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*Ephraim C. Areño*  
West Visayas State University

## THE FAMILY TREE OF LIM EUNG

### Introduction

This study focuses on the ascendants and descendants of an Ilonggo Chinese mestizo, Dominador Jabian Javellana, who passed away in June 1994 just before the start of this study. Javellana's origins are traced back to Lim Eung, also known as Go Cuy Co. Dominador Javellana, the 10<sup>th</sup> of the 16 children of Go Cuy Co, born between 1890 and 1915, changed his ethnic identity completely from Chinese to Filipino.

Javellana's father, Go Cuy Co, adopted the family name of his godfather, Julio Javellana, when he was baptized as a Catholic under the name Jose Javellana in the Jaro Parochial Church. The family tree of Cuy Co (Lim Eung) was reconstructed from personal interviews of his kin from the oldest surviving descendants, in-laws, their children, neighbors, friends, and colleagues, up to his great-great grandchildren.

Genealogy is the history of the descent of a family, often rendered in a tabular list or a family tree in the order of succession, with the earliest known ancestor placed at the head and later generations placed in lines of direct and collateral descent. Genealogy also covers the study and research of pedigrees.

Genealogy is used in the probation of wills when knowledge of descent is necessary especially if a dispute occurs, to ensure that the property goes to the right person. Genealogy is also used when legitimacy is in question. One of the best and most practical modern uses of genealogy is in the medical field. Physicians have, with considerable success, examined genealogical records for the origin of unusual diseases in present-day families.

The researcher used personal interviews first for extracting data. The grandparents, who were very likely to possess written records and family Bibles and whose memories were often clear and accurate, were interviewed. Libraries and courthouses were visited and documentary evidence from the town and parish records that registered weddings, baptisms, and funerals were gathered.

The living members of the family being studied are very good source of genealogical studies. They have direct information to corroborate the data found in documents. Old photographs, letters, diaries, newspaper clippings, or magazine articles on some prominent family members are also found very useful in piecing together an accurate picture of the family tree. A family reunion photo is especially important in giving a total picture of the living members of the family, especially if the years are indicated. The same family may have another family reunion years later with a different group picture and the dramatic differences in the faces and the number of persons in the group in both pictures can be discerned. Some have either left the place permanently due to death, some were added when other members of the clan came around for the reunion and children and grandchildren have been added to the number of family members. After the lapse of five generations, there is hardly any trace of Chinese origins, except in the obvious fair skin and slit-eyes of the family members.

The Spaniards brought Christianity and Greco-Roman influences into the Philippines during their more than three centuries in our country. With the advent of Christianity, marriage and childbearing became central concerns in religious teachings. The Philippines has been Westernized, first by the Spaniards and second by the Americans. It is in this context that this study is focused. Though the Chinese as a race are distinct from their Malay counterparts in the Philippines, the influence of Western culture on them could not be more significant and lasting due to their prolonged stay in the Philippines and their exposure to its institutions and practices.

The first ports opened by the Spaniards to international trade from 1855 to 1861 were Iloilo and Cebu. Raw materials were thus exported in greater volume than before. The Chinese thence shifted from being importers of Chinese goods to coastwise traders, middlemen, and wholesalers entirely replacing the mestizo class. By 1870, increased frequency in contact with Chinese ports like Macao and Amoy made immigration much easier. By 1881, the Ilonggo Chinese comprised four percent of the total Chinese population in the Philippines (Omohundro, 1981:16).

Up to the American period, the Iloilo Chinese community were virtually all-male immigrants. They left their wives in their hometowns in China and returned to them as often as possible to sire children, visit relatives, and invest their savings in their homeland. Back in the Philippines, they were encouraged by hometown Iloilo Chinese communities to take common-law wives among the Filipinas, which resulted in the growth of a new mestizo class (Omohundro, 1981:17). As late as the year 1903, Wickberg, a scholar on Chinese studies, cites the figure of 13 Chinese females to 1,000 males in the Ilonggo Chinese community (Wickberg:1965:174).

### Lim Eung Early History

Lim Eung, a Chinese, left Amoy, China when he was 16 years old in 1890. Upon arrival in the Philippines, he was first introduced into an Ilonggo household and

adopted by a Go family, the same family that now controls the large Go Pun Lumber Yard and Hardware, one of the first Chinese pioneers in the lumber and hardware business in Iloilo City. He was given a new name Cuy Co and as a result his adopted name became Go Cuy Co (henceforth addressed only as Cuy Co). The choice of Iloilo as residence for numerous Chinese travelers was due to the relaxation of travel and residential restrictions on all foreigners at the time (Loney: 1964).

His Ilonggo friends called him Cuya. Cuy Co had a total of 16 children. When he was of marriageable age, he used to hang out at the *Tienda Mayor* (now Jaro Big Market). It was the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and Jaro at this time was the hub of commerce. In the physical set up of the Archdiocese, Jaro was the important ecclesiastical and administrative center after it was made the political capital in 1868.

The present site of Iloilo City was remote and no permanent bridge connected it with the present district of Jaro. It was not until 1910 when W. Cameron Forbes, then American Governor-General, caused the construction of the wooden bridge that bears his name to connect the present Bonifacio Drive with Juan Luna Street, La Paz. It was in this latter district, La Paz, where Cuy Co applied his skills at the Uy Gongco Rice Mill (*arrocera*) owned by the Uy Gongco family, a close relation.

Cuy Co inherited his traits from his mother. Such traits as industry, thrift, patience, and determination inherent in every Chinese paid good dividends. Cuy Co diversified his resources. Aside from working as a warehouse timekeeper, he accumulated bottles everywhere he had the chance. These he would fill with distilled water that accumulated at the upper portion of the steam engine of the rice mill and sold cheaply but in large volumes. He also made a small fortune selling rice husks (*labhang*, in the Ilonggo vernacular) used as cleanser for the bottoms of blackened pots and pans. The La Paz town market was a stone's throw away from his house, which was opposite the *arrocera*. His children therefore conveniently helped in the family business.

### The Cuy Co-Jabian Family

A thorough description of Cuy Co's family will give us a fairly good idea of the life of the Chinese migrant at this time. Some time in the early 1890s, Cuy Co sought the services of an Ilonggo benefactor, Julio Javellana, to act as sponsor of his baptism to the Catholic faith. Following the custom of many Chinese, the godchildren adopted the family name of their *ninong* or godfather. When he was baptized at the Jaro Catholic Church the register showed a new entry, the surname of his godfather. So Lim Eung, who became Go Cuy Co, had a new name, Jose Javellana Go Cuy Co. The suffix "co" appended to the Chinese name was indicative of social position and prestige. According to writers (Austin Craig; Esteban de Ocampo: 1965), the word particle corresponds to the Spanish Don and Doña. After several years he dropped the first name which was Chinese sounding, and was formally addressed as a Javellana. His children's names were also registered in the parish as Javellanas, except Damaso, his eldest, whose name remained Go.

