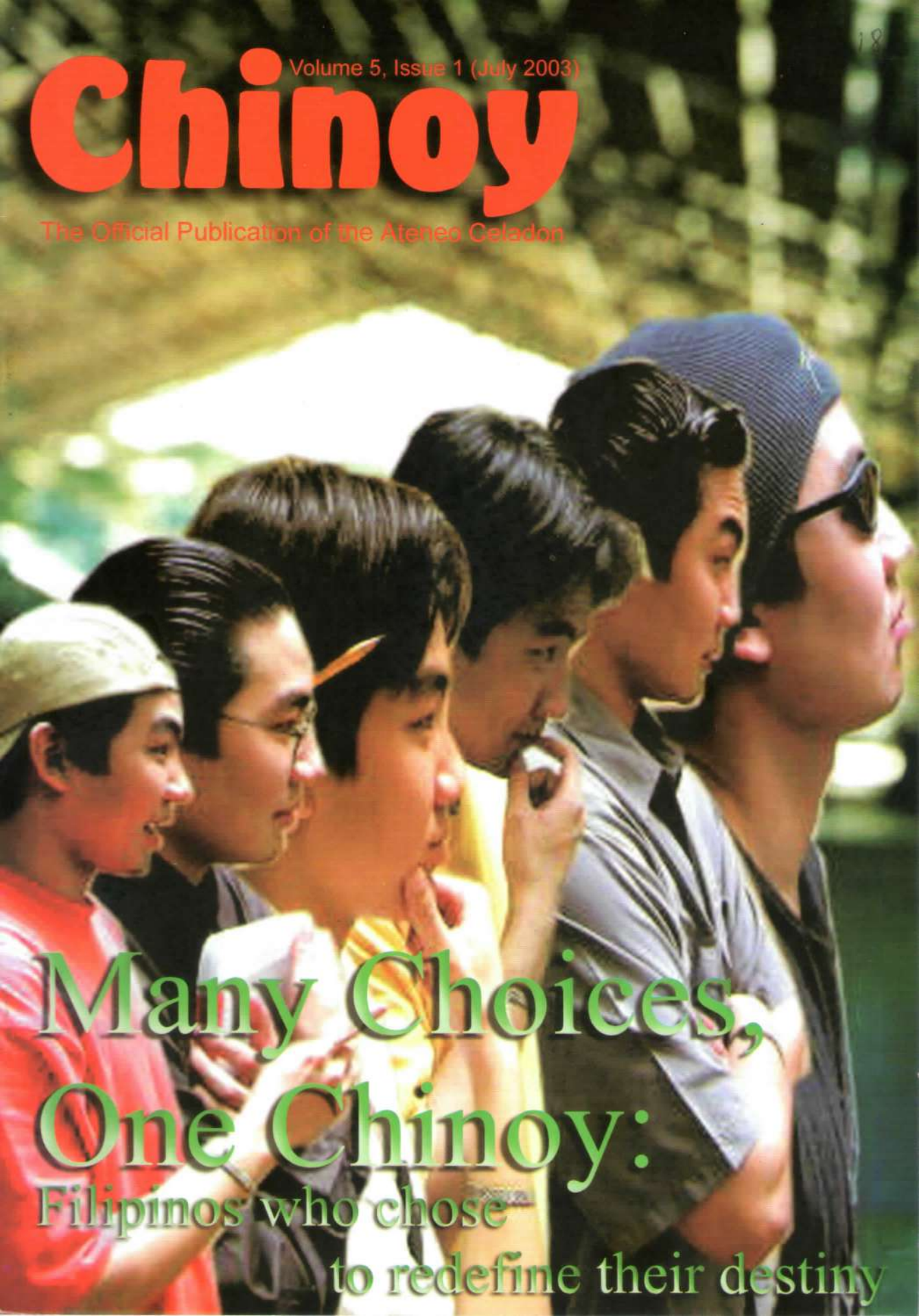


# Chinoy

Volume 5, Issue 1 (July 2003)

The Official Publication of the Ateneo Celadon



Many Choices,  
One Chinoy:  
Filipinos who chose  
to redefine their destiny

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# Letter from the Editor

## Defining "Chinoy"

FOR THIS ISSUE, we go down to the very basics.

On its 5th year now, **Chinoy** has devoted itself into examining, scrutinizing and presenting to its readers the various facets and issues that makes and shakes the Filipino-Chinese. It serves as the voice of the Chinoy community in the Ateneo, so to speak. The former **Chinoy** staff has done remarkably well in doing so, I must say. I was browsing through past **Chinoy** issues recently, and saw that the topics interestingly ranged from Fil-Chi relationships to rampant kidnappings in the Chinoy communities, with features on noteworthy Chinoy personalities every now and then.



The past issues have done a wonderful job in digging into the Chinoy psyche and coming out with thought-provoking pieces. However, this year's **Chinoy** staff felt that before we continue the work our predecessors have started, it is important that we examine first the essentials—such as defining the word "Chinoy". Who are Chinoys? What does it mean to be one? With such questions in mind, the idea for this issue was born.

Creating this issue was quite interesting, as it proved to be a tedious self-examination of sorts for some of the **Chinoy** staffers, who struggled to come up with articles to answer the questions. Finally, after several sleepless nights and busy days brainstorming, editing, and laying out the articles, the issue is finally done. It is an issue we are proud of.

The lineup is composed of a lot of first person essays, since we felt that a lot of reflection and reexamination is necessary for this issue. Read the accounts of a girl whose ancestry rendered her to feel quite out of place in "Growing up in a confused culture." Witness a boy's difficulties with mastering Chinese in "I don't know how to speak Chinese." Share the travails and triumphs of three Chinoy men as they were growing up in the new **Chinoy** mainstay *Three Generations Speaks*.

The rest of the articles are issues that confront the identity of Chinoys. When it comes to religion, are they (some of them anyway) Christians or Buddhists—or both? Is it true that Chinoys choose monetary ends above anything else?

We wish that each article somehow gives you a glimpse on what makes a Chinoy. And we hope you enjoy the ride, as we did. Now go on and turn the page ☺

Melissa Anne M. Telan  
Editor-in-Chief



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Article contributions are welcome.

# New Times, New Challenges

Art by: Keefe de la Cruz

**Three Generations speak about their lives and the challenges they faced growing up.**

"Three Generations Speaks is a new **Chinoy** mainstay, which aims to document and reveal the various changes in belief, culture, and custom that are occurring within the Chinoy community."

## A First Generation Experience

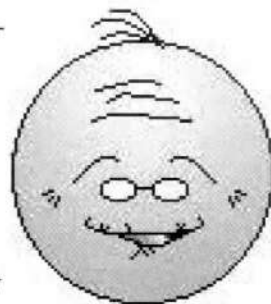
**I**MMIGRANTS from China did not have an easy life in the Philippines. Contrary to their initial dreams of having a better life here, the Chinese back then did not strike it rich the very moment they stepped on Philippine soil. In fact, it took a lot of effort to even get into the Philippines. One had to obtain a landing permit, and many had to buy other people's permits—and take on other people's names—in order to enter the country legally. A lot of them were uneducated and poor when they arrived, earning just enough to eat by working as laborers for earlier Chinese migrants.

Some people in my generation had it easier, especially those whose parents had already established small stores or businesses to live on. We were given the opportunity to go to school and get educated, while others had to help their parents feed the fam-

ily.

Even back then, education was already a big advantage. Those who could speak English or Spanish found jobs more easily than those who could not even speak Filipino fluently. Very few actually finished secondary and college education then, but those who did could count on getting hired as accountants, managers, engineers, or secretaries at the very least. This was opposed to doing manual labor or being self-employed.

Of course, we now know that there were quite a few self-made Chinese who became very successful. However, having an education offered more opportunities and choices, so many worked hard in order to send their children to school.



**"I feel that the Filipino-Chinese growing up today are more fortunate than we were."**

Studying in a school in Manila before was very different from how it is now. Although my family had enough to send me to school, I was not given an allowance. Therefore, I had to walk to school in the morning, walk home for lunch, walk back to school, and then walk back home after classes every single

day. It was not really a problem since I didn't live far from the school, except during the rainy season, when we had to soak our already flimsy shoes because commuting was too expensive. Back in

1934-35, I knew of only one classmate who had the luxury of an Austin, a small car.

