rates in the Philippines are among the lowest in the world, explained by the strong stigma attached by Catholicism to suicide, its rates can be higher among the Lannang because of shame, as is described by Ang-See (1997a:30) for two Lannang suicides, a 15-year-old and a 60-year-old, both ashamed of their poverty. The role of clinical depression in suicides is another matter of discussion, but shame as a trigger factor should not be underestimated.

Being Lannang vs Being *huan*

Lannang as ethnicity integrates the core personhood concepts of being Chinese, male, filial, and having a sense of shame. Lannang is a collectively shared boundary, a definition of who belongs, and who does not, with complicated permutations.

To declare one is Lannang is an important mode for social disclosure. Even a simple encounter between storekeeper and a customer with the question "Lannang?" and an affirmative reply can mean lower prices. In hospitals and medical consultations, both patients and health professionals will ask each other "Lannang?", an affirmative answer leading to a linguistic shift which can lead to more candid and productive case histories.

Being Lannang, our people, requires an othering, which is encapsulated in the concept of *huan*. The Lannang refer to Filipinos as *huanna* (番仔) which, I was told in early adulthood, meant "barbarian," a term I began to avoid as part of political correctness.

Researching for this chapter, I was pleasantly surprised to find, in a Minnan dictionary (Li and Li 2008:31), a complete absence of "barbarian" in the definitions of *huan* and other words with *huan*. It turns out *huan* refers to a foreign provenance, thus, Arabic numerals, a Western-style building, and even Western cookies will be described as *huan*. Even overseas Chinese have been referred to as *huan ke* (番客) or *huan* visitors.

Huan therefore refers to difference, to foreign-ness. Significantly though, *huan* as a single word is also defined (Li and Li 2008:31) as "misbehaved, stubborn, and unreasonable." Important in relation to mental health, one can be described as *huan* because of improper behavior. A "Lannang" is expected to control one's emotions; therefore, to be short-tempered is to become *huan*. There is a striking similarity in this boundary-setting mechanism with the Filipino use of the term *salbahe* to mean socially deviant behavior, the word derived from the Spanish *salvaje*, which means savage (Alcantara 1999:189).

Lannang boundaries can be quite pervasive, excluding even other ethnic Chinese such as the Cantonese or more recent migrants from mainland Chinese. The most formidable of Lannang boundaries is the Great Wall, a term coined by younger Lannang to refer to the taboo on relationships and marriages between Lannang and non-Lannang and especially the *huan na*. Note the description of one Lannang woman of this Great Wall: "…a witty analogy for all the broken hearts, the ruined relationships, the you-and-me-against-the-world love stories brought about by this unforgiving rule" (Chua 2008). Unforgiving indeed, such relationships risking disinheritance. (See Pantajo-Manalac 2000:31–33 for the story of one Lannang woman who left the Philippines so she could escape this Great Wall.)

The discrimination extends to the children from such relationships or marriages, referred to as *tsut si a* (出世仔). An older term, *pua huan* (半番 Mandarin *ban fan*) or "half *huan*," captures, more powerfully, the perception that the offspring of a couple where one parent is not Lannang means a loss of the potential of being Lannang. *Tsut si a* I interviewed say they face the conundrum of being rejected for

not being Chinese enough, as well as not being Filipino enough, which can lead to either trying harder to be Lannang or actually becoming anti-Lannang.

Language and Mental Health

At the core of being Lannang is being able to speak *Lannang Ue*, "our people's language." Language becomes a sanctuary, allowing the Lannang to speak of feelings and emotions. I find it striking that Baytan's (2000) study of Lannang gay men found they preferred using Fukien (Minnan), almost an irony considering that was most probably also the language used to scold and ridicule them for being gay.

The Lannang use the generic term *sieng kieng bi* (神经病 *shen jing bing* in Mandarin) to refer to mental disease. In addition, the Lannang have adopted many Filipino generic terms for mental disorders, in particular the Filipino terms *buang*, *baliw*, and *loko-loko*, and English words like crazy and insane.

Terms for emotions are abundant and particular keywords should be studied. Reflecting the Lannang diasporic experience, one keyword is *ko* (苦) or hardship, with bitterness as a synonym. Extreme hardship is expressed as *ko si* (苦死) literally to die of hardship. *Ki ko* (气苦), on the other hand, is a combination of grief and indignation that turns bitter the vital life essence *qi*.