Of the 16 children he begot from his marriage with a Filipina, Teresa Jabian, of Barrio Bito-on, Jaro, only seven survived. Jose Javellana Cuy Co met Teresa when the latter was an ambulant vendor at the Jaro Big Market, when she was only 13 years old. At that time, the *kanga-kangero*, a bull-drawn cart with a roof that covered goods and sleeping beds and used to ferry goods from out-of-town, was a common sight at the bustling market. Abaca fibers from Aklan were much in demand and Cuy Co, a most cunning businessman, focused on that product. In return, he exported piña fibers from Iloilo. Business grew. Since the Chinese at this time were allowed in the wholesale business of raw agricultural goods, Cuy Co meticulously took stock of his goods from which he derived his meager profits which later turned into bigger gains allowing him to save for the future expansion of his business.

One out-of-town trip to Sara, some 100 kilometers from Jaro, took one week at the most. Cuy Co would go to other towns as well vending his wares, including large volumes of fruits which were in season. He was patient, frugal, and persistent. He was contented with a little profit from small items and fast turnovers, as long as transactions were in large volume to insure returns for his money invested. He formally adopted the surname Javellana when a decree in 1936 directed all *Jareños* to adopt family names with the initial letter "J."

A trait that set Cuy Co apart from other Chinese migrants was his love for Filipino culture. This was borne out by the fact that he took a Christian name and a Filipino wife. This was handed down to his seven surviving children: Damaso, born 1891; Elpidio Sr. (1895); Estrella (1901); Amparo (1903); Vicente (1904); Dominador (1905); and Antonio (1915). The difference in the ages of Dominador and Antonio may be attributed to the fact that the 11<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> children all died at birth or infancy. A sharpened reed taken from sugar cane was used to cut the umbilical cord at birth, and due to this unsanitary practice, the babies died due to tetanus infection. Added to this practice was the perennial lack of modern medical facilities, which the natives could avail of during those early years of American occupation. The numerous deaths in his own family prompted Vicente to take up medicine when he was of age.

After three generations, Iloilo's Chinese leave the Chinese community physically or culturally. Most immigrants were exposed to cultural influences in Filipino society. The coming of the Americans partly explain the divergence with Chinese culture. Mixture with native values produced a mestizo culture, a primarily Catholic group whose economic interests had changed considerably since their competition with the Chinese during the Spanish era.

Acquiring a Christian name was a practice that became more prevalent during the American occupation. The Americans broke up the *Parian* district in Molo that was the exclusive enclave of the indigenous Chinese. It was therefore politically expedient to change physical residence or one's business venue. The choice of the *Parian* was Spanish imposition. The Americans saw no reason to desegregate the Chinese from the mainstream of cultural society.

Jaro at first offered a good opportunity for domicile but most of the houses

belonged to the upper crust, and Cuy Co was no match for the settled merchants of the place, the absentee landlord class or the *hacenderos* from Negros (McCoy:1982). La Paz district (between Jaro and Iloilo City), now open for commerce and residential housing because of a new wooden bridge built by Governor-General Forbes, proved to be a better prospect for a new Chinese community. La Paz was only a kilometer from the Provincial Capitol while Jaro was three kilometers away. Here, the mother, Teresa Jabian, kept house until Cuy Co's demise in 1940. Cuy Co's remains were buried at the Chinese cemetery in Tanza, Molo, Iloilo City. It has a place of prominence at the very entrance of the Chinese cemetery there.

Most, if not all, Chinese mestizos are middlemen and shopkeepers. They would interact with other Filipinos, socially and economically. Omohundro (1981:47), in his study of Ilonggo Chinese, claims that the ethnic Chinese marriage patterns, superstitions and sayings, inheritance practices, forms of reciprocity, political ranking, housing and household compositions, and such other cultural constructs are rooted in shopkeeping. An ethnography unfolds in the family history of the Javellanas — something akin to the family history of any mestizo Chinese upon whom Filipinos exert a great influence. It would be practical to pinpoint Chinese influences on the Ilonggo way of life if one bases his observations on those physically present as objects of one's study.

## The Children and Grandchildren

### DAMASO

Damaso, the eldest son of Cuy Co, practically played an insignificant role in their family history. He was sent back to study in China, especially for inculcation in Chinese values. Due to meager finances, his parents decided that he returns to the Philippines. He took a wife in La Paz but he stayed unobtrusive in the family business for he was considered the black sheep due to a serious drinking problem and lack of motivation to advance his social mobility. He did not change his Chinese name Go to the Hispanic Javellana, a new name purposely chosen by his forebears for its evident advantages while living in the community of Ilonggo speakers. He got some odd jobs, mostly as a *cargador* at the Ting Kee Rice Mill in La Paz, until his death in 1930. Damaso seldom got in touch with his brothers and sisters who faithfully stayed with their parents. The focus of attention therefore shifted to Elpidio Sr., the sixth among Cuy Co's children.

### ELPIDIO SR.

Elpidio Sr., Cuy Co's sixth child, was born on October 11, 1895 and died on September 1, 1979. He dropped out of school in 1913 after second year high school. Cuy Co considered him the eldest son who would succeed him after Damaso's indifference to take after his father's footsteps. To him was entrusted the responsibility of a Chinese male first-born. It was and still is the Chinese belief that the eldest son will bring good luck to the whole family, especially if he is financially supported. As a result, Elpidio was entrusted with the family capital. He put up

their first residence in 1910 (at the present site of Monte de Piedad Savings Bank, La Paz branch).