Everything back then seems so cheap nowadays. Before WWII, a bottle of Coke or a large pan of pastries only cost 10 centavos, as did a calesa ride. The costs may seem low today, but so was the minimum wage then, which was only about 40 centavos per day. An MBA graduate applying for a bank job in 1956 was only offered 120 pesos a month initially. Since my family was not that fortunate, we could not afford many luxuries, even when it came to food. Our meals were not even very nutritious. They usually consisted of plain congee and vegetables; meat, like chicken, was a

ers then, so the household chores were delegated to each member of the family. I had experienced everything from cleaning the bathrooms to scrubbing the floors. To help save money, we bought only what is necessary. So whenever my dad would buy a toy for me, even though it was just the cheap kind, I would really treasure it.



**“Our grandparents gathered the raw materials, our parents took charge of the tools, while our generation built for the generations after us to enjoy the finished product.”**

rare treat only served during special occasions.

Overall, I feel that the Filipino-Chinese growing up today are more fortunate than we were. At least they are relieved from a lot of physical hardship, having the comfort of technology and the ability to afford it. However, the importance of having an education seems only to have grown, as people nowadays have become even more competitive.

- Manuel Chai, 80  
(Transcribed by Natalie Chai)

## Second Generation Account

I AM already a third-generation Filipino-Chinese, my grandparents being the first ones to settle here in the Philippines. Although my family had already established a business when my time came, by no means were we rich. We were not even close, actually.

My family was in a financial crisis when I was growing up. We were very uncertain about our future, which was why we tried to tighten our belts in every way we could. We had no household help-

ers then, so the household chores were delegated to each member of the family. I had experienced everything from cleaning the bathrooms to scrubbing the floors. To help save money, we bought only what is necessary. So whenever my dad would buy a toy for me, even though it was just the cheap kind, I would really treasure it.

Back in those days, my daily routine was simply house-school-store. I walked to and from school to save money, even when it was raining (my parents reasoned that I have rain gears to keep me dry anyway). I wasn't so much exposed to fun and games because I was at the store to help my dad almost all the time. Sometimes, if there was an onion delivery from the province (my dad was an onion dealer), I would wake up even at 3 in the morning just to help my dad.

Growing up, I learned that helping out in our store was top priority—even above my studies. Whenever our class had an excursion, I usually wasn't allowed to go because my parents preferred that I help out in the store instead. In fact, I was not able to finish college because my father got sick and I was tasked to take his place and watch over the business. If I had finished college, I could have gotten a diploma in Commerce, major in Accountancy. I had no hard feelings, though, because I also disliked studying. So everything I know now, I learned mainly from experience.

My childhood was not what you would call a happy one, yet I bear no grudges about it. In fact, I'm very grateful to my parents for providing me with the best life they could. Life was tougher for them when they were growing up. My dad, for instance, would pick up scrap metals from the streets in the hopes that he would be able to turn it into cash. At least when my time came, our business was already established and my dad made sure I need not pick up things from the streets like he did.

I have no regrets about the way I lived, and I am quite happy knowing that my sacrifices somehow made life easier for my kids. Life for my kids, and probably a lot of today's Filipino-Chinese youth, is better and more comfortable now, in the same way that life was better and more comfortable for my generation as compared to my parents'. To put it in another way, our grandparents

# 3 Generations Speak



gathered the raw materials, and then our parents took charge of the tools, while our generation built for the generations after us to enjoy the finished product. I only hope today's Chinoy youth would appreciate the work done in providing them with the kind of life they have now.

- Henry Go, 44

(Transcribed by Melissa Telan)

## Third Generation Talks Back

EVERY TIME I tell my parents about school and how hard it is to be a teenager today, I have come to expect the same old reaction: they would sigh, give me a long rendition of how much harder life was back then, and would proceed to tell me to stop complaining and, instead, be thankful for all the blessings I have been given.

They're right. I really am blessed. My parents, through all their hard work, have managed to send me and my siblings to private high schools and later on to Ateneo for college. They have allowed me to live a rather comfortable life, so

**"Like many of today's Chinoy youngsters, I have been given so many opportunities on a silver platter."**

I never found t h e n e e d t o w o r k

for my food or walk to school like they did when they were young. Like many of today's Chinoy youngsters, I have been given so many opportunities on a silver platter. For this, I am thankful for my grandfather, my parents and to all the generations that have come before me—they have certainly made my life easier and made so many things possible for me.

However, having all these opportunities also bears with it tremendous expectations. Having been sent to the best schools, I am expected to get high grades because anything less than honor marks would seem that I am taking everything I have been given for granted. I still feel anxious whenever I remember the days of college applications and entrance exams. Back then, it was unnerving to even think of being rejected from Ateneo. Not getting accepted would have meant that all my parent's hard work would have been wasted. Such disappointment was painful to even imagine.

While applying for college, the only course that made sense for me to take was Management. I was expected to help out in the family business after graduating, and therefore pursuing other passions, like writing, was automatically out of the question. Besides, there would be no future financial guarantee in them. Moreover, such a course would not help carry on the business my parents have spent all their lives building. Sometimes all these expectations can be a bit overwhelming, because it is not easy living up to someone else's image of what you should be.

I know that life during my parent's time was filled with hardships and challenges, but life today for us Chinoy youth is not all fun and games either? More and more people are graduating from colleges yet jobs are becoming scarcer. In today's job market, you need to have exceptional grades and loads of extra-curricular activities in your resume in order to qualify for high paying jobs. Schoolwork has become more and more demanding, evidenced by sleepless nights doing papers and studying for accounting exams.

The family business isn't that secure anymore due to the encroachment of so much competition and larger corporations. Combine all these things with the general hardships of being a teenager—dealing with first loves, problems with friends, and issues of fitting in—and you have a big ball of mess.

I am grateful for the comforts and opportunities my parent's hard work had provided, but I hope they understand that life isn't all that easy for me either. They might have faced difficult challenges during their time, but there are challenges, albeit new ones, I also have to face during mine.



- John Phillip Ong, 20



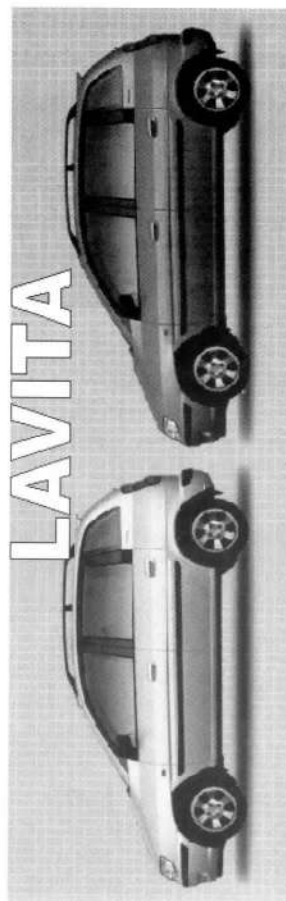


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# Two Cultures . . . Two Religions?

Here's a closer look at the Chinoy's side-by-side practice  
of Buddhism and Catholicism

By: Ginnii Sua (2 BS Mgt-H)

**O**NE of the perks of being Filipino-Chinese is getting to enjoy the best of two very different cultures: adobo and siomai, sinigang and *si but* (a kind of chicken broth), Mary and Buddha... wait a minute—Virgin Mary and Buddha?

Yup, that's right. There are quite a number of Chinoy families who practice Catholicism and Buddhism at the same time. Some of them have Sto. Niños and Buddha gods placed side by side in their homes. What more, such families give food offerings to Mother Mary like what Buddhists do for their gods.

Whether this practice is a perk or a quirk, it's up to you to decide as you hear what practicing two religions at the same time is like, from three students whose families have two cultures and two religions.

## Jeremiah's Family: The Best of Both Religions

Jeremiah's parents consider themselves more Buddhists than Catholics, especially since they both come from strong Buddhist family backgrounds. However, when his mom's family migrated to the Philippines, they came to know several Catholic associates and friends. These people would invite his mom's family to go to churches in Antipolo and Quiapo. Through this, his mother's family became more exposed to the Catholic faith

and soon began to go to churches voluntarily. Recently, his mother has also begun to encourage his father to go to Antipolo.

For his mom, Buddhism is not really a deep-sense kind of religion, but more a filial duty. She believes in the idea of praying for her ancestors because it is the responsibility of every child to remember and respect their parents even after death. Buddhism is a religion that allows her to do that. When they go to temples or cemeteries to light incenses and pray, they do it to remember and please their deceased relatives and not to please any Buddhist gods.

Jere's mom would also go to Catholic churches, but not because of her faith in God but because of her faith in what the "Catholic

God" can do. She believes that there are many gods and that they would help us if we ask them and if we regularly participate in worshiping them. According to her, most of her prayers are answered. Even Jere's father started going to church because he believed their business started earning more when he started to go.

