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## **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

### **When the curtain calls: stories of Filipino urban poor children in the performing arts**

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**“WHEN THE CURTAIN CALLS:  
STORIES OF FILIPINO URBAN POOR CHILDREN  
IN THE PERFORMING ARTS”**

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And to the ONE GOD, ever present. The One, who allows me at times to be shaken but never was I abandoned.

*Maraming salamat po!*

-- Diolch yn fawr! --

## ABSTRACT

The research aims to describe the particular childhood shared by scholars of the Quezon City Performing Arts Development Foundation Incorporated (QCFADFI). The QCPADFI is a non-government organization supported by the Local government, that provides free training to marginalized children who exhibit interests and talents in the performing arts. At the QCPADFI dreams find avenues for expression and realization.

The study makes use of both written and visual ethnography and in the process incorporates an indigenous Filipino method of research. The aim is to provide a multi-layered account of the spaces and the particular childhood, in such a setting as the QCPADFI.

Following the path set forth by the Sociology of Childhood (also known as the New Social Studies of Childhood), the concept of "childhood" is treated as a social space where in this study it integrates with urban poverty and the performing arts. Without the latter, the Filipino child follows a normal routine that centers on the spaces of the home, school and recreation. Where the children in this study must traverse an additional space, one wonders as to the kind of childhood they are able to live. The scholars' entrance to the QCPADFI might arguably be seen as a push towards the margins of childhood—where childhood as traditionally perceived is sacrificed in the service of the performing arts. However, such a view has long been challenged and this particular study is a further articulation of this fact.

A closer look at the children in this study will show that the QCPADFI is just another space of childhood --of the performing children. The data shows that as the QCPADFI unlocks the world of the performing arts to urban poor children it also opens other spaces and experiences for them that are normally beyond their reach. The QCPADFI provides them with spaces to show their competence, develop their confidence, experience more independence, and discover worlds they can traverse other than those available to children of disadvantaged backgrounds. Where the curtain calls, a different childhood is revealed. The curtain does not leave the children behind, nor close doors to them. What it does is bid the children to come onstage and take their bow. After all it is they who wishes and are called to perform.

## **ABREVIATION**

C.C.P.	Cultural Center of the Philippines
C.E.D.C.	Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances
C.N.S.P.	Children in Need of Special Protection
D.S.W.D.	Department of Social Welfare and Development
G.R.E.S.	General Roxas Elementary School
H.V.C.S.	Highly visible Children on the Street
I.L.O.	International Labour Organisation
I.N.G.O.	International Non-Government Organisation
M.R.H. S.	Manuel Roxas High School
N.G.O.	Non-Government Organisation
N.S.O.	National Statistics Office
O.F.W.	Overseas Filipino Workers
Q.C.	Quezon City
Q.C.P.A.D.F.I.	Quezon City Performing Arts Development Foundation Incorporated
U.N.E.S.C.O.	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation
U.N.I.C.E.F.	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund



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## PART I: THE STUDY

### Introduction

Modern society values children more for their potential—what they could *become*—rather than for what they are—their *being*. This is primarily because the young are invested with the power to shape the future, and hence great importance is placed on ensuring that they grow up to be responsible adults. This is supported by universal archetypes, which define children as *tabula rasae*, or as incomplete, incompetent, irrational, immature, dependent, innocent, etc., and thus in dire need of guidance and even moulding. In this way the young ones are somewhat devalued, treated as mere adults in the making, muted and isolated within the boundaries of family and school. This has brought about a culture of neglect that eventually resulted in abuse, amply demonstrated by an increase in child labour and other forms of exploitation especially during the '90s. Fortunately, this development seems to have finally called our attention to the fact that we need to rethink the ways in which we treat our children. Like gender, childhood stimulated academic and political discussions that resulted in its gaining a status in intellectual discourse. It is now recognized as a space, and the children as social actors<sup>1</sup>.

The realization of children's marginal status in society has inspired attempts to develop culturally appropriate and child-sensitive methods of research that studies them based on their cultural, social and economic contexts. But any research about children, in order to be truly relevant, should provide a genuine insight into a child's world. This means that its data and analysis should be based on an appreciation of the child's point of view. In Waksler (1991), a recognition of the need to look into the perspectives from which data on children were drawn and of the voices and worlds these data speak about, found articulation. These are the initial challenges that guided me in my research.

While recognizing, as Waksler does, that children occupy two realms—(1) an adult-defined child's world, and (2) a world that the children themselves define for and among themselves as they go about their everyday lives (1991), my primary interest is in describing the latter realm by closely following the routines of ten young scholars being trained by the QCPADFI. In so doing, I recognize the unavoidable presence of adult perspectives—mine and those of the QCPADFI's mentors and staff, adult characters who

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<sup>1</sup> Allison James and Alan Prout played key roles in this development as they define the then "emergent paradigm" from which sprang the new Social Studies of Childhood (James and Prout 1990, 1997).



structure this research (in my case) and that of QCPADFI's reality (in the case of the QCPADFI people). The significance of my study lies not only in its recognition of these two coexisting perspectives but also in the subjects' unique social location, which provides fresh insights into children's realities and thus a further contribution to the Sociology of Childhood. The QCPADFI, by virtue of its function as a performing arts training centre for urban poor children, is endowed with a multifaceted character—it is at once a site of: (1) the performing arts, (2) urban poverty and (3) childhood. In this research, a sociologist's concern would be to account for the urban poor children's involvement and negotiations within such a complex and varied world, focusing on their social interactions among themselves and with the adult characters, as well as on the effects of the QCPADFI on them, and as well as their effects on the QCPADFI's structured reality.

Doing this, I became aware that my research is in fact responding to the challenges posed by Childhood Sociology, also known as the New Social Studies of Childhood (Thorne 2003). The discipline emerged out of the concerted efforts of sociologist and anthropologist, in particular Allison James and Alan Prout, who, in putting together significant works on children and childhood in the 90's managed to lay down what they then defined as the "emergent paradigm" (James and Prout 1990, 1997). Discussion on this will be dealt with in the coming pages. However let me mention that at the core of the paradigm's tenet, is the treatment of children as social actors and the recognition of not just a single childhood but of a variety of childhoods (James and Prout 1990, 1997).

My research finds orientation in this paradigm. As I take the particular childhood within the QCPADFI my research's primary focus, I hope to provide an understanding of children and childhood in such a specific, yet multifaceted milieu, and contribute to the works within the Sociology of Childhood.

Let me turn now to clarifying some of the frequently used concepts in this study. Borrowing from C.F. Cuff, Wes Sharrock and Dave Francis, by *accounting*, I am referring to ethnomethodology's, "accountable organizations of actions" which point to the aspect by which everyday activities are organized in a way that renders them observable, intelligible, recognisable, identifiable and amenable to being discussed or reported (2003: 171-2). *Negotiation*, on the other hand, refers to symbolic

interactionism's concept of a worked-out arrangement of relationships and work practices through person-to-person bargaining (Cuff, Sharrock and Francis 2003: 133). Situating the latter within children's world points to the reflexive activity of making adjustments which children perform among themselves and with adults they get to interact with in their everyday activities. Applying these concepts in the research makes it devoted to the description of childhood as it is experienced, negotiated and lived by children in a multifaceted environment such as that offered by the QCPADFI.

The study is composed of three parts. Part one deals with the research design and the research process as it finds its way through related literature. Part two presents both the scholars' 1.) collective world through a description of the QCPADFI's social environment—its routines, culture and characters—and their 2.) individual world as reflected in the interviews, autobiographies and/or journals. These worlds will be accounted using both visual and verbal narratives. Part three discusses the findings thematically—with special focus on their implications to the Sociology of Childhood—through a critical reflection on the entire research process.



## Chapter I: Laying Down the Ground: Towards Defining the Research Design

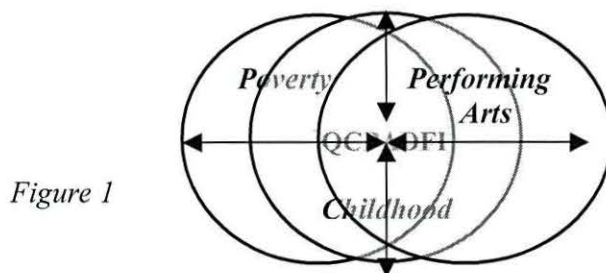
### A. Locating the Research

Before accounting for the research process, let me clarify first how childhood and other concepts such as social space are viewed in this study. In contrast to developmental psychology, the concept of childhood is treated here as a social space like gender, religion, class, race and ethnicity. This is in line with the Sociology of Childhood where the concept is treated as a variable for social analysis. Needless to say, the study does *not* consider childhood as a stage or phase that an individual goes through and in which he or she is seen to be in transition, but dares to treat it as an institution. This comes with the recognition that childhood is a permanent feature of society, and while children, who inhabit it, will eventually leave it once they reach adulthood, as a social space it will remain.

Looking at childhood as an institution and thus as a social space with its own systems of relationships and meanings does not mean taking it away from the institutions of family and education, where it is traditionally located, or treating it as independent of them. Rather, it means seeing it as coexisting with and at the same time existing within these two institutions that are its most immediate contexts.

According to Doreen Massey, a social space is a social construct constituted through social relations and material social practices (in Keith and Pile 1993: 145). I would like to think that childhood shares this definition. Like gender, race and ethnicity, it is a situated, organized, managed and negotiated social space.

Recognizing childhood as such, I realized early in the study that with the QCPADFI as the social location in which my research participants are situated, I am in fact dealing with two other social spaces—poverty and the performing arts. Hence, in venturing into this research I am faced with the three converging spaces of childhood, urban poverty, and the performing arts (see Figure 1), each acting upon and being acted out by the young performing artists of the QCPADFI.



In his *The Sociological Imagination*, Charles Wright Mills recommends (1) viewing even the most personal experiences within the wider social context of society's history, and (2) simultaneously shifting from the personal to the social (1959: 9-32). This lens directed me to look at the intersections between the young performing artists' individual lives and their wider social locations. This makes more apparent the convergence of the above-mentioned three social spaces as they manifest in the QCPADFI and within the scholars' lives.

Recognizing this brought me face-to-face with the dualistic approach to structure and agency. The approach places the QCPADFI scholars in opposition to the structures of childhood, poverty and the performing arts.<sup>2</sup> However, the sociological imagination provided a venue away from this trap by urging me to look at the interactions between my research participants and their unique social milieus, as well as the research's historical location in the social studies of childhood. With this, I see the interplay between my research participants' private milieu and the larger multifaceted milieus, which they simultaneously traverse as they create their everyday life. This depicts the interactions between structures and agency, which give rise to new forms of social relationships and new features to their social settings.

Following this, I look at urban poverty, childhood and the performing arts as forming the social backdrop by which Quezon City's young performing artists produce their individual biographies and organize, maintain and reproduce the QCPADFI as a unique world of poverty, childhood and the performing arts. The biographies, which are situated within various social institutions and spaces such as (1) the family, (2) school, (3) the performing arts, (4) urban poverty and (5) childhood, in turn speak of how these social spaces constrain as well as provide opportunities for the QCPADFI scholars as they go about their everyday life.

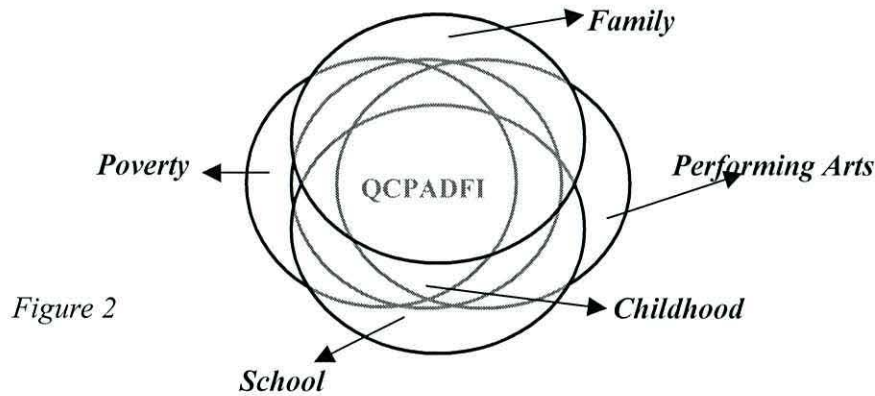
The converging worlds of urban poverty, childhood and the performing arts set multifaceted social settings of intertwining structures through which the young artists are socially located and which they are agents of. The scholars' family and educational backgrounds are also socially situated within urban poverty, while their membership in

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<sup>2</sup> The dualistic approach to structure and agency places humans in opposition to the world they try to understand and act upon, or which acts upon them, making the individual distinct from society inasmuch as the agent is distinct from structure (Loyol 2003).



these institutions (i.e., family and education) further locates them in childhood.<sup>3</sup> Therefore the QCPADFI, being the specific social space for such a convergence, can be viewed as the collective world of the scholars inasmuch as the latter's individual lives may be seen as a microcosm of the former.



Mills discusses the paradigm's flexibility in terms of shifting perspectives: from the individual to the social, from the biographical to the historical, and from the self to the world (1959: 10). My research is oriented towards accounting for the local production of the QCPADFI scholars' reality, which I deemed possible through an ethnographic study. Their accounts, however personal and local, provide a glimpse of childhood and poverty, and possibly the performing arts in Philippine society.

## **B. Journey Along Related Literature**

### **1. On Children and Childhood: Children's Spaces**

Childhood evokes a nostalgic feeling within every individual. In the older population it stimulates recollections of what is commonly seen as the good old days of fantasy, fun and play. While individuals glance back with fondness on childhood, society tends to have a forward-looking attitude towards it—it sees children as its future. Because of this, children have been confined to institutions such as the family and education, whose task it is to prepare them for their eventual roles in society.

The confinement of children to the aforementioned institutions has rendered the former invisible as a social category, a fact observed by Jens Qvortrup in statistics and

<sup>3</sup> The QCPADFI only accepts children with an urban poor background. The indicators they employ are the candidate's: (1) family's income, which should be below the poverty threshold (not beyond minimum wage), (2) residency in urban poor communities within Quezon City, and (3) enrollment in public schools (Fabella 2004).

social accounting, where data specific to children does not exist, and are instead subsumed under those of the family and school (in James and Prout 1997: 85-106).

In the arts, Philippe Aries has observed that early representations of children, particularly those in pre-Enlightenment paintings, appear to be of miniature adults (1962). Their presence as individuals separate from adults began to be felt in the sixteenth century when the upper classes saw them as a luxury to be had and the lower classes, as an investment in human capital. This perception was carried forward until the twentieth century when children, particularly in British society, became a subject of legislative attention when it was found that they were being made to work in farms (Jenks 1996). Apparently, this phenomenon occurs not only in Britain but also in peasant communities all over the world, particularly in poverty-stricken countries, where large families are favoured because children provide unpaid labour.

#### **a. Children in the Modern World: Different Childhoods**

The eighteenth-century post-Enlightenment rationality greatly influenced modern conceptions of children and childhood. It was during this period that children began to be seen in contrast to the adult population within the dependent-independent, immature-mature, irrational-rational and incomplete-complete continuum. Falling on the other end of this continuum, children were perceived to be dependent, incomplete, immature and irrational. Such characteristics were viewed to be natural and universal among children, who were believed to be passively absorbing their social world, hence the importance for socialization and the institutions of family and school. The need then was for these institutions to take care, control and train the children until they become functional adults. Needless to say, studies on children and childhood became the domains of Developmental Psychology, Social Psychology and Sociology of the Family and were articulated within socialization and developmental theories (Jenks 1992; Butler and Shaw 1996; James and Prout 1990, 1997).

However, industrialization and diverse post-industrial experiences placed children and childhood under a new socio-cultural context and painted new images of them that contrasted with the then dominant universal depictions. With industrialization, came: (1) other categories of marginal status based on class, ethnicity, race, gender, age, etc.; (2) the feminization of poverty; and with the latter (3) child poverty and (4) various forms of



child exploitation. It was because of the latter two phenomena that the universality of childhood and children's experience started to be questioned, for children who are made to shoulder the burden of an economic crisis exhibited qualities and behaviours that certainly went beyond their assumed "natural characteristics." Today this reality is still evident in societies where there are a lot of street children, and child labour and other forms of child exploitation exists, and has become the focus of much research and theorizing, as well as policies and program interventions.

#### **b. Children and Poverty: Paradigm Shifts in Children and Childhood**

"Children experience the realities of poverty and social exclusion in the immediacy of childhood; not in relation to their future status as adults."

--Tess Ridge (2002: 144)

In his statement made before The Special Dialogue on Child's Rights held in Geneva in 1999, ILO (International Labour Organization) Director-General Juan Somavia noted how childhood has been marked by economic and social marginalization and exclusion as evident in cases of children's service in wars and other armed conflicts, trafficking in commercial sex work or domestic service, or work in hazardous environments. Child labour in particular, was said to be link with poverty in that it is both a consequence and cause of the latter. This is most evident in developing and underdeveloped countries where children became the first victims of structural changes resulting from cutbacks in social services and the further informalization of economy (Somavia 1999). There, one finds children who are neither passive nor dependent but active agents in the family's survival, and who display characteristics that contrast with their universal and natural representations.

Michael Wyness writes: "What is in crisis is a particular understanding of childhood, a recurring set of ideas within political and academic domains that draws a generational boundary between adults and children, in the process restricting children to subordinate and protected social roles" (2000: 1). The active participation of children in the domestic economy, and hence society, and their involvement in social settings traditionally reserved for adults, has blurred these boundaries between the adult and children's world.

With the increasing diversity of children's experiences, socialization and developmental theories became inadequate articulators of children and childhood realities. Because of this, studies have started to look at children's being, recognizing thus their minority status in society.

In this venture, an interpretive and constructivist framework played a significant role as it provided grounds by which realities particular to children were studied. This led to a shift in approach in studies on children's reality as evident in the emergence of Childhood Sociology (Jenks 1982) or the Sociological Studies on Childhood (Corsaro 1997; James and Prout 1990, 1997; Jenks 1992, 1996 and 1998) and the New Social Studies on Childhood (James, Jenks and Prout 1998).

Sarah Holloway and Jil Valentine recognized the significance of this evolving disciplinal study on children; according to them it has led to a cross-fertilization of multidisciplinary works (Holloway and Valentine 2000). Here children's participation in the construction, maintenance and reconstruction of their reality became the central themes making apparent their engagement in the social construction of their life world and in the adult's world.

The Sociological and Social Studies on children discussed in the following works: Brannen and O'Brien (1996), Butler and Shaw (1996), Corsaro (1997), Holloway and Valentine (2000), James, Jenks and Prout (1998), James and Prout (1990, 1997), Jenks (1982, 1992, 1996, 1998), Mayall (2002), Waksler (1991), and Wyness (2000) have documented children's active involvement in their everyday lives. However, most of these studies are actually presentations of adults' views on the children's world which may be incompatible with the children's own construction of their world. A fact found even by Waksler in most literature about children in the early 90s. While these studies cannot be used sociologically as studies of children they can nonetheless, be used as studies of adult perspectives on children and childhood as these provide insights on how adults construct the children's social world (Waksler 1991: 71).

While what Waksler calls the sphere of "children in adult worlds" may not qualify as valid data for children's studies, there is another sphere she has identified that presents the children's point of view—what she calls the "child's world" (Waksler 1991: 236). It is in this sphere that children's competence, as actors, is manifested in the creation of their own social worlds through their own resources. However, in order to enter this



sphere the researcher must first do away with adult ethnocentrism and assume what Nancy Mandel calls the “least-adult” role:

I conceptualised being least-adult as a membership role which suspends adults’ notion of cognitive, social and intellectual superiority and minimize physical difference by advocating that adult researchers closely follow children’s ways and interact with children within their perspective. . . . The research challenge is to capture the dynamics of children’s interactions and to fit into children’s interpretive acts without disturbing the flow (in Waksler 1991: 58-59).

Looking at later works on children and childhood, including those mentioned above, I noticed a growing concern for making the children’s voices heard and their world more apparent. Not only in these works were childhood made the focus of studies, but quite a number from these involved direct engagement in the child’s world. In the case of James and Prout, they went as far as defining the grounds by which the New Social Studies of Childhood emerged. This they did by compiling works on the various, more current, studies on children and childhood and from there drew a paradigm by which Childhood Sociology, also known as the New Social Studies on Childhood, emerged. This paradigm presents as its key features, the need: 1.) to understand childhood as a social construction and children as actively engaged in this process; 2.) to identify childhood as a variable for social analysis; 3.) to recognize children and childhood as worthy of study in their own right; 4.) to see childhood as a phenomenon in relation to which the double hermeneutic of the social sciences which preoccupied Giddens, is present; and 5.) for ethnography as a methodology for the kind of study (James and Prout 1997: 8). The works of James and Prout have been influential in the field they, among others laid down, as it stimulated conferences and researches on children as well as multidisciplinary dialogues.

## **2. Children’s Spaces in Philippine Society**

Children play a crucial role in Philippine society, where their world and that of adults exist in a relationship of interaction or superimposition over each other (Shimizu 1984). Their social relevance is probably most evident within the Filipino family where, according to their stage of maturation, they are expected to perform tasks from simple household chores to caring for younger siblings, as well as to be involved in the family’s

economic activities. Hence in the Philippines, a child is perceived to be competent and actively engaged in the family's everyday life.

Unlike their Western counterparts, Filipino children go through a gradual and more organic process of growth; they do not become adults in clear-cut stages of development (such as the toilet-training stage during their toddler years) marked by a sequence of rites of passage (Shimizu 1984). Rather, they gradually learn norms and assume their roles in the family through exposure to and engagement in the adult world beyond their nuclear family. This is because Filipino children are born and raised in a people-filled environment composed of an extended family and the neighbourhood (community). Socialization in this milieu is not the exclusive responsibility of the nuclear family but a communal activity where norms and roles are acquired through imitation via observation or receiving specific training. This is true even in Filipino communities abroad where a couple's child finds his/her place in other household not only when his/her parents are working.

Like most children around the world, the Filipino child's primary social location is within the family. While it is a fact that the child assumes his/her initial identity and gains a sense of self through the family, his/her exposure and social engagements are not limited to it as the above accounts illustrate. From the family and home, a child's identity and social location extends further to the neighbourhood and community and later on to the school, religion and eventually region. In the case of the ever-increasing Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), this gains a global and hence racial dimension.

The family, being society's basic unit, is child-centred. In Filipino, the child in a family is called *anak*, and the Filipino word for *family* is *mag-anak*; indeed in the Philippines, a married couple, *mag-asawa*, can only become a family once a child is born (Torres 1995). With the birth of a child the family exhibits its recognized structure and form as the couple assumes a new status and role, as parents. The child also ties the couple's families together as indicated in the Filipinos' bilateral kinship pattern.

The relevance of children in Philippine society rests not only in their structural significance to the family, but in their functions and how they are valued. Children are perceived to be gifts from God and hence blessings that should be welcomed (Hollnsteiner 1970). Because of this, couples are pressured to produce a child a year or two after marriage. The majority of the Philippine population being Christians, abortion is



still considered taboo in the country and artificial contraception is not a popular practice. Therefore, it is usual to find a large family in a typical Filipino home. This reality is not only true among peasant communities or in rural areas but also among the urban poor communities, where children provide both paid and unpaid labour. With the family taken as a production unit, the child indirectly contributes to the domestic economy by assuming roles that allow the adult members, particularly the parents, to attend to the domestic economy, such as taking care of some household chores like washing the dishes, cleaning the house, fetching water and taking care of younger siblings. They also directly contribute to the economy of the family in rural communities by engaging in farm-related works such as tending the carabaos (a draft animal), feeding the chickens and hawking produce. However, in urban areas children directly contribute to the family's income as they engage in paid work.

The economic crisis experienced during the '90s has worsened the children's condition, making them part of the country's cheap labour force. It forced a lot of local businesses to close down and most of the bigger companies to implement reorganisations and retrenchment schemes. These resulted in mass layoffs that gave rise to high unemployment and underemployment rates. An offshoot of this was the growing visibility of women and children in the service sector who assumed underpaid works at hazardous and exploitative conditions. Apart from an alarming rise in cases of child labour, the country also experienced a dramatic increase in the number of children roaming the streets as well as of school dropouts. These motivated a lot of studies focusing on the plight of children, particularly those with disadvantaged backgrounds, of which several categories emerged, including: (1) street children, (2) working children, (3) child commercial sex workers, (4) child soldiers, (5) children with disabilities, and (6) children in indigenous/cultural communities. This phenomenon has created the need to conceptualise wider, as well as very specific, classifications of children such as the UNICEF's (United Nations Children's Fund) *Children in Need of Special Protection* (CNSP), formerly known as *Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances* (CEDC), and the Philippine DSWD's (Department of Social Welfare and Development) *Highly Visible*

*Children of the Street* (HVCS)<sup>4</sup> in an effort to better address their concerns and identify priority groups for program and policy interventions.

#### **a. Poverty and the Filipino Child: A Glimpse of the CNSP**

Based on the 2000 Census on Population and Housing, Filipino children comprise almost half of the country's total population. 43.4% of the Philippine population (33.172 million) are children aged 0-17, where 51% are males and 49% females (DAP 2003: 3). In 2001, 16.2% (about 4 million) of the children aged 4-17 were economically active (DAP 2003: 4). Of these, 60% were exposed to hazardous work environment, where 23% of them suffered from work related injuries (DAP 2003: 4). From among these economically active children, 34% dropped out of school with 22% of them admitted to their work's interference with their education (DAP 2003: 4-5).

Apart from the economically active children, the following comprised the CNSP in the Philippines: children and young people with disability (158,302), indigenous children (2 million in 1995), children in situations of armed conflict (4.5 million since 1972), child trafficking (95 documented cases from 1997-2002), children involved in drug trade, children in conflict with the law (usually male between 14-17 years old), neglected and abandoned children, and sexually abused children (DAP 2003: 5-7)<sup>5</sup>.

#### **b. Children and Childhood Studies in the Philippines**

In the Philippines, the '90s may well be regarded as the children's decade since during this time their plight became the centre of discussion among researchers and theoreticians. It was within this period that the National Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the United Nations (O'Donnel 1996) and when serious attempts were made at evaluating and reorienting programs and policies for the children.

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<sup>4</sup> The term *Children in Need of Special Protection* (CNSP) has replaced, and is now more commonly used, than the category *Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances* (CECDC). Both terms embrace within them the child labourers, street children, the sexually and physically abused children, abandoned and neglected children, and those who are in conflict with the law. On the other hand, the subcategory *Highly Visible Children of the Street* (HVCS) refers to street children, a particular category of children within the former two classifications. HVCS was coined in 2000 for program purposes when the Philippines' DSWD needed to identify its target priority group and distinguish the street children from among those children who may be found on Philippine streets, e.g. the child labourer on the street (Lamberte 2000).

<sup>5</sup> No figure was provided for the latter four CNSP.



Like the rest of the world, the Philippines also exhibits a growing interest in children due to the increasing incidence of child poverty and exploitation. Most of the researches done during this period were policy and program oriented. These were often funded by International Non-government Organizations (INGOs) such as the UNICEF, UNESCO and Save the Child in collaboration with Government Organizations (GOs) and the academe. This trend was also evident in unpublished scholarly works such as theses and dissertations with children as subjects of study.

Special attention was given to children in disadvantaged positions, and indeed most researches focused on abused children. These may be divided into those coming from the government sector, in particular the DSWD; those from INGOs like Save the Children and Child Hope Asia; and those from the academe such as the series of studies conducted by the Psychosocial Trauma department of the University of the Philippines' Centre for Integrative and Development Studies. The growing interest in this topic was further stimulated by the increasingly urgent need to promote and protect the rights of children.

While most of the initial studies were exploratory in nature, later ones took an evaluative direction in both their research approaches and their discussion of existing programs and services for children. The former provided insights into children's worlds by presenting their profiles and allowing their voices to be heard—an apt response to the urgent need expressed by the UN and INGOs for the building of a database on relevant issues, such as child abuse in the Philippines (Marcelino-Protacio et al. 2000: 1), in order to better protect and uphold the rights of children. On the other hand, more recent studies (e.g. Dela Cruz et al. 2001a, 2001b; Protacio-De Castro et al. 2002; Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights- UPCIDS 2003a and 2003b) have focused more on the significance of cultural diversity in children's experiences in their search for more culturally appropriate and child-sensitive approaches. Such attempts demonstrate a serious concern for the children's plight and a genuine interest in understanding and locating their realities and diversity of experiences. This has a lot of implications for policy and program making, particularly in terms of a shift in orientation from need-based intervention (vulnerability) to that based on assets or competency, especially where abused or disadvantaged children were observed to be displaying resiliency (Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights- UPCIDS 2003a, 2003b).

The shift from a paradigm of vulnerability to competency<sup>6</sup> was recommended to social workers and other caregivers working with policy and program interventions that took the biomedical and social welfare approaches, which needed to be transformed to a new approach based on children's rights (Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights 2003a, 2003b). This reflects a theoretical shift in perception—children began to be seen not as mere biological entities but as social beings.

### 3. Studies on Dance

Among all cultural activities, dance is one of the earliest and most commonly practiced. Early literature on the topic focused on tracing either its: (1) history as an art, (2) history of performance; or (3) social history. Meanwhile, most studies on dance that considered it an activity and a performance art centered on the quality of its movements and its choreographic and social contexts (Villaruz 1998). These led to analyses of the relationships between dancing space and movement, movement as texts, and the functions of dance (Goellner and Murphy 1994; Levy, Fried, and Leventhal 1995; Martin 1998).

The discipline of anthropology, in particular dance anthropology, provided the earliest literature on dance as a social phenomenon. These studies recognize dance as part of the physical culture that has significance to a group's cultural identity. Examples are the works of Margareth Mead with Gregory Bateson (1942) and Mead with Frances MacGregor on Balinese culture (1951). These show what Thomas Polhemus describes as the culture specificity of the Balinese's dance style and their use of the body as both intrinsic and essential to being Balinese (in Thomas 1995: 5). Dance anthropology does not just examine primitive ritual dances but also explores the more contemporary dances with traditional roots.

In sociology, examples of works that provide sociological insights to dance are those of Helen Thomas (Thomas 1993, 1995, 1997). In her *Dance, Gender and Culture*, she brought together studies that examine intersections between gender, dance and

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<sup>6</sup>The vulnerability paradigm is based on the traditional belief on the naturalized aspects of children (e.g., passivity, weakness, dependency, helplessness, etc.), whereas the competency paradigm looks at their strength and recognizes them as survivors rather than victims. Meanwhile, the biomedical approach looks at children's problem as pathology, thereby recommending treatment or cure; the social welfare approach on the other hand, views children as victims and hence uses curative and preventive methods to bring about a combined need for relief, protection and rehabilitation; and the rights-based approach, with its recognition and promotion of children's rights brings a preventive aspect to the curative and rehabilitation efforts (De Castro et al. [n.d.]:48-56).



culture. These works illustrate dance, in its various forms and contexts, as a site for academic inquiry into gender differences in various socio-cultural contexts. They point to a failure within feminism to see dance as a site of analysis for the representation of a woman's body, inasmuch as the body is significant as a symbol of society (Thomas 1993). A sequel of *Dance, Gender and Culture*, called *Dance in the City*, locates the study along urban spaces as it continues to explore the intersections of various social categories and contexts, where the boundaries and margins between what dance is or is not is questioned by the interface between performance and social dancing as well as dance, fitness and sports (Thomas 1997).

Another of Thomas' works, *Gender, Modernity and Culture*, also contains a gender dimension—it recognises women's role in establishing dance as an art form in the U.S. The book provides a multidisciplinary approach to the study of dance by tracing the development of modern dance from the 1920s until the 1930s, bringing into view the socio-historical context and forces that shaped American modern dance.

