

**IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF WONG CHUI TO BE ADMITTED
A CITIZEN OF THE PHILIPPINES. WONG CHUI,
PETITIONER-APPELLEE, VS. REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES,
OPPOSITOR-APPELLANT.**

G.R. No. L-23855. April 24, 1967

Ponente: CASTRO, J.

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CASTRO, J.:

This is an appeal from a decision of the Court of First Instance of Manila (CC 50245) dated July 28, 1964, declaring that Wong Chui possesses all the qualifications prescribed by law, and none of the disqualifications mentioned in the Revised Naturalization Law, and granted his petition for naturalization, inspite of the opposition of the Solicitor General, based on the grounds, among others, that (1) the petitioner has not conducted himself in a proper and irreproachable manner during his entire stay in the Philippines, because he used aliases without judicial authority; and (2) that his character witnesses namely, Antero S. Sarreal and Rosario Rivera, are not credible witnesses.

Wong Chui was born in Manila on January 25, 1924, of Chinese parents, baptized as Modesto Gonzales Wong Way Chui, and registered in that name with the Bureau of Immigration. He is married to Chuan So Wah, with whom he has eight children, namely, Carolina, Catherine, Roberto, Cristina, Edward, Zenaida, Florence, and Sylvia, all surnamed Wong. The first four are enrolled in the University of the East, Manila. Edward and Zenaida are enrolled in the St. Mary's Academy, Magdalena St., also in Manila. His recorded incomes for the taxable years 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962 and 1963, are P6,667.64, P6,052.54 P4,475.96, P10,384.16, and P8,019.25 respectively. He declared that he can speak, read and write English and Tagalog; that he believes in the principles underlying the Constitution of the Philippines; that he has conducted himself in a proper and irreproachable manner; and that he has mingled socially with the Filipinos. His two character witnesses, Antero S. Sarreal and Rosario Rivera, both affirmed the contents of their separate affidavits which were attached to the petition for naturalization. Sarreal, who testified having known the petitioner since 1939, and Rivera, who testified having known him since 1947, both declared that the petitioner possesses good moral character and has conducted himself in an irreproachable manner, that he has mingled socially with the Fi-lipinos, and that he has adopted and embraced the customs, traditions and ideals of the Filipinos.

After due trial, the court rendered the decision subject of the present appeal. The self-same arguments offered in the court below are the same grounds asserted by the Solicitor Gen-eral in the present appeal. Any of these grounds, if true, is sufficient basis for denial of the petition for naturalization.

Wong Chui, it is contended, has not conducted himself in a proper and irreproachable manner during his entire stay in the Philippines for he used aliases interchangeably during his said stay, i.e., "Modesto Gonzales Wong Way Chui" in his Alien Certificate of Registration, Immigration Certificate of Residence and in his income tax returns filed with the Bureau of Internal Revenue; "Wong Chee Kan" during his elementary schooling; "Wong

Way Chui" in the birth certificates of his children Carolina and Cristina; and "Wong Chui" in his amended petition for naturalization. His character witness Rosario Rivera declared that Wong Chui has been known to her as "Modesto Gonzales", "Wong Chui" and "Wong Chui Kan".

The use of the above aliases is not denied by the petitioner, but he explained that he was registered upon birth as "Wong Chui"; that when he first attended school, his father enrolled him under the name "Wong Chee Kan", in accordance with a Chinese custom which permits the father to choose an appropriate name for his child on such an important event in life as the start of schooling; that the name "Modesto Gonzales" was prefixed to his Chinese name in conformity with the practice of adding the sponsor's name to the child's Chinese name, and in his case his father's middle name "Way" was included, hence his adoption of the name "Modesto Gonzales Wong Way Chui"; and that "Wong Way Chui" is his legitimate name as his father's middle name is "Way".

The petitioner's use of said aliases is violative of section 1 of Commonwealth Act 142 which unequivocally provides that "Except as a pseudonym for literary purposes no person shall use any name different from the one with which he was christened or by which he has been known since childhood, or such substitute name as may have been authorized by a competent court." The aliases used were without authority of a competent court. The petitioner therefore violated said section 1, aside from section 2 of the same Act which requires a person "desiring to use an alias or aliases" "to obtain judicial authority" therefor. The use of said aliases by the petitioner without judicial authority "hardly speaks well of his character or of his fitness to become a Filipino citizen" (*Cosme Go Tian Ana alias Ana vs. Republic*, L-19833, Aug. 31, 1966), indicates that he has not conducted himself properly, and dis-qualifies him to acquire Philippine citizenship (*Lim Bun vs. Republic*, L-12822, April 26, 1961).

Furthermore, petitioner's character witnesses are not competent to vouch for the good moral character and behaviour of the petitioner "during the entire period of the alien's residence in the Philippines" (*Yap vs. Republic*, L-19832, Aug. 23, 1966), that is, from 1924, the year he was born, up to 1960 when he filed his petition for naturalization. Antero S. Sarreal appears to have known the petitioner intimately only in 1939 and 1940, when the latter was his (Antero's) pupil in language and arithmetic at the Manila Chinese Patriotic School. Sarreal admitted that his association with the petitioner "was purely and strictly a relation between pupil and teacher." Rosario Rivera came to know the petitioner only in 1947 when she applied as a seamstress in the dress shop of his mother-in-law. And despite her protestation that she had worked there for 13 years, that is until 1960, she cannot recall when the petitioner acquired a printing press. She does not know, of the petitioner's source of income. While she claimed that she stayed in the house of the petitioner's mother-in-law, where the petitioner at the same time also lived, she does not even know where the petitioner worked at that time. She does not also know the "faith" to which the petitioner belongs. She declared that the petitioner adheres to the principles underlying the Constitution of the Philippines, but admitted in the same breath that she has not even read the provisions of the Constitution.

ACCORDINGLY, the judgment a quo is reversed, and the petition is hereby denied, at petitioner-appellee's cost.

Concepcion, C.J., Reyes, J.B.L., Dizon, Regala, Makalintal, Bengzon, J.P., Zaldivar, and Sanchez, JJ., concur.

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