In the beginning, his parents would require Jere and his siblings to participate in their practices too, but eventually his parents let them choose their own faith. Contrary to what his mom says about her not really believing in the Buddhist gods, he thinks that she respects those gods and believes in their ability to heal sicknesses, to bless their family and to help their family business. Personally, Jere is a believer of the Catholic faith. When he is ordered to worship his ancestors, he only does it

*"Some [Chinoy families] have Sto. Niños and Buddha gods placed side by side in their homes."*



out of filial obedience. Though he does agree that he will lose a part of his Chinese heritage by letting go of Buddhism, he believes that in the name of true worship, some things really have to go.

### John's Family: Harmony through Respect and Compromise

Unlike Jeremiah's parents, who are both more of Buddhists, John's mom is Catholic while his father is Buddhist. You would think that there would be a clash with having two different beliefs in one home, but John says faith never really became an issue with them. This is because respect is what reigns in the family, as both of his parents try to understand and appreciate each other's beliefs.

When John's parents got married, his dad agreed to be baptized but he never actually practiced the Christian faith aside from occasionally going with the family during Sunday mass. In the same way, his mother would sometimes go to temples and in other Buddhist activities with his dad and the family. She practices Buddhism mainly for cultural reasons and out of respect for John's father.

John and his siblings are all Catholics like their mom. He goes to temples only because his parents ask him to. He views the times they would go as family activities, and as a way of getting insights into their culture as Chinoys rather than practicing a religion.

When asked about his opinion, John says "I feel that religion plays an important role in my Chinese culture, but I don't think I should practice something that I do not believe in simply for the sake of keeping it alive. I think that I will be able to keep my culture rich and prosperous by making myself aware of Buddhism and its roots, and how it developed and influenced me as a person and as a Chinoy."

### Abby's Family: Mix and Match the Transformation of Belief

Abby's mom is a faithful Catholic—a Marian devotee to be exact. But when she married Abby's father, adjustments were made out of respect for both cultures. Although not actually a believer of Buddhism, Abby's mom would "go to temples, light incense sticks and even cook if there's a feast for the gods or a special Buddhist holiday."

Compromises were also made on her father's side. Her Ama (father's mother) is what Abby

would describe as a "hard-core Buddhist," but like John's family, her grandma has a deep regard for the faith of Abby's mother. She would also make short visits to some churches and would even go to Antipolo with the family during May despite her arthritis.

At home, they have both images of Buddhist gods and Catholic statues. Abby laughingly relates that sometimes, the practices of the two religions would get mixed up. There were times when they would light incense sticks and offer food to the Virgin Mary, forgetting that such practices are only done for the Buddhist gods.

Both religions also have different celebrations, some of which they chose to celebrate on the same day like All Souls' Day. However, they observe New Year's Day separately based on the Roman and lunar calendars. During the Christian New Year, they would have round fruits on the dining table, which is in fact a Buddhist practice.

In spite of practicing Buddhist activities, Abby says her family is more on the Catholic side. Since her parents' marriage, her mom had become a big influence on her father with regards to the Catholic faith. For Abby, the practices done for Buddhism are merely that—practices, and not really a religion. Personally, Abby does not believe in the possibility of having two religions, especially if we're talking about religion in its strictest sense. ☺



# Gwa Bwe Hiyao Kong Lang Nang We

By: Charles Tan

## (I Don't Know How to Speak Chinese)

### A YOUNG CHINOY CONFESSES HIS TRAVAILS WITH LEARNING HOW TO SPEAK CHINESE

MY PARENTS wanted a miracle. So they sent me to an exclusive Chinese school for boys hoping that I would learn how to speak (and understand) Chinese. Never mind the fact that the dialogue they use at home is Fookien and not Mandarin, which the school, Xavier, actually teaches.

While admittedly I am inept, I am not that incompetent. It's just that my parents, or my relatives, who always complain about me ignoring my heritage, didn't take the time to teach me the language. But one phrase is embedded in my mind: *gwa bwe hiyao kong lang nang we* (I don't know how to speak Chinese), which I instantly utter when someone talks to me in Fookien.

#### Baptism of Fire

I was four years old when I entered nursery at Xavier. The first thing they taught me was how to write, and pronounce my name: *Yang De Ca*. All Chinese names comprise three characters, each having only one symbol. It was difficult to memorize at first since my name had complex and numerous strokes. My mother used to joke that one of her friends wanted to be named *Yi Er San*, which is translated as one two three, because each character had the same number of strokes as the number it represented.

Our formal foray into the Chinese language began in grade one, where we started memorizing Chinese characters aside from our names. Learning to write "a" went side by side with learning how to write "mu", the character for tree.

Over the years, we would tackle more complex characters as our knowledge of the language

began to grow. But in actuality, it didn't. Most sessions involved mindless memorization of words and their meanings, which will soon be forgotten by the end of the quarter. We didn't even know our seatmate's Chinese name so that whenever the teacher would call someone, only that person would know that he was being called. To top it off, even our ineptitude was laughed at. During exams, the teacher would write on the blackboard the entries that needed to be filled out, such as the year and section. Under the name, he would put *da pen niu* or big cow as an example. Some students would write *da pen niu* on their test papers.

#### More Chinese learning woes

By the time I was in grade five, Chinese became the subject everyone dreaded. No one understood it except one or two students in class, which is mainly attributed not to studiousness but more to the fact that they came from a Taiwanese family thus the language they were using at home was Mandarin and not the typical Fookien. At this point, cheating became rampant. Whether it was copying from our seatmate, scribbling notes on our hand or handkerchief, or sneaking a peak at the book when the teacher wasn't looking, we all became familiar with it. It even reached a point where students who did not normally cheat in other subjects did so in Chinese. And of course, the excuse was this: "It's only Chinese. There's no point in learning it. We won't use it anyway."

I only took my Chinese seriously (meaning an effort to actually retain what I had learned) in grade six because anime dubbed in Chinese was showing





Art by: Sheryl Lim


**Most [Chinese] sessions involved mindless memorization of words and their meanings, which will soon be forgotten by the end of the quarter.**

on cable. I'd stay awake until 10 pm just to watch these shows. It surprised me that I was able to apply my knowledge of Chinese Mandarin, even if it was just a little.

Then in high school, I found out we had it easy. In Xavier, you only had one Chinese class per day. In other Chinese schools, you also had Math in Chinese, History in Chinese, even Science in Chinese. Compared to students of those schools, we might as well have been mute.

So here I am, after suffering thirteen years of education in Xavier, still unable to engage in a conversation in Chinese. My parents and relatives are disappointed in me and still expect me to speak Fookien.

Am I a Chinese betraying his homeland for not being able to speak his native language? I was born and raised here in the Philippines, albeit around people from the Chinese community. I eat balut, daing, and sisig as well as congee, century egg, and miswa. I count with *isa dalawa tatlo* as well as *yi er san*. If anything, I am not just Chinese. Filipino-Chinese (or Chinese-Filipino) is more apt to describe me and if I am not proficient with either Mandarin or Fookien, well, I don't think I'm the only one who has that problem. ☹



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# Growing Up In A Confused Culture

story by: Grace Saria artwork by: Sarah Lee lay-out by: Kenneth Gan

**There are two cultures tugging at today's Chinoy youth: the Filipino and the Chinese side. Confusion comes in when one has to choose one over the other. Read the journey of one who ultimately finds a resolution through the fusion after discovering and appreciating the treasures that both cultures hold.**



stringent on and recognized for its Chinese

SOMETIMES, I feel like I'm forever trying to fit in.

Before having my formal schooling in Manila, I enrolled in a nursery school in San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan. You could just imagine how the kids from the province reacted to a fair-skinned, chinky-eyed chubby girl from the city. Indeed, I was different from all the other kids because of how I looked and where I came from. Even though I had the same thoughts, read the same books and went to the same school as my classmates, I was and will always be someone different from them.

Back then, being different didn't matter much to me since I was still too little to really understand, or care. Yet as the years went by, the differences became more striking.

## Chinese school blues

From preparatory until fourth year high school, I studied in a Chinese school. It was not just any Chinese school, but one that was

**Those who were of half or mixed Chinese descent were like "mud bloods" in the Harry Potter sense. We weren't hated, but there was a feeling that we did not quite belong.**

subjects. Thus, 90% of the student population was pure-blooded Chinese—making me, a half-Chinese, one of the minorities.

Ever since I could recall, I had this yearning to become pure Chinese because it was one of the ways to "fit in" at school. Those who were of half or mixed Chinese descent were like "mudbloods" in the Harry Potter sense. We weren't hated, but there was a feeling that we did not quite belong. This civil silence wasn't always the case, because there were a few instances when the discrimination was blatant, and even coming from the faculty.