Most studies on dance recognize it as part of culture, where culture is taken to mean either a way of life or a valuation according to class. Under the latter definition, one is introduced to dance as a form of either elite or high culture, or popular culture, and the different dance genres are categorised and valued accordingly. However, under the first definition, dance falls within physical culture in an anthropological and sociological sense together with body movements such as walking, sitting, standing up or holding one's body. Body movements are deemed culture specific since the learning of a particular style of movement depends on one's socio-cultural context and dance is a further stage in this stylisation of movement. As Polhemus notes: "While physical culture may be viewed as a crystallisation—an embodiment—of the most deeply rooted and fundamental level of what it means to be a member of a particular society, dance might be seen as a second stage of this process—a schema, an abstraction or stylising of physical culture" (in Thomas 1995: 7).

Polhemus goes further to argue that dance is, in itself, the embodiment of a particular culture citing as evidences the research generated by the choreometrics<sup>7</sup> project,

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<sup>7</sup> The choreometrics project was an offshoot of Alan Lomax's cross-cultural analysis of music styles where instead of music, it was dance that was analysed across culture in search of parallelisms between dance or movement styles and movements in everyday activities (Lomax 1968).

which explores dance in relation to stylised everyday movements; and Mead, Bateson and MacGregor's study on the Balinese (in Thomas 1995: 7-9).

## **Chapter II: The Research Design: Laying Down the Ground**

### **A. The Focus of the Research**

Among all dances, ballet stands out as a measure of dance and culture. It has been respected as an artistic tradition that surpasses cultural boundaries. As Cynthia Novack puts it, “The purely ‘technical emphasis’ of its teaching contributes to an image of ballet as an art transcending cultural boundaries, a dance that is not ‘ethnic’” (1997: 39).

Ballet is synonymous with classical dance and is accorded the greatest prestige, becoming thus an art exclusive to the elite. In fact, some ballet movements resemble to a certain extent the body language of seventeenth-century European nobility because the latter played a key role in laying down the foundations of the dance (Parsons, 2004). Hence, as a performance art, ballet exudes an aura of sophistication and elegance that makes it appealing to the upper classes. Its emphasis on technique has afforded it the status of high art that remains unchanged or undiminished despite efforts to modernize or popularize the genre. As Novack explains, “Ballet appears in so many different kinds of institutions that it may be seen as both popular and elite art. Yet, at its professional level ballet is conceived and organised as a closed and unified tradition making it resistant to change” (1997: 46).

While in many parts of the world ballet is losing its seeming exclusivity in terms of patronage while it gains a popular audience through television and film, in low-income countries such as the Philippines, access to both performances and trainings are still limited to the middle and upper classes. Only they could pay for private instructions from the country’s renowned dance professionals; the lower classes could only imitate what they see of the dance through popular media. Thus to lower-class Filipino children ballet is still largely inaccessible.

Fortunately, a number of dance professionals from across the globe have recognised what proper training in the performance arts can do for disadvantaged children and this has inspired them to put up dance training programs for this particular children. Alvaro Restrepo and Marie-France Delievin, for instance, established Project El Puente in Columbia (Callazos 2000); Barbara Gaskil put up The Ballet Studio in Washington, D.C. (Gordon 2006); and Margie J. Topf founded the Topf Center for Dance Education in Boston, M.A. Their programs were inspired by children’s reception of and transformation within the performing arts. In the Philippines three of our premiere dance professionals,



namely Eddie Elejar, Tony Fabella and Luther Perez, have also started training children from low-income families in ballet through the QCPADFI. Tony Fabella narrates how they came up with the idea:

We have been teaching the rich for a long time and have seen a lot of poor children who can dance. We said to each other, 'we are growing old. We have to leave something, give something back. ...'The rich can afford professional trainings while the talent of children from poor families gets wasted. And we, I especially, did not come from rich families, but I've seen how dance has helped me as a person and I can vouch for that . . .  
(Fabella, 2004)

#### *Defining the Problem by Way of a Prologue*

Filipino children are fond of dancing. I myself wanted to be a ballerina for a time when I was young. And like most disadvantaged children, it was poverty that robbed me of the chance to fulfil this dream.

One evening in April 2003, a friend working with the QCPADFI came to me seeking assistance in transferring video clips to visual compact disk (VCD) format. He was then beating a deadline, as he wanted to enter the foundation as a participant in the 9th International Youth Dance Festival in Macau.

While viewing the clips, I remember being greatly impressed by the various dance performances before local and international audiences, which demonstrated the group's versatility as they shifted from folk/ethnic dance to ballet and jazz to modern dance and hip-hop. I was doubly amazed when I learned later on that such a display of talent and confidence came from children with an urban poor background.

I first learned of this dance group back in the '90s through a documentary film by GMA-7 reporter Kara David. It featured a local government project in the brink of collapse due to lack of funds. The project was part of the Quezon City government program for talented marginalized children. As early as then the project already caught my interest, so I was surprised to find out that this was the same group featured in my friend's video clip.

These initial encounters stimulated my sociological curiosity and urged me to wander on and venture into their world. I wanted to hear the stories of these young urban poor ballet dancers, to explore their social worlds and meet the various characters that people them.



My eventual journeys to the Amoranto Sports Complex in Scout Chuatoco, Quezon City, where the disadvantaged young performing artists of the QCPADFI are based, were inspired by the idea of accounting for the local production of childhood within such a multifaceted space. Thrice a week (Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays), between three o'clock in the afternoon to nine in the evening, children clad in tights and leotards populate the sports complex's three dance studios, as well as its grounds, corridors and lobby while parents/guardians and some of the children's siblings patiently wait for the dance scholars. They are being trained in the four dance genres—ballet, folk dance, modern dance and hip-hop—with ballet serving as the foundation for the latter three. As the scholars are introduced to the world of the performing arts, they are required to exhibit grace, elegance and flexibility in their movements, qualities that are often lacking among urban poor children whose social environment has socialized them to be somewhat unrefined and aggressive in their gestures and demeanour. In fact, many poor children already have slouched backs—an unnatural posture for ones so young—probably as the result of too much hard work that seems to be a requirement for survival amidst the harsh reality of urban poverty, which is accounted by both parents/guardians and children in this study.

While the scholars may exude a sense of poverty by virtue of their economic background, the stage and the dance studios tell a different story. There the same children exhibit a different character; there the hardships of life slip away in an elegant display of talent. It is a wonder how the scholars shift from one character to another and from one world to the next. It is fascinating to see how the worlds of poverty, the performing arts, and childhood merge within the realm of the QCPADFI and within the individual lives of its scholars. For while it is a performing artist's nature to exhibit such transformations of character, it would still be interesting to see how these particular young performing artists raised in urban poverty adjust to the world of the performing arts.

Being urban poor children of school ages, my research addresses issues of negotiations in roles and spaces among children who are involved with the performing arts, and with adult characters they get to interact with. In particular, it seeks to look at how these children, the QCPADFI scholars, traverse various spaces, engage in several institutions, and comply with its requirements. With these in mind my research directs me to address the following questions:

1. How do the scholars go about their everyday life? Manage their activities? Comply with institutional requirements?
2. How do they perceive the QCPADFI and their engagement in it? The program and its effects on them?
3. How are the scholars able to live their childhood in the QCPADFI and within Amoranto's boundaries?
4. What spaces open up for the scholars within Amoranto? How do they make use of these spaces? What do these spaces require of them? And how do they respond to these requirements?
5. What kind of childhood is lived in these spaces?

My aim in probing into the particular childhood within QCFADFI is to make the local production of childhood and the culture within accountable through the stories the scholars tell and the experiences I witness and share with them as I go about my own research routine. Hence, in this study an attempt is made to describe: (1) the QCPADFI as a collective world situated between, managed and reproduced by its various actors who are mostly children and adolescents, (2) the scholars' individual yet multifaceted world, and (3) the methods by which the scholars traverse and reproduce this world.

In this kind of research, a childhood sociologist's main concern is in accounting for (1) the children's involvement and negotiations within such a multifaceted, adult-defined world, (2) their social interactions among themselves and with the adult characters in their adult-defined world, and (3) the effects of the QCPADFI on them and of their effects to the QCPADFI's structured reality. In the end the research is hoped to provide an understanding of children and childhood in a so specialized yet multifaceted world as the QCPADFI.

#### *Facing the Challenge: Towards Defining the Research's Scope and Limitations*

In attempting to account for the particular childhood within the QCPADFI, I face the challenge of describing the world as seen through the eyes of the performers. This is explored in chapter one of part two, where I discuss the QCPADFI as a collective world.

The need to probe further into the children's world urged me to go beyond the collective world that is the QCPADFI, and see through the children's individual accounts



the strategies they employ in coping with both worlds. These accounts comprise the bulk of the second chapter of part two which is limited to the specific childhood experiences of the QCPADFI scholars who were within the ages of seven to eighteen during the course of this study. This delimitation is made in accordance with the definition of a child accepted in the Philippine as well as international law.<sup>8</sup>

In this study, the terms *scholars* and *young performing artists* will be used interchangeably when referring to the research participants, who are children and adolescents from an urban poor background, who have been with the program for a year or more, and whose parent(s) or guardian(s) have willingly given them permission to participate in the study inasmuch as it is their decision to do so. To clarify, the research will only focus on childhood as exhibited/lived by the young performing artists of the QCPADFI. It will not attempt to arrive at a generalization of the concept or of children's experiences and characteristics.

## **B. The Theoretical Orientation**

### *Symbolic Interactionism*

In accounting for the simultaneous social production of the QCPADFI and the young performing artists' individual worlds, I was directed to look for ways by which these worlds are managed, understood and reproduced. Recognizing the young performing artists' engagement in the local production of the QCPADFI as they go about the normal course of their everyday lives, I was led to the domain of symbolic interactionism, which focuses on the study of commonsense knowledge and activities by directly observing social life as it occurs. Symbolic interactionism problematizes the taken-for-granted realities of everyday life by probing the circumstances in which individuals find themselves.

Premised on the idea that meaning is socially produced, situated, defined, modified and managed, symbolic interactionism would prescribe the direct study of the QCPADFI scholars and their social worlds. This requires looking at three processes: (1) how the scholars go about their everyday lives, (2) how they make sense of their lives, and (3) how they make sense to their lives. Attending to these, I am aware of the symbolic interactionist's position on the social location of meanings. Such a venture sees

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<sup>8</sup> Philippine and international law defines a child as someone between the ages of zero to eighteen years old.

the scholars as actively engaged in the ongoing interpretive-reflexive enterprise of producing their various realities as urban poor children performing artists. Unravelling these social processes would involve the same tasks required to perform them; hence, a direct study of the processes through observation is deemed appropriate, a task that is made possible if one takes the symbolic interactionist stance. According to Herbert Blumer:

Symbolic interactionism rests in the final analysis on three simple premises. The first premise is that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them. . . . The second premise is that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows. The third premise is that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters (Blumer, 1969: 3).

Symbolic interactionism establishes that (1) meanings are not inherent but socially located in interaction; (2) individuals (in this case the scholars) are sense-making beings; (3) this process of sense making is shaped by interaction and hence engagement in sense making is a continuous process; (4) interaction and thus the social production of its setting is an ongoing process making the social setting always in its being and becoming; and (5) the process is accountable by the very instance of its production.

Orienting this research in symbolic interactionism led me to look into the young performing artists' everyday lives, which are comprised of activities deemed to provide insights on the local production of their individual worlds, and of the QCPADFI's multifaceted world as they try to fit into it. This calls for the employment of ethnography in its attempt to account for these local productions of reality for which the scholars perform in the research's natural setting.

#### *The Paradigm for the Sociology of Childhood*

Venturing into the lives of children, I took note of the path laid down by childhood specialist, especially those of James and Prout who defined a paradigm for the Sociology of Childhood, which is now also known as the New Social Studies of Childhood. Drawing from the various researches on children and childhood in the 90's, James and Prout defined the paradigm, which enabled the emergence of the New Social Studies of Childhood. This paradigm has the following key features:



1. "Childhood is understood as a social construction. As such it provides an interpretive frame for contextualizing the early years of human life. Childhood, as distinct from biological immaturity, is neither a natural nor universal feature of human groups but appears as a specific structural and cultural component of many societies.
2. Childhood is a variable of social analysis. It can never be entirely divorced from other variables such as class, gender, or ethnicity. Comparative and cross-cultural analysis reveals a variety of childhoods rather than a single and universal phenomenon.
3. Children's social relationships and cultures are worthy of study in their own right, independent of the perspective and concerns of adults.
4. Children are and must be seen as active in the construction and determination of their own social lives, the lives of those around them and of the societies in which they live. Children are not just the passive subjects of social structures and processes.
5. Ethnography is a particularly useful methodology for the study of childhood. It allows children a more direct voice and participation in the production of sociological data than is usually possible through experimental or survey styles of research.
6. Childhood is a phenomenon in relation to which the double hermeneutic of the social sciences is acutely present. That is to say, to proclaim a new paradigm of childhood sociology is also to engage in and respond to the process of restructuring childhood in society." (James and Prout, 1997: 8)

My interest in childhood and children's lives finds resonance in this paradigm. Recognizing as well the multifaceted milieus by which the children in this study are socially located and engaged with, I take particular interest in their everyday life where I found the methods of ethnography, both visual and verbal very much enabling. Thus, it became the objective of my research to account for the specific childhood lived by the QCPADFI scholars where they themselves took part in the process of accounting.

### **Chapter III: By Way of Social Accounting –the Methodology**

“Ethnography is a culture-studying culture. It consists of a body of knowledge that includes research techniques, ethnographic theory, and hundreds of cultural descriptions. It seeks to build a systematic understanding of all human cultures from the perspective of those who have learned them.”

—James Spradley (1979: 10-11)

Entering the spaces within the Amoranto Sports Complex, I was introduced to the world of the performing arts, as well as to the QCPADFI culture and its various characters. My fieldwork took me not only to Amoranto and the QCPADFI’s local performances, but also to the young performing artists’ homes. Through these visits I was able to witness the QCPADFI as a multifaceted world of poverty, childhood and the performing arts, a world known in common and shared by its various characters. Eventually I myself, in however limited a fashion, was also able to share, experience and understand this world.

Accounting for these experiences and addressing the need to make them accountable led me to the domain of ethnography which, according to John Van Maanen, ties these two processes together while at the same time serving as its own knot (Van Maanen, 1988: 1).

As an interpretive enterprise, ethnography involves both the processes of trying to make sense of the world under study and of making it sensible for others. This is possible through what Roland Barthes calls the process of (1) decoding and (2) recoding (Van Maanen, 1988: 4).

Appropriating the process in this research I, the researcher coming from a culture different from the observed, was deeply engaged in decoding parts and parcels of the latter’s symbolic world in order for it to make sense to me even as I recode it to make it sensible to others. Needless to say, ethnography as a practice recognizes the relativity and particularity of culture as well as its symbolic nature. Thus to account for the ways by which the QCPADFI scholars produce their versions of childhood and of the QCPADFI as a distinct world of poverty, childhood and the performing arts, I immersed myself in the symbolic world within. The latter happened during fieldwork, the former while converting the “observed and experienced” into narratives.



### **A. The Ethnographic Fieldwork: Making Sense of a Multilayered World**

“Fieldwork asks the researcher, as far as possible, to share firsthand the environment, problems, background, language, rituals and social relations of a more-or-less bounded and specified group of people. The belief is that by means of such sharing, a rich, concrete, complex, and hence truthful account of the social world being studied is possible. Fieldwork is then a means to an end.”

—Roland Barthes (in Van Maanen, 1988: 3)

For this project, I found the methods of ethnography most appropriate as they enabled me to have flexibility of movement and to use effective techniques for going beyond the surface of the world under investigation. As a method of research, ethnography recognizes and makes apparent the multiplicity of spaces and characters at work in any social space. Where my research intention is to account for the QCPADFI scholars’ collective and individual worlds, which I early on realized to be multi-layered and of multi-character, an equally multi-layered accounting is hence necessary. To quote from George Marcus: “. . . Any cultural identity or activity is constructed by multiple agents in varying contexts, or places, and . . . ethnography must be strategically conceived to represent this sort of multiplicity, and to specify both intended and unintended consequences in the network of complex connections within a system of places” (1998: 52). Thus, in entering the field I needed to strategically locate myself in a position that allows sensitivity to a multiplicity of spaces and characters like QCPADFI and use a multi-layered methodology of accounting such as ethnography, which I deemed could provide both verbal and visual records of the social world under study. However, the employment of visual ethnography through the use of a camera only came later when the social processes within the QCPADFI has already been established by my immersion in the field. This was used especially during performances and with permission from the management and operations staff, the parents/guardians and the research participants themselves. While it is true that I took preliminary photos as I officially started my fieldwork, these photos were at that time intended to basically document the physical structures within Amoranto. But recognizing the multiplicity of spaces and characters within Amoranto, I found myself taking more photographs than necessary towards the latter part of my fieldwork. These photographs eventually found its place within the text

as visual accounts of the various worlds and characters within Amoranto, not to mention the various childhoods within.

The process of incorporating visual ethnography in the latter part of the fieldwork, maybe articulated as the discovery of the value images have in illustrating the insights discerned in the field and in the visualization of the social life therein. Photographs have been perceived as extensions of the photographer, not just that of the technology or the technique of photography (Adelman 1998: 149). In the case of this study, I employed the camera as a recording faculty, so much like a tape recorder, and the photographs --the visual representations of the recorded social processes, characters and spaces. This is the very reason why, visual ethnography, as part of my methodology, was only used later in the study --when the social processes has already been established by observation. Where the images captured by the camera are still pictures of the on-going production of childhood and spaces in QCPADFI, the credibility of a particular photograph should therefore lie on its being a reflection of/or evidence to, that childhood and space rather than its essential quality as photographs.

“We recognize that the photographic image is ‘true’ in the sense (physical or electronic manipulation aside) that it holds a visual trace of a reality the camera was pointed at. But more fundamentally, all images, despite their relationship to the world, are socially and technically constructed.”  
(Harper 1998: 29)

#### *An Account of the Accounting Process: An Overview of the Fieldwork*

The entire fieldwork maybe described as a process of cautious and spontaneous immersion into the QCPADFI scholars’ world. When I first entered the Amorato Sports Complex, it was with much precaution and through the unobtrusive technique of going there as a spectator --as someone who just wants to have a look around the sports complex.

During my initial visits I tried to create as little fuss as possible in order to gain insights into the ongoing realities within. This started in late May 2004; I came in as a curious stranger wanting to have a look around. These visits were exploratory in nature, aimed at getting a glimpse of the social environment. I wanted to have a feel of the foundation first and gain familiarity with (1) the site, (2) the children and other characters, (3) the culture and (4) the program. It was like taking snapshots of the world that could help me identify what to bring and how best to position myself within. Luckily I managed



to do this without arousing curiosity, thanks to the fact that the Amoranto Sports Complex, within whose multipurpose hall one of the QCPADFI studios is located, is open to the public. Thus I easily blended in with the other visitors and came and went virtually unnoticed.<sup>9</sup>

Having no training in the performing arts, I thought it best to formally enter the QCPADFI as a peripheral character with a fluid status and role. However, the purpose of my presence in the foundation was made clear to all when I officially started gathering my data in June 2004.

The first phase of the fieldwork involved establishing my position and presenting my research agenda to the QCPADFI's management staff and locating as well as defining my character within its various spaces. I assumed the role of a peripheral character: (1) a regular visitor who became friends with some of the scholars' guardians/parents who eventually became my key informants, and (2) an accidental documenter (photographer and researcher) for the foundation.<sup>10</sup> This latter part made me explore the possibility of entering yet another of Sociology's sub-discipline –that of Visual Sociology, through visual ethnography.

The second phase required me to immerse myself in the routines in Amoranto. I tried to discern the structured realities within and outside the foundation (e.g., regular trainings, training sequences, the scholars' and foundation's routines, etc.). Here my friendship with some of the scholars and their guardians/parents proved beneficial; not only did they become my resource persons, they also introduced me to yet another world—the satellite world of the guardians/parents within the QCPADFI, which represented a different culture. This was the world of the significant others dominated by the QCPADFI, controlled and regulated by the foundation's management and operations staff.

Being a peripheral character, I spent most of my time observing from outside the studio when training was underway. Here I mingled with the scholars' guardians and parents, sharing their space, engaging in their routines and taking part in their conversations. Some of them even considered me part of their *barkada* (peer group) and

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<sup>9</sup> The multipurpose hall hosts a variety of events and the entire sports complex is open to the public.

<sup>10</sup> I provided the foundation with copies of some of the photographs I was able to take for their documentation as well as did some interviews for their planned.

would invite me to come with them as they strolled along the nearby streets searching for some *merienda* (snacks).

The third phase of the research involved the employment of visual ethnography. Here the on-going construction of children's reality is documented through the aid of the camera. It is worth noting that I went through this phase when patterns of social processes have already been observed, and therefore established, allowing me the ability to document --using my camera's lens these processes as well as the physical structures within the Amoranto Sports Complex (Amoranto). It was also during this stage where I began visiting the foundation's local performances and documenting them. Here also is where I started identifying scholars for the individual narratives and thus, where the notebooks and pens handed out to those who wished to write a journal of their activities. Basically I just asked the scholars to write anything about themselves—their thoughts, interests and everyday routines. I did not prescribe a format for them to follow or set limitations on what to write. The intention behind this was to: (1) give the children enough leeway so they could freely choose the kind and extent of their participation in the research, (2) establish the daily routine of the children involved, and (3) verify the information gathered through the informal interviews (*pakikipagkuwentuhan* and *pagpapakuwento*<sup>11</sup>) and observations.

Interviews and visits to the scholars' homes were conducted during the fourth phase. This was done using *pagpapakuwento* to complement the journals and clarify and organize the observation data.

For those children who did not wish to write a journal and were more or less reluctant to reveal information about them, a semi-structured interview in the form of chatting (*pakikipagkuwentuhan*) was used. This created a more relaxed setting that reduced the children's stress, and made the interview more symbiotic and less exploitative. Here the research participants were given the opportunity to pose questions or queries to me on any matter of interest to them. There were even instances when I also had to share parts of my childhood story in an attempt to make the process less one-sided. All of these resulted in more spontaneous conversations. The only difficulty encountered was the task of tape recording them in their entirety, since the very process of turning

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<sup>11</sup> *Pagpapakuwento* is a form of chatting where one dominates the process by directing the chat through asking questions from time-to-time or defining the topic while, *pakikipagkuwentuahn* is more symbiotic where the involved individuals take turn in telling stories.



over the tape in the recorder often hindered the exchange, and the more loose structure allowed the respondents to attend to urgent tasks, such as closing the windows during sudden rains or responding to interruptions by family members or friends. In such cases, a recount would be held to establish and verify previously shared information before proceeding with the interview.

The management and operation staff, on the other hand were interviewed during the middle and final phases of the research. This I did intentionally since the information they provided basically served to fill in gaps in information and reconstruct the profile of the foundation. The only exception was the QCPADFI president and artistic director, with whom I had an initial chat when I was first introduced to the foundation. This gave me a glimpse of the foundation's history, culture and structure.

Informal interviews, chats mainly, were conducted all throughout the fieldwork. These were held in a friendly environment within the QCPADFI studios, the scholars' choice of venue or their homes.

#### *Ethnographic Account as Accounts of Childhood*

Frequent encounters with the scholars, as well as with the foundations' other characters, will likely produce the inevitable merging of lives. This is a natural course of ethnography and is evident in the narratives, where the voice of the narrator, often the researcher, indicates a merging of the experiences of the research participants and the researcher. It is thus proper to acknowledge ethnography as not just an objective collection of data about the lives of the research respondents and the culture under study, but an account as observed, experienced and reconstructed by both the research participants and the researcher, the form of which is shaped by the manner of narration. This is why ethnography as an account is also referred to as "the ethnographer's tale" and "tales from the field"—it involves narratives about several cultures and characters involving the researcher (Van Maanen 1988).

Thus, ethnography cannot claim to be an exclusive account of a respondent's self as experiences of the narrator's/social researcher's self is reflected and hence intimately part of the accounted self (James 1993: 15). Neither can objectivity be claimed, except in defining the location of the researcher and his/her voice both in the fieldwork and in the written account.



In this case, my sense of objectivity was somehow gauged and guided by my field journal and camera. I must say, while the former held my reflections and personal observations, and the latter a visual accounting of my observations, both kept me grounded and helped me keep track of the distance between my world and the research participants' own. This I tried to make evident in the narratives by defining my voice as distinct from the scholars' and by recognizing that the accounts presented here are narratives of merging experiences shaped in the instance of accounting.

The entire fieldwork was guided by *Sikolohiyang Filipino* (Enriquez 1992; Pe-Pua 1982), especially the orientation towards the research participants. *Sikolohiyang Filipino* (Filipino Psychology) recognizes the significance of breaking the indifference between the researcher and the participants in the research process. It is premised on the Filipino's orientation towards "familism" and "personalism". The belief is that once the research participant no longer regards the researcher as a stranger, access to the social processes and important information would be easier and more attuned with the respondent's reality.

Needless to say, *Sikolohiyang Filipino* involves breaking the barrier between strangers by the processes of feeling one's way in (*pakiramdam* and *pagkapa*), participation (*pakikilahok*) and fitting in (*pakikibagay* at *pakikiisa*) until the researcher gains the full trust of the research participant and becomes part of the latter's social world. The goal is to reach a level, no longer of anonymity and strangeness, but of personal relationship with the group under study. With this, I must say that the whole enterprise was designed with the view of opening up ways through which the research respondents may increase their participation in the actual fieldwork. This was achieved by loosening up the process of data gathering and giving options on how to participate in the hope of empowering them in the research process.

## B. The Ethnographic Tales

*“An ethnography is a written representation of a culture (or selected aspect of a culture). It carries quite serious intellectual and moral responsibility, for the images of others inscribed in writing are most assuredly not neutral.”*

—John Van Maanen (1988: 1)

The data obtained from my fieldwork on the various worlds under study were in diverse formats—photos, notes of my personal observations, interviews, informal conversations (*pakikipagkuwentuhan* and *pagpapakuwento*) and the research participants’ journals. The data also takes various forms from the transcribed oral data, to the written accounts, to the visual data. The next step in the process was to reconstruct the different worlds by putting the pieces of data together according to identifiable themes, just like a jigsaw puzzle. The goal was to provide a holistic picture of the children’s collective and individual worlds. The narrative, which is the main text of the research, consists of two parts. The first part focuses on the young performing artists’ collective world, represented by the QCPADFI, while the second tells of the children’s individual worlds, their life histories.

Drawing from my almost five months of fieldwork, I tried to reconstruct the history of the QCPADFI and describe the social spaces and culture I came to witness, understand, and inevitably share with its various characters through both the written (inclusive of the transcribed oral data) and visual data. Needless to say, the social world under investigation was made accountable through my voice as the narrator and a peripheral character within the QCPADFI, and through the camera’s lens. As mentioned early on, the accounting practice requires what Barthes calls “decoding and recoding,” making the writing phase an interpretive act of bridging three cultures: (1) that of the observed, (2) that of the researcher, and (3) that of those for whom the study will be made available in its final form.

As an interpretive enterprise, the narrative also presents intersections not only of cultures but, of lives—those of its multiple characters, including the researcher. The fieldwork depicts these merging or meetings, of lives and cultures, through the experiences lived and shared by the characters. Even while most experiences (e.g., the research participants’ childhood experiences, everyday routines, etc.) are accounted through recalls by the respondents, I can say that in this process of recollection and

retelling I was there with them inasmuch as it was to me they were sharing their stories, and hence --somehow these became part of my experiences as well. Therefore in narrating these stories through the written word I was telling my own tale too—the ethnographer’s tale. This is just a reiteration of the point I discussed earlier about ethnography being not entirely objective and exclusive. While this is so, my sense of objectivity (as I have already mentioned) is gauged and guided by my field journal and camera, which I am aware I direct.

In the process of writing the research participants’ life histories I tried to make my voice distinct from theirs to emphasize their voice. I deemed this possible through preserving, as much as I can, the voice of the child/adolescent narrator in their individual stories and through making the translation, from Filipino to English, as simple and direct as possible.

My introduction to each of the scholars’ life histories is italicized, in order to emphasize that it is my voice speaking, and that it is subordinate to the research participant’s voice. The latter is represented by text set in normal font, which is intended to make each child’s voice more pronounced and hence of primary significance.

Each piece of data will then be analyzed for its own value (within the specific narrative: within text analysis) and in relation to the other texts (other narratives: inter-text analysis). Arising themes and concepts within the narratives will be identified and analyzed in the light of the research’s framework.

With all these accounts and accounting it is henceforth appropriate to recognize ethnographic tales as a retelling of experiences, those of: (1) the research participants and their culture, (2) the researcher, and (3) the various characters within, as understood and shared by the ethnographer and whose forms are shaped in the moment of narration and writing.



## **PART II: STORIES OF CHILDHOOD AND CHILDREN SPACES –VISUAL AND VERBAL ACCOUNTS**

Every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, the Amoranto Sports Complex is transformed from a space strictly for sports and related activities to (1) an academy for the performing arts, (2) a children's playground/outdoor recreation area, (3) an open-air waiting area, (4) a wall-less changing/grooming area, and (5) a site for the informal economy. These transformations are made by the scholars themselves, and the other characters who may be accidental to the QCPADFI's existence but are nonetheless essential to its scholars, especially the very young ones.

There is a marked difference in atmosphere between the dance studios and the rest of the sports complex's spaces. While the studios are governed by a strong sense of discipline that demands promptness, flexibility and grace; anticipation, pride and gaiety characterize the rest of the area. The QCPADFI scholars themselves exhibit diverse personalities within the sports complex according to the demands of each particular space or situation. Thus while the spaces in Amoranto are transformed by their specific needs and uses, the characters --the scholars in particular, are also transformed in the process. It is as though different worlds exist within the confines of Amoranto, which children of marginalized backgrounds get to simultaneously traverse, experience, and recreate.

This section will present these worlds within Amoranto as well as the characters that populate them verbally and visually. This way the social processes and spaces are accounted in a multilayered fashion. The goal is to provide a holistic picture of the children's collective and individual worlds. The narratives will proceed from the scholars' collectively shared worlds in Amoranto, to the different spaces and childhood within, and then goes further to explore the scholars' micro-worlds through individual narratives.

Drawing from both visual and verbal data, an inward accounting is thus provided. Chapter one provides an illustration of the QCPADFI's physical structure, history, marginal spaces and characters. Chapter two is a presentation of the scholars' collectively shared worlds --that is the QCPADFI. Chapter three accounts the different childhoods and spaces found within Amoranto. And lastly chapter four focuses on the micro-world of each scholar through their individual narratives.

## Chapter I: Discovering Amoranto and the Structures within –A Multilayered Accounting



*Amoranto Sports Complex., Scout Chuatoco gate    The Landmark (signage)*

It was on the afternoon of 25 May 2004 when I had my first glimpse of the QCPADFI scholars and their world(s) within Amoranto. It was the last phase of summer yet the sun could still burn the skin so I decided to take a cab to get there.

Located at the heart of a residential area, the sports complex is not directly accessible via public transportation. Most scholars get there by walking from the nearest jeepney station. Those who study at the nearby Manuel Roxas High School go on foot to Amoranto after their classes. Others prefer walking all the way there from their homes, and vice versa, even if it takes them 30 minutes to do so just to save on transport fare.

Reaching Amoranto by Scout Chuatoco St., I stepped out of the cab just in front of the QCPADFI gate. I did not want to be seen arriving in a taxi, as I felt this might attract undue attention. This hunch turned out to be right, for I later found out that only the foundation's mentors and staff arrive there by cab, and the parents and guardians, as well as the scholars, tend to see individuals who arrive in cabs and cars as special guests of the foundation.

The first thing I saw was a sign that read "Q.C. Performing Arts Studio" beside a blue gate<sup>12</sup> with a restaurant's name on it and an empty security outpost. Entering the gate, I found myself in a big parking lot dotted with palm trees that seemed to serve as parking markers while at the same time providing shade and a touch of beauty to the area.

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<sup>12</sup> Now this gate is painted with the foundation's name in place of a restaurant's name.





*The sports complex's parking area*



*The sports complex's multi-purpose hall*

Walking further I came upon the multipurpose hall, now converted into the Quezon City Performing Arts Theatre, home to the current QCPADFI major production, *Ibong Adarna*. At the second floor<sup>13</sup> of this theatre is QCPADFI's oldest dance studio, where beginner-level scholars are trained. Adjacent to the theatre is the QCPADFI main office, where the mentors and administrative staff entertain guests and conduct the mundane task of distributing transportation allowances.