Despite Elpidio Sr.'s lack of a college degree, he became a millionaire through experience and a keen business sense. His penchant for property ownership was evident in his gradual acquisition of residential and agricultural lands. He attributed his success to thrift and wise use of his finances. When house construction boomed in the 1920s, he supplied the lumber requirements of the people of Central Panay, particularly in the towns of Lambunao and Janiuay where he established two lumberyards. He planted fruit-bearing trees on his land acquired in Leganes, Iloilo and his orchards were among the largest in that town in the 1930s during the Commonwealth Era. He eventually owned fishing boats and to supply the ice requirements of his fishing fleet, he founded the Javellana Ice Plant in 1933 at the bank of the Iloilo River near the Aduana and Customhouse. He was also popular in La Paz for his name is now engraved in the frontispiece of the La Paz Maternity Hospital and Puericulture Clinic as one of the district councilors responsible for the construction of this hospital in the 1940s. He married a second year nursing student, Salvacion Torre (born December 13, 1896; died August 12, 1976) of Tigbauan, Iloilo. They had 11 children, namely:

- A - **Alfredo**, a certified public accountant and dean at the University of San Agustin
- D - **Daniel**, a mining engineer in Semirara Island, Antique
- I - **Isidro**, died in a 1945 accident
- O - **Orencio**, a former priest, the last of his batch to be given papal dispensation from his vows in 1957.
- S - **Susana**, became a nun at the College of the Holy Spirit
- T - **Trinidad**, a disabled person since young
- O - **Otilla**, unmarried, a commerce graduate
- D - **Dolores**, housewife, married to Ernesto "Pancho" Uytiepo, a Bacolod Chinese mestizo
- O - **Ofelia**, unmarried, a Philippine Navy employee
- S - **Sylvia**, a certified public accountant, *summa-cum-laude*, married to Vicente Layao
- E - **Elpidio Jr.**, a businessman, followed his father's footsteps as a businessman of note.

The first letter of every child's name was programmed by Salvacion, Elpidio Sr.'s wife, to spell the Spanish words as in an opening prayer: *A-D-I-O-S T-O-D-O-S, E* (Everybody belongs to God), with Elpidio as the signature. Being devout Catholics, the Javellanas still celebrate the feast of St. Joseph on his feastday (March 19) every year as a family tradition to venerate God through their family patron saint.

The commercial land where the couple once built their ancestral home and where the present Monte de Piedad Savings and Loans Bank-La Paz branch (now Keppel-Monte Bank) stands is still titled to his name. The real property he acquired on the triangular lot facing La Paz Market on Juan Luna and Rizal Streets

and later sold to his eldest son Alfredo, is today one of the costliest in the city. Elpidio Jr.'s and Salvacion's children have their own success stories to tell.

**A - Alfredo**, the eldest, was born in 1913 and died in 1994. A certified public accountant, he married Virginia Decena, his former student at the College of San Agustin, where he was dean of the college of commerce since 1958 until its elevation to a university. They had six children: Armando (Tito), Dennis (Ninoy), Odette (Day Dette), Yvonne (Nonne), Siegfred, and Tristram (Baby Ting). When Alfredo's wife died in 1975, he married Alice Las, another of his former student, in 1976, when she was working with the National Grains Authority, Region VI.

*Armando (Tito)* married Agnes Montinola, a granddaughter of Don Virgilio Montinola, in whose commercial land the present Shoemart (SM)-Jaro Branch now stands.

*Dennis (Ninoy)* went to the United States in his early 20s. He was the manager of Hyatt Hotel in California for 13 years. He married Cathy Kier, of Cebu, and together, they run a successful travel agency in California.

*Odette* (died in 1994) married Floro Divinagracia, left to him the present management of City Dwellers Pension House located at the family-owned Virginia Decena Javellana Building (named after her deceased mother Virginia Decena-Javellana), which houses such large business establishments at the ground floor as Mercury Drugstore-La Paz Branch, and a pawnshop, all in front of La Paz Market.

*Siegfred* married Joy Jalandoni, an executive at the Philippine Long Distance Telephone and an adopted daughter of Josefa "Epang" Jalandoni (of the Ilonggo hero general's fame). Their family has since joined her brother Dennis in California.

*Tristram* for a while successfully managed the thriving family fishpond in Dumangas. He is now living in the United States with his brother Dennis.

**D - Daniel** (Daddy Dan), the second son of Elpidio Sr., was born on July 30, 1917 and died on October 28, 1977. He led a more colorful life sustaining two families. By his marriage to Corazon Pacifico (born on June 20, 1924) of Mina, Pototan, Iloilo, he had 11 children, all born in La Paz. A Mapua Institute of Technology graduate and a mining engineer by profession, his secret tryst with his employee, Teresa Almonte, at his ice plant produced six additional offsprings. Like his father Elpidio Sr., Daniel and his wife Corazon programmed their children's names to spell as *A DIOS TODOS*. *Alfredo* was born on March 5, 1948. A successful certified public accountant, lawyer, and banker (vice president in the main office of Metrobank-Manila), he is married to Nelly Tan, a Chinese mestiza, and now live in Ayala-Alabang with their three children:

- Aldrick Richard (born June 14, 1973)
- Nichole Marie Fortune (born January 29, 1979)

- Nadine Guinevere (born May 5, 1980)

*Daniel Jr.* was born on July 23, 1947. He is a graduate of Asian Institute of Management and also a banker. He married Elsa Laurel, of Batangas, and are now living in Better Living Subdivision, Parañaque, Metro Manila. They have two children:

- Agatha Valerie Anne (born December 20, 1978)
- Daniel Alexander Xedric (born March 15, 1995)

*Iona (Nene)* was born on January 8, 1949. An executive of Land Bank of the Philippines (main office in Manila), Iona is the twin sister of Olivia. *Olivia (Inday)* is a secretary-employee of Elpidio Jr. Both Iona and Olivia are single.

*Samson* is the general manager of the Philippine National Oil Corporation (Manila). He is married to Lory Constantino, and are now living in Better Living Subdivision, Parañaque, Metro Manila. They have three children:

- Amabelle Samantha Anne (born August 17, 1982)
- Dawn Lorraine Stephanie (born March 11, 1985)
- Isaac James (born September 2, 1988)

*Teodoro (Ted)*, the sixth child, was born on January 29, 1952. He is married to Rosario Belecena, now in the United States. They used to live in La Paz with their two children:

- Andrew Timothy Jonathan (born May 12, 1980)
- Dandrey John (born February 20, 1985)

*Olympia*, born on August 19, 1953, single, also an employee of Elpidio Jr., stays in her brother Teodoro's family house on Lopez Jaena Street in La Paz, Iloilo City. She takes care of their mother, Corazon Pacifico, who is now 75 years old.

*David Juan*, the eighth child, was born on March 8, 1955. He died on August 8, 1989.

*Ofelia*, the ninth, was born on July 6, 1959. She is a doctor and has a diplomate in nephrology.

*Stephen* was born on March 26, 1961. He married Maria Christine Tan, of Bacolod. They now live in Houston, Texas.

*Jason Troy*, the 11<sup>th</sup> and the youngest, was born on March 11, 1966. A certified public accountant, he married Girlie Teddy in January 1997. They live in Bangkal, Makati.