I once had a Chinese teacher who took delight in berating every student who had failed his exams in front of the whole class. Those who



were of little or no Chinese decent received a huge part of the verbal beating; he would call them insulting names and blamed the poor marks on their "skewed ancestry." This incident shocked everyone in class, not so much because the comments were below the belt but because we knew we had the same discriminating thoughts going through our minds everyday.

### Starting anew

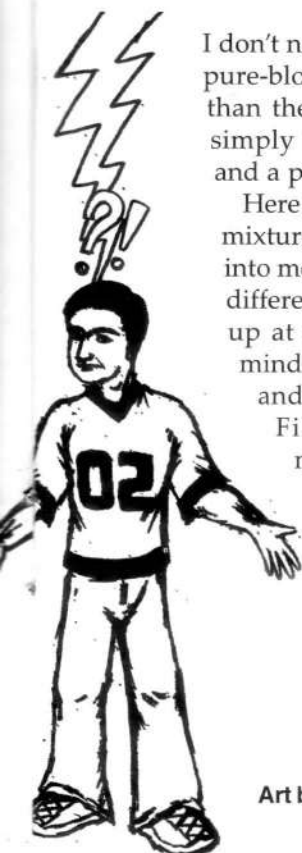
Starting anew in the Ateneo, where diversity is welcomed, made me feel that new gateways were opened for me. It felt like the walls of Communism had been torn down and I am finally free to be myself. I don't need to beat anyone at their own culture game anymore—

**Growing up with two different cultures can be seen with two sides of a coin.**

I don't need to be more Chinese than the pure-blooded Chinese or more Filipino than the pure-blooded Filipinos. I can simply be myself—a Filipino-Chinese and a proud one at that.

Here in college, I finally appreciate the mixture of culture that has been molded into me. It is true that growing up with different cultures can cause some mix-up at first but eventually, one won't mind the variety at all. The mixture and confusion is all part of being Filipino. The Philippines is a melting pot of culture where you can see different races comingling with each other and the end result would still be a Filipino at heart.

Art by: Jaydee Chun



### Being Filipino-Chinese

Being a Filipino-Chinese for me means respecting and taking part in two cultures that are not so different from each other anymore. The Chinese people have been a major influence in the country in that their culture and practices have been skillfully adapted into the Filipino lifestyle. Practices such as eating pancit during birthdays and wearing white during funerals have become common for both Chinese and Filipino alike. For me, the mixture of two cultures is a wonderful thing because it fosters learning, understanding and appreciation.

Having reflected on my experiences on being Filipino-Chinese, I feel that growing up with two different cultures can be seen with two sides of a coin. It can either be a terribly confusing experience especially when the environment and circumstances push you to take one culture as supreme over the other, or it could be an enriching experience where you put two and two together to make a new whole.

This has made me realize that once you learn to strike a balance between the two cultures by respecting and treasuring their practices and beliefs, then there would be no cause of confusion or shame. Moreover, growing up with two different cultures can even be considered a privilege and an honor.

Thus, I now say that I am Filipino-Chinese—and a proud one at that. ☺

# CHINOYS

An article featuring  
two Chinoys taking  
the road less traveled.

in

# SERVICE

Written by Joyce Gotamco  
Art by Albert Cukingnan

**W**HEN PEOPLE THINK of Chinoys and the profession they're most likely to get into, business would most probably be the first to come in mind. For most Chinoys today, there are few alternatives after graduation other than to go into the family business or start something new. There are few careers or vocations that are as acceptable as perhaps those that can be profitable in monetary terms.

Financial stability is one value that has been ingrained in us Chinoys since we were young. It is then refreshing to know that it is not impossible to encounter Chinoys who show courage by following their own dreams and aspirations. These special people put aside the search for profit and accept a different calling to serve their fellow man. Two of such



for Higher Education. *Pathways* is an education reform that helps underprivileged students finish their education, earn a decent living, and overcome poverty. He started doing social work at a young age due to the influence of outreach programs offered in Xavier School. He started by doing catechism work with the Christian Life Community, and this devotion was carried on to college. He believed there were already a lot of people in the financial world, which is why he felt the need to be of service in the social world instead.

"The world is in need of people to help uplift the current state of the poor people," says Harvey.

This is certainly not an easy path to travel but he still continues to work hard to make this world a better place. He is motivated by people who were never given a chance to get out of poverty, and this inspired him to work for a greater cause. He feels no regrets and is emotionally rewarded.

When asked if he feels he has made a difference, he said, "Yes, but it is not enough."

**Gerry Chua:** *"I am contented and happy that I was able to help."*



**Harvey Keh:** *the Robin Hood of education for the underprivileged (save the stealing)*

people are Harvey Keh and Gerry Chua.

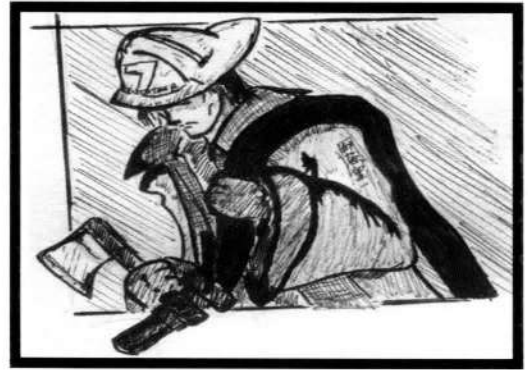
**Harvey Keh:** *"It's not enough."*

Harvey Keh, the youngest Ford Foundation Grantee, is the director of Pathways

Mr. Gerry Chua, on the other hand, is President and Fire Chief of the East Binondo Volunteer Fire Brigade and the Paco Volunteer Fire and Rescue Brigade. He is a dedicated firefighter who donated the famous ube fire trucks that can be seen in Ongpin, Manila.

His story started when he began to handle the family bakery which makes hopia. He is the third generation to own the Eng Bee Tin store and is the eldest of four siblings. **At a young age, he was given the responsibility of providing for his family, but with the business steadily declining, he started exploring other business ventures.**

He started looking for a new product that would save their business, so he asked supermarkets and grocery stores for the most sought after ice cream flavor. The answer was ube, and Mr. Chua soon became the founder of ube hopia. But the business was not as successful as planned. There were times when he had a lot of problems with his business and worried about his family's future. Still, he still



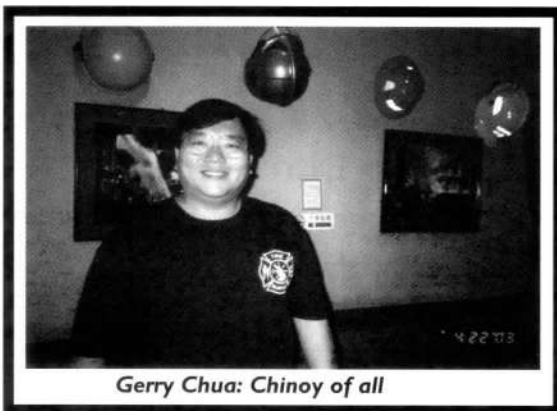
about Chinatown and the different people who lived and worked there. After interviewing him for the story, Ms. Quirino then wanted to interview the Buddhist Monks from the Chinese temples. The monks did not want to be disturbed, but Mr. Chua offered his help and persuaded the Buddhist monks to cooperate. Afterwards, Mr. Chua offered Ms. Quirino a snack of his ube hopia. Ms. Quirino felt gratitude towards his kindness and promised to return the favor.

A few days later, Ms. Quirino's staff called up Mr. Chua and he was suddenly featured on Ms. Quirino's show. Eng Bee Tin's ube hopia became an overnight success. Because of that, Mr. Chua felt that being a firefighter was a good omen and remained a volunteer to this day.

Even though he had a business to run and a family to attend to, he still managed to become the Vice-President of the Association of Volunteer Fire Brigade in the Philippines. He was even able to open a restaurant where part of the revenues goes to the benefit of volunteer firefighters.

When I asked him if he had any doubts or regrets about his chosen profession, he said, "No, I am contented and happy that I was able to help."

**Here are two outstanding men of service showing great dedication to their work. Hopefully, their accounts may prove to us that Filipino-Chinese are not only confined to the business world, but are also doing their part in helping the community and country. ☺**



**Gerry Chua: Chinoy of all**

found the time to help the community by contributing to the work of firefighters.

Whenever there was a fire in Manila, he would surely be among the first to help put out the fire. Most people laughed at him and told him he was crazy, but he stuck to what he was doing and continued helping. He felt so fulfilled in what he was doing that he became one of the most active and known volunteer firemen in the Metropolis.