Attached to the office is the main studio, where small performances are sometimes held. Its primary function, however, is to serve as a training venue for the beginners in the afternoon and for the higher-level scholars at night. Connected to the main studio is the studio annex, where newly recruited scholars are trained. Located within the studio annex are gender-designated dressing rooms for all scholars, regardless of level and age, although it is mostly the higher-level or teenage scholars who use them; younger scholars prefer to change clothes outside the studio under the supervision of their parent(s)/guardian(s). The annex studio extends as far as the fence that separates the multipurpose hall from the sports complex's swimming pool, to provide a space for an improvised kitchen where snacks are prepared and distributed to the scholars. Two of the scholars' mother had volunteered to do the task out of gratitude to the foundation. One of them has two children who belong to the oldest batch, now level-five scholars who are among the foundation's pool of student teachers.

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<sup>13</sup> In the Philippines, the ground floor is considered the first floor, hence the next floor, which in the UK is the first floor, automatically becomes the second floor.





*The QCPADFI main office*



*The QCPADFI main studio*



*The QCPADFI studio annex*



*The QCPADFI second-floor studio*



*Female dressing room*



*Male dressing room*

The QCPADFI office and dance studios, as well as the multipurpose hall, are separated from the rest of Amoranto's facilities by concrete walls that provide a sense of privacy and exclusivity.

#### **A. A Brief History of QCPADFI**

"We have been teaching the rich for a long time and have seen a lot of poor children who can dance. 'We said to each other, 'we are growing old, we have to leave something, give something back'. The rich can afford professional trainings while the talent of children from poor families gets wasted. And we, especially me in my case I did not come from a rich family but I've seen how dance helped me as a person and that is what I know..."

*--QCPADFI President and Artistic Director (Fabella, 2004)*

My frequent visits and chats with the mentors and staff of QCPADFI lead me to travel back in time when there was not a foundation yet and what came to be known as QCPADFI was once part of Quezon City local government's program for the youth.

Retracing the beginnings of QCPADFI, I found out the initiative came from three of the country's most distinguished dance professionals namely: Eddie Elejar, Toni Fabella and Luther Perez. While reaching the heights of their career, all three of them realized the need to extend the performing arts to underprivileged children. With this in mind, they handed a proposal to then mayor of Quezon City (QC), Mhel Mathay who adopted it within the QC's programs for children and the youth in 1994 --as the Quezon City Performing Arts Development Program (QCPADP). From then on the city government provided the venue for the training, transportation allowances for the scholars and salaries for the mentors in cooperation with the Twin Hearts Foundation. The latter is a private charitable organization that works hand-in-hand with the QC government by providing the other needs of the program.

The QCPADP had a humble beginning with just one studio, fifty scholars and improvised training outfits and facilities (e.g. making use of obstacle course bars for bar exercises). It encountered financial and administrative difficulties in the latter part of the Mathay administration, hence the documentary I've seen in channel seven about a promising program for urban poor children then at the brink of collapse.

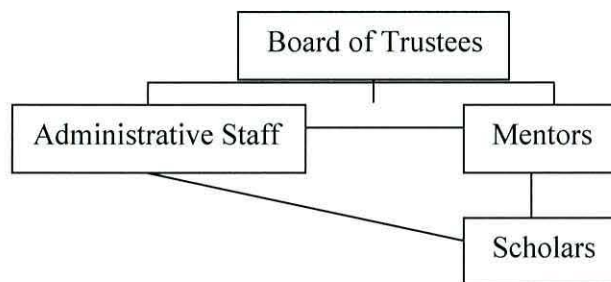
In 2001 the move to transform QCPADP into a foundation came about through the initiative of the incumbent mayor's daughter, Joy Belmonte, who together with her father, Mayor Sony Belmonte acts as one of the foundation's board of trustees. This brought about major changes that allowed it to expand in terms of programs, beneficiaries, and audience reach. One of these changes involved the establishment of an administrative and support structure that monitors and evaluates the program and its needs.

Now the QCPADFI has three dance studios within Amoranto, two training centres within Quezon City (Amoranto Sports Complex and Novaliches), has its own library and theatre (the modernized multi-purpose hall), and is not only confined to training urban poor children in dance but voice and Filipino musical instruments as well. The following are some other changes brought about by this transformation for its scholars: 1.) immediate access to transportation allowance which are distributed on the day of the



training, 2.) free snacks, and 3.) free ballet uniforms including point shoes. Apart from the direct benefits the scholars experienced, the QCPADFI itself was able to expand its beneficiaries as well as audience reach and was able to follow a yearly routine. The foundation holds regular auditions to ensure they reached their quota of 250 scholars. Although they often exceed this number whenever newly recruited scholars come in, drop-outs are inevitable. These auditions are held thrice a year in public schools as well as within the dance studios in Amoranto. Aside from auditions, the foundation made sure they have at least one school tour a year as a way of reaching out to students of public schools who otherwise lack exposure to this genre of the performing arts.

#### *A Look at the Foundation's Operating Structure*



The QCPADFI has quite a simple operational structure with a section, the administrative segment, having tasks other than managing the program. On top of the structure is the board of trustees whose responsibility is to track the financial status of the foundation. This segment is composed of individuals coming from business and cultural sectors including Fabella who currently acts as the foundation's president. The board of trustees meet twice a year to evaluate the programs' mid-year progress. The usual by-products of these meetings are the introduction of new schemes to improve program delivery, constructions of (or refurbishing existing) infrastructures, and additional fundraisings.

Under the board of trustees are the administrative staffs that take charge of the mundane tasks of running the technical side of the program like program handlings (e.g., marketing, fundraisings, preparing proposals/grants, etc.), budget allocations and management, communication and coordination with various agencies, and all clerical tasks.

The administrative staffs work closely with the mentors and report progress of programs to the board of trustees. However, it is interesting to note that this segment of



the foundation does not exclusively work for the foundation. Other than the QCPADFI the staffs also act as the administrative hand of the City Mayor's daughter's other foundation. Because of this the staff practice multi-tasking and operates on the principle of urgency. Thus while there exists an acting administrative head, the administrative staff works in a non-hierarchical manner where anybody is expected to perform any needed task and may be pulled out to any of Ms. Belmonte's foundations.

Working closely with the administrative staff are the mentors consisting of the programs' three founders, who all together act as the foundation's artistic directors: Elejar, Fabella and Perez. Being both the foundation's artistic consultant and president, Fabella takes charge of higher-level dance trainings together with Elejar, while Perez takes charge of the over-all trainings from beginners to level five scholars. Six teaching assistants help them in running the dance trainings. Of the six, five are among QCPADFI's top scholars. While the mentors and dance instructors receive their salaries from the city government, the teaching assistants, who are basically student teachers, receive their regular student allowance like ordinary QCPADFI scholars on top of that is the wage they receive which comes from the personal pockets of the mentors.



*Toni teaches new dance to higher-level scholars    Luther trains old beginner scholars*



*Two student teachers assist Luther*

*A student teacher handles new beginners'*

## **B. Spaces and Characters from the Margins: The Marginal Characters in Peripheral Worlds**

Whenever I enter the Amoranto Sport Complex, I always have a sense of traversing a multiplicity of worlds and characters. The spaces seem to change as the main characters, --the scholars, simultaneously shift between seemingly opposing characteristics—activity and passivity, dependence and independence, vulnerability and strength of character, playfulness and responsibility, poise and carefree-ness. It fascinates me how they bring together in one place a mixture of worlds and personalities, in collaboration with other characters whose roles, although central to them, are peripheral to the foundation's existence.

While the foundation and its scholars have endowed Amoranto with a different character, creating thus a parallel space that coexists with the sports complex, the adult characters who accompany the scholars provide yet another dimension to the place. Since the QCPADFI's clients are quite young, they still depend on these adults to ensure their safety and provide their needs, especially those not provided by the foundation. These characters are the scholars' parents—mostly their mothers—or guardians (e.g., grandmothers, elder siblings or aunts),<sup>14</sup> who stay and wait for the younger children to finish their training. It is through them that the spaces outside of the studios in Amoranto are transformed. Those scholars who are old enough to take care of themselves, or who have working parents, are left on their own during the training—their parents/guardians merely bring them to Amoranto and then return in the evening to fetch them.

Where the studios are territories of exclusion segregated by the walls that set its characters apart, the spaces beyond it are areas accessible to anyone who wishes to traverse them. From the moment the scholars arrive with their parents or guardians, Amoranto is endowed with a character of "otherness" distinct from its usual nature on non-dance training days. This otherness may be likened to what Michel Foucault describes as *heterotopia*, or spaces of alternative social ordering that stand in contrast to their taken-for-granted social order (Hetherington 1997). For while Amoranto's patrons frequent the place for its manifest function (as a sports arena), its thrice-a-week regular visitors go there because of its incidental function, that of being QCPADFI's training

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<sup>14</sup> Scholars with working mothers are usually accompanied by their grandmother, elder sibling, aunt or sometimes their father.



venue. Thus, while the former's going to Amoranto does not bring a sense of otherness to the place, the latter's presence does.

These other characters—the scholars' parents, guardians and younger siblings—stay in Amoranto for as long as the scholars are within its territory. For this reason it is inevitable that they should also make use of the spaces within Amoranto for whatever purposes may serve them. And since waiting is, for many of them, an agonizingly boring task, they innovatively transform Amoranto's spaces by introducing to it their everyday routines at home, or by making their stay more productive and fun, which most of the time means bringing their economic engagements with them. Some are retailers of beauty and ready-to-wear (RTW) products such as Triumph, Sara Lee, Tupperware and Natasha, and always bring their brochures with them to show to the other parents/guardians. Others sell pastries and light snacks as well as personalized calendars.<sup>15</sup> The former sell their products on an instalment basis, while the latter accept only cash or a pay-later arrangement. According to one mother, someone even used to sell refreshments during the summer, and indeed I myself sometimes saw one of the mothers selling ice candies (ice lollipops) stored in a small icebox. There was even one instance when a particular dance created an economic opportunity for a family of tailors. This happened in August, when a new dance that involves the use of thin bamboo sticks was introduced to the scholars. Seeing how the children were having trouble carrying their sticks around, the mother of the said family sewed fashionable carrying bags for the bamboo sticks, which she sold at a very reasonable price (ten pesos each).

While it is mainly the scholars and their parents/guardians and younger siblings who are the target clients of these entrepreneurs, mentors like Fabella often buy pastries from them as his way of helping the families, as well as to indulge his sweet tooth (Fabella 2004). Aside from selling, some mothers also offer certain services to fellow mothers or even the foundation's staff, such as manicures/pedicures, massages and hair treatments (Godofredo 2004).

For entertainment, the QCPADFI's marginal characters resort to chatting and sharing snacks, activities that they conduct in so lively a fashion that it often appears like

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<sup>15</sup> While I managed to take photos of the latter, I failed to document the former since the idea of exploring the otherness of Amoranto came later in the writing phase of the thesis when I was doing my analytic work. Needless to say, some of the pictures here are just accidental to the research and were not meant to be included in it when they were taken.



they are having a picnic just outside the studios, or in the theatre lobby. Some mothers would even bring food from birthday parties at home or *pasalubong*<sup>16</sup> from the province to Amoranto so they could share these with their fellow parents/guardians. The rest of their time is spent napping or reading pocketbooks, leisure activities they like to do at home. Some even crochet or sew, and still others while away their time by removing each other's grey hairs or grooming their young children. These activities endow Amoranto a sense of home and community.

*The Homely Communal Spaces in Amoranto*



<sup>16</sup> Bringing home *pasalubong* is a common Filipino practice. The term refers to goods, mostly food items a traveller buys from the place s/he has visited to give as gifts to friends and family at home. Common examples are local delicacies, handicrafts or any material culture particular to the visited place.





*Spaces for the Informal Economy*





### *Picnic Spaces*



### *Napping and Grooming Spaces*



### **C. Parallel Worlds**

My presence in the QCPADFI was quite timely for a lot of significant events occurred while I was doing my fieldwork. Not only was I able to watch several shows, two of which I got to record, albeit somewhat unskilfully, with a video camera, and the rest with a digital camera, I also got to witness a number of rehearsals, a pre-departure concert, and auditions. These events, although seasonal, are essential to the QCPADFI's life, creating



thus extensions of realities within and outside Amoranto. Here is where scholars get to experience other realities and spaces apart from that which they occupy as dance trainees as they take centre stage, go backstage, and inhabit the audience seat, the assistant instructors' demo space and the onlookers' marginal space. The first three spaces they alternately occupy during dance concerts, the last two during auditions when some of them help demonstrate dance steps while the others watch from outside the studio.

#### *a. Auditions*

Auditions are necessary to ensure the QCPADFI's continuity. Thrice a year, the foundation holds regular auditions within the studios of Amoranto and in public primary and secondary schools. According to Tony Fabella: "We have a quota of 250, hence we automatically hold auditions if the dropout rate among students is high. . . . Normally, we hold them thrice a year depending on the number of current students" (Fabella 2004).

I managed to witness the series of auditions the foundation held in Amoranto in September 2004. Although I did not see the ones they conducted in public schools, they nonetheless use the same screening processes. Fabella says he writes to public school principal way before the scheduled auditions to inform them of the foundation's visit. Audition schedules are also posted on the door of the foundation's office; visitors as well as parents/guardians can then help disseminate the information at the community level.

While dance auditions held in public schools are normally done in the morning, the ones in Amoranto are scheduled at four in the afternoon. During auditions, the afternoon dance trainings are cut short for lack of venues as well as the need for facilitators and assistants. It is usually Toni or Luther who supervises the audition while the higher level scholars assist through demonstrating the dance steps. Auditions starts with the gathering of all candidates in either the main studio or studio annex, through the initial supervision of the assistant instructors, with the higher level scholars demonstrating the dance steps. When the candidates are ready, either Tony or Luther enters the dance studio, briefs the candidates about the audition and proceeds with the evaluation process. While the candidates try to elicit the demonstrated dance steps on their own, Toni/Luther roams the room in search of potential scholars. Once a potential scholar is spotted, he goes beside the child and asks questions in the attempt to establish the latter's economic background. When all questions have been satisfied, a chosen child is asked to stay on a

corner until such time when all potential scholars within the room have been picked and are then asked to proceed to the QCPADFI office for the distribution of the official application forms and briefing about the upcoming orientation. Both of the latter are for the potential scholars' parents or guardians who are to fill up the form as a sign of their consent and are therefore required to attend the said orientation with their corresponding child/children.

The orientation is usually conducted on a Sunday, to give way to the scholars' parents'/guardians' work, in one of the dance studios. This is attended by Toni, a board member of the QCPADFI, the foundation managing director and secretary, and some higher-level scholars who are expected to assist in the process. In the orientation, Toni discusses the dance training program and the foundation's expectations of its scholars, while a board member and the managing director provides the background of the QCPADFI, explains the trust of the foundation and the nature of the dance scholarship.

#### *A Visual Account of the Audition*







#### *b. Dance Concerts*

During my fieldwork schedule (June to October 2004), the QCPADFI held at least eight local shows and two international dance performances. Of these, five were solo dance concerts—one held in celebration of Quezon City’s foundation day, another a pre-departure dance concert, and the rest are performances for various occasions. Among these, I had the privilege of watching six shows: (1) a mall show in honour of the Outstanding Filipino Young Women (“Womanity”), (2) a performance for one of their fund-raising projects (“Racket for a Cause”), (3) a pre-departure dance concert, (4) an exclusive performance for the Metro Manila mayors’ spouses, (5) a dance concert held to showcase Filipino Excellence and the Beauty of the Philippines (“Ganda ng Pilipinas, Galing ng Pilipino”), and (6) “Taga-QC Ako” (I am from QC), a thanksgiving dance concert for the constituents of the Quezon City local government.

As each scheduled performance draws near, the scholars undergo rigorous training and attend regular practice sessions that focus on the show’s repertoire. They are pressured to memorize the sequences of their dance pieces and to master the movements involved therein. Failure to exhibit discipline and mastery over a dance piece will, in



extreme case, lead to a scholar's exclusion from the show. Sometimes a general rehearsal is also held that provided previews of the scholars' performances for its patron and sponsors.

*Visual Accounts of Some of the QCPADFI Performances*

*A Dance Rehearsal*





*A Dance Show for the Mayors' Spouses*



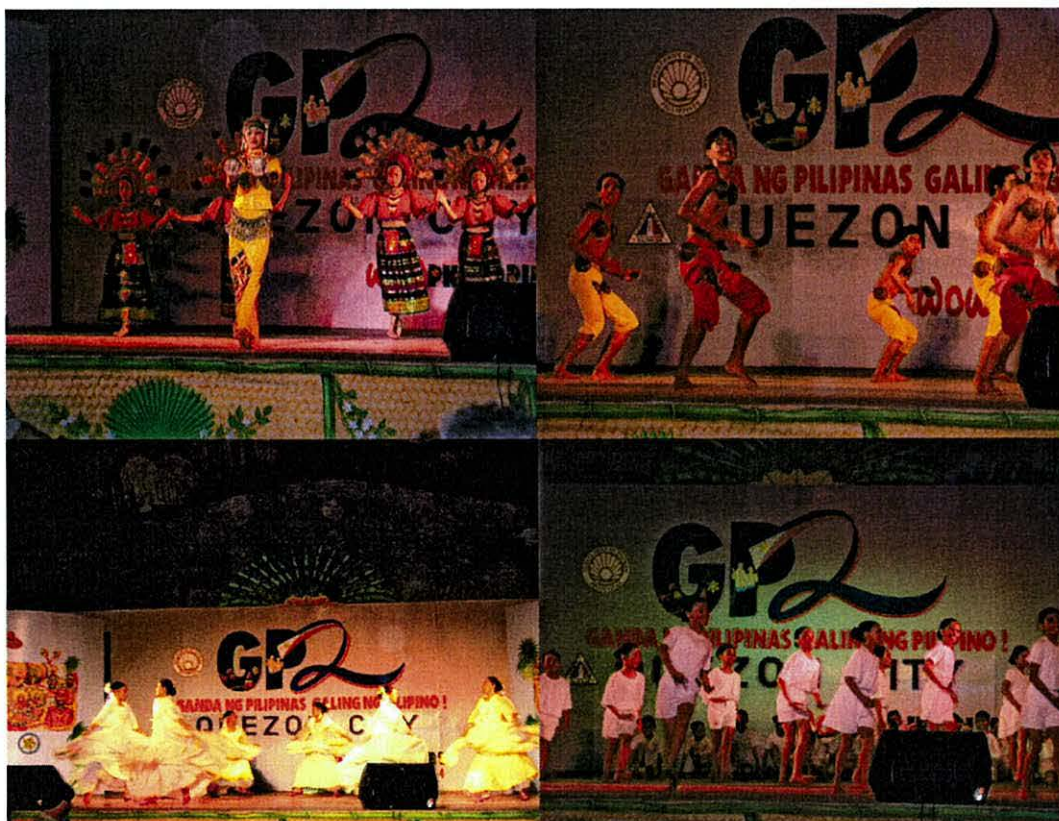
*"Taga QC Ako"*







*"Ganda ng Pilipinas, Galing ng Pilipino"*







## Chapter II: The QCPADFI – The Scholars' Collective World

### A. The Scholars at a Glimpse



“There are a lot of changes in them; they gained self-confidence. If you ask them they would respond immediately and are now alert unlike before when you cannot hear their replies to questions. Another is discipline. They have also acquired a ballerina stance, which can be seen in the way they stand, head held high, chin up and shoulders out. You won’t fail to notice the way they walk, especially the level-five scholars. You will say to yourself, ‘This is a ballet dancer. He/She can dance’”

--QCPADFI Secretary (Sunga 2004 ).



The QCPADFI scholars never fail to fascinate me. They seem to shift identities the moment they arrive in Amoranto. As they change into their ballet uniforms and enter the dance studios they fit into the world the QCPADFI is creating for and with them, which they in turn reconstruct in the process.

For a majority of the scholars the transformation is as fast as the sudden change of clothes. Among the beginners, one recognizes a budding performer's spirit, while those who have long been in the scholarship display a sense of confidence and elegance beyond the clothes they wear, qualities they exhibit even in the way they walk. These characteristics are seldom seen among children with similar economic background. The scholars also seem to have developed more respect for persons older than them. Some even claim to have gained confidence in dealing with people of different backgrounds, while all of them are now capable of facing and dealing with large crowds which is a direct result of the shows the foundation produces each year.

The scholars' parents, as well as the foundation's secretary (Ms. Sunga), share these observations with me. They attribute these changes in the scholars' to the trainings provided by the foundation. Apart from those mentioned above, the parents also recognized a growing sense of discipline and independence among their children noticeable in the way the latter balances their time between studies and dance trainings and where time for plays are quite often sacrificed.

### ***1. Scholars' Profiles***

In my visits to both the scholars' homes and schools, I was able to personally witness their poverty, which they often talked about in their journals and indirectly shared during our chats and interviews. For the QCPADFI it is not only an established fact, but actually a requirement that their scholars are socio-economically marginalized, a condition the foundation manages to establish through the scholar's family income, which must be within the national minimum wage or the defined poverty line. In addition, the foundation also requires that all scholars be students of public schools and live within recognized urban poor settlements in Quezon City. This the mentors immediately establish during auditions where potential scholars are asked about their school and address before being accepted. However, children of *barangay* (village) officials are exempted from these requirements provided they display a talent in dancing and bring an endorsement letter

from the barangay chairperson (Ponsaran 2004).

I don't really have detailed profiles of all the QCPADFI scholars. The only information I have came from the foundation's 2003 report prepared by its managing director, Mr. Ponsaran, for the board of trustees. As of June 2003 there were 135 scholars, the majority of whom were females (73 percent) and just a little more than a quarter of whom were males (27 percent). Of these scholars, almost half (40 percent) were between the ages of six and ten, slightly more than half (53 percent) were eleven to fifteen years old and the rest (7 percent) were sixteen and above. Most of them (95 percent) were studying while a few (7 percent) were out of school. Of the former, most (75 percent) were elementary students, some (22 percent) were in high school and the rest (4 percent) were in college. It is interesting to note that even then the females outnumbered the male scholars in the QCPADFI. This of course can be attributed to the double standard that has been applied to the arts, especially dance, wherein female performing artists are favoured and males are viewed as weaklings and effeminate. Such gender discrimination was experienced by one of the male beginner scholars, who related his struggle in attending the program. Like Billy Eliot,<sup>17</sup> he also has to hide his dance training from his family for fear of being beaten up, a traumatic experience he claims to have gone through more than once.

The unequal gender distribution among the QCPADFI scholars was still evident when I left the Philippines in late October 2004. For even while the foundation took in an additional 200 scholars through the series of auditions held between 21 to 30 September, females outnumbered the male recruits at a three females to one male ratio.



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<sup>17</sup> Billy Elliot, the main character in a movie of the same title, is a boy who perseveres in his ballet training despite his family's objections.





## *2. Stratification by Merits within the Scholars' World*

“There is hierarchy among the scholars. If you are a level-five scholar, you are definitely higher than the beginners. When the scholars are outside the sports complex it doesn’t exist but within, a scholar knows his/her position. The beginners are always on the last part of the queue and the level students are always first. The structure within the foundation is not one based on inequality but ability. It is not a written code; it is an invisible code that scholars eventually acquire through time. You get the culture when you stay there through time, by observation. There’s no formal socialization that dictates that they learn it.”

—QCPADFI Managing Director (Ponsaran 2004)



There are two major categories of scholars within the program: (1) the beginners and (2) the level scholars. Both of these categories have subdivisions. The beginners are subdivided into the new and old, hence the term *new beginners* and *old beginners*.

New beginners refer to the newly recruited scholars who have just passed the most recently held auditions. This group has the highest number of dropouts; usually only 20 to 30 percent stay in the program (Ponsaran 2004). The usual reasons for dropping out are: (1) inability to balance dance trainings with studies, (2) inability to cope with the training's demands and (3) loss of interest in the program. Two other reasons some of the parents give are their dissatisfaction with the mentors' way of disciplining the scholars, and the difficulties of travelling and accompanying their children to Amoranto.

The old beginners, on the other hand, range from the advanced beginners who have been with the program for at least three months—that is, those who were recruited from the audition prior to the most recently conducted one—to those who have been with the program for more than a year yet have still not been promoted.

Scholars who learn fast and exhibit style and the capacity to learn new techniques are promoted and designated as *level students*. The levels are from one (1) to five (5), with five being the highest. Levels are assigned to scholars based on qualities defined per level. Level one scholars are those who display correct movements, know a lot of dances and can easily pick up steps and techniques; level two must exhibit the right techniques like in doing the pirouette; level three must be capable of performing classical ballet; level four must show mastery of folk dances; and level five, of classical dance (Adajar 2004).

Being with the scholars in Amoranto for almost five months familiarized me with the patterns of hierarchy within the QCPADFI. This hierarchy emerged out of the foundation's value for excellence, discipline and hard work built on merits and manifested in the privileges higher-level scholars get to enjoy, like being first priority when it comes to company freebies, coach seats and performances, not needing to queue for snacks, etc. When riding coaches, designations are made according to levels; hence, higher-level students get to ride a separate coach from the rest of the scholars and are often seated first, while the latter have to wait in line. In addition, level scholars are sure to perform or take part in every QCPADFI show unless program sponsors or organizers require age-specific performers.



Level stratification plays an important role in motivating the scholars to do their best in the trainings. Like the functionalist's notion of stratification, levels in the QCPADFI seem to function as the foundation's means of ensuring there will always be higher-level students. The system operates on a reward-motivation scheme wherein good performers are rewarded with easy access to resources such as those mentioned above. The scholars are thus inspired to do their best and aspire to reach the highest level possible, in order to receive the promised benefits. According to a number of old beginner scholars, the opportunity to teach ballet, to travel and to take part in international performances such as those in Japan, Macau and Hong Kong has become their motivation in striving to reach level five.

The hierarchical pattern of social processes within the foundation, as described by Ponsaran, is not directly taught. Neither is it forced upon the scholars as part of their initiation to QCPADFI culture. Rather it is so well-defined within the QCPADFI system that new scholars gradually learn it as they perform their routines within the foundation. Hence it is quite normal to witness beginner scholars patiently queuing to claim their costumes or company freebies. However when it comes to claiming allowances and snacks, contrary to Ponsaran's statement, I noticed that it is the teaching assistants who organize the distribution process by ending their training session in time for the scholars to queue up for their snacks and transportation allowance. Beginners on the ground floor line up for their snacks first before queuing for their transportation allowance, while those on the second floor follow the reverse order.

The teaching assistants from the second floor, Jessie and Paul, dismiss their class as soon as they see the foundation's secretary, Ms. Sunga, coming since it is often she who distributes the scholars' transportation allowance.<sup>18</sup> Snacks on the other hand are ready for distribution whenever the ground-floor teaching assistants signal for a snack break or the higher-level scholars have had theirs. Higher-level scholars have their dance trainings from six to nine in the evening, the same time slot for the evening classes of the beginners hence they are allowed to take their snacks first before starting their warm-up exercises. Most beginners, on the other hand, have their trainings at three in the afternoon up to a quarter before six. Supposedly, only those beginners who have afternoon classes

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<sup>18</sup> There are cases in which the foundation's administrative head, Mr. Ponsaran, takes charge of the distribution, especially when Ms. Sunga has errands to perform.

at school are allowed to take evening classes, upon the request of their parents and guardians.<sup>19</sup> However, beginners who have siblings of higher level or who go to school in the afternoon prefer to attend these classes so they could have someone to go home with.

*The dance training by level*

*The new beginners at the multipurpose hall*



*The old and new beginners at the studio annex*



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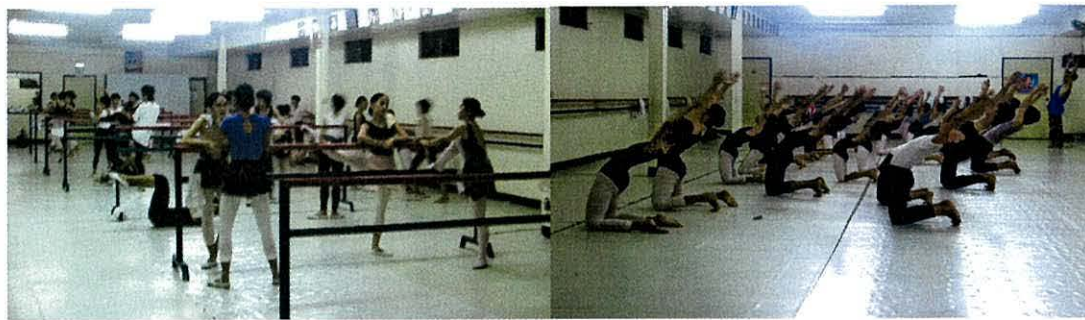
<sup>19</sup>Classes in Philippine primary schools usually follow one fixed schedule: grade six classes start early morning and lasts until noontime, while grade five classes are from noontime to five in the afternoon.



*The old beginners at the main studio*



*The higher level scholars at the main studio*



*Level designated coaches*



## **B. Everyday Routine within QCPADFI**

### **1. The Dance Trainings**

“For the beginners the training is very structured. This structure is universal for ballet and the format is the same for all levels although they become more difficult as the years go by. . . . The basic training has to be very solid. We are very strict with regards to basic training because if one commits a mistake then it would be difficult to correct it.”

(Fabella 2004)

As I went about my normal routine in Amoranto, I was able to observe everyday life at the QCPADFI. I must admit being a peripheral character prevented me from directly experiencing its reality as a performing arts school. Nevertheless my mere presence there presented me with numerous opportunities to witness its everyday construction. On Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, when the scholars' dance trainings are scheduled, the sports complex assumes all the characteristics of a typical performing arts school. The presence of the scholars themselves clad in ballet attires, as well as of their mentors, facilitates this transformation.

During dance trainings, the instructors take full control of the social construction of realities inside the studios. At this time, the scholars are expected to submit to the authority of their mentors and absorb the structured dance trainings. In this way they are socialized to be completely obedient to the QCPDFI culture as it is defined by their mentors.

Regular trainings begin with *warm-up exercises* that include stretching and floor exercises to physically prepare the scholars for basic ballet. These are followed by *bar exercises* that are comprised of basic ballet steps practiced on the bar, and then *centre works* in which the scholars must perform the same basic exercises without the bar. This part of the training culminates with *corner exercises* or *corners*, which consist of pique turns that are done from one corner of the studio to the other, hence the term "corners." After this the scholars are given a five-minute break to drink water or use the toilets, after which the second part of the training begins.

The second part of the dance training is devoted either to learning and practicing modern dance or practicing the repertoire for a scheduled dance concert. This lasts until 5:30, at which time the scholars are dismissed so they could line up for snacks and transportation allowance. If the foundation has a scheduled performance, the second half of the training is held in the main studio under the supervision of Luther Perez. Sessions such as these normally end with Perez gathering the scholars and giving them feedbacks on the day's training. This routine is true for beginners taking the afternoon classes. However, higher-level scholars are expected to do the warm-up and bar exercises on their own, hence the perception among some scholars that they are receiving a different kind of training. While scholars across levels follow the same dance training, in terms of sequences and content, expectations are much higher and the conduct of trainings more



strenuous for the higher-level scholars as the focus shifts to developing styles and techniques.

All throughout my five-month fieldwork in Amoranto I noted that the structure of the QCPADFI dance trainings was almost the same across time for all levels. As Fabella himself articulates,

“What changes is the style and how it appears as you progress to higher levels. That’s the reason why we are strict with the training because it will be the same until you are through with your dancing career. It’s the best way for the body to strengthen and assimilate technique,” (2004).

The scholars are aware that they must first learn the basics of ballet before they are introduced to modern dance. Some of them admittedly have difficulties with the terminology and are unfamiliar with the music, but these obstacles have not prevented them from learning ballet; instead they have developed ways to overcome these difficulties. Relates one of the scholars,

“First, the ballet positions were taught to us—first, second, third and then *brava*. Then came the positions of the feet—turn-out-turn-in and how we are supposed to do it. I had difficulty with the pronunciations. The terms were so alien to me, like *brava*. I go home<sup>20</sup> bearing these things in mind and whenever I’m home I practice. So when I come here I know how they’re supposed to be done. The music is different as well. I hadn’t heard it before; it was only here that I got to listen to it. What I’m used to is modern dance, not ballet” (Galanze 2004).