By Teresa Almonte, with whom Daniel also dutifully lived at another household on Duran corner Sto. Rosario Streets in Iloilo City, his offsprings are:

*Dante* was born on August 28, 1956. A former executive of the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI), he is now the assistant vice president for Branch Banking Operations of Queen City Development Bank (QCDB). He finished Bachelor of Science in Commerce major in Accounting at the University of Iloilo in 1976. He married Menchie Hermano, then a fellow BPI

employee in Iloilo City, by whom he has two children:

- Coleen Ann, born on March 6, 1986, first year high school student at Assumption Convent School in Iloilo City.
- Camille Denise, born on October 16, 1991, grade two pupil at Sta. Maria Catholic School in General Blanco Street, Iloilo City.

*Nenette*, born on May 13, 1960, is also a commerce graduate of Colegio del Sagrado Corazon de Jesus (Sagrado). Nenette married Enrico Jacomille, assistant vice president for Commercial Banking of QCDB in Mapa Street, Iloilo City and nephew of former Iloilo City Vice Mayor Jacomille. Enrico Jacomille is the high school buddy and best friend of Nenette's elder brother Dante at University of Iloilo High School. Nenette and Enrico now live in Baluarte, Molo. They have two children:

- Danya Marice, born on March 4, 1984, third year high school student at Sta. Maria Catholic School
- Marielle Therese, born on January 6, 1991, is eight years old

*Josette*, born on March 19, 1963, is a graduate of Bachelor of Science in Commerce at the University of San Agustin. She is married to Rodney Zaragoza, of Guimaras Province, an employee of the Commission on Human Rights, Region VI, Iloilo City. They have residence on San Isidro Subdivision in La Paz. They are childless.

*Susan*, born on March 9, 1965, is a graduate of Bachelor of Science in Commerce. An employee of Far East Bank and Trust Company on Iznart Street in Iloilo City, Susan married Trix Ferrariz, of Oton, Iloilo. They have three children: Trixia (born October 17, 1991); Jillian and Meryl.

*Neil Allan*, born on March 4, 1969, single, still lives with his mother Teresa Almonte, now 81 years old, in Duran-Sto. Rosario, Iloilo City. He finished medical technology at the University of San Agustin. He took another course in respiratory therapy in Manila and is now preparing to go to the United States.

*Sheila Marie*, born on February 13, 1972, is a Commerce graduate at the University of San Agustin.

I - **Isidro** died in an accident in 1945.

O - **Orencio** (Toto Rencing) was born on June 16, 1921. He studied at the University of Sto. Tomas and finished A.B. Philosophy in 1947. He got his licentiate in Canon Law in 1951. Ordained priest in La Paz, he was later assigned to the parish of Concepcion, Iloilo: He was a former chaplain of the Iloilo City Colleges (now University of Iloilo) up to 1957. He left the priesthood after seeking and thereafter having been granted a papal dispensation from his vows in 1957. This was an aftereffect of his support to Erlinda Arcosa, an 18-year-old *cantora* (church choir soprano) with whom he begot four children, to get a BSEEd degree in the Colegio del Sagrado Corazon de Jesus. He was made manager of the Javellana

family-operated ferryboat plying the Calapan (Mindoro)-Manila route. From 1970 to 1985, Toto Rencing suffered from a rare disease to which he finally succumbed on May 19, 1985. Toto Rencing was able to acquire prime real estate property in the heart of the city by dint of hard work and with the help of the Javellana brothers. When his wife died of cancer of the ovary in September 12, 1994, the four children they left behind now manage evenly their boarding houses from the rentals paid by tenants who are usually families, not individuals or students.

**Alexis**, born on April 2, 1966, manages the Javellana compound near U.P. Iloilo City campus in Matias Ybiernas Street, Iloilo City. He married Maria Teresa Tan Lopez (born April 4, 1964), a second year BSC at the University of San Agustin. They have two children:

- Alexa Therese, born on December 16, 1990, grade two student at the Colegio de las Hijas de Jesus.
- Danielle Marie, born on August 9, 1992, grade one student at Hijas.

**Diana**, born on September 9, 1969, is now a doctor of endocrinology at U.P. Philippine General Hospital. She finished her B.S. Biology and medical studies at U.P.

**Ingrid**, born on November 14, 1971, is a nurse working in Saudi Arabia. She finished nursing at U.P. Padre Faura.

**Oliver**, born on December 2, 1973, finished his B.S. Biological Science at the Iloilo Doctor's Hospital in 1991.

**S - Susana** (Nene Susan), born on April 21, 1924, was studying music at University of the Philippines when World War II broke out. She became a nun in 1949 at the College of the Holy Spirit (CHS) in Manila. She celebrated her 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a nun at the CHS on May 15, 1999, a big affair attended by her brothers and sisters and their respective families. Of her father Elpidio Sr., Sister Susana says, "He was a man of vision and ambition." During the Japanese occupation, Nonoy Babe and Susana recalled that Elpidio Sr. managed to elude the Japanese who were out looking for him in the hills of Jan'uay and Ma-asin, where he and his large family stayed for the duration of the war. He was also wanted by the guerrillas for his close association with some Japanese business partners who later turned out to be officers of the Imperial Army during the occupation. Despite the odds, their father planted root crops like *camote* and vegetables, and raised livestock as an industrious farmer could, in the mountain barrio of Haranas in Ma-asin, Iloilo. And what made his feats more remarkable to his children was that he was able to recover his assets from the ashes of the war after Liberation in 1945.

**T - Trinidad Ismael** (Noy Maeng), born on March 11, 1925, is a polio victim since young and presently living with Elpidio Jr.

**O - Otilia**, born on June 19, 1926, died May 27, 1993 in Negros, unmarried, a graduate of Bachelor of Science in Commerce, *summa-cum-laude*.

**D - Dolores** (Langga) was born on April 15, 1930. She married Ernesto "Pancho" Uytiepo (born February 24, 1925), a Chinese mestizo who pioneered ballroom dancing in Negros and Iloilo in the 1950s, with whom she has five children. They live in Villamonte, Bacolod City.