Good luck came his way when Cory Quirino wanted to interview a firefighter for her TV show and chose him. The feature was



# BALANCED ATTACK

By: Jason Tan

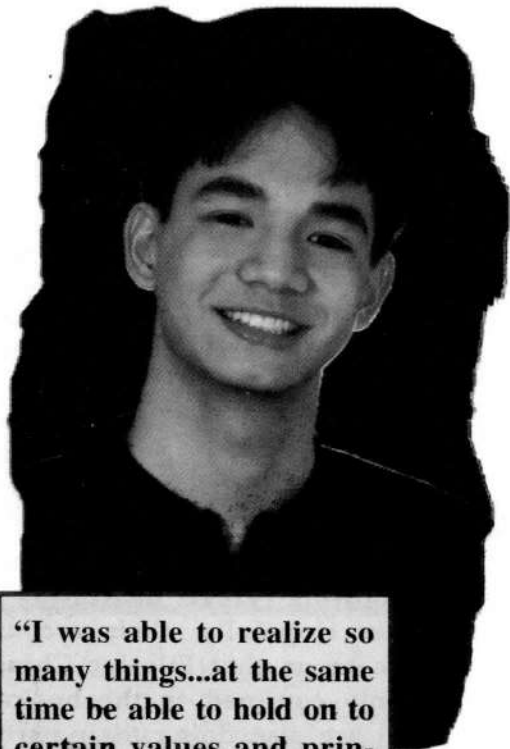
Here's the outcome of *Chinoy's* recent one-on-one with Blue Eagles rookie Chris Tiu

THE PURSUIT of high numbers is built into the fabric of the Filipino-Chinese culture. A large percentage of Chinoy's are raised to believe that emotional fulfillment should always be quantifiably measurable. The more digits you get next to your name, the happier you are assumed to be. As in most Asian cultures, academic over-achieving here is not so much a praise-worthy discipline as it is a pressure-packed stereotype. Studying hard is a practical investment for future profit

margins. In these circles, it's pretty much the only path to an authentic life. Everything else is either an admirable hobby or a strange one.

Basketball, the adopted game of the nation, is all about numbers too. In a country where cham-

**What if you are one of those people who can score on both ends—which side would you rather be on? *Chinoy* poses this question to Chris Tiu.**



**"I was able to realize so many things...at the same time be able to hold on to certain values and principles."**

pionship games knock world news and global politics out of the headlines, figures matter. A player can be praised for having all the "intangible" skills in the world, but the fact is, if it can't be recorded on a stat sheet, it's not a part of hoops history and by the time the next generation of fans come around, the memory of that player dies from a word-of-mouth shortage.

Here's the thing: what if you are one of those people who can score on both ends? If you grew up listening to the philosophy of Fil-Chi practicality while simultaneously working on your jump shot, which side would you rather be on? Ateneo freshman Chris Tiu has proven – at least in the high school field – that he has developed into that type of all-around player. That's what happens when you single-handedly torch your opponent with 40 points in a brink-of-elimination game with your school's Tiong Lian (the Chinoy high school equivalent of UAAP) basketball championship on the line,

while earning an incredible amount of academic acclaim on the same year.

*Chinoy* talks to Chris on how he plans to perform his upcoming balancing act.

## How do you feel about being in Ateneo?

Well, first of all, it's an honor to be here in Ateneo because not everybody gets a chance to enter the school due to its standards. I'm also very grateful because not everybody gets the opportunity to be able to play in the basketball team and at the same time be in a very respected and prestigious course such as M.E. (Management Engineering).

## You've been practicing with the Blue Eagles team already, right?

Yes.

## How have your teammates been treating you so far?

When I first trained with the team this summer, I felt really welcomed and at home here in Ateneo because of how friendly all the players were from the moment I stepped in. They were always like big brothers to me because they've always helped me. They taught me how to be a better player, and most of all they really shared their time and helped me become part of the team.

## Did they ever give you a hard time? Any right of passage rituals?

Um...no not really. No! I mean, not at all! But sometimes there were practices where...no, no, no. I take it back. It's just that, I probably feel that the game here is different—entirely different—as compared to high school, which was why it took me some time to adjust to the toughness of the players. They're really much stronger and more physical here as compared to high school, but I wouldn't say they were trying to start some initiation thing. No. It's just part of the game.

## From which side does the pressure feel higher: from the academic or from the sports side?

I think probably from the academic side because from what I've been hearing, M.E. is one of the most challenging courses here in Ateneo. A lot of people had been, you know, transferred [from M.E.] to another course and the passing rate is somewhere around 50% so I think it's really challenging here. A lot of people expect me to really do well, especially people in my family, close friends and relatives, so that's why I think there's

probably more pressure in the academic side.

## What did you dream of becoming when you were growing up? Did you ever see yourself as basketball guy?

Actually, no. I never really dreamt of becoming a professional or amateur basketball player like in the PBL and stuff. I just like to play basketball for fun because I enjoy the game.

I probably always wanted to be a successful businessman and, you know, have a happy family, good wife and of course children, and then also be a person with good values inside me. Yeah, that's probably it.

## You're basically describing the Atenean dream.

[Laughs] Yeah. Man for others.

## If you had to keep just one memory from your life so far, what do you think that would be?

Not just basketball? Anything?

## Anything.

Hmmm...that's a tough one. It's not that far off. Recently, during our high school graduation, I was awarded the four of the most prestigious awards of the school: the Xavier Award, the Leadership Award, the Magis Award, and the Academic Excellence.

Why is it the most memorable for me? Probably because these awards, when you receive them, mean that you really...did something throughout your time in high school. I also believe that through these awards, I was able to realize so many things, such as how fortunate I've been to be able to receive such quality education and at the same time be able to hold on to certain values and principles.

Receiving the awards made me realize how grateful I am to my parents, and even my friends, 'cause they've been responsible for all of these achievements and everything. I've been really lucky and blessed with these talents. Through these awards, I've been able to realize the true person that I am. ☺

Art by: Sarah Lee

# Flash Back:

## The Leadership Training Seminar

By: Ivan Lee

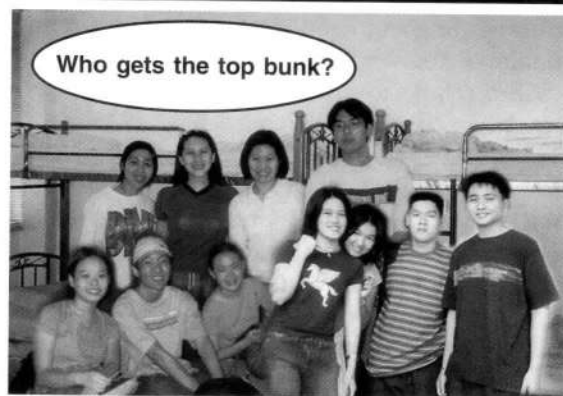
**C**ELADONEANS trooped to the ISO complex last February 8 to attend the much-awaited Celadon Leadership Training Seminar, which was designed for us humble members and project managers to learn from Geoffrey Yu (last year's Celadon President) and his mythical Executive Board team.

Each member of the EB took turns in enriching and indoctrinating our young innocent minds with Stephen Covey's *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, which went on up until the next day. In between talks, Celadon's HR team converted language into action by setting up activities that incorporated our newfound knowledge into both towering works of art (literally) and unforgettable experiences.

The first day ended with the main highlight of the event, the "Humanopoly," which was a fun and pretty weird activity conjured up by the ever-creative HR team (now we know what they do during their meetings). In it, the members of the different teams transformed themselves into game board pieces as they traveled across the length and width of the ISO complex while doing all sorts of unimaginable things. In the end, the all-girls team won the event (whatever happened to male-superiority?) by completing the course in record-breaking fashion.

### All-nighter

As is typical of all Celadon overnights, many people didn't even bother to sleep. Some went to watch a movie, some stayed at a Starbucks and others decided to spend the night in the best possible way: Warcraft. After exhausting all the sensible activities open to us, you'd think that we'd finally retire and call it a day... but no! Instead, some people opted to sit down, play cards and



risk looking like the "living dead" the next day.

In the end, the whole event was a huge success. Aspiring future leaders of Celadon got to know one another and got to learn from the experiences of the outgoing leaders. This is exactly what makes us strong: our commitment to one another and to Celadon laced together by the memories and experiences handed over to us by the very people who have made Celadon what it is now (the best). ☺



### My 5 favorite memories in this year's LTS:

- 1.) Late-night truth or consequence...that had a lot of consequences
- 2.) Char's "kilig moments" when the very macho guys of Celadon gave her their best pick up lines (Peace Char!)
- 3.) Warcraft: the ever indispensable game of the century
- 4.) All the graduating Celadoneans (We'll miss you guys!)
- 5.) The people responsible for the event itself (Thank you!)