The QCPADFI does not distribute modules or printed programs. Perez purposely forbids this to safeguard the mentors’ choreographic rights as well as the foundation’s program (Ponsaran 2004). However, the format of the daily trainings is posted on the wall so the beginner scholars can familiarize themselves with their training routines and performing arts terminologies.

Even though the QCPADFI uses one training program for all the scholars, the mentors teach only the lessons that are appropriate to the scholars’ capabilities or level of development. Ponsaran explains,

“Luther knows the children’s level of development and from this he gauges what to teach them, for example the first step, first phase. . . . You can stay twelve years in the program yet not achieve level 2, not because

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<sup>20</sup> By home here Rey means the vacant lot he occupies at night when he was still a street kid which later refers to the vacant classrooms and eventually the guard house.

you cannot dance properly but because you lack commitment and discipline” (2004).

Hence, for Fabella it is important to keep track of the scholars’ individual progress, which he does by monitoring them during trainings and rewarding them whenever they show signs of improvement.

“We sometimes upgrade a scholar twice in just one year. But there are those who remain where they are for one or two years. That doesn’t mean they are not talented. They are just slow learners. But there are those who are really fast in terms of pickup and we cannot just let them stay with the beginners. Of course they will get bored. They know they can do it and the body will know. Why don’t we test them?” (Fabella 2004).

To test the scholars’ skills and progress, the mentors provide them with opportunities to show how far they can go, like squeezing them into the program whenever the foundation has a scheduled show or pulling beginners out of their group and mixing them with level students when they are introducing a new dance. Kenthkenth, one of the level scholars, relates:

We were often asked to observe and learn the dances of higher-level scholars. Once we had mastered these we would be instructed to join them in their practice. (Uy 2004)

#### *A Visual Account of the Dance Training*



*Warm-up exercises, main studio*

*Warm-up exercises, annex studio*





*Bar exercises, main studio*



*Bar exercises, annex studio*



*Centre works, annex studio*



*Centre works, second floor of the theatre*



*Corners, main studio*



*Corners, second floor of the theatre*



*Five-minute break*



*Basic dance, main studio*





*Practicing a dance repertoire –Lemon Tree*



*Practicing the Christmas Medley*



*Luther gathers the scholar for feedback*



*Luther provides feedback/reprimands a scholar*



*Beginner scholars queue for snacks*



*Higher-level scholars take their snacks*



*Beginner scholars queue for transportation allowance*





## **2. Character Building**

Seeing firsthand how everyday life is organized within the QCPADFI, one gets a sense that the foundation's routines are structured not just to teach the performing arts but to develop character as well. As Fabella articulates,

"Students are given the opportunity to learn not only the arts but also discipline, respect for authority, personality development and even conversational skills as well as table manners. My dream is to always come up with students who will be good citizens of the country. While they all want to venture into dance, the Philippine dance industry cannot accommodate them all so where will they go?" (2004)

These aspirations are reflected in the foundation's marketing kit and structure the way training is carried out and relationships are defined within the foundation.

"Aside from developing their inborn talents and providing them with a venue through which to express their artistic merits, the program endeavours to instil underprivileged children with a sense of pride in themselves, help them to discover a sense of self-worth, and inculcate in them the value of discipline, hard work, proper conduct, and a philosophy of excellence" (QCPADFI 2003).

Fabella, meanwhile, describes how the mentors instil a sense of discipline:

"We place a lot of importance on attitude. If there's a scholar with an attitude problem, which means we have difficulty disciplining him or her, it might mean that s/he has different interests. Our efforts, as well as the student's, will go to waste if what we are trying to develop is not within the student's interests" (2004).

The QCPADFI's definition of discipline embraces two aspects, one of which involves the body's ability to conform to the demands of training while the other has to do with personal attitude. According to Fabella:

There was an instance when we had to drop one student whom we had been training for years out of the program. We could not discipline him! It could be that the body was not willing. Then there are those who are really good and we want to practice them but they are not willing to be corrected. Ah! These can't be. All of these things we take into account. We can't be right all the time. Hopefully we're not wrong because not all of them will become dancers but with this training at least when they go home they have something. With discipline, whatever you aspire for you can get as long as you have focus. Thus the other thing we teach is focus. You have to be very focused on what you do (2004).

It is evident from the way the trainings are conducted that the scholars are treated as responsible individuals and not helpless children. Also along this line, whenever there are official transactions that need be made the foundation deals directly with the scholars, who in turn convey the information to their parents/guardians. The latter accept and abide by the foundation's structured processes and entrust their children to its care. This, according to the foundation's managing director, has always been the case since one of the foundation's goals is to develop responsibility and independence in the scholars.

Regardless of age, the scholars must know how to be independent. They must know how to dress up, wash their costumes and prepare them, do their makeup, etc. We treat them as independent persons but they don't have any say in the foundation's decisions. Remember where these children are coming from. They lack self-worth and self-respect. You have to build those up by training them to be independent individuals who are capable of doing things without the aid of anybody. That's where we take off (Ponsaran 2004).

It is thus but normal for the scholars to be treated without any form of pampering in the QDPADFI. Whenever they commit mistakes they are apprehended directly.

### **3. Learning Discipline and the Art of Making Apologies**

"Being kids, it is but natural for us to be noisy. But usually, we only get scolded when the noise is too much and uncalled for like for example chatting while a lecture is going on. Sir Luther would scold us right away and so we need to apologize. We always apologize immediately."

—Merianne (Bartolome 2004)

I must say the duration of my fieldwork in Amoranto was adequate enough for me to recognize the structure of authority within the QDPADFI and to witness how it operates. As the foundation's administrative head confirmed, the QCPADFI assumes a structure of authority patterned after the traditional Filipino family where respect for authority is ingrained and the subordinates are expected to obey without question. Obedience, in this regard, is not the only requirement but to a certain extent fear of authority as well. But the scholars understand that discipline is imposed for their own good. As Merianne, one of the scholars relates:

Whereas the teaching assistants handle the beginners now, in my time, it was Sir Luther who handled and supervised us. But it was fun with Sir



Luther. They say it's frightening if it's with Sir Luther. It is frightening, as sometimes he curses but it's okay because in the end we learn our lessons. He will personally see you through. He will hold your foot and correct its position. Then there's Kuya Jessie; he's been there from the start. If Kuya Jessie asked you to do the pliè you'll be in that position for far too long, until your feet get tired but still you've got to do it (Bartolome 2004).

Regardless of their age, the scholars are required to exhibit attentiveness and discipline. They are expected to acquire the ethics of hard work and professionalism, to deal with losing face in front of fellow scholars, and to manage as well as balance emotions when reprimanded. In the course of my fieldwork, there were a number of instances in which I witnessed children being asked to leave the dance studio after committing mistakes or displaying misconduct. It is normal for scholars to be harshly reprimanded whenever they: (1) fail to follow instructions, (2) do not concentrate or (3) chat while training is going on. Mistakes are immediately corrected and brought to the attention of the appropriate scholar who gets reprimanded in front of the entire class.

In cases where the students commit mistakes or fail to properly execute a movement, they are made to repeat it until they achieve perfection. If scholars still fail to get the right movement after three trials, they are asked to leave the studio. The same fate awaits those who do not concentrate on the training and those who are caught chatting during training sessions. This clearly demonstrates the importance mentors put on discipline and focus. Scholars are trained to learn dances by sequence, hence when they are booted out of the studio they are actually being meted out a double punishment since they will also be left behind in their training program. Karen, a beginner scholar, relates her experience:

All of a sudden we were summoned, Marie and protruding-butt Dayanara. The three of us are always reprimanded. This time it was because while we were doing pliè Marie said, "Karen, Ate Ivy is now near you. She is going to kick you." Eh I was annoyed with her so when I turned around I kicked her and then I took a rest near the bar but she joined the three of us. So we were suddenly asked to leave the room. It was because Marienar did the pliè, and she repeated it. Eh, both Dayanara and I had already brought our feet down but Marie was still doing the pliè so we were caught. Marie was caught on the bar while we (Karen and Dayanara) were listening but Sir Luther thought we were also doing the pliè so the three of us were asked to go out (Collado 2004).

In this case, the punishment was meant as a disciplinary measure to correct misbehaviour rather than an opportunity to perfect the step being taught.

The aforementioned observations are true for most dance classes except in Perez's class, where more rigorous trainings are to be expected. In this class, one finds a mixture of scholars who have not reached levels yet, but are more advanced than the beginners. Here, failure to perform the required movements correctly or being caught chatting or losing one's focus during training will incur a punishment all scholars dread—*promotion*. As Karen relates, "Marie kept coming to my side pushing me. I was annoyed so I said, 'Move Marie, you're crowding me.' But it turned out I had a bigger space, eh Sir Luther saw us and he thought we were both laughing. We were again asked to leave. Sometimes we are not allowed to come back anymore, we get promoted. But if it's the smaller scholars they are allowed back" (Collado 2004).

*Promotion*, in QCPADFI lingo, means the reverse of its denotative meaning. Simply put it means being pulled out of Perez's class, which is held in the main studio (on the ground floor), and transferred to Jessie's class at the second-floor studio. The scholars in this class are predominantly new recruits—in the foundation's language, new beginners. Thus the promotion in this sense is literally a vertical movement in training venue, but a demotion in terms of training rank/level.

When an offence graver than the mere committing of mistakes, such as showing disrespect for authority or lack of discipline, or even becoming a bad influence to fellow scholars, is established, the offender is dropped from the program. A case in point is that of a male scholar who was involved in the commercial sex trade and was caught soliciting sex from fellow scholars. After he was kicked out he was even banned from entering Amoranto (Ponsaran 2004).

However, there are also success stories of scholars who were readmitted into the program after being expelled. A good example is Jonjon who, after being caught making fun of the dance trainings, was dropped from the program. He admits that when he was first awarded the scholarship he did not take the dance training seriously, but when he was readmitted after a year of continuous struggle he did his best to pass the audition even when it meant starting all over again (Bides 2004). He narrates what happened after he was first admitted into the program:



The following months our mentor taught us other dances. While we were practicing the new dance, I played around with the steps not knowing our mentor was watching. I was reprimanded and was removed from the scholarship. The following day, I tried to come back and apologized for what I did. But my apologies were never accepted and that's when I lost hope. After a year, I auditioned again. I was eleven then. I was given another chance to continue with my dance training. At first it was fairly easy but when it became more difficult I really tried to do my best because when I got myself in again I said to myself, "I want this. This is what I want now and I don't want to be removed from the scholarship again" (Bides 2004).



*Luther reprimands the scholars*



*Jessie asks the scholars to repeat the same step until they could properly execute it*

#### **4. Coping with Reprimands**

"In my case, whenever I got scolded, I cried. I was still a kid then and naturally I cried easily."

—Merianne (Bartolome 2004)

When female scholars are asked to leave the studio, they often resort to crying outside. This is especially true among children between eight to ten years of age. The really young

scholars between six to seven years old are seldom reprimanded; the mentors are more considerate towards them, and they are more attentive to instructions anyway. When they are reprimanded they just keep quiet and apologize right away. Male scholars, on the other hand, simply leave the studio in silence.

Once outside, scholars who are asked to leave after committing mistakes continue practicing along the studio's corridors where they can still access the dance trainings through the open door/gate. However, scholars who are reprimanded due to misconduct evaluates the situation by discussing it among themselves in the hope of finding a way to approach the concerned mentor. In both cases, scholars wait for the proper timing to ask permission to be allowed in again, gauging the mood of the instructor and his receptivity to apologies. Once leniency is detected, scholars approach the latter in groups asking for pardon and the permission to rejoin the class. This the scholars usually do right after short breaks. The mentors usually respond positively. Karen recounts:

Outside, we [Karen, Dayanara ang Marienar] talked and started fighting. "It's all your fault," we kept telling each other. Dayanara started crying; both of them cried. But then I told them, "Don't make noise, we will apologize later." Eh, it turned out Sir Luther was not hot-tempered that day. But we were still afraid. "You go first, Marienar," I said. Eh, they asked me to go first. I suddenly opened the door. I was terrified, I almost cried. All of a sudden Marienar pushed me in so Sir Luther noticed us. He said, "Come here, the two of you." Both of us said, "We're sorry, Sir Luther." Then we were allowed to go in. We seemed to be really afraid then. Because of this we were separated at the bar. . . . (Collado 2004)

Scholars admit they are embarrassed when they are reprimanded or asked to leave the studio in front of the class. Nonetheless, they claim to understand that such actions are necessary and are for their own good. Thus, after having a good cry, instead of sulking they try to think of strategies for appeasing the mentor and getting themselves back into the studio. Usually they file in in groups to apologize after a short break. There are, however, instances when adolescent scholars leave Amoranto on their own out of embarrassment. After some time, the instructor asks someone to look for the scholar. Sometimes scholars also decide to leave after being reprimanded several times. In such cases the other scholars usually take the side of the mentor, telling themselves their teacher was only doing his job while their fellow student failed to fulfil her/his responsibilities. As one scholar explains: ". . . Angelica will quit ballet because Sir Luther reprimanded her several times already. . . . You know, it is really her fault. She



didn't learn the dance steps early on.” (Hernandez 2004)

During the course of their training, the QCPADFI scholars learn not only to balance their emotions when reprimanded, or to offer apologies when they realize their own mistakes or inappropriate behaviour, they also learn to improvise and imbibe the value of mutual help. Proof of this last I often witnessed. For instance, whenever a scholar had forgotten to bring a required dance accessory and hence was in danger of being excluded from the training, he or she would borrow from fellow scholars from the evening class. Usually, the former need not ask for the latter would readily offer to lend their stuff. Sometimes the scholars improvised by looking for similar things in the environment that they could use as replacements. For instance, once when the mentors were teaching a new dance that required the use of two rattan sticks, one scholar who failed to bring his own simply made use of similar sticks he managed to find around the area.

Unfortunately, this spirit of creativity and cooperation is also applied by the scholars to their more naughty pursuits. For example, they would sometimes ask younger scholars, older siblings also enrolled in the program or even the parents/guardians of fellow scholars to write fake excuse letters with forged signatures for them when they forget or fail to secure one from their parents. They know they would not be allowed to enter the dance studio if they cannot produce the required letter, and after all there is always a big chance their mentor will just receive the letter without really reading it. Obviously the students would rather face the risk of being found than experience being left behind in their training.



*Scholars discuss reasons for being asked to leave*



*Four scholars were asked to leave the studio*

*A scholar writes an excuse letter*



### **Chapter III: Images of Childhood and Children's Spaces**

Within a day's training, scholars seem to shift personalities from being playful and carefree-active children to seriously engaged submissive individuals. The former is seen prior to dance trainings and in-between breaks, where children get to define their own activities and take control of their time. During this period, one will witness the scholars in their self-created play spaces along Amoranto's grounds (rotunda), and immediately outside of the studios (e.g. the theatre lobby, studio corridors and the path just outside of the main office). The latter –seriously engaged submissive children-- are recognizable inside the dance studios during dance trainings, where they have to submit to the training design, and the mentors' and assistant instructors'/student teachers' authority. While this is so, both scenarios present children who are actively engaged in defining, maintaining, and redefining their immediate social environment.

While the studios retain its legitimate function during the dance trainings, these and the spaces just outside it present an "otherness" that endows them alternate ordering in between trainings. For the most part of the training days, the studio corridors, lobby and grounds become recreation areas, and an improvised dressing and grooming room. The studios however, get transformed into sites for recreation just before the training.

#### **A. Carefree Children in an Improvised Recreation Space**

Upon the students' arrival until just before training starts, images of innocent and playful children are most evident within Amoranto. During this period, I have come to witness how spaces within the sports complex become real recreation areas for children. The scholars, at this time, redefine the spaces that are available to them within Amoranto, and define its rules according to their games or their need for it. This they do within acknowledged/discerned adult restriction showing thus their rational/sensible-independent-responsible-obedient character.

While a number of scholars use the pre-training time to practice previously learned dance steps, most scholars could be seen playing with fellow scholars within the grounds of Amoranto and even inside the annex studio. Below are the visual accounts of some of the favourite games (and recreation activities) among the scholars: (1.) *larong inaawit*, 2.) *habulan*, (3.) *luksong lubid*, (4.) *sipa*, (5.) mini-badminto, (6.) mini-badminton, (7.) touch ball and (8.) *luksong baka*. (9.) *agawain* base and (9.) singing and



playing the guitar for adolescents (see the presentation as a sequence from 1-9 with 1 – being the “larong inaawit” and 9-10 –singing and playing the guitar.







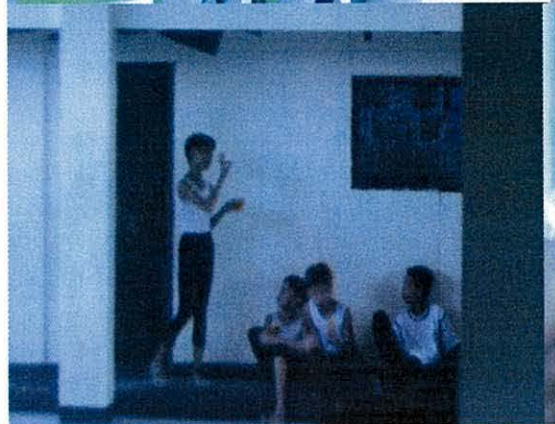
### **B. Of Innocence and Playfulness: Children on Queue and in-Between Trainings**

Stepping out of the dance studios, in-between or after trainings, I get a sense of the scholars shifting to a more relaxed and carefree spirit. Like the pre-training period, short breaks and after training periods are instances where playful children are more visible.

During these periods scholars get to relax, ease out tensions, and release their playful spirit. A normal break lasts from five to ten minutes and is usually held in between training sequences, right before or after the centre and corner exercises. Short breaks are intended to give scholars time to use the toilet or drink. Some even manage to snatch a snack by going to their mother or guardian/s' waiting space. While this is so, scholars who need to use the toilet way before the break may do so provided they excuse themselves properly.

During the short breaks, snapshots of the scholars' cheerful nature may be seen with the way they maximize time to have a little fun or simply rest for a while. However, like the pre-training period scholars are more likely to be having fun while waiting for the distribution of transportation allowance or snacks, as this provides them with a much longer play time.













### **C. Responsible Children: In Preparation for the Dance Training**

The arrival of student teachers marks the beginning of training preparations. Student teachers usually arrive between 2-2:30 p.m. and at times as early as 12:30. The student teachers usually take responsibility in preparing the studios as well as the students for the training. Preparing the studios for the training involved arranging the bars, importing the sound system (i.e. karaoke player) and electric fans from the main office to the designated dance studio, while preparing the scholars meant the facilitation of stretching exercises.

During the preparation most scholars voluntarily help in preparing the dance studios by carrying electric fans and karaoke, and arranging the bars within the studios. Some scholars on the other hand start preparing themselves by grooming their hair and practising previously taught dance steps, while still a number continue to play.









#### **D. Disciplined Children: Dance Trainees Within the Studios**

The studios are adult-defined spaces where children's voices are most of the time unheard. From outside of the studio, one sees a tension-filled room of children treated as serious trainees, who are expected to render full attention to the on-going exercise. A regular of the foundation is conditioned to hear instructions conveyed strictly and in sharp tones, where mistakes are directly corrected and misconduct immediately reprimanded. These spaces require discipline, obedience, respect and submission to adult authorities (e.g. mentors, assistant teachers, and QCPADFI staff and guests). In these spaces a scholar takes on the status of a dance trainee and is thus expected to assume so with a certain degree of independence from parental/adult-care, competence, and professionalism. This reality presents an understanding of children by the mentors, and assistant instructors as responsible individuals, completely aware of what is expected of them and hence, capable of responding appropriately. Here, spaces as they appear in the instance of its use are within its legitimate/recognized functions<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> In Robert Merton's terminology –its manifest function.





*Scholars greet the mentors as they arrive*



*Dance training under the assistant teachers*



*Dance training under Luther Perez*



*Dance training under Tony Fabella*



*Dance training under Luther Perez*

### **E. The Performers on Stages: The Young Dance Professionals**

The stage, unlike the spaces within and outside of the dance studio, shows images of the scholars as professionals. Here they transform into the characters they are tasked to portray. The transformation does not just come with a sudden change of costumes but with gestures, graces and movements acquired through disciplined trainings. A dance performance, be it QCPADFI's dance concert, performing as part of variety show, or taking part in a dance festival, features professional young performing artists who manage

personal routines with minimal adult assistance. These events present children who are treated and thus, act as dance professionals.

While the stage and other performance spaces (theatres, out door spaces e.g. gardens for outdoor performances, and at times the QCPADFI main dance studio) are as well adult defined spaces, the scholars are its main characters. During a dance performance, the scholars are expected to exhibit not just confidence and stage presence, but a certain amount of independence from parental/adult assistance, competence, responsibility and organization.

On the backstage, one sees children as young as six years old perform tasks such as changing into different costumes, waiting for cues, and entering and leaving the stage in coordination with other young performers. All scholars must develop the perfect timing for everything: an estimated time for changing costumes and putting on accessories, and the precise moment to leave the changing area and enter the stage. They must develop a system of organizing their costumes and accessories in their bag, construct ways to identify their stuff from other scholars, know the dance sequences and the music that goes with it as well as the fellow scholars who are to perform the particular dance with them. While this is so scholars' help each other as may be observed especially among those performing as a group. However, children releases their anxieties and nervousness by trying to have fun while waiting for their part.

During performances, the mentors are positioned in locations that allow them spaces to evaluate the performers and the different aspects of the presentation, as this usually becomes the venue for level promotion. Toni is often seated among the audience, in front seats, watching the over all presentation, while Luther could often be found at the back and side stage --seeing to it that sequences are followed, and entrances and exits are organized.



*Backstage scenes: the independent-organized performers*





*Onstage Scenes: the confident young dance performers*





*The curtain call and after...*





#### **Chapter IV: The Scholars' Micro-world**

While the previous chapter presents the scholars' collective world, an attempt to look deeper into their reality is presented in this chapter. Here the scholars' are given the opportunity to tell their own stories in a variety of ways. Most of the older, higher-level scholars (five) resorted to a generous rendering of their stories. Their hectic schedules due to their various activities afforded them with little time to participate intensively in the research process. However, they managed to provide concise and chronological accounts of their lives by way of *pagkukuwento*.

All scholars in this chapter participated through either *pagkukuwento* or *pakikipagkuwentuhan*. The older the scholar is the more the process becomes a *pagkukuwento*.

Aside from the *pakikipagkuwentuhan*, two of the scholars wrote autobiographies; one, the youngest, wrote a journal; and three chose to do all three: writing an autobiography and a journal, while still providing time for *pakikipagkuwentuhan*.

Listening and hearing the voices of the scholars are of prime importance in the reconstruction of their life histories. In this process I recognized that there are not one but many stories each scholars have of their life. This is evident in the scholars' autobiography and/or journal, as well as in their *pakikipagkukuwentuhan*. While their parents/guardians, friends/fellow scholars, the QCPADFI staff presents yet another version of a particular scholar's story, in my reconstruction of their stories it is the scholar's version and hence voice that takes precedence. In reality, what these people shared about what they knew of a particular scholar does not contradict that which was shared by the scholars themselves. For one, the difference lies in the perspective and hence the voice. With the QCPADFI staff and even the scholars' guardians/parents and friends/fellow scholars assumption of a third or second person rendering, a somewhat distant if not detached account is provided. In the latter, one cannot totally feel the utter pain, hardships, struggles, joy, amazement, awe or sense of power or lack of it which are so evident when one hears or reads what the scholars wrote or shared themselves. These are what I tried to preserve as much as possible in the following life histories. And while it may be argued that what one reads below are yet another version of the scholars' stories, let me clarify that what I did for most of them are: 1.) translations (from Filipino to English), 2.) putting highlighted phrases that appears as mini-themes which in reality



are part of what the scholars said in their accounts, and 3.) stitching or pasting together the story according to themes or chronological order.

As mentioned earlier, a scholar has different stories to tell even about a particular experience hence it is not surprising to feel a sense of being lost in a web of tales from time to time. This is just the reason why I decided on highlighting a small portion of what a scholar said and placing it in between accounts that appears like mini-themes. By making use of such device, I do not mean to divide a particular scholar's life history into sections or even themes. I did this to assist the reader in entering the micro-world of the particular scholar. Highlighted phrases are like stop lights, meant to put a reader to temporary stops. While in this process, it is hoped that the spaces for pause creates just enough time for the reader to make sense of what s/he has just read.

In this section, two distinct voices will be heard, that of the particular scholar's and mine. In each scholar's life history, one reads of my introduction to the particular scholar as a way of showing: 1.) how I came to know the person, 2.) I reconstruct her/his story, and 3.) the relationship I have come to establish with her/him. This is meant to locate my position and voice in every scholar's life history. It is worth mentioning that this particular introduction does not only reveal my personal or direct encounter of the scholars' individual worlds but a combination of encounters and accounts resulting from the spontaneous merging and meetings of lives.

The scholars featured in this chapter are those of ages seven to eighteen. Six among them are females and four are males. Three of the scholars are in their primary schools (second to sixth grade), six are in secondary schools, while one is taking up a computer secretariat course. Four among them are old beginners in QCPADFI and the rest are of levels one to five. A number of them (three), auditioned twice for the scholarship where one (Jonjon) experienced re-admission after a year of having been kicked out of the program. Most of the scholars except for Jeffrealz, Melissa and Rey, live with both of their parents. While Jeffrealz experienced visits with his father and Melissa a life with the presence of her mother, it was Rey who was left on his own since age seven.

The narratives in this chapter are deemed to provide insights on the varieties of childhood and children's experiences. It is aimed at presenting the micro-world of children and their involvement in the social construction of their own world. Age, gender,

level in QCPADFI and length of stay in the program, as well as their family background are some of the criteria used in selecting the scholars for this section. I felt it appropriate to pick scholars who, although share the common characteristics of economic marginalization and interest in the performing arts, have different stories to tell due to the family's: 1. relational background, 2.) economic engagement, and 3.) other "yet to be recognized" characteristics. For these reasons, scholars were closely observed and their routines, as much as possible, followed. Where a lot of the scholars were too eager to participate, the adequacy of information they managed to provide, as well as recommendations from fellow scholars, parents/guardians and/or QCPADFI staff helped in the need to narrow down the research participants.

The stories in this chapter were retold as written and narrated by the scholars themselves. Where either the interviews or autobiographies yield concise retelling by the scholars themselves (as in the case of Jonjon, Kimberly, Melissa, Merianne, Rey, and Rommel) my intervention was just in stitching the information that went somewhere else where looking at the entire text it could be located and hence attached in some other parts. Examples of these are the process of putting together accounts that has similar themes or fall under the same theme e.g. scholars' routine, life before the scholars' engagement in the performing arts, coping with the performing arts' demands, coping with other institutions' demands, etc. Most of the time this only requires a process of cut and paste especially among adolescent scholars who provided a logically spontaneous account.



### Dayan: By God's Mercy Here I Am...

*Traveling from my house in Quezon City, it took me twenty minutes to reach Dayan's house in Libis. It was fairly easy to find, as her mother mentioned, it is just along the highway adjacent to the Libis Elementary School. The signage "Dayanara" atop their convenient store was a big help for the houses in this neighborhood seemed all alike. Most also had mini convenient stores and small beer garden that caters to workers at night<sup>22</sup>. As I approached the ajar-improvised gate, I saw two video arcade machines, a karaoke jukebox and three plastic dining sets—typical beer garden paraphernalia. A galvanized-iron fence separates the area from the rest of the neighborhood. This store-beer-garden became the family's main source of income when Dayan's father was unemployed. The main house is made of concrete with wood dividers, while the convenient store is all galvanized iron and wood. Like many Filipino households, Dayan's is comprised of an extended family where they share a house with some relatives.*

*Dayan is a well-balanced child who still has time to play despite her tight schedule. An outstanding student, she is also rather wise in the ways of the world—an unusual characteristic for a child her age—probably because of her early exposure to serious adult problems. At a very young age, she is already very much aware of her family's condition. In her journal, she often writes about their daily struggle to survive in the squatters' area, her mother's endless attempts to make ends meet, and her parents' frequent fights. In Amoranto, she displays a quiet facade and a graceful spirit, in contrast to her more exuberant companions (Karen and Marie).*

*Dayan is one of the first few scholars I met on my early visits to Amoranto. Her story, as narrated here, is a product of her attempt to account for her everyday life through the brief autobiography she has written, the diary she keeps, our **pagkukuwentuhan** in Amoranto and their house, during my home visits. In telling her story I am faced with the challenge of having to trim down certain sensitive details to give her and her family some degree of privacy without sacrificing the richness of her childhood experiences.*

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<sup>22</sup> Beer gardens are literary spaces for commercial binges. In this case the beer gardens are situated in residential areas within an urban poor community where the front yard of some houses are converted to give way to an additional source of income.

“Sa awa po ng Diyos eto po ako one year na po akong sumasayaw ng ballet. Madami pa ring problema pero nakatiis po ako at ang mga magulang ko sa paghahatid sa akin sa Amoranto.”<sup>23</sup>

(Arandela 2004)



### **I was fond of dancing even back then**

I am Dayanara. I am now nine years old. My mother gave birth to five kids but my eldest sibling died at the early age of three. That is what my parents told us. We only saw my eldest sister in pictures. Her name was Darlene Gladys. Now there are only four of us siblings left and I am second to the eldest, an only girl with three male siblings.

I was born on January 31, 1995. At the age of four, Mama enrolled me as a nursery pupil at Libis Elementary School where I took part in dance performances. As early as then my parents already wanted to enroll me in ballet but we didn't have enough money for that.

<sup>23</sup>“By God's mercy here I am. I've been dancing ballet for a year now. We still have lots of problems but were managed to endure and my parents still bring me to Amoranto.” (Arandela 2004)



I was fond of dancing even back then probably because of Mama's prayers while I was still in her womb. She said she used to pray that the baby turns out to be a good dancer and singer. And I guess I also inherited that talent from Mama.

### **Still I never stopped dancing**

At the age of six, I finished kindergarten. I was always part of our school programs. I danced. I was also crowned Miss Libis Elementary School and graduated with medals for being best in English, science and math. In grade one, I took part in school programs and finished with medals. But when I reached grade two I was no longer part of the "honour roll" (academic ranking) because of a family problem.

I must admit I was deeply affected by our parents' frequent fights. I was always crying and praying for them to stop quarrelling. We no longer had peace at home. I even thought it would result to their separation, especially since they started asking us to choose between them. I want them both. I don't want them to be separated. I'm really thankful that their relationship slowly regained its vigour. The only difference is that now we are rather hard up financially whereas before we still managed to eat out and visit playgrounds.

It was only recently that my Papa got a job. He was jobless for almost two years. We were thankful for the little earnings we got from Mama's convenient store. Maybe we're still short of funds, which must be why our parents seldom bring us anywhere now. As Mama always says, we better use the money for food instead.

My kindergarten and grade one teachers also felt bad when I did not make it to the top ten. Still I never stopped dancing. I continued taking part in school programs.

### **It's difficult but it's what I love to do**

I know my teachers are fond of me. They say I am a good dancer; maybe that's why the principal summoned me and asked me to join the audition at Amoranto. Mama accompanied me but I was overcome with shyness so I did not qualify. I just stood there and couldn't dance. Mama was terribly angry with me.

After a few months, I learned about another audition and I gathered my courage to dance. Mama was hesitant then to accompany me thinking I would refuse to dance again. But when she saw that this time I was really set on joining the ballet program she finally

agreed to come with me. Finally Sir Luther noticed me and I got picked. Mama was happy with me because I qualified. She bought me a cooking play set in Isetan<sup>24</sup> on our way home. Came April 2 I started attending ballet training. I dance ballet thrice a week.