**Evangeline Bernadette**, born on July 7, 1955, is a lady architect married to Alfonso "Pontit" Gamboa (born June 15, 1954). They have three children:

- Aline Ernestine Pamela (born September 24, 1975)
- Aimee Evette (born October 14, 1980)
- Avril Elaine (born September 25, 1984)

**Eileen Elizabeth Ethel**, born on June 20, 1957, has followed her father's dancing prowess.

**Elenita Maria Teresa**, born on May 30, 1959, is a radio announcer. She married Atty. Noel Amane, former law partner at Treñas Law Office. They live in Lawaan Village, Jaro, and have six children:

- Christian Edrick (born June 22, 1981)
- Diane Therese (born June 1982)
- Steven Joseph (born March 14, 1984)
- Stephanie Anne (born March 7, 1988)
- Mark (born February 2, 1989)
- Daniel (born March 6, 1995)

**Jose Ernesto Jr. (Panchito)** was born on March 5, 1961. He died in an accident (his car was hit by a Victorias Milling Company bus) in Victorias, Negros Occidental.

**Jesusa**, born on December 24, 1962

- Jed Ernest (born July 3, 1991)

**O - Ofelia** (Inday "Eur"), born on January 14, 1935, is unmarried. She was an accountant at the Philippine Navy general headquarters in Manila. When she retired as comptroller at the Philippine Navy, she was still an asset to her boss for she continued reporting for work to train new personnel in the intricacies of her job.

**S - Sylvia**, born on December 9, 1936, is a certified public accountant, a graduate of the University of San Agustin (*summa-cum-laude*), and married to Vicente Layao (born April 5, 1936), of Lambunao, Iloilo. She used to work at the Continental Bank in Manila. On March 26, 1976, her husband and three children, whom she calls her *Tres Marias*, immigrated to the United States. Vicente is a civilian detention officer of the Los Angeles Police Department.

**Ma. Cristeta or Nene**, born on March 25, 1970, is now an American

citizen. She works at the Jackmar Industries in California as an accountant although she finished nursing at the Cypress Community College in California in 1994.

**Ma. Ana Teresa** (or Inday), born on July 23, 1972, is now an American citizen. She finished business accounting at the University of San Diego, California in 1994.

**Dulce Ma. Rosario**, born on September 12, 1974, finished business marketing in 1996. She is a buyer-purchaser for International Business Machines (IBM).

**E - Elpidio Jr.** (Nonoy Babe), born on October 13, 1938, is a commerce graduate and the overall administrator of the entire Javellana estate. He did not formally marry his partner Luisa Jamandre, but the union produced two boys, Jose Maria Aloysius Winston, now a computer programmer, and Elpidio Christopher Joseph, an electrical engineer. Both boys are being groomed to take after their father's footsteps as businessmen. Luisa is well provided with her own furnished house in Jaro.

To Nonoy Babe was entrusted the management of the family estates, particularly the Javellana Ice Plant branch on Comission Civil Street, in Jaro, on the large Javellana compound where his father, Elpidio Sr. eventually built the ancestral home in 1962. The large mansion houses Elpidio Jr.'s office, and most of the house foundations were constructed from the massive wooden posts and beams taken from the old La Paz residence and lumber yard in La Paz. Elpidio Jr. manages a large agricultural estate in Passi, Iloilo and also runs the electric power plant in Victorias, Negros Occidental. He has 150 hectares of fishponds in Escalante, Negros Occidental and 50 in Dumangas, Iloilo. He once owned a 10-hectare subdivision in Payatas, Quezon City which he bought at bargain price in the 1960s. Later he sold it at prices far below their market value due to a serious squatter problem. By today's standard he is a millionaire like his father.

### ESTRELLA

The seventh of the brood of Cuy Co, Estrella was born on November 15, 1901. She married Amado Umiten (born in 1933, died November 5, 1968), of Ivisan, Capiz, with whom she had two children, Gilda and Gerardo. She was 78 years old when she died on March 18, 1979 at their residence in San Nicholas, La Paz, Iloilo City.

**Gilda Javellana-Umiten** married Solon Deloso Villanis, of Panay, Capiz, when she was 17 and he 19, while she was taking up Education at the Iloilo Normal School. They migrated to Bulaqueña, Estancia, Iloilo. Her husband was the manager of the Javellana Hollow Blocks factory that operated from 1949 to 1972 in Barrio Tabuc Suba, Jaro.

The business was owned by Solon's uncle-in-law, Dominador Sr., younger brother of his mother-in-law (Estrella) and his wife's uncle. It was this business that sustained the schooling of his seven children for 23 years. Though their children came one after the other, Solon got his commerce degree in

1958. Gilda managed to graduate from her course in 1957. She recently retired after 42 years in the teaching profession. Her last stint was at Barrio Ungca Elementary School in Pavia, Iloilo.

**Melanie**, born on July 25, 1956, single, is an executive secretary of the National Power Corporation in Barrio Obrero, Lapuz, La Paz.

**Ariel**, born on March 7, 1959, married Juney Sapalo of San Joaquin, Iloilo. They have four children:

- Jechelle, born on February 19, 1978
- Arjun, born on September 3, 1979, is a Norwegian maritime school scholar of the John B. Lacson Memorial College Foundation, Iloilo City. He is to graduate next year.
- Ariel Jr., born on April 4, 1984
- Junar, born on October 3, 1986

**Solon Jr.**, born on August 18, 1960, married Lourdes Segaya, of San Joaquin, Iloilo, and is working overseas. They have two children, Rochas and Nina Ricchi.

**Arnel**, born on December 9, 1962, is an employee of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. He married Nornally Segaya Gabio with whom they have two children, Lynel Rose and Queenel Ann.

**Glenda**, born on June 12, 1964, married Abner Zerrudo, of Anilao, Iloilo. **Archel**, born on May 18, 1963, single, is a graduate of Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education.

**Gillon** (combined name of Gilda and Solon), born on May 4, 1976, single, and a graduate of Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education.

**Gerardo**, a young man who suffered mental illness, was confined at the Mandaluyong Mental Hospital where he passed away at a young age.

### AMPARO

Cuy Co's eighth, Amparo was born in 1901. She remained single until her death in 1949.

### VICENTE

The ninth, Vicente was born in 1903 and died in 1983. He became a doctor and a long serving municipal health officer in Sara, Iloilo. Among the siblings, he was the most Filipino-looking, for he had the brown complexion of his mother. He married Doda San Agustin (born April 24, 1914), a noted Ilongga writer from Valladolid, Negros Occidental, with whom he had 15 children.

**Teresa**, born on January 6, 1934, is an employee of the Commission on Audit assigned at the National Irrigation Administration in Iloilo City. She married Antonio Rodriguez; they have nine children.

**Roberto Dante**, born on November 12, 1935, is a presiding judge in San

Carlos City, Negros Occidental. He married Nerfina Salcedo; they have nine children.