Kleinman (1986) and Lee (1996), among others, have written on how the Chinese tend to have more somatization of mental problems. This somatization certainly applies to the Lannang, and a linguistically competent psychologist or psychiatrist will need to understand the expressions around aches and pains, which can be similar to many other cultures, such as a headache being an expression of suffering from life's problems. In addition, there may be symbolic somatization, for example, the stomach, *pak* (腹*fu* in Mandarin), is often used to describe dysphoria, as with the expression *kui pak ke he*, the stomach filled with fire.

Somatization in the Lannang context may be due to the need to be strong, and stoic, especially among women, despite their often more difficult life circumstances. There is a Minnan term, *lun* (忍), which Li and Li (2008:80) define as "suppress, control," a term I heard very often especially from Lannang women, usually with sadness, as they talked about how they had to repress feelings of anger and resentment that come with enduring hardships, including a troubled or oppressive marriage. The term resonates with the Filipino *tiis*, to endure, again used much more by women. Significantly, the term is used as well in Mandarin, pronounced *ren*, to mean "to endure, to tolerate, to restrain oneself," and is considered a cardinal virtue in Confucianism.

I have referred to the fear the Lannang have from anti-Chinese sentiments; yet, I cannot remember hearing Minnan terms for fear. It took a poem by a Lannang, written in Filipino with references to *takot* (fear), *aalinlangan* (uncertainty), and *nangangamba* (anxiety), that reminded me we do use the Filipino, rather than Minnan, terms for this domain of emotions.

The Lannang community may need to question some of the Minnan terms we use. For example, the Lannang tend to be even more direct than non-Lannang

Filipinos when it comes to commenting about someone being thin or overweight. Paradoxically, such comments are intended to express concern, with an emphasis on the need to be heavier in weight as a sign of health. I have found such comments made for children, young adults, and the elderly.

Having cared for my parents for nearly a decade as they battled dementia, there were many occasions when they would tell me they had visitors who had commented they were looking "very thin," which would depress them, making them feel they were much weaker than they really were. Such comments can also be interpreted, by caregiving relatives, as suggesting neglect of their elderly and leading to a loss of face because it suggests a lack of filial piety.

Caring for the Lannang elderly demands even more linguistic competence because for many of them, Minnan remains the first language. This will include phasing out terms that have become dysfunctional, as with the Lannang term for dementia, *lau gong* (老戇), which means old and stupid. Another term is *lau huan tian* (老番癲 Mandarin *lao huan dian*), meaning "old and muddle-headed" (Li and Li 2008:70). Note that the term incorporates the word "*huan*," which I have discussed as the term distinguishing Lannang from "others." Other terms from Chinese remain unsatisfactory, like the Mandarin *shi zhi zheng* (失智症), which means loss of wisdom, or *chi dai* (痴呆), which can mean imbecility. I prefer using the English term "dementia," and then explain what it means, certainly not old and stupid.

Le and Multiple Cultural Pathways

Le (礼 li in Mandarin) is a Chinese keyword, referring to rituals, as well as to lifeways, and "etiquette, protocol, courtesy" (Li and Li 2008:71). The Chinese stress on *le* cuts across a continuum, from cursory politeness to obligations associated with filial piety.

Le as rituals are important in relation to health, the best example being an adherence to the *geh lai* (月里), a month-long observance after delivering a child. The *geh lai* will include non-bathing (although sponge baths are allowed) and the use of herbal preparations, as well as semi-isolation of mother and child. While tedious, the *geh lai* can become a time for the mother to rest.

The *geh lai* continues to be observed even by younger Lannang. I had a third-generation Lannang, in her 30s, who told me she and her friends observe the *geh lai* not only after births but also after miscarriages and gynecological procedures such as the removal of polyps, on the premise that any medical procedure involving the uterus is disruptive enough to need the *geh lai*, albeit with modifications such as a shorter length of observance and a combination of Chinese and Filipino medicinal plants.