### **Every Monday I must wake up at five in the morning**

Here's my schedule. Every Monday I must wake up at five in the morning. Actually Papa has a difficult time waking me up because it is so nice to sleep. Breakfast would be ready by then so I'll eat first, take a bath change into my school uniform and head straight to school.

On Mondays I have classes from six in the morning to twelve noon. I have a Kumon Math (tutorial) session from one to two in the afternoon then I go home. On Tuesdays, I go home right after school to eat lunch then I change into my ballet outfit and we head to Amoranto. It's really tiring. I want to do other things but it's difficult because of my tight schedule. As I mentioned, I often fall asleep while traveling back from Amoranto yet I still need to do my school assignments. I can't risk being reprimanded by my teacher if I fail to do them.

On Wednesdays my classes are from six to twelve as well. Thursdays I again have dance trainings in Amoranto. Fridays, I have Kumon Math hence I have to hurry again. Saturdays I have majorette practice from eight to ten in the morning and from two to five in the afternoon I attend Evolve.<sup>25</sup>

### **It really requires sacrifice**

I was having difficulties at first because Amoranto is far from our house. We have to take two jeepney rides from here in Libis and upon reaching Cubao we need to walk to the jeepney station near Diamond. There we have to queue up for a ride that will take us to Amoranto. It really requires sacrifice.

For instance, our convenient store has been quite neglected lately. Mama has to attend to so many things. Sometimes she couldn't find anyone with whom to entrust our store or who would take care of my siblings who are younger than me. Sometimes kuya

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<sup>24</sup>Isetan is a department store in Cubao, Quezon City.

<sup>25</sup>Evolve is an advanced class for exceptional students.



takes charge of the store but he neglects it primarily because he is still young, but mama doesn't have a choice.

There are times when *kuya* accompanies me to Amoranto. This makes my parents worry because we often come home late. Sometimes they would entrust me to Kuya Paul<sup>26</sup> who lets me tag along on his way home. Eventually he started sleeping in our house and even stayed with us for a time. But now Kuya Paul goes home to his family.

It got even harder when I was in grade three. My classes were scheduled from twelve to six in the afternoon so Mama requested my teacher to allow me to go home early during Tuesdays and Thursdays so we went to Amoranto on these days so I could attend ballet practice from seven to nine in the evening. She obliged. On Saturdays I attend ballet training and Evolve.

It was really difficult for me because once I reached home I needed to hurry, change my uniform and fix my hair. I really needed Mama's help because I still didn't know how to fix my hair. I also had to eat fast so we could beat the rush hour. We really had to hurry all the time. I needed to reach Amoranto by seven. If I'm late I won't be allowed in and we would have to go home. This had already happened several times.

I was always really, really sleepy. I often fell asleep inside the jeepney. Sometimes we would miss our stop because Mama had also fallen asleep, and we had to go back again. And then on top of all this I still had to do my school assignments. Those I failed to finish Mama and Papa did them for me. For now I have to study hard so my parents won't ask me to stop dancing. It's difficult but this is what I love to do.

### **By God's mercy here I am**

When I was in grade three I was often asked to dance in school programs. Our school principal was proud of me, she would often boast about my scholarship in the QCPADFI. So I always did solo performances whenever we had school visitors. I would perform the dances I had learned at the QCPADFI. I also taught dances to my classmates whenever there was a program in school.

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<sup>26</sup>Paul is also a scholar and one of the assistant dance instructors of the QCPADFI who lives in Cubao.

I finally finished grade three. I was top five in my class and was voted the most friendly among my classmates in Section 1.<sup>27</sup> I was second place in gymnastics during the Unit III Athletic Meet held in Amoranto Roces Stadium in Quezon City. I also received recognition from my school because of this.

Mama still accompanies me to Amoranto where I am pursuing my dance training. I was part of the show held at the Tara Court Metrolane Complex.<sup>28</sup> I was also supposed to take part in a dance concert at the Quezon City Memorial Circle but unfortunately I wasn't able to join the last practice, my Saturday classes got in the way.

Now I am in grade four and am still in Section 1. It's difficult to combine dancing and studying at the same time but I really love what I am doing. I also dream of going abroad like the level-five students. I hope I can also go to the places they've been. I'll persevere in spite of the difficulties that go with my dance training.

By God's mercy here I am. I've been dancing ballet for a year now. We still have lots of problems but we managed to endure and my parents still bring me to Amoranto.

### **This made me dream of becoming a popular dancer someday**

*Hay naku!* It's difficult to be a squatter. Mama said we don't own the lot our house is built on. Finally what Mama had always dreaded came—the day our house got demolished.

It was not really the whole house that was demolished, just the front. But that's where Mama's store was, her source of income. I really took pity on Mama then. She didn't know what to do first. She had so many things to worry about like where she could fit all our stuff from the store, how to put the store back and where. She didn't even have the time to attend to our needs. Our house was demolished without prior notice. My parents were taken off-guard and didn't know what to do with our stuff, as a result my youngest brother failed to go to school that day. This made me dream of becoming a popular dancer someday. I must finish my studies so I could get a good job. My dreams are quite simple. I just want to have our own lot on which to build our house. This way Mama won't be afraid anymore of sudden demolitions. Of course I also dream of rising from poverty and helping my parents and my siblings.

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<sup>27</sup>Dayan's school practices homogenous clustering where top students of the batch are assigned to Sections 1 and 2, a procedure still used by many public schools in the Philippines.

<sup>28</sup>A dance-for-a-cause show is one of the foundation's fund-raising activities for its scholars.



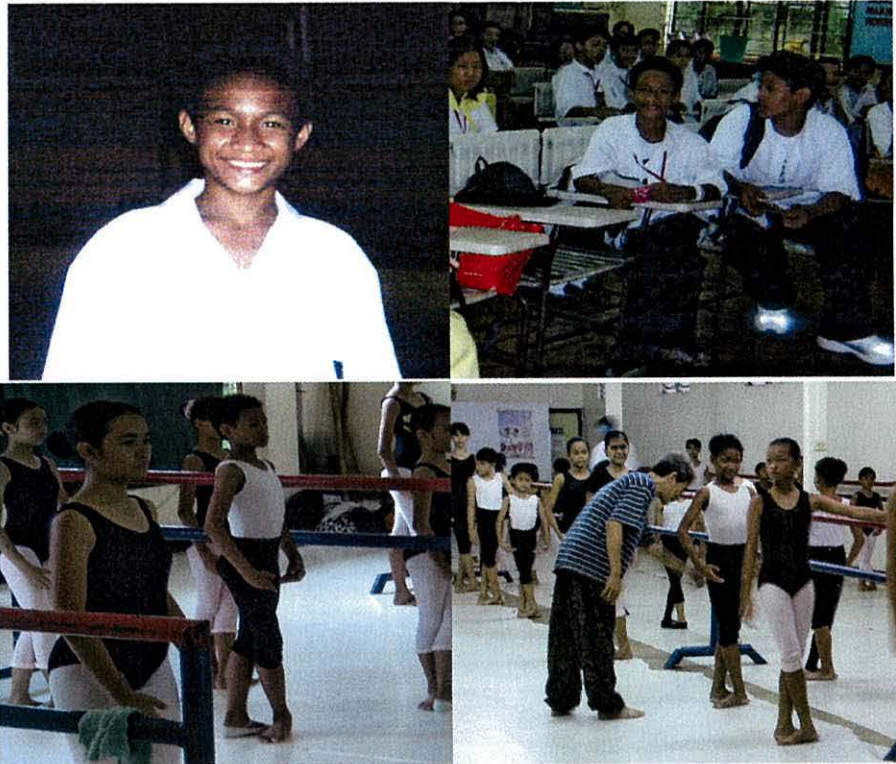
### **Jeffrealz: I Can Reach My Dream**

*One afternoon I fetched Jeffrealz after his last class at Manuel Roxas High School (MRHS). We had a long conversation while having snacks at the nearby fast-food restaurant. From there I insisted on accompanying him home to make sure he arrives safely. The trip took around forty-five minutes which included a twenty-minute jeepney ride and a long walk through internal passageways. The alley that leads to his grandmother's house is very narrow yet one could still find a bingo and a bingo game held at the midst of it. Farther down, the alley becomes darker until we reached an area near the dead river where Jeffrealz's relatives cluster. As we entered the house, I sensed tension in the air. Not soon did I find out that his father and brothers were against his dance training and so kept it a secret from them until now. Because of this, I deemed it necessary to share the information I knew about QCPADFI and the benefits and privileges that goes with being a QCPADFI scholar to Jeffrealz's grandmother and aunt. His grandmother possesses a strong character making me a bit uneasy. Hence, I was relieved when she gave me the assurance to help in convincing Jeffrealz's father with regards to the latter's dance training. In addition, both Jeffrealz's grandmother and aunt disclosed his family background: his mother's work abroad and his father's other family. They also informed me of the frequent beatings Jeffrealz received from both his father and brothers in the latter's attempt to put an end in the former's dance training. The reason being, Jeffrealz's seeming effeminacy. His father was afraid ballet would only worsen what for him was an undesirable characteristic.*

*Jeffrealz was among those who took the dance trainings by heart. This, I noticed sometime after the first quarter of my fieldwork which motivated me to approach him and asked if he would want to participate in my research. Like most scholars, he was very enthusiastic about having his story told. In fact he was one of the very few who devoted so much time in it. He prepared an autobiography, wrote his journal religiously and was always looking forward to our scheduled pagkukuwentuhan. These he mentioned in his journal thus, I felt bad noting an incident where I had to cancel one of our pagkukuwentuhan. I tried to preserve Jeffrealz's tone of accounting where a need for emotional release may be gathered from his writings as he often make use of the phrase, "do you know?"*

“Dapat po pagbutihin ko yung pag-aaral ko kahit na maraming humahadlang. Katulad po ng ballet, dapat po ipagpatuloy ko yon para po mahasa yung husay ko sa pagsasayaw kahit po maraming humahadlang dapat po ipagpatuloy ko ’yun para po maabot ko yung pangarap ko. . . .”<sup>29</sup>

(Hernandez 2004)



### **That’s when life became so difficult for me**

I am Jeffrealz. I am fourteen years old. I was born on March 30, 1990. My father is Mark and my mother is Nancy. We are six siblings and I am the third from the eldest. I studied kindergarten and grade one in Nueva Ecija.<sup>30</sup> I was still young when my mother went abroad to work. My father remarried so someone will stand as a mother to us, so he says.

You know, we transferred here in Manila because my father said he can take care of us and then I studied at GRES (General Roxas Elementary School). And you know, I am annoyed with my stepmother because I still want to be with my mother. We used to

<sup>29</sup>“I must do well with my studies even when there are many obstacles. Like ballet, I must continue with my training so I can hone my dancing skills. Even when many are against it, I have to continue with it so I can reach my dream...” (Hernandez 2004)

<sup>30</sup> Nueva Ecija is province in Central Luzon, Philippines.



rent a house then but when summer vacation came we transferred to Project 8. It was fun there and I thought I wouldn't be able to finish grade three but our family moved to my grandmother's house where I live together with my brothers until now.

You know, since we moved here my father no longer visit me. That's when life became difficult for me. But you know, my mother still manages to write us. And you know, despite the difficulties I managed to finish grade four.

According to my grade three teacher, I am a good kid. And you know what? In grade four, I was the only student who does not have a textbook in class. Almost all of my classmates had textbooks but this was never a hindrance for me. I was able to pass grade four even without a book, and when I reached grade five I often went to school without money.

### **I Can Reach My Dreams**

Do you know, I often go to school without money and sometimes I don't eat lunch? I just bring to class what I was supposed to have for my lunch at home. But I still managed to finish grade six with a medal. I was first honor then yet I was not happy because I thought it was my father who was going to pin the medal on me. Instead it was my uncle who did it. But when I reached home my mother gave me a long-distance call. I was so happy, and happy to discover that in spite of her absence I did not have problem with my studies.

Do you know, I celebrated graduation in someone else's house? It was just my friends who organized the party. They cooked *pancit*<sup>31</sup> and spaghetti. You know, despite everything I still have my friends who see me through. Even in my sadness they are there to make me happy. And do you know, when I enrolled in MRHS (Manuel Roxas High School) it was the assistant principal who paid my tuition fee<sup>32</sup> and bought me my English textbook? But when second grading<sup>33</sup> came, my mama arrived and that was indeed a happy day. We watched a movie, ate out and did a lot more! You know, she bought lots of new things but my cousins asked for them.

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<sup>31</sup>A typical Filipino dish of rice vermicelli, meat and vegetables traditionally prepared on special occasions as it is believed to bring about long life.

<sup>32</sup>Public schools do not have tuition fees but a PTA (Parents-Teacher's Association) fee is required upon enrolment.

<sup>33</sup>The school year is divided into four grading periods with the first ending in August. An academic year starts in June and ends in March.

You know, I thought my mama would spend Christmas here but I was mistaken. She had to go back because she was sick. Her ailment forbade her from eating spicy food. And you know, I did not join my family when they brought her to the airport because I knew I will only hurt the more. Despite all of these I still don't feel any anger towards her.

You know, I started growing stronger emotionally after my first year in high school because of the hardships and joys I experienced. On my second year, I auditioned for ballet. I did not qualify but came vacation time (summer time) I tried again and by God's mercy I was accepted.

My papa was not there so I asked my aunt to sign the acceptance form on my behalf. I asked her because she was the one taking care of us siblings.

### **I Cannot Let Them See**

You know when, I got home I hurriedly hid because they might find out about me. They are now prohibiting me from doing ballet. I wish they would eventually allow me to dance and you know, if they do I will really give my best!!

You know, I have just finished washing my tights and leotard because I cannot let them (papa and brothers) see it. You know that I am not allowed to do ballet. But I still continue with my dance training I am not sure though if I can attend the practice this Saturday. I hope I can come because I still want to dance. After school I always go straight to my dance class. There I focus my mind on ballet alone. I concentrate on the dance. After the practice I go straight home and wash my ballet uniform right away.

Sir Luther said, when we're dancing we have to smile so we'll perform well. Do you know Angelica is going to quit ballet because Sir Luther reprimanded her several times already? You know, it is really her fault. She failed to learn the dance steps early on.

You know we were taught a new dance, "Lead Me Lord." It is designed for a group of four dancers so I stayed. I went home at ten (in the evening) and I was reprimanded. I was asked where I had been. I said outside but the truth was I attended my ballet class. You know I was hit on the face, which is why I am crying now.

You know I hurriedly went home because I was sleepy. Upon Arrival, I immediately slept and when I woke up they told me to prepare for tomorrow. I



immediately felt anxious. What should I do? They no longer want me to dance but I still want to achieve my dream of becoming the best ballet dancer. I wish this would come true. My training doesn't get in the way of my studies anyway.

You know it rained during my last class in school. I was afraid I might be late for ballet training, but it turned out I was early. I don't know if I can still dance properly it's been long since our last practice<sup>34</sup> but I gave my best and "Take Me Out" was taught to us, the same piece taught by Sir Luther during our last practice. I was still unaware that I was the third.<sup>35</sup> I wonder why J.R. was absent.

I don't know what will happen tomorrow. I hope my aunt and grandmother will come to my defense. I wish they would still allow me to do ballet. I wish they wouldn't see my ballet uniform and burn it. You know I have to start praying now because my papa might beat me tomorrow. I wonder what will happen tomorrow. I wish they would still allow me, please. . . . I wish I could still do ballet. I will sleep now but I still have to pray. I'm afraid my father might barge in during ballet class and talk to Sir. Then Sir might agree with him and ask me to quit too.

### **I was really happy that day**

I attended ballet training secretly because they wouldn't allow me until I met Ma'am Lota. The first time I met her I felt light and you know, she gave me a notebook so I could write the story of my life. And when my interview schedule came, I felt shy at first because we even ate at Wendy's. And I felt anxious when she said she was going to talk to my grandmother. I thought my grandmother would not approve of my dancing but Ma'am Lota explained everything to her. From then on, I started studying hard. After a month, my grandmother and I confessed my ballet activities to my papa and he gave me his consent because I told him I could handle school and ballet at the same time. I was really happy that day. My papa said I would have to quit ballet if I fail in school but I have not received my report card yet and I think I failed some subjects this first grading<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup>Practices were cancelled when the QCPADFI dance group went to Macau to represent the country at the International Youth Dance Festival and to stage a show for the OFW's in Hong Kong.

<sup>35</sup>By this, Jeffrealz meant the third dancer in a cast of four who are supposed to perform this particular piece.

<sup>36</sup> The first grading refers to the first quarter evaluation that usually falls on the month of August. The Philippines' primary and secondary schools practice four grading evaluation where the academic calendar is divided into four periods.

I am really afraid of my papa because once he finds out I might be asked to quit my dance training.

You know, the only reason I failed was because I was absent and am frequently late for class which usually happens when I don't have money. But even if my papa finds out, I will make up for it this second grading period. I promise even if he asks me to stop my ballet training I won't stop. I can realize my dreams even without the support of my parents.

### **I woke up feeling good today because it's Tuesday**

You know, I woke up feeling good today because it's Tuesday and class ends early so I can attend ballet practice. I even made it to my first subject. The teacher for my next subject was absent. Then we had group work in English. After English we again did not have a teacher in Filipino. Then we had Science. I was not aware we had an exam in Science so I just submitted my paper after barely answering the questions. We had another exam in MAPEH<sup>37</sup> but this time I was able to answer all the questions although I know my answers were wrong. Then class break came and we did a lot and ate. Then in our AP<sup>38</sup> class we labeled maps. You know, I headed straight to ballet training after class. I did not notice Mark James was trying to catch up with me then Ma'am Lota saw us and took a photo of us. We arrived early, but soon the training started. Sir Luther asked us to come in. He asked us to dance "Lemon Tree." Sir Toni liked it. A beautiful American woman who teaches ballet in other countries arrived. She said we are better compared to her students abroad. Then I went home.

### **Do You Know How Lonely I Am Without My Mama and Papa?**

You know when I woke up they (Jeffrelz's brothers) were already washing our school uniforms. I immediately tried to help by hanging the laundry on the clotheslines. Then I went out and you know I saw Jacky. We played games on her PlayStation and she paid for my snacks at Jollibee. She is rich. Everything she wants she immediately gets. Then we resumed playing games on her PlayStation. And you know we bought a Sega

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<sup>37</sup>A acronym for a cluster of four subjects: Music, Arts, Physical Education and Health.

<sup>38</sup>AP is an acronym for Araling Panlipunan (Social Studies).



toy<sup>39</sup>” at McDonald’s. Her choice was so ugly! Then we walked to Sto. Domingo<sup>40</sup> and came across a bracelet maker. Jacky bought a bracelet with her name on it. Good for her she has lots of money. Everything she wants she gets because her papa is abroad. My mother is also abroad but I don’t know if she still sends money and why she hasn’t come home yet.

I wonder why my mama doesn’t come home to us. But you know I still haven’t lost hope that she will come back. You know if only I had a cell phone then I could contact her. I heard she still calls my papa. Do you know how lonely I am without my mama and papa with me? No one takes care of us except my kuya who at times I don’t obey. Sometimes they beat me because of ballet. I ask them, “Why are you trying to take away my dreams?” This is one of my dreams. I hope I won’t have to quit ballet. I hope I can realize my dreams. My papa also does not live with us. I wonder why my life is like this.

### **I wonder why children do not prioritise their studies**

You know, when I went home I washed my uniforms and even cooked rice. They (brothers) have all gone to my school to attend a meeting. And so I just cleaned the house, yet when they arrived they scolded me. You know why? Because they said I did not cook the viand. I told them there was no money for me to buy the ingredients and so we just bought and ate cooked viands. Then I went outside to search for items needed for my science assignment. But I could not find any and I was reprimanded by my kuya for having stayed out late without finding what I was looking for.

I was so sleepy this morning because of science assignment last night. You know I failed to concentrate on our lesson and I was asked to recite in Math. But you know my teacher who was mourning arrived.

Do you know that our class schedule has been changed? It’s really difficult for me because now classes start at seven in the morning and ends at three in the afternoon. I don’t know if the schedule will be change again.

I don’t know why I felt dizzy a while ago. When I went home I went to Jacky’s place and we did her assignment. We went to Glory (a grocery store) to look for pictures

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<sup>39</sup>Part of McDonald’s promotional item for its “happy meal” product.

<sup>40</sup>Sto. Domingo is a church within walking distance from where Jeffrealz and Jacky lives.

of bodies of water but could not find any so I was forced to draw them. I was planning not to go to school tomorrow but Jacky's mother gave me money. Do you know, it was already ten in the evening when I went home? I don't know if tomorrow's class will be the same as yesterday.

You know, I was so sleepy this morning so I failed to attend my first subject and it was good that I managed to recite in Math. You know, we had a hard time in our English class. First we had recitation. We really had a difficult time. It is really difficult being in third year high school. I wonder why children do not prioritise their studies. Some do not study at all although their parents are doing their best to encourage them. Their parents have a hard time sending them to school.

### **Jacky is the only good friend I have**

You know, I did nothing this morning. I just went to Jacky's place and we played games on their computer and you know she is stubborn. How I wish I could be her mother's child instead because her mama is very kind and Jacky is not treating her well. She does not respect her.

You know Jacky is the only good friend I have? I don't know why I am like this. If I were rich I could do whatever I want but even though I am poor I promise to fulfil my dreams because that is the only way I could progress. I will show everybody that in spite of my unfortunate state I can succeed!

When I arrived home I looked for Jacky but she was not home yet so I cleaned the house first. You know I forgot to do my assignment because I did Jacky's first. Then I played pool. I have too many chores at home yet I chose to play pool instead. It will be twelve by the time I go to sleep.

You know, I did not go out today but I thought of going to Jacky's house. And you know, she asked me about her missing wallet and I said I don't know where it is. But I wonder why she asked me? You know, I stayed at their house a lot so I was bothered by her question. How come she asked me that when I came home late last night? I arrived at ten (in the evening) and I did not go to their house as I had my ballet, right? How come Jacky seemed to be accusing me? I told her I won't go to their house for a while and you know I went home and slept.



### **I Am a Strong Child**

What differentiates me from other poor children is the fact that I can take care of myself. Other children are neglected by their parents because they don't have money. No one feeds them so they are obliged to vend on the streets. Like me, they also need to be strong. They also go to school hungry, with an empty stomach.

I am a strong child because I still study even when I don't have money for school. I must do well with my studies even when there are many obstacles. I strive to be happy within my broken family. In spite of the many hindrances that came along the way of my ballet training I still continue to reach for my dreams. I must continue with my ballet so I can hone my dancing skills. Even when many are against it, I have to continue with it so I can reach my dream. I wish my father would realize how important ballet is for me. I wish he could see that there's good in ballet. Who knows, five years from now I may be teaching ballet? I wish I could go abroad like Kuya Gary<sup>41</sup> and teach ballet like Sir Tony and Sir Luther. In case I fail to pursue ballet, ten years from now I hope to find a job like managing a restaurant. I hope by then I have learned a lot from ballet. And in case I have children by then I would like them to learn ballet so they will also achieve the things I did.

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<sup>41</sup>Garey is a level-five scholar who often takes part in international performances.

### **Jonjon: I Thought It Was Just About Dancing**

*I met Jonjon through a colleague in the QCPADFI (the foundation's managing director). Being a social scientist himself, he recommended that I write Jonjon's story. This fifteen year old lad often cracks joke and shares funny stories with fellow scholars. His light and happy dispositions, in addition to his family's background, have motivated me to seriously consider my colleague's advice. In their home, I witnessed how Jonjon goes about teasing and sharing jokes with his family. He is very courteous and always ready to lend a hand.*

*Fifteen year old Jonjon is the youngest in a sibling of five. Currently in his third year high school, Jonjon aspires to finish college. However, he is still uncertain on what course to pursue or job to assume in the future. In terms of dancing, he was shy of mentioning his desire to also teach ballet. Now a level one scholar, Jonjon like the rest of the QCPADFI scholars aspires to reach level five. He joined the performing arts when he was ten years old and took part in a number of shows, which are too numerous to mention. His parents are very proud of the fact that he managed to go abroad as a performer, representing the country for an international dance festival in Macau and for the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) in Hong Kong.*

*This story is a product of Jonjon's initiative to write an autobiography, the various pagkukuwentuhan we had within QCPADFI and with the various characters of QCPADFI including his fellow scholars. The opportunity his family gave me to visit and spend sometime with them allowed me further access to their inner world in as much as the opportunity to share my own life story with them. I must admit our conversation got a bit emotional as mutual sharing of stories about personal struggles spontaneously flow. While my informal interviews with the other respondents exhibit such a symbiotic sharing of experiences, it is with Jonjon and his family where this reached equality as I felt the need to equally share my own experiences towards the end of our pagkukuwentuhan. At some point I was confronted with the issue of distance between the researcher and the respondent but was struck as well with the realization of the research's known exploitative nature due to a one-sided exposition of truth. It is but appropriate then to say that this narrative is reconstructed through a series of meetings, and mutual sharing of experiences, not just a process of extracting data.*



“Nung unang pasok ko po doon hindi ko po inisip na may iba-ibang bansa. Akala ko sayaw-sayaw lang. Akala ko walang show-show.”<sup>42</sup>

(Bides 2004)



### **I discovered my talent**

I am Jonjon. I started with the foundation when my neighbors invited me to join them in an audition. They were so persistent even when I don't really want to join so I gave in and auditioned with them. I was ten years old, on my fifth grade then and was not interested with dancing. But that was how I discovered my talent in dancing.

We are just a poor family. My parents' work involves buying and selling empty bottles, which I also get to experienced. Everyday we wake up early in the morning, around six or seven with our push cart and we go around the neighbourhood. We go to places where we could buy used or empty bottles. We work really hard yet what we earn is not enough for us and for my father's medicine. My father got sick because of alcohol

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<sup>42</sup> “During my initial attendance to the program the possibility of going abroad did not occur to me. I thought it was just about dancing. I thought there's no show.” (Bides 2004)

abuse and the difficulties of pushing a cart under a raging sun. Now I seldom go with them. I only join my parents on Sundays when I don't have class and ballet.

### **The first thing I do after I woke up**

The first thing I do after I woke up is play video games just within our neighborhood. I pay 15 pesos per hour just to play and have breakfast while doing so. Then in the afternoon I wash the dishes. I wash the plates and sometimes keep watch over those who fetch water from us<sup>43</sup>. In the evening we watch the television together and have dinner. I am closer to my friends than with my family. It is with my friends where I go to whenever I have problem.

The difficulties of balancing ballet with my studies did not occur to me when I was in grade five. It was only now when my classes take a whole day and coincides with ballet that I am having difficulties. But I can still manage it. Whenever we have exams I review in school in between classes or during breaks. We seldom have home works. Incase we have I also do it during class breaks.

My ballet trainings are held in the evening, sometimes from six up until eight or eight thirty in the evening, at other times nine thirty or ten. The trainings in the evening are different. The dance practices are different, ballet first then five minutes break then dance again. This time the dance is no longer ballet.

### **I only began to have interest in dancing when Jake invited me**

I was never fond of dancing. I only began to have interest in dancing when Jake<sup>44</sup> invited me to join the audition. My elder sister was already a scholar of QCPADFI then. I already went there once to fetch them and I saw how the classes where conducted. I was afraid. But then I tried, I eventually did. I finally agreed to try and join the audition.

When I did join the audition, I was the last among the successful candidates to have been chosen. We were many then. We were too many I even thought I will not be chosen. I was among the last.

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<sup>43</sup> Among the urban poor communities in the Philippines (and rural as well), tap water is stationed on street corners making it quite inconvenient to wait for long queues. Thus for some households who managed to have it installed in their house it becomes an additional source of income.

<sup>44</sup> Jake was already a scholar of the foundation then. He happened to be a friend of Jonjon as well as his neighbour.



When I was admitted I was really shy of moving around the studio. I have a sister who watches over me there. Her name is Edith, she is part of the higher-level scholars assigned to teach us dance. The first dance I learned was “Lemon Tree”. Every practice I have to contend with a mixture of joy and fear. After a few days of practice I was included among those chosen to perform for a show at the CCP (Cultural Centre of the Philippines). After the show I persevered with attending practices.

The following months our mentor taught us other dances. While we were practicing the new dance, I played around with the steps not knowing our mentor was watching. I was reprimanded and was removed from the scholarship. The following day, I tried to come back and apologized for what I did. But my apologies were never accepted and that’s when I lost hope.

#### **When I got myself in again, I said to myself I want this**

After a year, I auditioned again. I was eleven then. I was given another chance to continue with my dance training. When I was given this second chance, we were given free uniforms.

As the years go by, the trainings became more difficult. I’ve learned dance after dances. At first it was fairly easy but then it became harder nonetheless, I gave my best because when I got myself in again, I said to myself I want this. This is what I want now and I don’t want to be removed from the scholarship again. But some of the dances are really difficult. I’m finding it hard to follow hence I often got myself reprimanded.

After a few months our mentor taught us the dance “*Pandanggo sa Ilaw*”<sup>45</sup>. Just after a day, I forgot the steps and was reprimanded resulting to my demotion in level. Still I did not give-up. I persisted with the dance training and after a few months I regained my old level. I went through a lot of hardships before I regained my real level. I learned the dance step-by-step and that’s how I also learned discipline.

When I was given the opportunity to continue with my dance training, I tried my best to get myself included in every show so I can be of help to my parents<sup>46</sup>. I tried my best to help my parents.

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<sup>45</sup> *Pandanggo sa Ilaw* which when translated in English literally means dancing with lights is a Filipino folkdance that involves dancing while balancing candles on the palms and head.

<sup>46</sup> Scholars who get included in a show receive honorarium plus a *per diem* allowance in the case of an out of town or out of the country performance.

After a few years we had a show abroad, in Macau and Hong Kong. When I first heard about it I worked hard so I can get myself picked. We were advised to do our best so we may have the chance to be included (in the performance). I was happy while at the same time nervous. And since I would like to be included I did my best in dancing. I was afraid of committing mistakes and getting reprimands.

As time goes by I had a sense that I will be included in Hong Kong but only in Hong Kong because we lacked male scholars. They told us we are not included in Macau. There they need bigger male scholars. But then after a few weeks I've learned that I was included because I was handed an envelope containing the list of requirements and an application form for the passport.

We were indeed chosen by our mentor because a lot of students (older scholars) have left the foundation then. They were all good and because there were not enough good students left anymore, we were chosen to perform.

The first thing I did, the moment I learned I was included in the show was tell the news to my parents. They were extremely happy. From then on every time I go to sleep I never fail to pray for the success of our show. Days passed by and we were on our way to the airport. On our way to Hong Kong!

### **It was difficult being a neophyte**

It was difficult being a neophyte. You have to help and carry the luggage. Before we left for Hong Kong, Sir Luther asked us to assist in carrying the luggage. He was not comfortable with the idea that all of us (scholars) will have the same allowance so he assigned Edward to carry Ma'am Eya's bag and I, Ma'am Joy's.

Once inside the airplane, I was overwhelmed with joy because I am finally boarding an air plane. When the plane reaches Hong Kong airport we are faced again with the task of carrying heavy luggage under the sun. The first place we went to was Macau<sup>47</sup>. We stayed there for eight days. On our first day we woke up at 6 in the morning so we can prepare for our first show. We had our parade. Everyday it's the same routine, its tiring but fun. We were with a lot of people and we made a lot of friends. It was lonely having to leave the place.

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<sup>47</sup> From Hong Kong Airport the group went straight to Macau by sea aboard a ferry boat.



The task of carrying heavy luggage continues with going back to Hong Kong. Someone was already waiting for us there his name is Eric. He was tasked to watch over us whenever we need to go out. We were on our way to the hotel, named *Holiday In*. That's where we stayed. We only spent three days there. Then at the hotel's lobby, we gather together: Ma'am Joy, Ma'am Eya, Sir Tony, Sir Luther, Sir Jessie and me, I was watching over Ma'am Joy while carrying her bag.

On our first day, at six in the morning, we are up again to go to the theatre where we were supposed to perform. By eight we were already practicing the dance we were to perform that afternoon's show. The first show we had there is lovely and fun. The next day we prayed that the show would be as successful as the previous. And this wish was granted. When the show ended we went directly to our hotel. The next day, the day before we left Hong Kong, we went shopping and we headed back to the hotel to pack our things.