# A Magical Night That Was

by: Charlene Chua



**Celadoneans transformed into dapper princes and charming princesses at the recently held Celadon Ball**

**L**AST March 1, 2003 (Saturday), the first ever Celadon Ball, entitled *Masque*, was held at the Acropolis Clubhouse. Celadoneans left the usual jean-and-shirt at home and donned a more formal attire at the event. The men, fully clad in coats and ties, were transformed into charming princes, while the princesses came in elegant dresses. The program finally started at eight.

Hosts Ivan Lee (4 BS Mgt) and Jals Tiu (3 BS Mgt-H) welcomed the Celadoneans to the event and to dinner. Hordes of hungry people swarmed around the buffet table.

While everyone was eating, the winners of the informal awards, such as Achi and Ahia ng Bayan [which were given to Jojami Ko (5 BS ECE) and Ace Sy (BS ME '03) respectively] were announced. This was to be followed by the Celadon Choir led by Maan Nuguid (4 BS MIS) and the formal awards such as the best project, outstanding managers and members, and best departments for the school year.

Finally, the best *Masque* (mask) award was given to Charlene Go (3 BS MIS). The turnover rites came next marked by a pledge and the speeches of Former President Geoffrey Yu (BS MGT '03) and Incumbent President Clarence Lim (4 BS ME).

Celadoneans danced the night away after the party. It was truly a magical night.



Just the guys.



Ahia ng bayan



Say cheese!

# Capping Summer Vacation in a Quaint Way

Written by Jules Ang  
Photos by Nats Chai

*Celadon officers escaped to Antipolo and had a blast at the recent Celadon Managers' Formation Seminar*

**C**ELADON OFFICERS closed May and welcomed June 2003 in a rather bizarre way. For starters, the customary Tagaytay-Baguio-

but for questions—to know each other a little bit more.

Following this was a series of talks (yes, attending talks during summer vacation is relatively peculiar) on Celadon need-to-knows: From this year's vision-mission-objective (conveniently termed VMO), to constitutional reviews, to marketing SOP's, to letterhead-slash-logo conventions, down to the newly-adopted upward-downward evaluation scheme. A game called "Ask Me If You Can" followed to test if the managers absorbed all the relayed information, as well as to relax their already sit-sick buttocks.

After a balanced repast of chicken curry, beef bouillon and stir-fried veggies (with *buko pandan* for dessert) for lunch, the formation and information resumed. The afternoon started with an activity on effective decision-making. Provided with



*Clarence welcomes the managers*

Boracay tourist spots were defeated by Las Brisas, Antipolo as the choice of destination. Here, the officers did not lounge away to enjoy the remaining days of summer vacation. Instead, they attended the Celadon Managers' Formation Seminar and honed their headship skills into becoming better Celadon officials.

Not far from the irony list were the activities and talks, which were designed both to form and inform the participants. After introducing this year's new set of executive board members, the entire assembly went indoor fishing—not for seafood,



*Full and fueled Culturals*

an end-of-the-world scenario, each manager was given an opportunity to be om-



*Micmic (pointing West): "Look East!"*

nipotent by deciding which six of the ten individuals to save. When they have made up their minds, each officer would discuss his decision with fellow omnipotent groupmates, who also made their own choices.

Later on, several more topics were discussed, such as the various techniques of motivating a member, delegation strategies, trends in today's market, and effective ways of managing conflicts. Cherry-topping all these was a speech on the integration of all five departments to form one Celadon. This was followed by quotes to inspire the Celadon officers, led by Celadon President Clarence Lim (4 BS ME) and Executive Vice President Jane Carol Or (4 BS MIS).

### *The fun starts*

A group dynamic followed, aiming to alleviate the impact of the previous hardcore discussions. Here, each one was sorted to a particular family and was tasked to act out a Jollibee scenario. After much cheer and Chicken Joy, the GD was at last concluded by the picture-taking of each family and department.

After dinner, a little heart-to-heart transpired between the officers, each sharing his expectations from the organization, the EB, and his fellow officers. After clarifications on Celadon's VMO and some reflec-

tion on a John Maxwell quote—*voila*— it was bonding time! Board games such as *Taboo* and *Scattergories* proved to be very effective bonding tools that entertained everyone. After a few episodes of *Animatrix*, everyone finally retired to bed.

All participants greeted June 2003 at about 7:30 a.m., which was the call time. This day was particularly devoted for the presentation of each department. Equipped with creativity and an exceptional knack for using ad-lib as their unanimous script, each department presented the projects they have in store for the nearing school year.

After an hour of aching stomachs and tickled funny bones, the Best Presentation award finally went to the four Comm Department jesters. An oath of affirmation and commitment, led by Celadon President Clarence Lim, formally closed the seminar. And so, after an hour-long backstabbing session (the good backstab, not the bad one), everyone ate lunch, packed their bags, bid



*Comm jesters bag Best Presentation Award*

adieu to each other, and went home feeling as if they had just gone to an extraordinary vacation... sans the sunburn. ☺





## ***Managers' FormSem*** portfolio

1. Comm (da coolest) Team
2. Diana "The Evil Queen" Tan
3. Wacky Culto Managers
4. FHMs (holding Birdie)
5. Cheson *unloads* while reading **Chinoy**
6. HR (da best) Mavericks
7. Externals Cuties
8. The Celadon EBlings



*When all work...  
...is all play.*

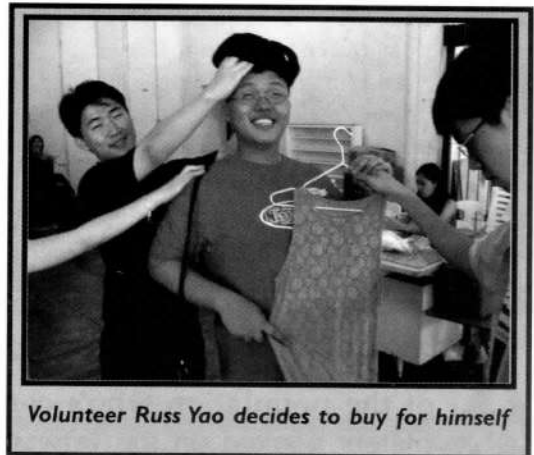
# Look At What I've Found Here!



Text & Photos by Edward Cheson Sy

So and Chrissy Teng – had to encounter several day-long sessions of organizing and classifying the donations to their right, reasonable, and respective prices. With brimming supplies, there was enough to hold 3 different sales in 3 different locations – June 21 at the Mary the Queen Church in San Juan, June 22 at the Sacred Heart Parish

**O**NE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL fund-raisers for Celadon has always been the Rummage Sale. Asking donations of old clothes, toys, bags or simply anything saleable, project managers are blessed to be given a project that suffers no loss. All it takes is an enormous amount of time and effort to sort the second-hand goods, and off they go to the profit transformation chamber – or simply put, money. However, this summer, the Marketing & Finance (M&F) Department decided to make things more exciting. The plan was simple: instead of having every department making a Rummage Sale for the school year, the M&F Dept decided to take control over the whole scene and create the biggest



Volunteer Russ Yao decides to buy for himself

Church in Manduluyong City and June 28 at the Varsity Hills Village in Quezon City.

On the other hand, selling the merchandise was a different story. Mobs invaded the booths like Christmas shoppers in late-night discount sales. Thankfully, officers from other departments were there to help and bargain with the customers. They were the ones who provided the company and entertainment to their fellow project managers from cross-dressing to masked killer dolls running amok. With empty boxes and full



Co-Project Head Louise Lim maintains her poise

Rummage Sale ever, the so-called *Ukay-Ukay Challenge*.

Indeed, gargantuan work was poured in making this project possible. The Rummage Sale Project Heads – Jacky Chua, Louise Lim, Hannah



Chuckie gets berserk and attacks VP M&F Oliver Salva

spirits, everyone found the tiring day's work none but fulfilling. ☺

# "Meteor Garden"



By: Angela V. Ignacio

Due to popular demand, **Chinoy** gives you the scoop on the Taiwanese soap everyone's been talking about.

**A**DMIT IT. You belong to 99% of the population who's completely hooked on the Taiwanese soap "Meteor Garden" and its gorgeous stars. If not, here's a crash course on what everybody's been talking about.