**Corazon**, born on April 29, 1938, is a retired teacher who majored in Economics and Education at the Philippine Women's College. She married Antonio Tady, and with their five children, they immigrated to America in 1991.

**Vicente**

*Progreso Manuel* got married in December 1997.

*Brigitte* married a peace corps volunteer. They now reside in the United States.

*Doda* married Mr. Weatherbee, the American cartoonist of *Archie Comics* series.

*Antonio Jr.*

**Velma**, born on October 21, 1939, is an administrative officer at Sara District Hospital. She married Toribio "Danngol" Araño Jr., a businessman who operates Doda's Bake Shop. They have eight children:

*Mercedes* ("Kit") married Leopoldo Misajon. They have two children, Andrew and Diana.

*Dr. Vicente* married a Tagala, Dinah Lapitan, a registered nurse. They immigrated to the United States in 1992.

*Leonardo*, a pharmaceutical products salesman, married Thelma Salcedo. They have three young children, Leynard, Kristel, and Leonardo.

*Toribio III* married Ann Trisme. They have one child, Shanon.

*Doda*, bookkeeper at Keppel-Monte Bank-Sara branch, married Johan Montinola. They have two cute daughters, Mary Colleen, 7, and Shema Grace, 5.

*Antonio* married Jenena Dumalaoco, a West Visayas State University education graduate, now a teacher in Sara. They have one daughter, Helen.

*Mary and Grace* are twins, Bachelor of Science in Commerce graduates of the University of San Agustin.

**Bona Fe** (Binggot), born on January 6, 1943, is a graduate of Bachelor of Science in Chemistry at the University of Iloilo, now a classroom teacher. She married Teodorico Katalbas; they have nine children.

**Vicente Jr.**, born on November 28, 1946, is bank manager of Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation in Antique. He married Milagros Pinequito; they have one child.

**Jose Dovin** (combination of Doda and Vicente), born on June 15, 1948, is an auditor at the Commission on Audit. He married Flora Mogato; they have five children.

**Ramona**, born on November 9, 1949, died in an accident in 1969 right after her graduation as Medical Technologist.

**Ignacio**, born on May 16, 1951, a mechanical engineer, married Dolores Doctolero. They have four children.

**Cenda**, born on January 27, 1953, a pharmacist, married Jun Narvaez, a manager at United Laboratories, Manila. They have five children.

**Mariano**, born on May 17, 1954, an employee of the Department of Public Works and Highways, married Jennifer Dator.

**Doda**, born on August 9, 1955, assistant municipal treasurer at Concepcion, Iloilo, married Pol Sicad, a fishpond owner. They have four children.

**Vida Socorro**, born on February 3, 1957, an accountant at Shop Mart in Mabalacat, Pampanga, married Richard Galvez, radio operator at Radio Veritas, Manila. They have three children.

**Edsel Augusto**, born on August 5, 1958, a supervisor at Nestle, Philippines (Manila), married Medea Ariola. They have four children.

**Felicidad**, born on September 21, 1960, a pharmacist at Food and Drug Administration (Manila), married a Montinola. They have four children.

An interview with the elderly Doda San Agustin, now 85 years old, in Sara, Iloilo, revealed that she has at present 75 grandchildren by her 15 children. She said she met Dr. Vic while he was staying in their boarding house in Manila during his medical studies. He was 10 years her senior and she was only 12 at that time and a second year high school student. They got married on December 27, 1927, when she was barely 14, at a chapel near Sta. Rita's Hall along Taft Avenue. The wedding was officiated by Fr. Sheridan, the famous Jesuit priest-writer. This early marriage accounts for the high incidence of the number of children (15) who came one after another, starting 1934 to 1960.

Of her father-in-law, Cuy Co, Doda San Agustin recalls much except when he exactly died. According to her, he was a *bolantero* (traveling peddler) who would spend days on end on the road, from town to town selling his wares and fruits in season. One thing she remarked about her father-in-law's good trait was his success in sending his seven children to the best schools despite the odds, for quality education to the Chinese belief is the best test of social prestige. Her husband, Vicente, finished Medicine at the University of Sto. Tomas by dint of hard work and great sacrifice.

During her spare time, Doda used to write articles in English for local and national magazines, among them *Philippine Graphic*. They used to speak fluent



Spanish in Valladolid, Negros Occidental and even in the Manila residence where her father was a *contratista* and her mother, a seamstress. Teresa Jabian Javellana, Doda's mother-in-law, started living in their Sara household upon the death of Lim Eung in 1940. Teresa helped raise her 15 grandchildren (*apos*) until one by one, they finished their respective courses. Most of Doda's children boarded with her Tita (*Manang*) Ester Jardeleza-Javellana at their La Paz residence during their college days.

#### DOMINADOR SR.

The 10<sup>th</sup> of the brood of Cuy Co, Dominador Sr. was born on October 2, 1905 and died on June 12, 1994. He was married to Ester Jardeleza (born June 28, 1915), the informant of this study. Dominador was a civil engineering graduate of Mapua Institute of Technology in Manila. His first civil engineering accomplishment was the strengthening of the concrete foundation of the present Montinola Bridge connecting Tabuc Suba with Jaro Poblacion. The Jardelezas used to own the lands near the riverbank at the north approach of the bridge, and here he met Ester. Her family allowed him to lease a parcel of their family real estate for his hollow blocks factory after the war.

Dom Sr. was a guerrilla fighter, a commissioned captain under General Macario Peralta during World War II under the United States Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE). Married in 1936, Dom Sr. and Ester have eight children: Dominador Jr., Dolores Esterlita, Josefino, Gemma, Antonio, Ada (Immaculada whose twin sister Concepcion died at birth), Rey, and Carmela. He was an active member of the Knights of Columbus and a deeply religious man.

Ester relates that she was a graduate of the Iloilo Provincial High School, situated in Juan Luna Street, La Paz. There were three sections in her class with 150 graduates in 1932. She served as a public school teacher, former principal of Jaro Elementary School, and is now 84 years old. She supplied most of the facts of this genealogy. One of her teachers was John McBride, who specialized in the instruction of out-of-school youth and older pupils.

The fact that she was a girl, Ester's classmates used to tease her and made her cry. Matriculation fee then was P2.00 a year. She topped her class in Grade VII. Her contemporaries include Selfa de Perez, presently cooperative manager of Pototan, Iloilo; Venancio Aligaen, a scholar from Alimodian; and Caridad Grió, former vice-mayor of Cabatuan, Iloilo. When she studied at the Iloilo Normal School for her Elementary Teacher's Certificate, she was the first editor of the *Normalite*, the Iloilo Normal School paper. Her other classmates were Leonor Villarete, retired teacher from Mandurriao and Concepcion Llavore, superintendent of schools in the 1970s. Lydia Jardeleza Patag, mother of television actress, Cynthia Patag, was her second cousin.