### **I will never forget the people we met**

I will never forget the fellow dancers we met in Macau. We met friends there, from Canada. They are also Filipinos, a male and a female. The female introduced her self as... I believe her name is Andrea Vargas. Then we met a Filipino woman while doing grocery with Kuya Jojo. She asked us why we're there (in Hong Kong) and I told her we were just invited to dance. On our last performance we met her again. We recognized her that's why she greeted us. She hugged me and bestowed kisses on me while referring to me as her son. Aside from this, we also met a guy on our way back to the hotel. I was afraid I could not understand him. He was speaking a different language. It was only when he spoke in English that Sir Luther understood he was saying he remembered me performing in Macua.

It was overwhelming to be with fellow dancers. I will never forget the Japanese. They are very funny.

I don't know that's how it was performing in other country. I haven't stop dancing and studying. This is where my story ends I don't know what will happen the following month or year...

### **Karen: We Always Play**

*Karen was among the first scholars I met at the QCPADFI. I was still feeling my way around the foundation when I approached and initiated a friendly conversation with a group of mothers just outside the QCPADFI office. Karen's mother was among them. She was silently listening to the ongoing conversations until a group of young scholars approach us. One of them was Karen.*

*Apparently, the mentors had given the scholars a short break and while the others were enjoying their snacks, Karen and her best friend Marie gave me their full attention.*

*I can still recall how Karen fondly called me "teacher" when the mothers introduced me to their daughters. While both girls were probably wondering what I was doing there, it was Karen who asked a lot of questions. And so I told them that I wanted to write about them, and this made Karen very excited. That night, I found myself leaving Amoranto along a different route with Karen clinging to my right arm and Marie on the other, while their mothers chatted while walking behind us.*

*During the period of my fieldwork, Karen was an only child. She was the centre of her family's attention, which includes her grandparents and some relatives, and often managed to get what she wanted. I myself found Karen amusingly talkative and sweet – characteristics that often get her into trouble both in school and the QCPADFI.*

*In reconstructing and retelling Karen's story I had to weave together various accounts from her journal and coupled it with the data from my pakikipagkuwentuhan with her. Karen's manner of storytelling involves lots of demonstrations as well as monologues of the interactions she had with various people. I tried to preserve her style of accounting here.*

*"Nag-ballet na naman ako. Practice tapos allowance. Pag wala pa si Ate Jacky<sup>48</sup> naglalaro po kami ng mga kaibigan kong sina Marienar, Dayanara at iba pa. Palagi kaming naglalaro."<sup>49</sup>*

*(Callado 2004)*

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<sup>48</sup>The foundation's secretary who distributes the scholars allowance. Most scholars, specially the young ones, play with each other while the distribution is going on or while waiting for her when she arrives late.

<sup>49</sup>"I attended ballet practice again then I was given my allowance. When Ate Jacky is not yet around I play with my friends Marienar, Dayanara and others. We always play." (Callado 2004)





### What I Remember

I am Karen, a seven-year-old student of Diosdado Macapagal Elementary School. My parents are Rosella and Eusebio. I live in Quezon City. I am fond of singing and dancing. I dream of becoming a doctor and I also want to go abroad. Don't the doctors heal the sick? I want to be a doctor so I can help people when they are sick. What I remember when I was small was when I had my first birthday at Jollibee. I was just looking at my photo album. I still didn't know how to walk but I was happy because I had many guests: my *lolo* (grandfather), *lola* (grandmother), *ninong* (godfather), *ninang* (godmother), *tito* (uncle), *tita* (aunt) and my *pinsan* (cousins) and *kaibigan* (friends).

What I remember from kindergarten was when I danced ballet in our school program. It was just Teacher Baccay who taught me then. Mama was very happy but I was so nervous. The people in the audience were also happy. I cried afterwards because I was really nervous. I also remember that when I was five years old Mama and I went to watch *Eat Bulaga* (a noontime television show). We did not manage to get inside. Eh, there was this last audition for Little Miss Philippines (a contest for young girls). Mama

asked me to try it out. I danced “Angelina” then the judges asked me something. Then they said, “You should try again next time.”

I remember when I auditioned for *Starstruck Kids*. I did not qualify because I was so shy. When I was asked how old I was, eh the question was in English. I whispered, “How old?” But when I understood that I was being asked about my age I answered, “Six *po*.”<sup>50</sup> I managed to say six. “Where are you studying?” “In Tatalon<sup>51</sup> *po*.” “What’s your talent?” “Spaghetti *po*.” And “Spaghetti” was played. I did the spaghetti dance. The fat person imitated me.

At the *Starstruck Kids* audition Mama gave a picture of me to a woman who called Ate Kaka’s mobile phone asking if we could join *Marinara*<sup>52</sup>, if it was possible to borrow us. We were indeed borrowed. Eh we went to the set early, it was only eight o’clock and we waited long because we were the first to arrive.

### **Sometimes We Play in School**

Whenever I wake up at five in the morning and breakfast is not yet cooked I take a bath first and have breakfast after. Then I go upstairs to change and go to school. At school we always start with writing practices. Then recess, writing again, then sleep.<sup>53</sup> After sleeping, Kate Anne, this happened before, right Ma? When you asked me to sit in row two? While we were having a test Kate Anne fell asleep. Teacher said, “Don’t wake her up.” But I went on and said, “Kate, Kate Anne.” And I made noise using my pencil box (Karen demonstrated by banging her pencil box on the table) just to wake her up. She woke up a bit. Then I said, “Kate Anne!” Teacher was wondering who that was (who shouted). Then Kate Anne said, “Ay, do we need to write something?” Then teacher said, “You shouldn’t have woken her up.” And I replied, “Okay.” And we continued writing. Eh when I was through Kate Anne insisted, “Let me copy, Karen.” “Don’t copy yet,” I replied. “Why are you copying?” And so I said, “Ma’am, Kate Anne told me she is going to copy from me.” Kate Anne said in a whisper, “Don’t make noise. Okay, say it again and I will make you cry.” And so I replied, “Okay, stop it.” Afterwards I said, “Okay, I

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<sup>50</sup> *Po* is an expression of courtesy or respect used in sentences when addressing an elder or a person of authority.

<sup>51</sup> The name of the community/barangay where Karen lives. This barangay has an elementary public school named after it – Tatalon Elementary School.

<sup>52</sup> *Marinara* is a popular primetime television drama series back in 2003.

<sup>53</sup> Nap times are included in the class schedule for lower grades in most primary schools.



am going to submit it now so it can be checked.” Eh . . . I can’t remember anymore.<sup>54</sup> Then it was time to go home.

### **I have many friends**

I have many friends at school like Nine, Besa, Nira, Sinay. At home there’s Jepoy, the gay. He wants to be a girl but whenever we tease him he would cry. Then Nine is also my friend. There’s just the two of them here. And yes there’s Tata and who was that? Ate Janine, who else? Kuya Paolo, Ate Kaka. We play hide-and-seek and “London bridge is falling down, falling down . . . ”

Sometimes we play at school. Karen Icalim and I often accidentally unfasten our clothes while playing. Eh, one time Teacher saw us. She asked us to stand in front. We were still in row four then and so Teacher said, “You two, come here!” All of a sudden we were like the undressed Christ. We paraded until we reached row one and back to our row again. She (the teacher) was not teaching, she was just sitting then.

Whenever we are reading and Mrs. Mallari looks at me, I listen. Sometimes when we are asked to read aloud one by one I become afraid of her and when she comes near me I will start reading at once. Then Ashley would say, “Let me read first,” and he will make me sit, but if Teacher sees him she just lets him be.

Sometimes Mama does not fetch me because she’s too tired in the morning. I just walk home by myself.

### **I Danced “Spaghetti Pababa” Then I Said, “Let’s Dance, Nine”**

When I auditioned for the ballet scholarship at school, Teacher asked us to fall in line. We asked, “Teacher, where are we going?” We saw a radio that looked like that (points to a karaoke player). Eh I was shaking. I danced “Spaghetti Pababa”<sup>55</sup> then I said, “Let’s dance, Nine.” But Nine was pushed in front because of the long queue. She was overshadowed. Didn’t Nine say Maureen overshadowed her?<sup>56</sup> She made a split then, eh, while me, when the music stopped, I did this (demonstrates the main dance step for “Spaghetti Pababa”).

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<sup>54</sup>Karen could not recall what happened next.

<sup>55</sup>A popular dance song during that year (2003).

<sup>56</sup>Karen often cross checked her memories with her mother during the entire interview.

Reynan was picked first. I came next, then Maureen, then Pedro. Then it was over. Reynan gave up, then Maureen, then Pedro. I was the only one left.

It took a long time before I could tell my classmates about ballet. They said, “Really, you are doing ballet?” I replied, “I felt shy about it so I didn’t tell all of you. Please don’t tell Teacher. I’m afraid she might have me removed from the ballet program because I am always reprimanded for being so talkative.”<sup>57</sup>

I used to be aloof from friends, but when I started doing ballet I became very close to them. That’s because I always play with them. I entertain them whenever they have problems. Then I would tell Teacher when they make noise but I would erase their names from the blackboard.<sup>58</sup> And they will do it for me as well.

### **The Three of Us Are Often Reprimanded**

I attended ballet practice again then I was given my allowance. Whenever Ate Jacky is not yet around I play with my friends Marienar, Dayanara and others. We always play.

Sir Luther teaches us dance. Sometimes it’s Sir Jessie’s brother. When Sir Luther arrives we immediately say, “Good afternoon, Sir Luther.” Then I’ll hide because I am afraid eh. All of a sudden we will be summoned Marie, protruding-butt Dayanara and me.<sup>59</sup> The three of us are always reprimanded because of Marie. Eh we were doing pliès then she said, “Karen, Ate Ivy is now near you. She is going to kick you.” Eh I was annoyed with her so when I turned around I kicked her and then I rested near the bar but she joined the three of us. So we were suddenly asked to leave the room.

It was because Marienar did the pliè, and she repeated it again. Eh, both Dayanara and I had already put our feet down but Marie was still doing the pliè. Then we were caught. Marie was caught on the bar while we (Karen and Dayanara) were listening but Sir Luther thought we were also doing that (pliè) so the three of us were asked to leave.<sup>60</sup>

(Outside) we talked and started fighting. “It’s all your fault,” we kept telling each other. Eh Dayanara started crying; both of them cried. But then I told them, “Stop making

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<sup>57</sup>Karen’s teacher apparently uses Karen’s fear of losing her QCPADF1 scholarship to discipline her by telling the child she can have her removed from the scholarship if continue being noisy in class.

<sup>58</sup>The names of noisy pupils are listed on the board.

<sup>59</sup>Karen’s pet name for Dayanara, whom she says has large protruding buttocks.

<sup>60</sup> The three girls were apparently caught doing pliès while Luther was discussing something. As a punishment, he asked them to leave the room.



noise, we will apologize later.” Eh, it turned out Sir Luther was not hot-tempered then, but we were still afraid. “You go first, Marienar,” I said. Eh, they asked me to go first. I suddenly opened the door. I was terrified, I almost cried. All of a sudden Marienar pushed me in so Sir Luther noticed us. He said, “Come here, the two of you.” Both of us said, “We’re sorry, Sir Luther.” Then we were allowed to go in. We seemed really afraid then. Because of this we were separated at the bar but Marie kept coming up to me and pushing me. I was annoyed so I said, “Move, Marie, you’re crowding me.” But it turned out I had a bigger space. Eh Sir Luther saw us. He thought we were both laughing. We were again asked to leave.

Sometimes we are not allowed to come back anymore but if it’s the smaller scholars they are allowed back. I don’t know what they did.

### **My Happiest Moment**

I remember our first show in Circle.<sup>61</sup> We performed a lot of dance numbers: “Beautiful Life,” “Kapayapaan,” “Lemon Tree.” It was a lot of fun because lots of people were clapping and Mama and Papa were there. When I took part in the show I was really happy because I became part of it. Sir Tony chose me. Sonny Belmonte (the mayor) held us, and I also saw Bistek.<sup>62</sup> The people in the audience were so happy when we danced “A Beautiful Life.”

My happiest moment was my birthday; of course it’s my birthday. It’s because they bought me a cake. I like ice cream but not spaghetti. I also don’t like *pancit*.<sup>63</sup>

My saddest moments are when Mama spansks me for not finishing my food. I get spanked whenever I fail to finish my food because I had eaten too much junk food.

Mama used to sew. Now she sews doctor’s caps (nurse’s caps). We use the money they pay her to buy food.

The reason Papa works is so we can have good food. But sometimes we don’t have money so I just eat *chicharon* (crispy pork rind) with rice. Sometimes they bring me to SM,<sup>64</sup> but that’s very seldom; we’ve been there only about five times.

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<sup>61</sup>The Quezon City Memorial Circle, where the foundation regularly holds dance performances for the constituents of the Quezon City local government.

<sup>62</sup>The popular nick name used by Quezon City Vice-Mayor Herbert Bautista in show business.

<sup>63</sup>A popular Filipino dish made of rice vermicelli, meat and vegetable that is usually served during birthdays as it is believed to bring about long life to the celebrant.

<sup>64</sup>Shoe Mart (SM) is a famous mall in the Philippines that caters to the lower and middle classes.

### **They are poor, I am also poor**

I have classes in the morning, Mondays, Tuesdays. . . . Papa doesn't work on Wednesdays so he and Mama sometimes bring me to SM. Sometimes I see something there I want to buy but then I don't have money—I just have very little.

There are pretty toys in SM. The F4 are handsome; I have a crush on Dao Ming Su because he is so handsome.<sup>65</sup>

I see children<sup>66</sup> in SM. Sometimes they want to eat at Jollibee, asking a stranger for French fries. I asked Mama why that was so; I somehow pitied them. “Mama (looking at her mother), isn't it that while walking on the street I sometimes see a blind beggar?” I want to give people like that money. The reason why the person begs is because he doesn't have money to have his eyes cured.

They are poor, I am also poor but in their case they don't have food to eat. It is only when they have money that they could buy food but what if they don't have money? Does that mean they won't eat?

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<sup>65</sup>F4 is a group of Taiwanese male singers who became popular in the Philippines in 2003 because of their television series *Meteor Garden*. Dao Ming Su is the name of the series' male lead, played by Jerry Yan. He was the most popular of the four among both kids and adults alike.

<sup>66</sup>Referring to children less privileged than her.



### **Kenthkenth: That Meant I Could Pursue Ballet**

*These narratives on Kenthkenth are a product of my interviews with her and her mother in their home, as well as the conversations we had with the other scholars who performed in Macau and Hong Kong. It was unfortunately that Kenthkenth's tight schedule at the QCPADFI (she was scheduled to take part in a series of shows when I was conducting my fieldwork) prevented her from writing an autobiography and a journal. This has been the case with most of the higher-level scholars who participated in this research. While I do the telling in this particular (introductory) part, I attempted to let her do the next by trying to be faithful in putting together and translating the results of the pagpapakuwento I had with her.*

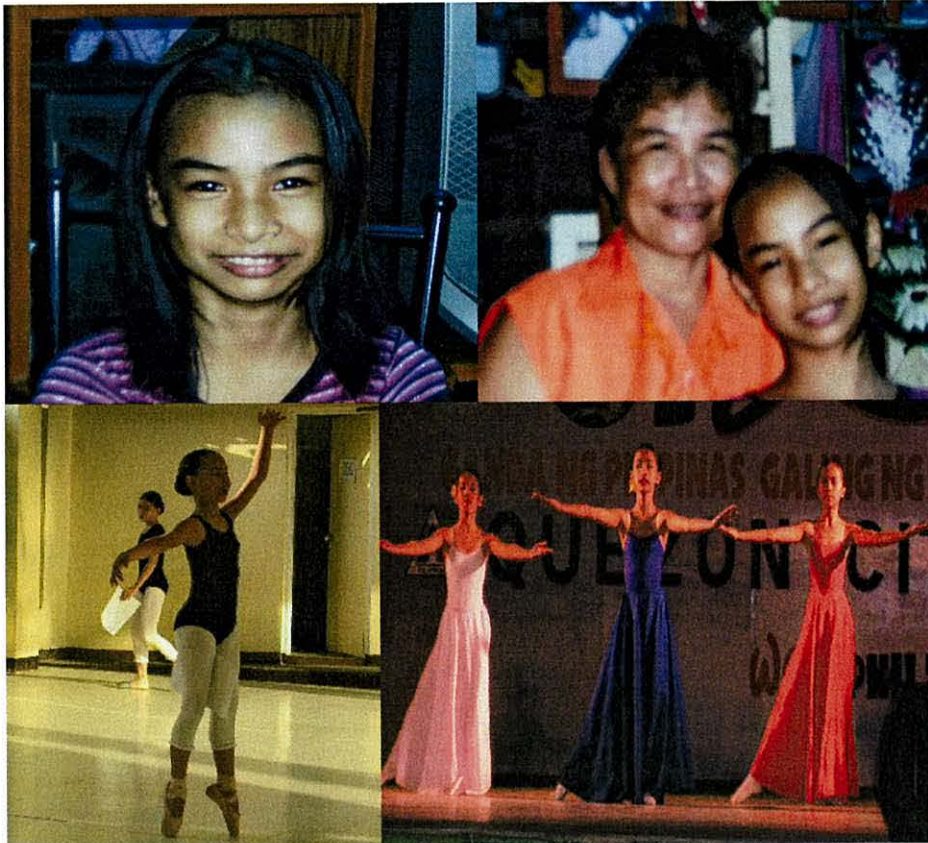
*Twelve-year-old Kenthkenth is the youngest among three siblings. She is currently a first year high school student at Ramon Magsaysay High School. Kenthkenth started her dance training at the QCPADFI at the age of nine in 2001. Now a level-one scholar, she always takes part in dance concerts the foundation holds. In fact, when the foundation staged a show for the Overseas Filipino Workers in Hong Kong, she was one of those selected to perform.*

*Kenthkenth was brought up and raised by both of her parents through the help of her eldest brother, who works as a personal driver in India. Her father is a jeepney driver and her mother a plain housewife. The family currently rents an apartment in Cubao, Quezon City.*

*Within her family, Kenthkenth is closest to her mother, Aling Pearly, who grew quite ecstatic when she first learned that her daughter had received a dance scholarship from the QCPADFI. Aling Pearly considers her daughter's entry into the QCPADFI a dream come true. She recalls how she used to frequent SM City just to watch the children having ballet lessons there. Thus when Kenthkenth started her dance training she had her mother's full support. In fact Aling Pearly would drop all her household chores just so she could bring Kenthkenth to Amoranto at two in the afternoon and fetch her at nine in the evening. While waiting outside the studio for the training to end, she fondly watches as her daughter practices her ballet moves. And of course she has never missed any of her daughter's public performances. She says seeing her daughter's talent and energy when she dances never fails to overwhelm her.*

“Importante ho yung mabilis na pagpick-up ng steps. Sabi po kasi ni Sir Luther dati pag hindi ka mabilis pumick-up ng steps kahit ilang beses ka nang pinagsabihan hindi mo pa rin makuha papaalisin ka na po sa ballet.”<sup>67</sup>

(Uy 2004)



### **This motivated me to improve my dancing**

When I was in grade two I used to join contests at school. I choreographed dance numbers based on those I had seen performed on TV. Then in grade three our school principal announced that there was an ongoing dance audition in Amoranto. I joined.

They just played music and we were instructed to make up our own dance steps. There were a lot of applicants so we were formed into several groups. While we were dancing, Sir Luther would roam around and pick a dancer from each group. Once he

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<sup>67</sup>It is important that you have fast pickup when you're learning the dance steps. Sir Luther once said if we cannot learn the steps quickly and it has been brought to our attention several times then we might be asked to give up the dance scholarship.” (Uy 2004)



spotted a potential dancer he would instruct that person's group to stop and he would pick that person from the group. Then another group will dance.

I was really happy when I got picked because that meant I could pursue ballet. This motivated me to improve my dancing.

Ay Ate, I used to walk like a hunchback until I joined the QCPADFI and developed a straight posture. I also became more self-confident and assertive. Whenever they ordered me to do things at home, I would get angry because I usually come home very tired.

### **When I reached level-one we had longer training sessions**

When I became part of the QCPADFI there was no level one although there were level two scholars back then. So my batch mates who happen to be tall automatically became level one. But they left and we were promoted to their level.

When I was still a beginner, our training was just until six in the evening. But when I reached level one, we had longer training sessions. We were often asked to observe and learn the dances of higher-level scholars. Once we've mastered their dance we would be instructed to join them in their practice.

We have to learn the dance steps fast. It is important that we have fast pickup when learning the dance steps. Sir Luther once said if we cannot learn the steps quickly and it has been brought to our attention several times then we might be asked to give up the dance scholarship.

The higher-level scholars had separate training sessions back then. There were just a few of us beginners so we did our bar exercises with Sir Eddie while the higher-level scholars did theirs with Sir Toni. But when the beginners increased in number we were combined with the higher-level scholars. Then the steps became a bit different. They were the same but more difficult. I was in the fifth grade then and when the second grading period came my marks fell. I received lower grades. So I told my mama, "Ma, I want to stop ballet now." But Mama replied, "Why quit now when you've already reached level one?" That was what Mama said so I just worked harder.

### **I Almost Did Not Make It Then**

Sir Luther picked the seven of us and instructed us to master the dances because we were to perform in Hong Kong. I was surprised to learn I was included so I really studied the dances, especially those that I didn't know.

I was really happy when Sir Luther included me in the list of performers for Hong Kong. This motivated me to work even harder and practice the dance steps for the show. The first person I shared the news with was mama. She herself could not believe that I would be joining those who were to perform abroad.

I almost did not make it then because we had some problems with the required documents. The people at the census bureau couldn't find my parents' marriage contract so my mother had to go to the province to secure a copy. She went several times but it was all in vain; she couldn't find a copy. Because of this Ate Jacky warned me that I may have to be left behind. But just when I was about to lose hope my auntie made a long-distance call to Mama instructing her to give the name of the person who presided over their marriage rite to the personnel in the census bureau, and that's how their contract was located.

### **What I Cannot Forget About Hong Kong**

What I cannot forget about Hong Kong was the experience of sharing a room with Janine, Melissa and Ate Jennifer. That was really fun. Once we had a show scheduled at nine in the morning and we woke up at eight so we had to hurry. We all took a bath at the same time. Melissa could not turn on the faucet and asked Ate Jennifer to do it. Then once in a while she would scream because the water would suddenly turn cold.

Then there was the penalty incurred by Janine and Melissa. They were putting on their makeup where Rio and Ate Jennifer were quarrelling. Sir Luther heard about it and asked what all the noise was about. Rio and Ate Jennifer raised their hands and since Melissa and Janine were in the same room, they also received punishment.

I also cannot forget about the incident at Victoria's Peak. We bought soft drinks not knowing it was prohibited to eat and drink while inside the tram. The penalty was \$1,000 so we tried to drink everything. Rio helped me consume the soft drinks but we really could not finish it all so I just hid the can in my bag. I tried to hold it securely in my bag so it wouldn't spill.



With regards to the dance performances, I cannot forget about our last dance, “Sabihin Mo.” The Filipinos could not help but shed tears especially when the Philippine flag was raised while we were all wearing costumes depicting the Overseas Filipino Workers’ jobs abroad.

**If I cannot find anything interesting to watch I will go out and play**

On days when I don’t have class I wake up at ten or eleven in the morning. I’ll have breakfast first then watch television. If I cannot find anything interesting to watch I will go out and play with the other kids in my neighborhood. They also dance and want to learn the way I dance. “Ate Kenthkenth, teach us to dance and help us join your ballet program when there’s an audition.” They really want to be ballet dancers too.

By twelve noon I’ll have lunch, take a bath, change into my tights and leotard and go to Amoranto. After the training, as soon I reach home, I’ll just have dinner and sleep.

### **Kimberly: I Managed to Stay Away From My Barkada**

*When I first saw Kimberly, she strikes me as the typical 'snob' teenager of a more affluent background than the rest of QCPADFI's scholars. This observation has a lot to do with the way she dresses up and carries herself. She seldom smile, walks gracefully, and is always poised. She dresses up casually but with a certain taste commonly found among middle and upper class teen-agers. She also shares the latter's feature being of fair complexion with smooth skin. Simply put, Kimberly seemed to belong to a minority of the more privilege scholars who managed to get into the program due to political connections. That is being a relative of a local politician within the city<sup>68</sup>.*

*But these assumptions were proven wrong, except of course for her outer appearance. Like the majority of QCPADFI scholars, Kimberly belongs to the lower class of urban poor background. Her father is unemployed and the family relies on their retail store for everyday subsistence. She is studying in a public school just beside Amoranto Sports Complex, MRHS, and is currently on her third year in high school.*

*Like the rest of QCPADFI scholars, Kimberly is very courteous as displayed in the way she talks to people older than her or scholars of higher level. She could be seen playing Chinese garter with fellow female scholars during break time and converses about love life with a chosen few.*

*Kimberly's story as narrated in this section is based solely on the conversation we had one afternoon in QCPADFI's main studio and the observations I had of her during my fieldwork. Like most higher-level scholars, it is quite difficult to expect her to hand in a journal and write an autobiography given her rigid dance trainings and the dance commitments they've got during this fieldwork. However my regular presence within Amoranto, and in most of the foundation's dance concerts, made me very familiar to the scholars. This enabled their participation in my research becomes so natural that I did not encounter rejection. A fact, this story can attest to.*

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<sup>68</sup> Relatives, e.g. off-springs, grandchildren, nephews and nieces of a local politician within the city who happen to display interest in dancing are taken in the program even if they do no



“Nung hindi pa po ako nagbaballet non lagi po akong nasa kalsada kahit gabi. Wala po kaming ginagawa non tambay lang po, laro. Pero nung magballet na po ako naiiwasan ko na po ang barkada ganyan. Pagkagaling sa ballet diretso sa bahay, pahinga kinabukasan papasok na naman po. Hindi na po kagaya ng dati na pagdating sa bahay tambay, ganyan, tambay sa kalye.”<sup>69</sup>”

(Cabahug 2004)



### **Luckily I Passed and That's How It Started**

When I was a child I already have a flare for dancing. I would as much want to join every dance contest until Sir Toni, came to our school in 1998. I was in grade four then and my teachers asked all students interested in dancing to audition. So I, together with my classmates who are interested in dancing, joined the audition. Luckily I passed and that's

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<sup>69</sup> “I used to always stay out on the street even at night prior to my engagement in ballet. We just bum around and play. But when I started with ballet, I managed to stay away from my *barkada*. I go straight home after ballet, rest and go to school the next day. This was so unlike before where upon reaching home I stay on the street and hang around.” (Cabahug 2004)

how it started. I was overwhelmed with joy when I got accepted. I said to myself now my dream of dancing will come true.

I used to always stay out in the street with my *barkada* prior to my engagement in ballet. We just bum around and play. But when I started with ballet, I managed to stay away from them. I go straight home after ballet, rest then go to school the next day. This was so unlike before when upon reaching home I dropped my things then go out and I stay on the street and hang around. I was once called a hunchback. I was teased as a hunchback when I was a kid. My friends used to tease me as such because of the way I walk until they noticed the changes when I started with ballet. They say they noticed how the way I walk. My teachers also noticed changes. They said there was a big change in me. I was no longer shy. Where as before I do not join activities they started to notice I dance whenever I am asked to dance.

### **Some of my teachers were against It**

I was just starting with my scholarship when Sir gave promotions. I was accelerated to level three. Some were asking why I got promoted to level three when I was just a beginner but from our batch many were actually accelerated to level three. When I was in elementary there was no hindrance to my dance activities. My teachers were even proud of the fact that I can dance. It was only now in high school when some of my teachers were against it. They said it excuses me from attending classes hence I've been missing many quizzes. They were asking me to choose between my studies and ballet. My parents objected. They said I don't have to give up any of them because ballet gives me the opportunity to travel and it is keeping me away from my *barkada*.

My parents do not find anything wrong with it. Actually, it is even them who would remind me to attend my training whenever I feel lazy.

My *barkada*, on the other hand, are so against it. They were even saying, "Ay drop it! Stay away from there and be with us instead." Whenever I'm with them they would ask, "What's ballet? What do they teach there? What do you get out of that?" In reply I would say, "a lot." I was able to influence a number of them. Sadly they cannot sustain it. They are finding it difficult. They were even asking how I was able to endure almost six years in the program. I would often share with them the things we do in the foundation



and during shows. I give them accounts of what we normally do when we go abroad and they would reply, “You’re lucky to have gone abroad while we are confined here.”

### **I have something to be Proud Of**

At first I almost gave up. I was finding it really difficult. All of a sudden I was chosen to dance. I was barely a year in QCPADFI then, yet I was already chosen to take part in a show. My first performance was in Philippines Plaza<sup>70</sup>. I was really proud which is why will not forget about it. The dances I knew then were “Lemon Tree” and “A Beautiful Life.”

On 2000 New Year’s Day, I won’t forget a show in “Circle”<sup>71</sup>. That was the first time I performed with actors. We had photos with them. Then there’s those show in Japan, Macau and Hong Kong. I will not forget all three. But the most memorable for me was that show in Japan because I was a first timer then. When I boarded the plane I made a fool of myself by asking “are we still moving? Because the airplane was not moving *hala!* Did we stop?” Because it was my first time I did not know and so they laughed at me.

There was an age limit in Macau, I believe it was 15 and above *po*. We were among those chosen to perform. There where exceptional scholars who were not chosen because they were not yet 15 then. It was good I turned fifteen so I did manage to join. We were also evaluated according to the dances we know and if we know the particular dance we are to perform there.

I was indeed happy because I’ve been to Japan and now I have the opportunity to go to Macau. I have something to be proud of and share again in our place because not all youth can go there. Even my teachers haven’t been outside of the Philippines, which I’ve managed to do. So I am really proud and happy.

The first thing I did then was breaking the news to my parents. Then I refrained from wearing the clothes I wanted to bring with me. I really prepared the things I brought with me. The next thing I did was asked permission from my teachers who allowed me

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<sup>70</sup> Philippine Plaza is one of the country’s five star hotels.

<sup>71</sup> Quezon City Memorial Circle Park is where QCPADFI often stage dance concerts.

and even asked for *pasalubong*<sup>72</sup>. I also told my *barkada* who asked me teasingly, to bring them with me through packing them in my luggage.

### **Look at me, I am a Filipino**

On our way to the airport we were quite disorganized. We were carrying a lot and were having a hard time then but we managed by helping each other with the luggage.

The same process happened upon arriving at the airport. We assisted each other, counted the luggage. We had ribbons on our luggage to distinguish them from the rest, as there are so many people there with the same luggage. Ma'am Joy, Ma'am Eya and our mentors were there to assist us anyway.

Boarding the plane I became nervous. I don't know what to do. I closed my eyes and prayed because I was afraid. A lot of things were running through my mind. Thoughts like, "what if on our way we fail to reach our destination and crash?" Fear dominated my mind then. I will never forget that. I was too afraid to board the plane and was thinking of the same things on our way home.

We share hotel rooms, two persons per room. In Macau, we met people of different nationality. I will never forget that as well because whenever we go down the lobby people from different nations introduce themselves to us. They asked for our name and our email addresses. It was fun.

We were the last to perform in Macau. While we were performing somebody shouted, "*Pinoy yan! Mabuhay ang Pinoy!*"<sup>73</sup> I will never forget that. Other nationalities were amazed with us. They said we danced great. We were the youngest performers.

We can never forget as well our performance in Hong Kong. This is because those who watched us were *malalaking tao*<sup>74</sup>. The *Pinoy*s can't help but cry. They were crying. *Pinoy*s usually go abroad to work. "Isn't it the *Pinoy*s there are working?" And seldom see our native dances, *Pinoy* dances. So they can't help but cry. We were proud because we managed to remind them not to forget where they came from. There were many *Pinoy*s there.

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<sup>72</sup> *Pasalubong* are anything from a visited place/country that may serve as token, travellers brings back for those they left behind.