## Meteor Garden 101

Based on the popular Japanese animated series "Hana Yori Dango" (literally translated as "Men Are Better Than Flowers"), "Meteor Garden" is about a simple, strong-willed girl from a middle-class family who is enrolled by her parents in an exclusive prep school, in the hopes that she might snag a rich guy. Instead, she clashes with four handsome bullies, played by none other than Taiwan's hot-

test male pop group F4, and turns their lives upside down.

Why has "Garden" made such a huge splash here in the Philippines? First of all, it's the first Chinese drama series to be aired locally, which is a nice change from all those Spanish *telenovelas*. Second, the dubbing in Filipino seems more believable, as the stars all have Asian features. Third, the plot contains the quintessential love triangle that leaves the viewers in a pinch as to who should end up with whom. Fourth, starry-eyed viewers like the Cinderella aspect in the plot, wherein poor girl meets rich guy, and they all live happily ever after. (Or do

[Meteor Garden] is the first Taiwanese drama series to be aired locally, which is a refreshing change from all those Spanish telenovelas...the dubbing in Filipino seems more believable, as the stars all have Asian features.



they?) And fifth, its gorgeous stars. Need I say more?

### Cast of heartthrobs

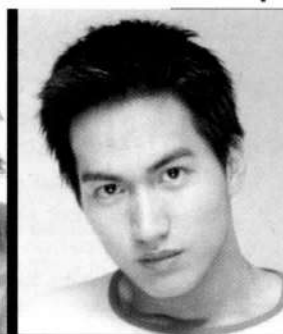
"Garden" boasts of an extraordinary cast of pop icons whose good looks can reduce grown women—and men—to mere puddles of mush. 26-year-old (yes, you read it correctly) Barbie Xu, who's one-half of the sister pop duo SOS, takes on the role of 19-year-old heroine San Cai. Spunky and headstrong, San Cai defiantly holds her own against rich snobs and ends up winning the hearts of two of the hunkiest guys in school, Dao Ming Si and Hua Zhe Lei.

Dao Ming Si, played by Jerry Yan, is the wealthy, bad-boy leader of the notorious Flower Four. With a temper to match his fiery sex appeal, none dared cross paths with him until San Cai stands up to him and his group. Judging from the smitten reactions of viewers, it appears that 26-year-old Jerry is the resident heartthrob.

Vic Zhou plays the shy charmer Hua Zhe Lei. Quiet and unassuming, he is secretly the one who holds San Cai's true affections, which brings him at odds with Dao Ming Si. The youngest at 22, Vic is known to his screaming gaggle of fans as Zai Zai, which is a nickname his grandmother had given him. He used to study Engi-



Dao Ming Si  
with long hair

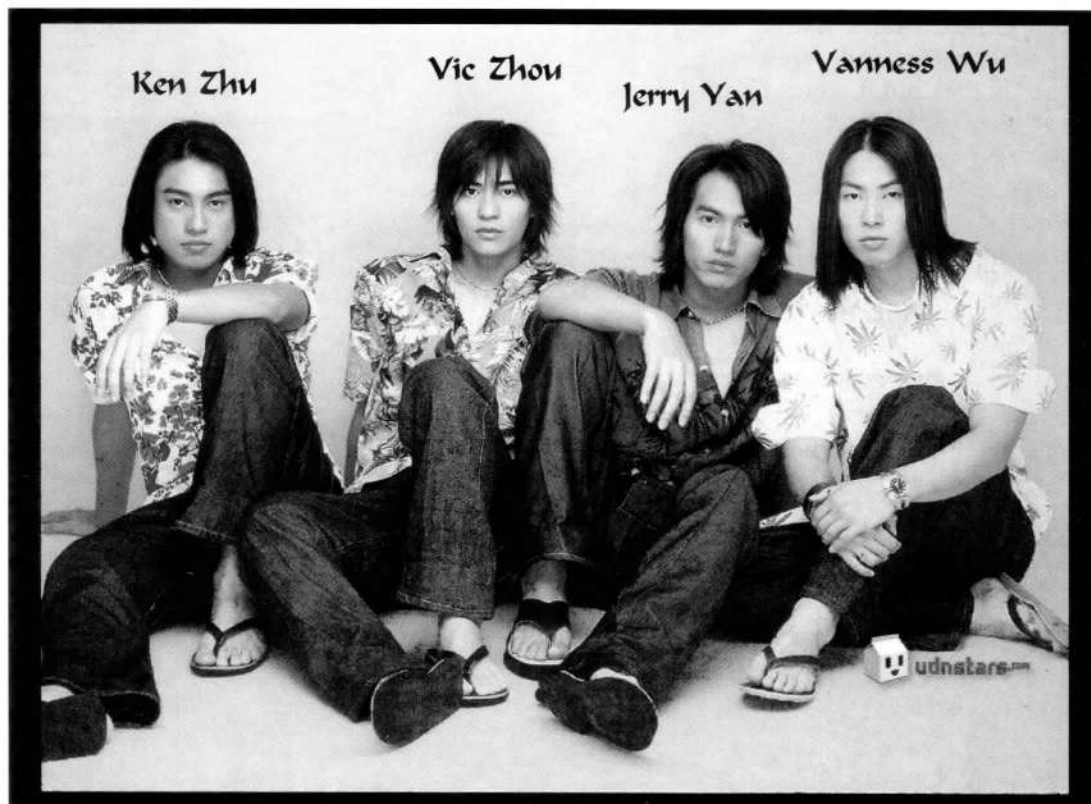


Dao Ming Si  
with short hair

neering before he got drafted as a member of F4.

The indomitable playboy Xi Men, played by 24-year-old Ken Zhu, is the cool, calm and collected member of the quartet. Xi Men's philosophy is rooted in the belief that every woman becomes uninteresting a week after he gets to know her, so he shies away from long-term relationships. Although born in Taiwan, Ken has lived in Singapore for eight years and, like Vanness, can speak English well.

And last but not the least, Vanness Wu plays the smooth talker Mei Zhuo, whose happy-go-lucky personality adds a touch of humor to the



show. Vanness has lived most of his 24 years in Los Angeles, California, which explains his flawless English. With his irritatingly gorgeous hair, he is the easiest to recognize among the four.

#### F4's meteoric rise to fame

The F4 boys were virtual unknowns before "Garden" pushed them into the spotlight. Ironically, the group was originally formed for the series and not as a vocal pop group. Each of them was handpicked from the thousands who auditioned for the roles of the four big men on campus, dubbed as the Flower Four.

Jerry had actually been in the modeling business before he landed the leading role of Dao Ming Si. Vanness was spotted by the casting agents when he guested in a Taiwanese Sunday TV show. Vic went to the audition only to accompany his friend, but got the plum role of Hua Zhe Lei instead. And finally, Ken was discovered while he was working in a Japanese BBQ restaurant.

The quartet made "Garden" such a huge and instantaneous hit that they caught the attention of Sony. Two chartbusting albums ("Meteor Rain" and "Fantasy 4ever") and a "Garden" sequel later, the fate of F4 as Taiwan's newest pin-up gods was sealed, with the Philippine mania instantly rising to a fever pitch.

#### Spellbound viewers

Not only that, but it seems like the whole of Asia has fallen completely under their spell, and for a darn good reason, too. Their Oriental features are a refreshing alternative to a pop culture mostly dominated by Caucasian "boy bands."

To date, F4 is the biggest Asian pop act to gain a cult following practically overnight. Critics may argue that they're just another run-of-the-mill boy band with the same formula as that of their counterparts: wholesome good looks, funky clothes and little talent. But apparently, this formula is exactly what the viewing public wants. And boy, is it ever. ☺



The F4 boys were virtual unknowns before *Meteor Garden* pushed them into the spotlight...

Eat Drink Play

FLOW ROOM

Level 5  
**THE PODIUM**  
ADB Ave., Ortigas Center  
Mandaluyong City  
Philippines 1550  
Tel. 634.1404 / 635.2881  
Fax: 914.2025

BETTY LIM  
Director



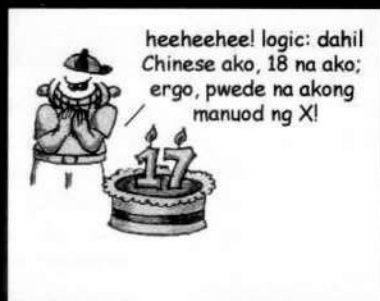
# Aling Lahi Ka?

Text & Art by: Keefe de la Cruz

Show no mercy! Eating out, especially at Chinese restaurants, you either consume everything or have the waiter plastic whatever's left. Be it a little Yang Chow fried rice or some delicious chili sauce, nothing is left behind.



...Chinoy!