Ester's first teaching assignment was in Bacolod, Negros Occidental, but because of her young age, her application was rejected. Subsequently, she taught at the La Paz Elementary School. When she married Dom Sr., they lived with her parents. In 1939 when the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) first started

operations in Iloilo, the couple obtained P10,000 loan with which, they bought three lots in what was formerly a Japanese garden in front of what is now St. Clement's Church.

The couple, with their three children, Dom Jr., Dolores Esterlita, and Josefino, later transferred to number 28 Juan Luna Street, La Paz on July 4, 1946, the day America handed over the American flag to the Filipinos in Manila to mark our Independence Day. It was a day to remember for the whole nation, most especially for Dom Sr. and Ester.

They had a thriving hollow blocks factory at Jaro. As a war veteran, Dom Sr. did not receive his backpay right away. It was only in August 1946 when he received the lump sum of P15,000, an amount which he used to start his hollow blocks factory. At that time, the 4 x 4-inch hollow blocks cost 14 centavos while the 6 x 6-inch cost 16 centavos.

Dom Sr.'s first customers included Iloilo Governor Mariano Peñaflorida who patronized his "mortarless" hollow blocks, well-known for their durability. In fact, when the Jaro Bellfry was toppled down by a strong earthquake in 1948, the newly built house of Peñaflorida withstood the test of strength. It was this hollow blocks factory that sustained Dom Sr. and his family until 1978.

**Dominador Jr.**, the eldest, was born in 1937. He married Rosario "Charry" Cata-ag. They have nine children. He was a successful business executive of Carnation Philippines and later became manager of Pepsi Cola, Philippines-Baguio branch until his death. He died of heart disease at the age of 57, three months after his own father, Dom Sr., died of a lingering illness in June in 1994.

**Dom III**, born in 1959, is a writer for a TV station. He married Chi Brillantes and worked abroad (in a Malaysian TV station) earning considerable salary. He was instrumental in the success of the TV series "Mongolian Barbecue."

**Julie**, born in 1960, is a correspondent, married to Sammy Santos, also a correspondent of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*.

**Malou**, born in 1961, single.

**Luchi**, born in 1962, married to Cesar Elumba, has a duck farm that produces large commercial quantities of *balut* in San Pedro, Laguna. They have two children.

**Maita**, born in 1963, was a computer engineer of Unilever, Philippines, and is now with Abbott Laboratories (Manila). She married Art Cabinian, a commerce graduate. They have a large fruit and vegetable farm in Parañaque, Metro Manila.

**Johanna**, born in 1964, an architect, married Cesar Santana only recently. **Ignatius** or "Iggy," 23 years old, was born in Manila in 1976. He is a third year college student of Communication Arts at Ateneo de Manila University.

**Dolores Esterlita**, born in 1938, is regional director of Region VI (Western

Visayas) Probation Office and recently reassigned to the National Capital Region. She married Domingo Nalumen, an LLb. graduate of Bacolod City. They have two children.

**Jose Dominador**, 16 years old, is a gifted child. A microbiology major, he was the only Filipino Opus Dei representative to the congregation's conference in Paris.

**Domingo Jr.**, 15 years old, was a former seminarian. He is presently a Tourism student after he left the convent in a spat with his benefactor, Fr. Mauricio Silva, the parish priest of Lapuz, La Paz, Iloilo City.

**Josefino** was born in 1940. Better known as Fr. JJJ, he entered in 1953 the religious congregation of the Society of St. Paul, a formation house for seminarians dedicated to the propagation of Mass Communications. He spent eight years in Italy (while taking up Theology), where he was ordained priest in 1965. He came back to the Philippines and became editor of the film review section of *Home Life Magazine*, published by the Society of St. Paul (SSP). He taught Journalism and Mass Communications subjects at the University of Santo Tomas part-time, while teaching Spanish, Italian, philosophy, and religion at the SSP motherhouse in Makati. With an ear for music, he used to play the organ and the violin. As a priest, he was in wide demand for his scholarly reviews and film criticisms. He conducted spiritual retreats, said masses, delivered lectures on mass communications in Manila schools and in other provinces in the Philippines.

In his middle-age years, Fr. JJJ suffered from Parkinson's dystonia, a rare form of physiological speech defect that rendered him incoherent for long period of time. His congregation gave all the necessary medical care for his recovery. At first, a therapy was administered. He was even treated with sophisticated methods in the United States, but his condition continued to deteriorate. Findings showed that some Chinese males inherit such rare disease from their distant ancestors. Today, Fr. JJJ is under the watchful and tender loving care of the Sisters of the Divine Master in Makati, Rizal. His mind remained alert, and he can communicate intelligently with friends and colleagues with the use of a laptop computer.

**Gemma**, born in 1948, looked more Filipina among her sisters, with her moderately brown complexion like her mother Ester. She had B.S. Education at the Iloilo Normal School and became a teacher like her mother. At present, she is working at the Department of Local Government while pursuing a masteral's degree at the West Visayas State University graduate school. She married Chris Paras, an electrical engineer at the National Power Corporation. They have two children, Christopher Jon, a junior Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences (BSBS) student at West Visayas State University, and Christine Ann, junior computer engineering student at the University of San Agustin.

**Antonio** (Tony) was born in 1949, when the St. Clement's Church was built in front of their residence. It was there where the Irish Redemptorists (whose founder was St. Alphonsus de Ligouri), established a monastery in a once swampy 25-hectare land. Most of the parishioners were Lapaznons, with a sprinkling of Chinese residents. The St. Clement's Monastery and Church became the focal point of many a Chinese family in the practice of their Catholic religion. The Javellana boys used to serve daily Mass as acolytes there and became very close to the Irish priests of the Redemptorist Order (Congregation Sanctissimi Redemptoris or CSsR, the congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer).

Like his elder brother, Fr. JJJ, Tony entered the Society of St. Paul in 1963, this time in its new site in St. Paul Road, San Antonio Village, Makati, Rizal. While he was in his first year in college, he recruited this researcher to enter the seminary. Tony was the Sunday organist during mass at St. Paul Seminary, a gift for music learned from childhood. He enjoyed eight fruitful years inside the white walls starting his high school there and finishing his A.B. in Philosophy.