<sup>73</sup> *Pinoy* is a layman term for Filipino. The audience were shouting, "They are *Pinoy*'s! long Live the *Pinoy*'s".

<sup>74</sup> *Malalaking tao* literally means big people. This is often used by Filipinos to refer to people of high positions or high ranking officials.



The audience in our second performance in Hong Kong composed mainly of big people. The same thing happened, bravo, applause. On our part we were proud. We were proud because we received applauses and standing ovation. We were admired.

I had good experiences in Macau and Hong Kong. It's different when you perform abroad because there you can say, "look at me, I am a Filipino. Witness how lovely our indigenous dances are. They are totally different from yours."

And on our free time we go to museums or do some shopping. We learned a lot about their country, about their culture. I won't forget that as well because we went to several museums. At least now it's not just about the Philippines we know, we've learned as well about them. We have a lot to share to others now like their culture, of the differences between Macau and Hong Kong.

### **I must say it is good to join this foundation**

I aspire to finish my studies and become a dance instructor like Sir Tony and Sir Luther. That is really my dream –to dance. I think I'll be working at the age of 25 and 28. I feel like I want to remain single because life is difficult these days. It is difficult to find work would I still contribute to that? What I really want is to make sure that my family is economically stable before I quit working.

I must say it is good to join this foundation especially for the youth who indulges on bad vices. Once they try this they will stay away from their bad vices and they will have the opportunity to perform, travel, and help their parents. This helped me a lot first, with my *barkada*. I managed to avoid my *barkada* even in the early stage of my involvement here. My *barkada* then would often say, "Hey, let's drink! Let's get drunk." So when I started with ballet I managed to avoid that.

When it comes to school, it helps that I am dancing especially with MAPEH<sup>75</sup>. It pulls my grade up because whenever I stage a performance I get additional grades. With regards to my parents, I give them the honoraria I receive from my shows. Papa has no work so we rely on the sales of our retail store. In reality what I usually earn through dancing goes straight to our store because that is where we get our daily needs. Then the

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<sup>75</sup> MAPEH is the acronym for a clustering of 5 subjects which includes Music, Art, Physical Education and Health.

thirty pesos transportation allowance provided by QCPADFI (every dance training) becomes my school allowance so the foundation is really a big help.



### **Melissa: The Chance for Me to Go Abroad and Board the Plane Finally Came**

*Fourteen years old Melissa is a third year high school student of Manuel Roxas High School. Currently a level one scholar of QCPADFI, Melissa assists her mentors in handling classes in the latter's other dance schools. This usually occurs on a Saturday morning where Melissa and other higher-level scholars receive an extra allowance for doing so. ` However she also aspires to teach ballet, do more shows and visit other countries. She said she will hold on to her scholarship for as long as she can.*

*Melissa is a responsible daughter. Being the eldest among four siblings, she helps her mother in selling goods in Kamuning Market where they rent a space. There, Melissa spends a whole week, including Saturdays and goes home only on Sunday with her mother.*

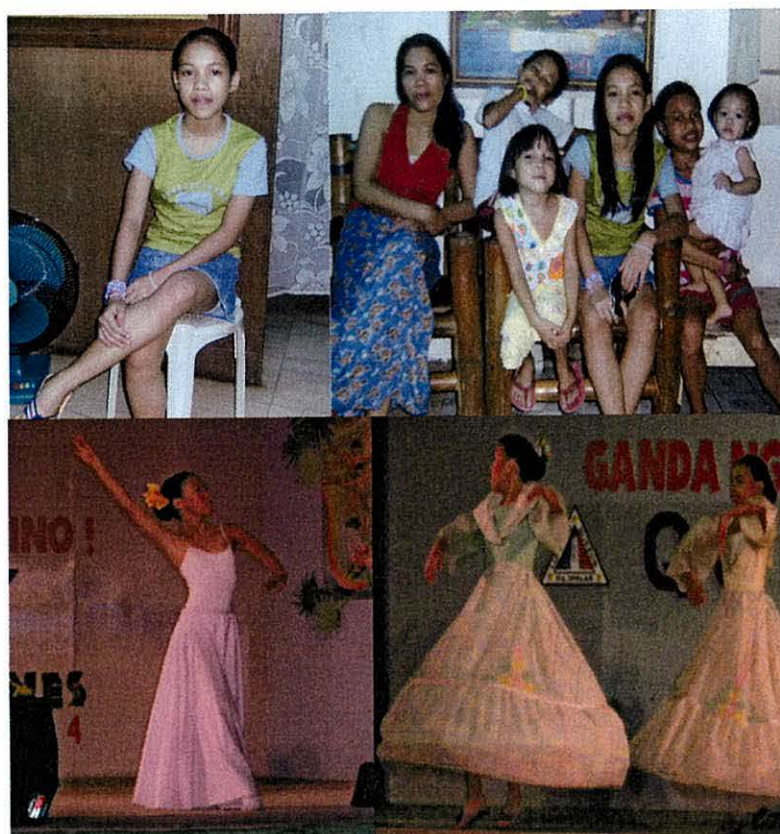
*Melissa's mother was alone in raising all four children. She has no knowledge of her husband's whereabouts. The latter has long been reported missing and the family have lost hope in finding him. In spite of this the family manages to survive through the help of some relatives who look after Melissa's siblings when both mother and daughter are in the market. The family lives with other relatives in Veterans Village, in the interiors of Pasong Tamo, Quezon City.*

*Locating Melissa's house was indeed difficult. It required me to travel long and challenged my skills in following direction. The house was located in one of the innermost villages within Pasong Tamo that can only be reached through a long tricycle ride. The tricycle ride gave me a quick tour of other villages within the area and showed a seeming rural side of the urban Metro Manila where lots in between houses provides a natural playground for children and crops for domestic consumption.*

*Melissa's story is a reconstruction of the long conversation I had with her when I visited their house and the lunch date I had with her and other scholars who took part in the Hong Kong show. I must mention Melissa's willingness to write her autobiography however, the timeliness of this research, which coincided with QCPADFI's several dance commitments, posed a hindrance to this project. However, the accounts she gave through the mentioned conversations are just enough to facilitate the writing of this narrative.*

“Pinili po kami yung mga kasama sa Hong Kong. Ano po masaya at saka excited kasi makakapunta na ako sa ibang bansa at makakasakay na ako sa eroplano. Nagpursige po talaga ako para makasama po ako sa Hong Kong...”<sup>76</sup>

(Hervas 2004)



### **I was unaware that I have talents in dancing**

My siblings and I are fond of dancing. We would stand in front of the television imitate dancers as they perform new dance steps. Back then I was unaware that I have talent in dancing until a program was held in school where all kindergarten students are required to participate. That's when it all started...

In grade two we established a dance group. We choreograph dance steps every time we hear new dance music but they are now with a different group. Between grade four to six I have this other group composed mainly of gays. They were my classmates.

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<sup>76</sup> “We were among those chosen to perform in Hong Kong. I was indeed happy and excited because the chance for me to go abroad and board an airplane finally came. I really tried my best to get myself picked for the Hong Kong show.” (Hervas 2004)



Then Rio<sup>77</sup> became my friend. She asked me if I wanted to join the Quezon City performing Arts Development Foundation and so she recommended me. I did audition.

What actually happened then was when she referred me to the foundation, they no longer asked me to dance they just thought me the dance steps. I have a companion then. When we arrived Rio was about to leave for a show within Quezon City so we were left with Paul. *Eh*, my companion was so shy so we just went home but we were asked to write our names in a bond paper before leaving and was handed a form.

### **I found it difficult po**

I found it difficult *po*. Practice starts at seven and ends at ten or nine in the evening. I was so tired after the practice that I would fall asleep upon reaching our space in the market. This at times caused me to come to class late the next day.

When I was still new, beginners were not allowed to join the higher levels on bar exercises. We do bar exercises with Sir Jessie and were asked to perform five dances. After this Sir Luther meets us and dismisses us.

When I reached level one, scholars of level three and below have breaks after bar exercises so sometimes we play. We just need to go back to the dance studio after the higher level students are through with their bar exercises. The mentors then would ask us to dance.

Promotions in level are usually awarded after QCPADFI stages a show or an audition. An audition was held in February after our show at Chang Kai Shek<sup>78</sup>. Those who passed became the beginners and went up to level one. Sir Jessie and Sir Tony announced it. Then most of my batch mates: Mildred, Roselle, Jayson, Princess, Romilyn left the foundation leaving only three of us. Mildred was the first to leave because she was reprimanded. Romilyn left as well because she failed to attend our show in Glorietta<sup>79</sup>. Princess was next who was also reprimanded then Jayson.

With Jayson, he failed to attend the show in CCP because he had exams so he was allowed to continue with the training but with frequent absences he voluntarily left out of shame. His several absences were due to conflicts in our schedule and his exams.

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<sup>77</sup> Rio was then a level three scholar of QCPADFI.

<sup>78</sup> *Chang Kai Shek* is a Chinese School.

<sup>79</sup> Glorietta is a mall within Makati City, the country's top commercial area.

I was a shy person before I joined the foundation but when I became part of it, it lessened as I've learned to get along with people. They also taught us good behavior like we are asked to avoid shrewdness, becoming over-ambitious, and shy. Ambitiousness refers to scholars who would insist on doing what higher-level scholars do even when they are not ready for it. They were never contented with what the mentors are teaching us.

We receive tempering especially those who prawn when scolded. There are instances where resentments create big issues. Where some scholars influence others to turn against us resulting to conflicts within. Indicators of such are some scholars' sudden shrewdness towards others.

### **I was indeed happy and excited**

The first show I joined was in Chang Kai Shek. That was before Christmas barely four months after I received my scholarship. Then sometime between the months of August and September or was it in October we went to Masbate<sup>80</sup>. When we went there I could not sleep because it was my first time to ride a boat and see mountains. I thought we were going to ride a big ship but as it turned out it was just a ferryboat. It took us about a day and a half's trip. A community band welcomed us. It was the opening of their theatre. After our second show we headed straight to the beach and stayed there overnight. The next day we went to another beach.

We were among those chosen to perform in Hong Kong. I was indeed happy and excited because the chance for me to go abroad and board an airplane finally came. I really tried my best to get myself picked for the Hong Kong show. Upon learning about this I broke the news to mama. Sir asked us to prepare the necessary documents.

### **I had problems with securing a DSWD**

I had difficulty applying for a passport because I had problems with securing a DSWD (Department of Social Welfare and Development) permit. It was because my papa was missing. He disappeared like a bubble. We cannot find him so we needed to provide a formal statement to prove he was indeed missing and witnesses to support it. Then came the expenses for the application process so I thought I wouldn't be able to make it. And when the schedule for the passport application came I was caught unaware. I was just

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<sup>80</sup> Masbate is one of the country's provinces within the island of Luzon.



informed by Ate Janine so I went with them to the DFA (Department of Foreign Affairs) to familiarize myself with the procedure. It turned out Ate Jacky forgot to contact Kuya Igme. So both Kuya Igme and I failed to secure our passport with the group. We did so at another time with Ate Jacky. We managed to get our passport that same day we started with the application process. The procedure was quite fast.

### **We saw the whole of Hong Kong**

Our first show was the OFW's day off. Towards the end of our show the Filipinos were crying. Our last dance number was *Sabihin Mo Ikaw ay Filipino*<sup>81</sup> where they realized they are still Filipinos even when working abroad. Even abroad they will never forget their home country where they were raised.

Before going home we first went to *Wang Chai* and *Victoria's Peak*. We had our picture taken and sight seeing. When we were in *Victoria's Peak* we saw the whole of Hong Kong.

We roamed around the airport before boarding the plane that took us back to the Philippines. We were asked to take care of our own meals and so we ate at Burger King. After eating we had picture taking sessions and went with Ma'am Eya to the Disney Store. But it was expensive there and so when Ate Jacky announced she is going to Watson's, we came with her to buy our *pasalubong*<sup>82</sup>. There we bought lotions, baby bath, chocolates. I bought two bags that only cost ten Hong Kong dollars then we boarded the plane.

### **We have to leave for the market by five in the morning**

Every Monday I need to be in school by 6:45 in the morning. From Tuesdays to Fridays my classes are from 7 to 2:45 in the afternoon. The moment I wake up I eat first and head to school. Upon coming back from school, I fix my things and do the laundry. Before going to bed I would prepare the clothes I will wear the next day.

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<sup>81</sup> The dance, *Sabihin Mo Ikaw ay Filipino*, expresses pride in being a Filipino as it literally means "Tell Them You are a Filipino" when translated in English. The dance interpretation involves the scholars dressed in different professions or jobs including the usual OFW's work e.g. nurses, care-givers, engineers, service work etc.

<sup>82</sup> *Pasalubong* are any items, which could serve as tokens of Hong Kong for the members of the family or friends left behind.

We stay at the market the whole week. On Tuesday s I go to our space first in the market to get my tights and leotard before going to my dance rehearsal. The same routine goes for me at night.

There are times I go to the arcade with my classmates to play computer games. That's after class. During break time I chat with some of my schoolmates who go to my classroom. And if we still have home works we failed to do, we finish it before the next teacher comes.

I no longer have a peer group. We're no longer close *eh* they already have other members so I play with my siblings' friends instead. We play *patintero* and softball. They are the only one's I got to play with *eh*. Sometimes we go to the gutter we climb the hill. Whenever mama harvests yams we go with her.

On Sundays I just watch the television and if they failed to wash my clothes, I do the laundry. Then I will prepare the things that I would need like the clothes I will wear from Monday to Saturday because we have to leave for the market by five in the morning. Once in the market I will just get my allowance and go to school.

I want to finish my studies and get a good job like in HRM (Hotel and Restaurant Management) or as a care-giver. HRM because I would like to manage hotels, while care-giver because I want to take care of the sick elderly and possibly go abroad.



### **Merianne: Ballet have Exposed Me to This**

*Merianne belonged to the early batches of scholars, long before QCPADFI became a foundation. Whenever the QCPADFI scholars perform, one never fails to notice how she got to dance in almost every number and does it with poise and grace only a true ballerina can master. At sixteen, Merianne is often at center stage playing major parts in the foundation's dance repertoire with her brother Gian who inspired her to traverse this path. Like most scholars, she started quite early on her dance training and after eight years in the performing arts, Merianne is now a level five scholar.*

*As the youngest in a sibling of three, Merianne is the apple of her father's eyes, in her own word –a "Papa's girl". Her mother, in gratitude to the foundation, volunteered to serve in QCPADFI by preparing the scholars' snacks and doing errands for the foundation. Her father, as the sole breadwinner of the family, is employed in a government office.*

*I often see Marianne coming in by the studio annex's gate late in the afternoon with a big bag clinging on one side of her shoulder. She usually walks her way to Amoranto, which normally takes less than 10 minutes from their house. Once inside the studio, she goes straight to where the mentors are to greet them then goes the change of outfit from the casual outdoor clothes into tights and leotard, followed by the grooming of her hair the ballerina style. After this routine, she proceeds to do her warm-up exercises while having a light conversation with other QCPADFI's higher level scholars. Her practice starts between six to thirty past six in the evening and usually ends at nine or ten.*

*I also met Merianne through the foundation's managing director who introduced me to Merianne's mother. The latter facilitated this interview, which gave substance to my observations. This story is lifted from the **pagpapakuwento** I had with Merianne. I must say that through the latter process, Merianne managed to provide an account that could stand as a full story. What I just did was perform minimal stitching to put things to its appropriate themes (e.g. stories about childhood, dance training, early experiences in the performing arts, etc.) where the spontaneous nature of chatting often scatters some fragments. Thus the need to put fragments together especially the part where we had to temporarily stop to collect the laundry her mother hanged to dry outside when a sudden rain poured.*

“Ang laki talaga ng pagkakaiba eh. ... Marami silang (kapwa kabataan) nagagawa na hindi ko pwedeng gawin. Ang lamang ko lang ako nakakapunta ako sa iba’t-ibang bansa, sa iba-ibang lugar. ...naiinis din ako kasi atleast sila napagdaanan nila, pero mas nauna naman ako. Ako sanay naman ako na makihalubilo sa mga tao, kahit iba-ibang mga tao dahil dyan na rin sa ballet.”<sup>83</sup>

(Bartolome 2004)



### **I was just influenced by *Kuya***

When I was a kid I did not find dancing to be interesting. No one had a flare for dancing in the family except *kuya* and me. I was just influenced by *kuya*. I envied him and so I followed in his footsteps.

<sup>83</sup> “There’s really a big difference. ... They (fellow adolescents) can do a lot of things, which I cannot. My only advantage is, I’ve been to different countries, to different places. At times I’m annoyed because at least they’ve been through those but I am quite advance in the sense that I am used to mingling with people, with any kind of people because ballet have exposed me to this.” (Bartolome 2004)



I was in grade one then when, still living in Tondo, *kuya* and I would travel on our own to attend school here in Roces<sup>84</sup>. After school, *kuya* goes to his ballet classes while I watched and wait outside the studio until mama suggested that I join *kuya* and be a dance scholar myself.

I was in grade two when I auditioned and got admitted, but I started the training when I was in grade three. Looking back, I was surprised to realize I have that intention so early in life. I will never forget that audition. First, we were asked to enter the office. There were other kids and I was so quiet because I don't know anyone. Sir Tony checked if our body was flexible enough and since we were still young our bones were soft then. He asked each of us to lean on the table and stretch our legs upward. He pulled it up as high as we can until it reached our head. That alone was a happy experience because at that point we kids got to know each other. Afterwards, Sir Luther asked us to dance in front of him. This was very funny because we have to dance along a designated music with whatever step we can put into it. You don't have to know how to dance to be accepted as long as you can follow the rhythm. Then came my first point shoes

When I started with my training I was playing around. I was not that serious yet as I did not really know how to dance.

Being kids then, it is but natural for us to be noisy, that's a fact. But usually, we only get scolded when the noise is too much and uncalled for. Like for example chatting noisily while the lecture is going on. Sir Luther would scold us right there and then and so we need to apologize. We always apologize immediately. In my case, whenever I got scolded, I cried. I was still a kid then naturally I would cry.

Unlike now the trainings then were conducted by the mentors themselves. Whereas the teaching assistants handle the beginners now, in my time, it was Sir Luther who handled and supervised us. But it was fun with Sir Luther. They say it's frightening if it's with Sir Luther. It is frightening as maybe observed but the outcome is good like he curses but you will learn. He will personally see you through. He will hold your foot and correct its position. Then there's *Kuya* Jessie, he's been there from the start. If *Kuya*

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<sup>84</sup> Tondo is located in Manila while Roces is just within Quezon City near Amoranto. Travelling between the two areas would take more than an hour's ride by public transportation system.

Jessie asked you to do the *plié*<sup>85</sup> you'll be in that position for far too long, your feet gets tired and still you've got to do it.

When I first came in, the training schedule was daily. I have to be in Amoranto by three in the afternoon. Being a grade three student, my classes then were held in the afternoon so what I did was, I asked my teacher to excuse me from my other subjects so that I can attend my dance training on time. In spite of this, I did not take my classes for granted. I was even surprised to have received high marks. Then came my first point shoes. I was in grade three then and was overwhelmed with joy when I saw it. I thought it was fairly easy to dance with it. I was so excited to use it. I never thought it would be painful. And so when I started dancing with my point shoes on, it was difficult. I got blisters and even lost my toenails. I don't know how it happened, half of it had just gone up and so I had to cut it off but the other half followed until I thought I lost my toenail. Good thing it grew back.

From beginner, it took years before I reached level two. I did not pass through level one. I went directly to level two. When I reached this level, of course I have to prove myself worthy of it because someone from that level is supposed to be higher than the beginners. Then I got promoted again to level three. Again it took years before I reached this level. Then came level four, it was here where I really stayed long. Only this year, 2004, was I promoted to level five.

### **It was my first show ever**

My first show was in 1996, a musical performance entitled, *Munting Pangarap* I think it was held in UP Theater. I was still in grade three then. I remember we had a picture where we were forming the shape of a bird. Whatever our costume was, we formed its shape. There was even a part where we acted like we were riding a bus that goes round and round. Then we pretended to have reached Amoranto and went inside for our ballet classes, some would pretend to be singing and some dancing. That was really fun. It was my first show ever. Imagine at grade three, even though I was not yet in front, still I am part of the show and was featured in a magazine. I still have that magazine. Also I will never forget about my first International show that was in 2000 and was held in Japan, in Chiba. It was the first time I've been to another country. I was a level four

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<sup>85</sup> One of the basic positions in ballet.



scholar then. The experience was new to me. I felt funny especially inside the airplane I don't know what to do.

I got rattled during the show but was happy because we performed the different dances in the Philippines. Through us and by our talents, we were able to show what the Filipinos are capable of. It was just a day show and the rest was spent on tour. The tour felt good, it was like being on vacation. Then this year came the shows in Macau and Hong Kong.

### **I can no longer do what a normal kid does**

When I was not doing ballet yet, I used to roam around the neighborhood. I often got spanked because I always hangout. But when I started ballet, I am usually tired whenever I reached home so I used to just stay inside and practice what was taught in the studio. Sometimes Kuya and I danced at home.

It acquired discipline and from then on seldom do I play with our neighbor's children. There are times when I envied them, as I can no longer do what a normal kid does. But I don't regret my decision because when I came in, I really like what I was doing. And it feels good to have gone to different places. It really felt good knowing that while still a kid I've been to a lot of places.

Before I became a performing arts scholar, I was really a kid and acted like a kid. But when I got into ballet I became silent, I was serious. On my first year in high school, I did not experience going out on gimmicks. My parents do not allow us. But if it's school parties then they will allow us. But Gimmick with friends –no, which is why my *barkada*<sup>86</sup> would often say, “don't bother ask Merianne, she won't come.”

All of their experiences are from the internet, right? Well for me I also have internet experiences. I once got addicted with the internet. I was there almost every hour. That's what they share with me, but they still have things, which they can do that I cannot. There's really a big difference. Like when they have gimmick, I cannot drink because I have ballet classes. I cannot have gimmicks my parents will get angry. While most kids can go home anytime they like, we can't. They<sup>87</sup> can do a lot of things, which I cannot. My only advantage is, I've been to different countries, to different places. At

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<sup>86</sup> *Barkada* is a Filipino term for peer-group.

<sup>87</sup> Merianne is referring to young people her age who can do things normal to adolescents.

times its annoying to feel they've been through those but I am well advance in the sense that I am used to mingling with people, with any kind of people because ballet have exposed me to it.

### **I love what I'm doing**

It was also during this time (first year high school) when I started teaching ballet in Manila Dance, one of our mentor's training school. My schedule then consisted of: attending school and ballet classes in Amoranto during Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays; while Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays were devoted to teaching ballet after school.

I was initiated into teaching ballet in Amoranto. This went on until my fourth year in high school when I asked Sir Luther if I could leave teaching ballet for a while because I had to attend to an overwhelming graduation requirements.

Looking back, I knew that to be a good ballet teacher, one has to imitate the real teachers, and so I did just that. I started with the hands, one at a time, and then patience. You really have to have patience. When the kids are lazy then you have to be patient. It was good to have experience the same things yourself, that's how you will get to understand that they're kids and it's but natural for them to be annoying at times and so you have to be patient with them. From this, I also got to understand why Sir Luther and the other mentors were shouting. I for myself can't help but shout at times.

### **I hope to also share whatever it is that I've learned to children for free**

A lot of people were asking me how I got to balance my activities back then. I told them I love what I'm doing. If you really love what you're doing then there's no such thing as a difficult task.

Now I am a first year computer secretariat student. I was supposed to take up business management, as it was my dream to become a businesswoman someday. But I decided against enrolling in the university this year because of our scheduled international shows.



I did not enroll in the university, as I was afraid I might be dropped-out of the courses because of the number of eventual absences the show will require<sup>88</sup>. Hence, to avoid the possibility of wasting money, I postponed enrolling in the university.

Ballet did a lot for me. I started here not knowing how to dance. I was not even interested in dancing. But now I feel something is lacking whenever I missed it. Then there's the money we get out of it. This helped a lot in our daily needs. And of course the experiences I had. If not for these I don't think I will have the same opportunity of going to other countries and places, and of meeting and working with big performing arts groups. I am really thankful to the foundation and admire those who conceptualized the whole thing. Ten years from now, I hope to also share whatever it is that I've learned to children for free.

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<sup>88</sup> The international show referred to here are: the 9<sup>th</sup> International Macau Youth Dance Festival which lasted for seven days, where QCPADFI represented the Philippines, and the show in Hong Kong which was sponsored by the Consular Office of the Philippines in Hong Kong.

### **Rey: My Dreams Are Just Within My Reach**

*Reynaldo strikes me as a quiet and serious adolescent. Unlike most QCPADFI scholars, he was silent and rarely does he mingle with adolescents of his age. He comes to the foundation just a few minutes before practice starts, and whenever he arrives he goes straight to the male dressing room to change into tights and leotards. But like the rest of the scholars, Rey is very courteous in his manners and polite in words. In my limited encounter with Rey, I seldom see him chatting with fellow scholars. However, there are occasions when he would join a younger group of scholars as they play *sipa*, a favorite outdoor game among male children, or sit with fellow male scholars along the rotunda's bench.*

*I met Rey two weeks before I left the Philippines. The QCPADFI had scheduled an orientation for its incoming scholars then and I was busy preparing my camera when he came inside the office to talk to Sir Tony. After their very short conversation, Sir Tony gave me a brief background of the former, which caught my interest and made me decide to do his story. Luckily Rey was very willing and cooperative.*

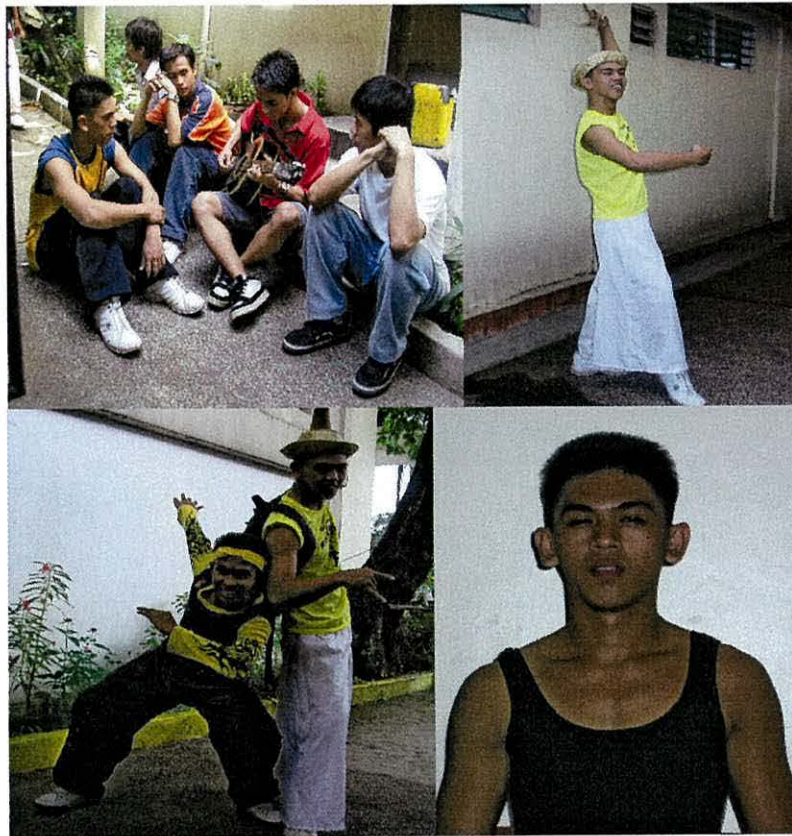
*Rey have been a scholar of the foundation for a year and a half but circumstances forced him to give up his scholarship in exchange for a more stable shelter. At 18, he had been exposed to the harsh realities of a broken home, street life, and orphanage. In spite of these, he remained steadfast in his desire to follow his dreams, one of which is to become an international dance choreographer. Hence, in the afternoon of 2 October 2003, Rey decided to approach once again the heads of QCPADFI to be readmitted to its program.*

*This story is directly lifted from Rey's own accounts. What I did was just to translate it in English and perform a bit of stitching where little fragments falling on certain themes appeared somewhere else in his manner of accounting. But all together he gave a coherent account of his life from childhood in the province to his struggles as a child on the streets (technically speaking a child of the street), as well as his pursuit to reach his dreams.*



“Kasi kumbaga masaya ako kapag sumasayaw ako. Kasi parang nawawala lahat ng problema ko tapos yung pangarap ko parang nasa tabi ko lang. Parang makukuha mo lahat.”<sup>89</sup>

(Galanze, 2004)



### **This made me decide to run away from home**

I was in the province, Leyte, until the age of five. My parents would often quarrel over my mother's jealousy, which eventually lead them to end their marriage. When my mother left, I was left in the care of my father. He was a drunkard and he often beats me. Then my father decided to go to Manila, leaving me to the care of my grandparents. When my grandfather died, I was left with only my grandmother to look after me until my auntie decided to bring me to Manila, in Calderon, near the Montessori. There she brought me to my father whom I did not recognized immediately as he became so thin

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<sup>89</sup> “Whenever I am dancing I am happy. It is as if all of my problems are way behind me and my dreams are just within my reach. Like, I can have everything...” (Galanze 2004)

due to his vices. He smokes and drinks a lot. When my auntie introduced me to him, he took me home with him. It was then that I discovered he has another family and I was immediately assigned the task of looking after their child. Whenever my father is away, my stepmother beats me. This made me decide to run away from home and sought shelter in the streets.

### **Life on the street and in-between**

I stayed on the streets for five years. First, I roamed the streets of Munoz where I learned the craft of a parking boy, a barker, and soon met rugby boys where I learned to become a substance abuser<sup>90</sup>. I became filthy since I don't have anything to wear other than the clothes I was wearing when I left home. After a year of staying on the street, an American and a Filipino approached me. They inquired if I have a family to which I said no, and asked me if I wanted to go to an orphanage. Not knowing what an orphanage is like, I came with them to try it out and they brought me to *Tulay ng Kabataan*<sup>91</sup>.

When I was in *Tulay ng Kabataan* I saw lots of kids. Some were much older than me while others were just my age. I was only eight then. As time went by I incurred a number of enemies, then the thought of running away recurred to me. I was somehow drawn to the street as I have been used to living there. However, I did not return to Munoz, I went to Monumento, to Ever Gotesco<sup>92</sup>. There, I again met rugby boys who invited me to join them and so I became, once again, a rugby user. This went on until an Engineer from Isabella who owns a house in Munoz-Pajo adopted me and brought me to Isabella with him<sup>93</sup>.

In Isabella lived the engineers' wife who gets easily irritated. I have learned to plant *palay*<sup>94</sup> there. I plant *palay* to while the time away until I left their house and went back to the streets again. This time I did not go to Manila. I just roamed the streets of Isabella until someone found me and let me into his house. After a week I decided to go

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<sup>90</sup>Parking boys/girls and barkers are informal jobs usually created by the street children for themselves. The former earns through looking for a parking space for private motorist and watching over their vehicle while they are away, the latter, by assisting drivers of public utility vehicle through calling passengers to fill their vehicles. Rugby boys, on the other hand are street children who sniffs glue.

<sup>91</sup> *Tulay ng Kabataan* is a drop-in centre for street children.

<sup>92</sup> Monumento is a busier street compared to Munoz and is adjacent to it. Street children are drawn by its vivacity as well as heterogeneity.

<sup>93</sup> Pajo is a particular place within Munoz while Isabella is a province in the northern part of the Philippines.

<sup>94</sup> *Palay* is Filipino's regular meal.



back to the engineer's house to tell him I am going back to Manila even if it meant staying on the streets for a while. It was Sunday when I went. The engineer who adopted me was there and so I told him that I wanted to go back to Manila. That night we traveled back home. We went back to Munoz. I stayed there, they gave me money for food and since I did not forget about the orphanage, I voluntarily went back to Tulay ng Kabataan. I told the staff I wanted to stay there because living on the street is difficult. I lived there for five years.