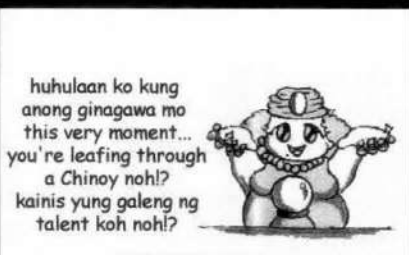


You're always an age older than you actually are. And people can tell exactly how old you are by

just knowing under which Chinese zodiac you were born under.

...Chinoy!

Two words: *Manang Bola*. You won't know



the course of future events is uncanny, particularly when it comes to love life. I'll bet that each of us even has at least a friend who can use playing cards, your palms, or your handwriting as "windows to the future."

...PINOY!

anak, dahil berday mo, ipaglaluto kita ng samting special, samting new! combination 'to ng mga payburits mo. ipaglaluto kita ng sinigang na adobol



Majority of the food you can cook is either *sinigang* this or *adobo* that. The variety,

though, of foods that can be prepared as *sinigang* or *adobo* never ceases to amaze me.

...PINOY!

A pack of these assorted tablets, capsules, and pellets with a peculiar smell

mysterious voice1: ey doc, y'got the goods?

mysterious voice2: y'got the cash?



thrice a day as a remedy for a fever, cough, or other sicknesses – it's a wonder we haven't been diagnosed with drug dependency and abuse yet.

...Chinoy!



The television set also serves as a clock. It's turned on almost all day and you can tell

approximately what time it is by the show that's running on your favorite channel.

...PINOY!



# ASK MR. CONFUCION

by: Stephanie Ann M. Dionisio (2 BS COMTECH)  
and Jimson V. Gow



art by: Keefe de la Cruz (4 BS LM)

**Mr. Confucion enlightens us on chopsticks etiquette, lucky numbers and why the Chinese wear red during birthdays.**

**Why can't you insert chopsticks in an upright position on a bowl? Is it just one of the Chinese food etiquettes?**

**Mr. Confucion:** Chopsticks pose an important role in the Chinese food culture. Chinese people have been using chopsticks as one of the main tableware for more than 3000 years. There are 5 classifications of chopsticks based on the materials they're made from: wood, metal, bone, stone and compound chopsticks. Just like any other culture, manners and ethics are highly revered. When using chopsticks, there are certain etiquettes to follow.

**Do not beat your bowls while eating.** This behavior used to be practiced by beggars, and is sometimes done in restaurants when the food is coming too slow. If you are a guest at someone's home, beating your bowl while eating is like insulting the cook.

**Do not grasp chopsticks too tightly or your hand will cramp.** Snapping them in two is considered poor etiquette.

**Do not place your chopsticks across your plate or directly on the table when they are at rest.** Lean the tips against the side

of the plate, letting the bottoms rest on the table.

**Do not stick your chopsticks upright in the rice bowl.** Instead, lay them on your dish. The reason for this is that when somebody dies, the shrine to them contains a bowl of sand or rice with two incense sticks stuck upright in it. By sticking **y o u r** chopsticks in the rice bowl, it would seem like the said shrine, and **i s** equivalent to wishing death upon a person at the table.



**Do not reach across a neighbor's chopsticks.** "Chopstick fencing" at best will cause a mess. At worst, it could result to the loss of an eye.

**Do not lick or bite your chopsticks.** This is considered barbaric, so is fishing around for



the best pieces in a serving dish.

**Why do Chinese wear red clothes during birthdays? Are birthdays related to any significance in the Chinese custom?**

**Mr. Confucion:** Chinese people put their family on the top priority as to keep family bloodstream flowing. And the running family bloodstream maintains the life of the whole nation. This is why children production and breeding in China has become a focus of all members of families. They have even accepted it as an essential moral duty.

Birthday celebrations, like children production, are important for the Chinese family especially during the 1<sup>st</sup> month and the 60<sup>th</sup> year. On the morning of the baby's 30<sup>th</sup> day, sacrifices are offered to the gods so that they will protect the baby in his subsequent life. Ancestors are also virtually informed of the arrival of the new member in the family. According to the customs, relatives and friends receive gifts from the child's parents. Types of gifts vary from place to place, but eggs dyed red are usually a must both in town and the countryside. As people do in the Spring Festival, gifts given are always in even number. On the 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, however, Chinese experience the biggest celebration for it poses as the most important point in their lives.

During these occasions, colors portray different meanings in Chinese customs and are vastly considered. The celebrant wears red during his birthday in order to acquire luck and to protect himself from evil spirits and bad fortune.

**What is your favorite number?**

**Mr. Confucion:** If I were a Westerner I would pick an odd number, such as 1, 3 or 133,147. But since I am Chinese, I would pick an even number for it has been said that blessings come in pairs.

But you must remember never (and the Chinese man says *never*) to pick the number 4 because it reads as "death" in Chinese.

**I asked a Chinese friend once and he told me that he loves the number 1-6-8. What's with it anyway?**

**Mr. Confucion:** The number 1-6-8 or (*Tsi lo hwat*) in Chinese is a saying that means continuous luck. Keeping that number with you is a way of keeping lifetime luck. ☺

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Ping Lun Pian is a Chinese term used to denote a written opinion or critique

# ON BEING Chinoy

By: Jody Bustos

## A Chinoy probes deeper on what it really means to be one

**W**HAT does it really mean to be Chinoy? Is it being Chinese but living in the Philippines? Or is it being half-Filipino and half-Chinese by blood? Does it mean being a pure-blooded Chinese, but one who thinks like a Filipino? Or could it be the other way around? Does having one-fourth Chinese blood qualify as Chinoy? What about Filipinos living in China—do they count as Chinoys as well?

When you think about it, "Chinoy" is not an easy word to define. It's a confusing term, and a term that stirs confusion. It's as if the label is saying that there is a boundary that separates a "Chinoy" from a Filipino, and even a Chinese. However, is there really a boundary?

### Chinese Schooling

I am half-Chinese and half-Filipino by blood, and it was my parent's decision to put me in Xavier School. Actually, it was my Amah's (Paternal grandmother's) mandate that all men in our family study in Xavier and all women study in ICA.

Since I went to a Chinese school almost all my life, I have been surrounded by Chinese friends, learned the Chinese language, loved Chinese food, and integrated the Chinese culture into my life. But don't get me wrong— I enjoy all the things being Filipino has given me. It's just that when I see myself in the mirror, I identify myself to be more Chinese than Filipino. People are surprised to know that I am only half-Chinese because I look, act, and feel Chinese.

Thus the question arises: if I call myself Chinese, can I still say I am Chinoy? I believe so,

because calling oneself Chinese only means having Chinese blood, but calling oneself Chinoy means having a certain way of thinking, feeling and living.

Being Chinoy is a blend of the Filipino and Chinese cultures, a combination that is unique here in the Philippines. The four million Filipino-Chinese living in the Philippines has integrated the Filipino ways in their culture, creating a unique harmonic fusion in mind and in heart that is Chinoy.

### The best of both worlds

But is being Chinoy really the best of both worlds? Certainly so! I can attest that it really is a unique experience to be half-Filipino and half-Chinese. I especially enjoy the convenience of speaking in Fukien to my mother in front of my father, who couldn't understand it, when I need to tell my mother something I don't want my father to know. But I have also grown to appreciate being able to trace back my Filipino family tree and see the towns where my ancestors used to live. When people ask me where I come from, I say I come from the Fukien province of China and Pampanga as a testament that I do come from two different cultures and places fused together by my being.

Perhaps what I've learned from my experiences is that our generation of Chinese become Chinoys first by circumstance and then eventually by choice. There are a lot of Chinese people who do not know how to speak Fukien, while there are pure-blooded Filipinos who speak the language.

My years spent in Xavier School definitely exposed me to what it is to be Chinoy. And even though I had no choice where I had to study for my primary education, now I can say that it has become a choice of mine to live this way of life—to live as Chinoy. ☺

**Jody Bustos** is a junior taking up Management Engineering. He loves playing mahjong and hopes everyone would gain an appreciation for it.





**Chinoy**

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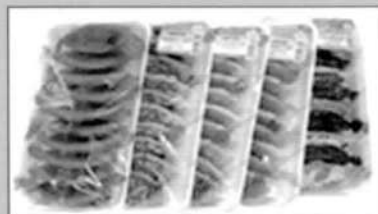
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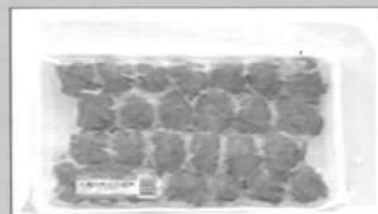
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