About 60 percent of SSP aspirants in the 60s and 70s were Ilonggos. This was due mainly to the zeal of the likes of Fr. JJJ and Tony who, together with other seminarians from the different towns of Iloilo, found their way into the SSP major seminary.

Tony now runs the family-owned Tony's Fast-food and Catering Services, together with his wife, Resenia Palma, of Passi, Iloilo, an education graduate of West Visayas State University. They have four children, Ryan Joseph, 19; Antonette, 16; Mary Clare, 10; and Michael Augustine, 2.

**Dolores Esterlita**, entered the Daughters of Charity congregation in 1958 to 1973 where she stayed for 15 years.

**Rey**, the youngest of the male brood, was born on October 25, 1952. He is a mechanical engineer. He also spent four years inside the seminary walls, two at the St. Clement's College and two at the St. Alphonsus in Cebu City. He is married to Marilou Olave, a Batangueña, who works at the Development Bank of the Philippines (Makati). They have five girls: Madonna, Regina, Genna May, Chin-chin, and Mai-mai. Rey used to engage in selling household products with offices at Mandaluyong. He is presently teaching part-time at the Ateneo de Manila University. The eldest, Madonna, is now in her second year medical internship.

**Ada** (she would not use her baptismal name Immaculada) was born with her twin sister Concepcion, who died at birth, on the feast day of our Lady of Immaculate Conception. December 8, 1951. She is presently a professor of English at Ateneo de Manila University in Loyola Heights, Quezon City. Married to writer Rolando "Roy" Loredano, who traces his family to

Lambunao, Iloilo, they have one son, Roy Jr. Ada, an educator for 19 years with the Ateneo, is presently working on her doctoral dissertation there.

**Carmela** is a Doctor of Psychiatry. She is based in Salt Lake City, Utah, United States where she heads the psychiatry department of the city's leading hospital. Married to American Nicolas Kormanik, an economist, she has one cute precocious child, Kathy, who dabbles in painting, and is a chess wizard. Carmela is the most talented of the brood. She used to play the piano and guitar, act, debate, lead in school and community activities. A born leader, she is the lone Filipina (among other non-Americans) to head a unit in the hospital where she works.

Recently, Ester Javellana was featured by Fr. Bernard Casey, a long-time parish priest at St. Clement's Church, in *Candle Light*, the parish weekly paper, in an article entitled "Growing Old Gracefully," a tribute to her enduring spiritual influence to the senior citizens' group of which she has been thrice president since her retirement in 1978. She was an active member of the Catholic Women's League and many religious organizations at St. Clement's.

This religiosity of the family of Dom Sr. and Ester is very evident in the number of religious men and women who found the Javellana home a welcome shelter. All SSP seminarians and priests would drop by the Javellana home, especially during the yearly summer vacation in the 1960s and 1970s.

### ANTONIO

The 16<sup>th</sup> in the Cuy Co family, Antonio, born in 1915, married Amanda Bayot of Capiz. They used to live as next-door-neighbors of Dom Sr. and Ester. They later sold their house and resided in Victorias, Negros Occidental. His only son, Gerardo, served as manager of Victorias Milling Company for many years before it folded up three years ago. He is devoted to his father who recently had an almost fatal stroke.

### General Observations

The above genealogy is not complete. The fifth-generation Javellanas, the grandchildren and great-grandchildren, were hardly touched.

One thing, though, stood out quite prominently. Almost all have taken a type of formal education that spells the difference between social mobility and stagnancy. It was a family credo to go to school at all cost. When interviewed, Noy Maeng, the polio victim, of Elpidio Sr. said he reached grade seven assisted by his siblings throughout elementary school at La Paz.

The Javellana clan morally supported each member. Every member, either male or female, could finish a college course, land a job, get settled into a new family, and retire leisurely despite the large size of the families.

Children are most especially attached to their parents, even when they have families of their own. A case in point is the family ancestral home. When wear and tear of time had taken their toll on the wooden structures, the land on which the house stood has only passed from father to son or daughter, and the land titles in La Paz, Jaro, Pueblo Concepcion, Sara or Bacolod or Manila have not been sold or encumbered.

The Javellanas were also very circumspect in the choice of their life partners. The parents' opinions were always sought first before making the fateful decision. A very deep religious spirituality many a time played a crucial role in every major endeavor, be it a choice of a career or the decision to go abroad, or construct a new residence and most especially, put up a business venture. In these particular cases, it was easily noted that the Javellana women played a key role in decision-making, a fact that the male counterparts constantly approved.

The prejudice that Chinese and Chinese mestizos are out to make a fast buck at the expense of the Filipinos is gradually being effaced. As in the case of the Javellanas, they are as Filipino as anyone. These people are now found in all walks of life — arts, the professions, business, or industries. They have made their social impact felt forcefully but cleanly, and the next generation may fully well be considered as truly integrated in the cultural milieu in which they operate.

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*Tonette Solatan Pañares*  
Southwestern University Museum

## THE CHINESE-FILIPINO SYNERGY: A RENAISSANCE OF INFLUENCE

It was Teresita Ang See who invited me to join the PACS conference to share my insights on the significant Chinese influence in Cebu and other islands in the Visayas and Mindanao based on the observations of the Chinese artifacts unearthed in Cebu and displayed particularly in the Southwestern University Museum where I work as curator.

This invitation proves to be the beginning of a strong friendship, a strong affinity, a sense of oneness — that of an ethnic Chinese, and of a native Cebuana. I was challenged to look into the implication of the involvement of the ethnic Chinese in the Philippines today. I can clearly say and believe that the Chinese and the Filipino today have strong sense of commitment to Cebu and towards nationhood. This is nurtured not only through a strong blood relationship but also through a shared cultural legacy and rich tradition that can be traced as far back to the port island in pre-Hispanic times. My paper highlights the phenomenon of what I call the Chinese-Filipino Synergy: A Renaissance of Influence.

My position is backed by the many observations that I have done while working as the curator of the Southwestern University Museum. For the last four years, the pieces in our collection point to various facts and situations that validate my assumption, that indeed, the Chinese-Filipino synergy exists and has brought about a renaissance of influence not only in Cebu but also in the Philippines.

This influence dates back to the pre-Hispanic past when Cebu played a major role in shaping the destiny and the transformation of this island archipelago into a nation and the Chinese, indeed, were very much part of this past. Archaeological finds link the Chinese back to the time when Cebu was a port of call for the Chinese and other Asian traders in pre-colonial times.

The artifacts that I can single out are the three ancient Chinese coins in our museum collection. One is dated between the 951-960<sup>th</sup> centuries at the short-lived