Le is expressed too with gifts, *le but* (礼物 *li wu* in Mandarin), with medicines ranking high as an expression of *le*, especially for the elderly. Chinese medicines carry high prestige as gifts and are often referred to as *lannang yo* (*yo* 药), which are sometimes seen as superior to Western medicines, reflecting meanings of Lannang as ethnicity and exceptionalism, as well as social obligations and reciprocity.

The importance attached to medicines as social objects adds to its allure for mental health, offering comfort and internalizing the concern of the person giving the medicines as gifts. This however can be problematic, especially for Chinese medicines, because many Lannang do not read Chinese, presuming the medicines to be herbal when they may in fact contain Western drugs including antihistamines, antibiotics, analgesics, steroids, and even tranquillizers.

Le gives reassurance about life's important milestones, particularly end of life rituals with eclectic wakes and funerals and Buddhist monks sometimes chanting prayers right before a Catholic priest comes in for Mass, the modified rituals reflecting the bicultural Lannang's milieu for grief management (Dy 2015:148–151).

Lannang women are the gatekeepers for rituals and other forms of protocol, maintaining tradition but also being able to modify these practices. There is a Lannang expression that my mother frequently used to complain about excessive protocols, *u le bo te* (有 礼无体), which means all form but no substance (or, literally, no body), and she would either dispense with the observance or modify it. Simply uttering the expression was a way for her to reduce the stress that comes with cultural imperatives.

Paradoxically, the impetus to "preserve" Chinese and Lannang culture, coming especially from Lannang social scientists – historians, anthropologists, and psychologists in particular – may be an engine for change. There is, for example, renewed interest in teaching Confucianism in some of the Chinese schools, which might lead to variations in the reading and interpretation. Ang-See (1997c:10), one of the Lannang community leaders, is direct when she analyzes the cultural conflicts as being partly due to a "merchant culture" rather than "the traditional Confucian-based culture of China."

Change will be accelerated too as younger Lannang harness media to articulate their experiences and to reach out to fellow Lannang. A fortnightly publication appropriately named *Tulay* (Filipino for bridge), with articles in English, Chinese, and Filipino, describes itself as "a bridge of understanding between two cultures, a bridge of tolerance between two ages." Its content includes current events, as well as articles on Chinese and Lannang language and history and even a column on parenting.

Among younger Lannang, I find, too, that the adoption of an important Filipino value, *kapwa*, provides a way of dealing with the harsher imperatives of Lannang culture. *Kapwa* is difficult to translate but boils down to finding self in others (Enriquez 1978). It allows a balance between a more communal ethos and its strict requirements of conformity, with individual autonomy and agency. *Kapwa* is never essentialist but instead the product of social interactions called *pakikipagkapwa*, a constant relating of self to others. Here I find potentials in revisiting Lannang as an inclusive word. In Minnan there are two terms for "we": an exclusive *gun* (阮 and an inclusive *lan* (咱, which is used in Lannang. Lannang's borders may not be as rigid as it looks on the surface: one may be "genetically" Lannang but, not being able to speak Minnan, would not be considered as *jia Lannang* (real Lannang). Conversely, a *huan na* who takes effort to learn Minnan and adopt Lannang ways – as I have seen in many *huan na* men courting Lannang women – may be able to break down the Great Wall.

With young Lannang, the challenges to mental well-being may not be so much traditional Chinese culture, or of the influence of Filipino culture, or even of a bicultural Lannang. The tensions may in fact be between an expanded Lannang concept and a "Western" ethos especially around rights and entitlement.

The linkages between identity and mental health need to be further explored as they evolve today in different settings. I asked Lannang who have migrated to Canada for their views, and they vary, some retaining a sense of being Filipino, others of being Chinese, but, always, Canadian. They describe their identities in terms of food, language, or greeting people on the street, for example, "Are you Filipino?"

I referred to the importance of language in defining Lannang identity and have found this to be true too in discovering a sense of being Chinese in my trips to China. With frequent visits, I have come to be more comfortable with Mandarin, an indicator being an ability to express feelings, and to find shared identity, *kapwa*, among the Chinese, who always take delight in my being able to speak, write, and read in Chinese. My use of Chinese, I have realized, is often an invitation: Let me speak in Chinese so I can tell you what it means to be a *hua ren* (Chinese), Lannang, and a Filipino. It is in this spirit that I write this chapter.

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