### **I know I can dance**

It was during my second stay in Tulay ng Kabataan where I met a rugby boy who performs in QCPADFI. Whenever I see them dance in Tulay ng Kabataan parties, I am reminded of a dance group, the Street Boys, I often saw on television when I was still a kid in the province. As I watch them, I can't help but dance along. I dance whatever step I can master. By then the children in the orphanage were organizing performers for dance numbers. At one point I joined them. I know I can dance and whenever they teach me, I easily learn the steps until we held an audition for a show in Glorietta with Gary Valenciano<sup>95</sup>. It was my first time in Glorietta<sup>96</sup>. I tried my luck and I was among those chosen. We practiced every night and when the show came, I was the only one who was asked to come and perform. That is how I learned how to dance. The kids who were chosen along with me then were already performers of QCPADFI but it was still later when I learned about the foundation.

When an audition for the QCPADFI scholarship was held, a fellow from Bahay Tuluyan asked those who knew how to dance if they are interested to try out for it. I did raise my hands. When we went there it was Saturday. We thought we would be asked to perform our own choreographed dance. What they did was they thought us the dance and then picked those who easily learned the steps and were, at the same time, able to follow the beat. I was chosen first. Sir Luther picked me and I was overwhelmed with joy as I became so sure of my talent. It felt like, here is where my dream of becoming a dancer

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<sup>95</sup> Gary Valenciano is one of the top performer in the country known not only for his songs but more so with his skill in dancing.

<sup>96</sup> Glorietta, a high-end shopping center, is one of the leading shopping areas within Metropolitan Manila located in Makati City.

will be realized and what used to be mere home dancing will soon be witnessed by a lot of people.

**If you really aspire for something... it will come true**

I auditioned in April of 2002. After a year, I was promoted to level one and after a few months, to level two. First, the ballet positions were taught to us: first, second, third and then brava. Then came the positions of the feet: turn-out, turn-in and how we are supposed to do it. I had difficulty with how things are pronounced. It was so alien to me like brava. I go home bearing these things in mind and whenever I'm home I practiced. So when I come here I know how it's supposed to be done. The music as well is different. I haven't heard of it, it was only here that I got to listen to it. What I'm used to is modern dance, not ballet. And so I discovered ballet and my body seemed to go well with it. I realized, if you really aspire for something, like having a dream, it would come true.

Prior to the ballet classes, I review the dance in the studio. I tried to recall whatever was taught the previous class, stopping only when lesson starts, when we are to do the bar exercises. There are times when in the course of our training, I experience difficulty in following the steps. What I normally do is I go to the periphery and imitate the one before me. Sometimes, I don't even have to imitate. I had the experience of a sudden mastery over a dance even without looking. Only after our ballet classes are we taught modern dances. So goes the: Lemon Tree, A Beautiful Life...

I was really happy when I became part of QCPADFI. Everything that I wished for is there. I am overwhelmed with joy every time we have shows. Before a show starts, I often get nervous. I say to myself: "this is big time. Now there's a lot of people there to watch you, while before it's just you, practicing by yourself alone, in front of a mirror". But when onstage everything goes smoothly, although I still feel a bit nervous. It is as though you can't believe what you're hearing, that you are an excellent dancer. It is as if you're famous.

Whenever I am dancing I am happy. It is as if all of my problems are way behind me and my dreams are just within my reach. Like, I can have everything. Then came the show in Intramuros<sup>97</sup> where some items in the exhibit room were reported to have been

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<sup>97</sup> Intramuros is one of the country's historic places within Manila which have been revived as a tourist attraction where regional shows and exhibits are held.



missing. Our level became the suspect and so we were all demoted to level one. This had been my level until October when in my school a band was organized and I became the bass drummer.

### **My decision then was motivated by a moral obligation**

While I was new in QCPADFI, I was still leaving in the orphanage until I turned seventeen and I have to leave Tulay ng Kabataan. The orphanage was supposed to house children from ages six to fifteen only. Since I am seventeen then, I was supposed to have been released. What the staff did was to look for my father as I have indicated his address in my profile. One morning, I was surprised to see my father and stepmother in the orphanage. I don't really want to go with my father but then they talked to me and explained that I can no longer stay in the orphanage. And so I went with them and stayed in their house for two months after which I left again and once more, sought shelter on the streets.

When I went to the streets, I stopped schooling but went on with the QCPADFI. I knew someone from Kamuning and Makabayan<sup>98</sup>. I washed my clothes there, in my friends' house, which I collect in the afternoon. I stayed in a vacant lot in Morato, that new building there. There used to be a vacant lot there. That's where I used to sleep. And for food, I knew the person who collects garbage from McDonald's, that's where I get some food. I saved the left over chickens. Some were still whole while the others were really left-over. These I eat. But when there's ballet lesson like during Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, I eat in Amoranto. I asked for extra bread until I got myself adopted again, this time by a fellow scholar's sister, Ate<sup>99</sup> Rosabella.

They are five siblings in the family, three of whom are working and one is graduating from college. She told me she would help me go back to school and so I continued my studies in Tomas Morato Elementary School. I have been a student of Tomas Morato and have been dancing there during programs ever since I became part of the QCPADFI. Through my dancing, the teachers got to know me. They knew me to be kind and are aware of my background. One time, while performing, the principal saw me and praised me. Upon hearing this, the school's guidance councilor told the principal that

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<sup>98</sup> Kamuning and Makabayan are villages near Thomas Morato and Amoranto. The latter houses the QCPADFI.

<sup>99</sup> Ate is a term use to refer to an elder sister within the Tagalog region in the Philippines.

I am homeless and was living on the streets. And so after the program, the principal asked for me and offered to house me in the school. I thought about it and weighed it against my current living arrangement. Somehow I felt that I am adding burden to my foster family as there were only three among them who are working and both the parents are relying on the income of these three. And so I decided to talk to my foster father who I consider to be my own, “tay<sup>100</sup>”, the school principal approached me awhile ago asking if I wanted to live inside the school. She found out about my condition and was moved by pity for my lack of shelter and school uniform”. Tatay replied, “it is up to you. If I were you I’ll choose to stay there, as you can see we are jobless. We cannot offer you anything other than sending you to school. Whatever we earn goes directly to the food we eat.” So when morning came, I went directly to the principal’s office and expressed my decision to accept her offer.

Inside the school is a security guard’s house where I now stayed. Before the security guard was still occupying the space, I slept in empty classrooms. One day, a thief came and robbed the school. Limping, the security guard could not deter the robber and so he was terminated not just for that incident but also for having insulted the principal. From then on I sleep in the guardhouse and help in guarding the school. Until now, the school provides for my meal through the cafeteria during weekdays and sometimes they give me money for the weekends.

Meanwhile I am becoming active in school as a bass drummer. Our group is currently the interschool champion. One time in October, we have a show in QCPADFI, which coincided with a scheduled band contest. I cannot leave the band since there is no alternate bass drummer. Mr. Miranda, our conductor, and the group depended heavily on me and so I phoned the QCPADFI informing them that I cannot come. This, the foundation thought was the reason why I gave-up the scholarship, which was partly the reason why I eventually left the foundation. It’s not really choosing to play for the band over dancing. My decision then was motivated by a moral obligation to the school that adopted me. Somehow my activities in QCPADFI are putting the principal in jeopardy since the school, as a public infrastructure, shouldn’t house anybody. This is the reason why I used to climb the fence at night because I don’t have keys to the gate. My ballet practices usually ends between eight thirty to nine in the evening but whenever we have

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<sup>100</sup> Tay is a short cut for *Tatay*, which is the Filipino equivalent for *Papa* or *Daddy*.



shows, practices normally ends at twelve midnight or one in the morning. This is why the principal eventually confronted me as she was only allowing me access to the school facilities in secrecy. Hence, I gave up my dance scholarship.

### **I really cried in front of her as she gave me her permission**

I cannot really let go of the performing arts. Thus, I tried my best to convince the principal to allow me to once again join the foundation, but I failed in this pursuit. And so last summer (between March-April 2003), I went to the foundation to ask if they can accept me again. But they required me to present a written permit from the school, which I cannot produce since the principal wouldn't let me. And then, just last Saturday, with the school band already having an alternate bass drummer, I approached again the QCPADFI. Now, I secured a permit signed by both the guidance councilor and my teacher. The principal, still not signing it, talk to me and made it clear that she wouldn't want to hear of me hanging-out with friends and that I am to show notices of performances. I was teary eyed that time, I really cried in front of her as she gave me her permission.

Last year when I was still a QCPADFI scholar, I was able to teach whenever someone asks, like the handmaids in the church and they would give me two hundred pesos. I've learned how to teach dance. The only thing I cannot teach then is ballet. I can dance ballet but I cannot teach it yet. Now as I dream of becoming an international choreographer, I feel a mixture of joy and sadness. I am happy being back in the performing arts. It is as if everything is within me again. Although not everything; as thoughts of seeing my mother still haunts me at night. I haven't seen her for a long time. I was only little when I last saw her. Now I can't remember her face. I don't even have a picture of her. Every Sunday I go to church and pray that I'll be able to see my mother. Even just a picture of her will do. I confided this to the principal and my teacher. I told them I would like to see my mother and my sibling. I have a sibling who is a year and a half younger than me. The last time I heard about them they are already here in Manila. My teacher told me if I really want to see them, I should write to *Wish Ko Lang*<sup>101</sup>. But I cannot attend to it now, as I am very busy with my assignments. My priority is my

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<sup>101</sup> *Wish ko Lang* (My Wish) is a reality television show in the Philippines that seeks to grant the wishes of viewers who write them.

studies. This is very important especially in my case, because I am alone. I don't have anybody to care for me. The people who look after me are strangers. I would like to believe that I would still see my mother and my sibling. I am holding on to this, which is why I don't want to let go of the performing arts. This might lead to the fulfillment of my dreams and who knows, one day my mother might see me on the television and say, "I know him."

What I would really like to happen is to be reunited with my family. I don't care about my father. He has a family of his own. My mother and sibling are the ones dearest to me.



### **Rommel: Now My Life Has Changed**

*Rommel and his family live in Barangay Paligsahan, a community near Amoranto. The house is a small wooden studio-type structure with just enough space to accommodate a family of four. There we found Rommel taking an afternoon nap while his younger sister was watching an afternoon television show. I was ready to leave and reschedule the interview but his sister insisted on waking him up. As it turned out, Rommel was more than willing to accommodate me. And so we began our pagkukuwentuhan just outside the house, seated on the stools Rommel brought out. It was a bit humid inside the house and with the television on we might not hear each other clearly.*

*Seventeen-year-old Rommel is the elder of two siblings. He is currently on his third year in high school. Prior to his QCPADFI scholarship, Rommel's life revolved around his barkada (peer group). His mother used to complain about not finding him home hence when he got his dance scholarship through the QCPADFI she was just as happy as he was. Now Rommel's routine has drastically changed. He spends much of his day at school and heads straight home after class to eat a late lunch and take a nap. He wakes up at five in the afternoon and starts doing his share of household chores. After dinner Rommel helps his sister do her assignments before doing his own. And on Sundays he helps his mother do the laundry after hearing mass. Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, meant sacrificing an afternoon nap to give way to his dance trainings.*

*In reconstructing and retelling Rommel's story, I wove together his own account on his life from our various pagkukuwentuhan in their home and with the rest of the younger scholars who became part of the Hong Kong-Macau Performances, and his autobiography.*

“Kaya po ako sumali sa ballet ay para matulungan ko po ang mga magulang ko po sa kahirapan. . . . Naging maayos na po ang takbo ng buhay ko, hindi kagaya ng dati patambay-tambay, kung saan-saan napupunta. Hindi parang sinasagot-sagot ko na po yung magulang ko dahil po sa mga barkada ko, napapabayaan ko na po ang mga trabaho ko sa bahay pati ang pag-aaral ko.”<sup>102</sup>

(Balanes 2004)

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<sup>102</sup>“The reason I joined ballet was to help my parents out of poverty. Now my life is running much more smoothly, unlike before when all I did was hang out and wander around the village. Now I no longer talk back disrespectfully to my parents just to defend my peers, or neglect my household chores and my studies.” (Balanes 2004)



### **I am Rommel**

I am Rommel. I was born on March 23 at the East Avenue Medical Center. We live in Barangay Paligsahan. My father works in a car wash while my mother is now a plain housewife. She is a good mother. I have a sister. We are the only two siblings in the family.

When I was still a kid we lived in Kamuning.<sup>103</sup> Then I studied at Roxas Elementary School where I finished grade six. I studied first year high school at Roces but was transferred to Manuel Roxas High School when I reached second year. My only dream when I transferred there was to finish my studies because my parents told us education is the only treasure we could have in life that could help ensure that we won't end up like them.

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<sup>103</sup>Like Barangay Paligsahan, Kamuning is another barangay in Quezon City.



Whenever a community celebrates its feast day we dance.<sup>104</sup> We would go as far as Balara, Frisco/San Francisco del Monte, Barangay Obrero and Kamuning. One time while we were walking along Scout Tobias a community fraternity accosted and attacked us. I got a bullet through my back. My parents were both working then so it was Ate Georgia and Ate Mercy (neighbours) who brought me to the hospital while my sister fetched my mother from work. It was my mother's payday then so all of her salary went to my hospital bills. My father incurred a lot of debts from his boss. We had a really difficult time. Until now my father only earns a little, not even enough to cover our daily needs.

It took one and a half months before I was discharged from the hospital. We could not afford the medicines so we sought the help of social workers. And because our hospital bills were so big someone advised us to approach Mayor Sonny Belmonte and so we went to his office. He helped us pay the bills so finally I was discharged from the hospital.

A year after the operation a friend informed me about an audition. He said I might get picked. So I tried and I indeed succeeded. By God's mercy I got accepted; I am really thankful to God.

### **So I went and they taught us a certain dance**

When I was young I only danced during special occasions in our community until a neighbour informed me about an audition.<sup>105</sup> I immediately went there because I didn't have anything to do anyway. I was just spending my time hanging out in the neighbourhood. So I went and they<sup>106</sup> taught us a certain dance. There were about fifteen of us but only five were chosen. It was Sir Luther who informed us. He handed us a form and asked me to start the following day. My parents were pleasantly surprised when I told them about it. They believed it would keep me away from my peers and prevent me from just hanging out.

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<sup>104</sup>Rommel and his friends perform whenever a barangay celebrates its community feast. Until today, the Philippines still practices the tradition of celebrating a fiesta in honour of the particular community's patron saint, e.g., San Juan (St. John the Baptist) in San Juan Pasig City, or Our Lady of Peña Francia in Bicol.

<sup>105</sup>The QCPADFI's way of recruiting new scholars. The foundation holds auditions every four months or whenever there is a significant decrease in the number of scholars.

<sup>106</sup>The assistant instructors who facilitated the dance audition.

I used to feel ashamed of performing the way they do because I thought people would laugh at me. Now I've learned it's really quite easy. You just need to go onstage and you'll receive rounds of applause. I've learned to be friendly because of that and now spend most of my time with the other scholars even though I still don't know much about them. We chat a lot. They (the mentors) also taught us to stay away from vices and help our parents instead.

There are instances when Sir Luther reprimands us because of our mistakes. That's really how it is. Someone will always have to do that because it is they who guide us when we are dancing onstage so we won't commit mistakes and remember the dance.

### **When dancing you sometimes cannot avoid committing mistakes**

I used to be in level two but I got suspended and now I'm back at the beginner's level. We performed badly in a show in Intramuros and Sir Luther lost his temper and demoted all of us. We had a bad start then. We did not begin at the same time, there was no synchronicity in our claps and somebody tripped.

When you're dancing you sometimes cannot avoid committing mistakes but—and I don't mean to brag—the audience loved us nonetheless. We danced for two hours because our host asked us to extend our performance, because the foreigners loved it.

It took about two years before I got promoted. I just took part in performances until one time Sir Luther announced a change in levels. I did not go through level one. I got accelerated to level two.

As you move up the levels the training becomes more difficult. The practice is just the same as that for beginners except for the street dance.

I can no longer count the number of performances I became part of but it's the Hong Kong show I loved best. When Arjay and the others were called, I told them I don't think I'll be included in the show but then I was the last to be called. I was really happy. The first thing I did was strive harder to improve my dancing. I wanted to make sure I wouldn't commit mistakes because this time we would be performing abroad. Then I informed my parents about it. My mother was the first to know. She said, "You better do your best there because it is your first time to tour abroad. Do your best or you might get reprimanded or lose your scholarship." We were so happy and nervous at the same time, afraid to be criticized or censured.



### **I was happy to be going abroad**

I was happy to be going abroad and to board an airplane for the first time. Actually it was the experience of boarding a plane that I was so excited about. When we were in the air the airplane would suddenly drop down then move back up and sideways. I was afraid on our way back because there was lightning and just as we took off the rain poured and the plane suddenly dropped; I immediately made the sign of the cross.

At the hotel four of us shared one room. That night before sleeping Bides and Edward started punching each other on the bed just for fun. And when Bides was about to take a bath Edward instructed him to turn the shower knob to the left so it won't be too hot. And so Bides did as told. He turned the knob all the way to the left and got scalded. We slept together and upon waking up headed straight to our choreographer, who asked us if we had our breakfast.

I cannot forget when we went to what do you call that, the highest place? Peak? Victoria's Peak. We rode the train. It was frightening because we had to go upside down. It was so inclined it made our necks hurt. It was lovely there. We took pictures and went sightseeing.

And when we performed, when we danced "Sabihin Mo Ikaw Ay Filipino" was the time we realized how it feels to perform before fellow Filipinos abroad. That was the only time we felt the impact of the dance because we made the people stand. There was shouting, clapping and crying.<sup>107</sup> We couldn't seem to figure out how to react, whether to also cry or just keep on smiling.

I tried to bring something home for them (his family) from Hong Kong. I tried to buy something for them even when I no longer had money. It's not that I am thrifty it's just that I had already bought some things for myself like a cellular phone (mobile phone).

### **What I really want to do**

I want my family to be together because sometimes it's just my sister and I at home. The reason I joined ballet was so I could help my parents out of poverty. Now my

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<sup>107</sup>The show was organized by the Philippine Consulate in Hong Kong for the Overseas Filipino Workers there.

life is running much more smoothly, unlike before when all I did was hang out and wander around. Now I no longer talk back disrespectfully to my parents just to defend my peers, or neglect my household chores and my studies. The QCPADFI program has prevented me from going into illegal drugs like most young people nowadays.

I really want to be independent. To live far from my parents and not depend on them because they are old and can no longer support us. To have a decent job—any kind of job will do because it is hard to find work nowadays. Even working as a cashier at Jollibee will do, or maybe working at night and looking for a dance company.

When I was little I really dreamt of becoming a dancer. When I was accepted in the ballet program I learned many kinds of dances and really tried my best so I will be picked and take part in every show: in hotels, and we have many dance venues now.

What I really want to do is to perform abroad again. I would like to thank our sponsors and directors. I would like to thank Sir Luther, Sir Eddie and Sir Tony for bringing us to Hong Kong. It was because of them we were able to perform in Hong Kong. I would like to thank Ma'am Eya as well who guided us when we were there.

And how I love dancing! All of us<sup>108</sup> dream of reaching level five.

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<sup>108</sup>The QCPADFI scholars.



## **A Synthesis of the Scholars' Narratives**

To summarize, as the scholars talked about a life that revolves around the spaces of the home, school, and the performing arts; eight common themes arises which are the scholars': 1.) life before the performing arts, 2.) accounts of talent acquisition, 3.) structured daily activities, 4.) awareness of their family's situation, 5.) coping with personal and family issues, 6.) coping with and adjusting to the demands of the performing arts, 7.) institutional support, and 8.) realization of personal strengths. All of these speak of the scholars' resourcefulness and resiliency articulating thus their active engagement in defining their life and institutional contexts.

### **A. Life before the QCPADFI scholarship**

#### **1. The scholars' private milieus**

The scholars' narratives speak of children who are very much aware of their socio-economic condition. Regardless of age, the scholars were not protected from the hardships of life brought about by their family's poverty and relational problems. Such is the root of Rey's decision to leave home and sought shelter on the street, of the momentary decline in Dayan's academic performance and Jeffrealz everyday longing for love and attention.

In the narratives, one finds articulation of the deeply affected children who actively engaged themselves in comprehending and doing something about their private milieus. There one finds a child as young as seven (Karen) who understands and can explain why: 1.) both of her parents need to work, 2.) she sometimes has no choice on what she eat, or 3.) cannot visit a mall as often as she wants (Callado, 2004). Within the narratives are articulation of a common aspiration to get themselves, and their family out of their current state of poverty through securing a degree, a stable job, going out of the country, and doing well in their performing arts training.

#### **2. The scholars' multiple milieus**

Prior to the scholars' engagement in the performing arts, it maybe assumed that the scholars' life revolved around the home, school and peer group or recreation, except of course for Rey and Jonjon. While Jonjon speaks of being involved with his family's economic activity –that of buying and selling used bottles which became less frequent

due to his QCPADFI scholarship; Rey's was a life characterized by the constant struggle to survive on the street, adjust to temporary shelters and acquire formal education (Bides, 2004; and Galanze, 2004).

During the scholars' pre-QCPADFI days, it was their recreation and peer world that eat up most of their time. Kimberly, Merianne and Rommel's accounts reflect this where they mentioned having used to spend most of their time after school in the company of their barkada, or simply loitering within the neighborhood. So when these scholars finally made it to the dance audition, their parents were more than happy to see them off to Amoranto. Merianne articulated the former period in her life as being, "really a kid and acting like a kid" (Bartolome, 2004). Hence in her narrative maybe sensed a tone of longing for the usual experiences that comes with a particular age.

While male children may be observed as being more vulnerable in terms of vices and negative influences from peer group, this is not gender exclusive as maybe witnessed in Kimberly's experience with her barkada (Cabahug, 2004). The absence of parental care, a permanent home and support group may account for such vulnerability which although doesn't seem to adversely affect Jeffrealz, nonetheless finds articulation in Rey's narrative.

Whatever the scholars' personal context, within their narratives are articulations of resiliency, which enabled them to confront and survive in their personal milieu. Moreover, this very qualities allowed them to attend to yet another world –that of the QCPADFI.

### **3. The scholars' introduction into the QCPADFI**

Most of the scholars (Dayan, Karen, Kenthkenth, Kimberly, Melissa, Rey, and Rommel) mentioned in their narratives an innate fondness for dancing. This they get to develop and hone through watching and imitating the dancers they get to see on the television screens, developing their own dance and joining dance contests and school programs. However, two among the scholars realized their talent only through the QCPADFI. Of the former, Dayan and Kenthkenth even mentioned their parents' desire to enrol them in ballet schools, which unfortunately are beyond their economic capability (Arandela, 2004; and Uy, 2004). Most of those scholars who discovered their talent early on attributed it to heredity, where Dayan also mentioned her mother's fervent prayer for a daughter



endowed with skills in dancing and singing when she was still in the latter's womb (Dayan, 2004). These accounts show children as capable of: 1.) developing their own talents and skills independent of adult supervision, and 2.) explaining their acquisition of such talent.

The scholars' entrance to the QCPADFI was made possible either through the informal social networks of friends and neighbours or formal social networks such as the school and the teachers or principal therein. Where some scholars' had their audition in their own school, some went to Amoranto on their own or in the company of their mother or friends.

Most of the scholars, except for Dayan and Jeffrealz, passed their dance audition on first trial. However, with these two, one finds a decisive and persevering spirit among children who never gives up especially when they are certain of what they want. This attribute is evident in every scholar and finds articulation in their observance of a routine that fits all of their various activities in.

## **B. Life as a QCPADFI Scholar**

### **1. The scholars' daily routine**

With the scholars' entrance in the QCPADFI, another space and hence institutional requirements were added in their everyday life – that of the performing arts. This is evident in the scholars' routine which speaks of the need to attend to several social spaces and institutional requirements such as the school's curricular and extra-curricular activities, QCPADFI's dance scholarship requirements, domestic/household responsibilities and their own need for company and recreation. In the narratives one finds scholars whose day starts as early as five in the morning and ends late at night. This is especially true on days where they have dance trainings. During these days, scholars could be seen juggling several social roles and responsibilities as they alternately, at some point, simultaneously traverse several social spaces in a day. Public primary schools usually follow a half-day schedule where outstanding students (like Dayan) are more than encouraged (almost required) to attend special classes even on Saturdays (Arandela, 2004). Some public secondary schools in the Philippines follow alternate day attendance to accommodate the growing population of high school students. Because of this, some scholars like Jonjon and Kenthkenth have more time for rest and recreation (Bides, 2004; and Uy, 2004).

The scholars' activities are predefined for them by their institutional engagements however their daily routine and management thereof speaks of their agency. The degree to which scholars are independent of adult intervention in the development and management of their routine may well be observed as age influenced where the older the scholars become the lesser adult supervision or intervention could be seen. And while an amount of adult intervention maybe observed in this regard, it is evident that scholars' are aware of their own schedules and are capable of observing it.

In the absence of a supportive family, as in the case of Jeffrealz, or the family itself, in Rey's case, a greater degree of independence is witnessed in the development and observance of a routine. However, it requires greater responsibility and sacrifice. For Jeffrealz, whose family was against his dance scholarship, this meant finding ways to secretly attend the trainings and hide everything that has to do with it (Hernandez, 2004). Rey on the other hand, who currently found an alternative shelter within his school, was compromised to give up, for more or less a year, his dance scholarship to attend to his band engagement in school out of debt of gratitude (Galanze, 2004).

## **2. Institutional adjustments and the scholars' coping mechanism**

The narratives speak of a number of scholars who experienced stress which stems from the need to comply with too many institutional requirements. This is most evident in Dayan's narrative, where even his parents got themselves involved in the formers' school home works (Arandela, 2004).

Most scholars experienced a decline in their academic performance at a certain point in their QCPADFI scholarship. However, Dayan's case is different. In her, the experience coincided with that point where her family was facing a crisis due to her parents' relational problem. However, she managed to regain academic excellence after the crisis and was able to maintain it even after almost two years of QCPADFI scholarship (Arandela, 2004).

The scholars' experience of stress is often brought about by their need for balance in their various activities --their many institutional engagements. While it may appear as just a matter of time-management, some of the scholars' like Dayan, seemed to have far too many in their hands. In spite of this, they are still able to handle it through a well-structured-daily and even weekly (alternate week activity attendance) routine. More often



the difficulty of developing and observing routines happen in scholars whose school schedules fall within training days.

While there are scholars, whose dance training falls outside of their school schedules, a majority have classes on the same day. Most of those in the former are scholars in their secondary education, while the latter are mostly primary school students. Higher-level scholars usually belong to the former. While they experience less stress in terms of time management, especially those having alternate-day class schedules their dance training is more rigorous especially when they have dance performances.

The adjustment scholars' has to make is not only internal to them, as maybe witnessed in the narratives. Most of the scholars received institutional support that extends from their family to that of their school. In the home, except of course for Jeffrealz and Rey, the adjustment affected domestic routine and responsibilities which, for some unavoidably affected as well the family's economic activities. Whereas Dayan's mother has to either close their convenient store or entrusts it to the care of a very young son, just so she could bring Dayan to Amoranto herself; for Jonjon, this meant limiting his engagement in the family's economic activity (Arandela, 2004; and Bides, 2004).

Most of the adjustments the family has to make are age and location influenced. The nearer a scholar's house is to Amoranto and the older s/he is the lesser the adjustments will be in the home and hence, the family's economic activities.

While the scholars' dance training has adverse effect on the domestic economy, it nonetheless has positive impact along this line. With the transportation allowance scholars' get at the end of the training, the family's expenditure become less where a number of them use it as the next day's school allowance. For some, the transportation allowance as well as the honoraria they (especially higher-level scholars) received through their dance performances goes either to the family's everyday needs or their small-enterprise's rolling capital.

When it comes to the scholars' academic institutions, they receive support that ranges from early dismissal to give way to the particular scholar's dance training, additional grades in subject such as physical education and leadership there in, and excused absences on the occasion of a dance performance whether in-country or abroad. The older the scholar the more independent they are in seeking the support of their teachers and school.

### **3. The organization of the scholars' everyday life in QCPADFI**

Within Amoranto the scholars' observe a routine that involved compliance to the QCPADFI defined routine and responding to their individual needs. The narratives speak of a compromised routine that indicates varying degree of independence. The routine may well be divided into those which have to do with the dance training and those which are entirely outside of it. The former starts upon the arrival of the teaching assistants and mentors and ends with the distribution of the transportation allowance, while the latter are those moments in between trainings. The narratives, articulate the former as adult spaces and activities which, in Karen's account seemed to be filled with tensions.

Regardless of age, the narratives illustrate a common understanding among the scholars of the spatial and temporal boundaries within QCPADFI. However strict and structured the majority of spaces within Amoranto, this did not deprive the scholars of recreation neither did it prohibit them from establishing relationships among themselves. In the scholars' account, one finds their ability to discern proper time for play and spending time with friends. This for the very young scholars like Karen meant the instances before the start of the dance training or while waiting for the distribution of the transportation allowance (Callado, 2004).

Age and dance-level specific activities and informal groupings outside of the training schedules find articulation in the narratives. While younger and lower level scholars play among themselves in between dance trainings, as illustrated in Karen's account, the older and higher-level scholars finds company among themselves. With regards to the latter, conflicts among higher level scholars exists as articulated in Merianne and Melissa's narratives. This they attributed to pride, jealousy and envy.

### **4. The scholars' aspiration and realization of personal strength**

Most of the scholars, regardless of age and gender, mentioned in their narratives certain realizations they had about their dance training and life in general. Most of these revolve around the recognition of their personal strength and of knowing what one really wants as the key in reaching one's dreams. Jeffrealz credited this to the difficulties he experienced in striving to reach his dream by pursuing his dance training and education amidst the absence of his family's support (Hernandez, 2004). This finds further articulation in



Dayan and Merianne who both believed that a difficult task becomes bearable when one does what one loves to do, a reiteration of Jonjon's realization upon re-admission to the QCPADFI's scholarship program (Arandela, 2004; Bartolome, 2004; and Bides, 2004). To Rey, having a dream itself can transform an aspiration into a reality (Galanze, 2004).

Almost all of the scholars mentioned in their narratives an aspiration to be like their mentors. Aside from wanting to be an acclaimed ballet dancer, a dance instructor, an international choreographer, or teaching ballet for free to less fortunate children, most of them wish to finish university education with the following as their mentioned future jobs: doctor, nurse, care-giver, hotel/restaurant manager, and a businessman.

Born and raised in poverty, it is not surprising to find within the narratives an aspiration to rise above their state. This finds clear cut articulation in Dayan who dreams of acquiring a lot for their house and rising from poverty (Dayan, 2004). However, like Dayan, the scholars do not wish to rise from poverty alone. It is but common to find within their narratives an aspiration to include their family in this experience. Hence, it is not surprising that in Rey's narratives his outstanding dream is to be re-united with his mother and sibling where he saw a venue to its fulfillment in his dance engagement (Galanze, 2004).

The narratives, illustrate how scholar's everyday life consists in traversing several social spaces. This required them to comply with the spaces' structured reality. However, the scholars in doing so were never passive but were in fact actively engaged in every process.

### **PART III ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION: CHILDHOOD AND CHILDREN SPACES**

For about two decades, studies on children have witnessed images of childhood that are drastically different from those understood hence back. The move to focus on children as worthy of study on their own right has come to see childhood as complex and dynamic and where definitions of what children are is no longer confined to descriptions of their physiological and biological make-up nor the processes they go through as they move along the developmental stages. These studies have come to: 1.) realize children's agency, 2.) see childhood as a permanent feature of society that is also "structured", and 3.) recognize the different childhood contexts and therefore –the varieties of childhoods.

James and Prout have put a number of these works together in their book *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood* (1990 and 1997) where they examined and brought to light the paradigm shift in these studies, defined and articulated it to what is now known as the Sociology of Childhood –also known as the New Social Studies of Childhood. What came to be their work's primary contribution is the emergent paradigm that sees childhood as a social construction, where children and childhood should be taken as worthy subjects separate from adults, and the approach that could best emphasize their voices.

Having taken the path laid down by James and Prout, what I am about to do now in this section is see how far my research was able to perform what, in the first place, it defined to account –the QCPADFI childhood, and in the process identify how it can contribute to the Sociology of Childhood. The first part will thus focus on the local production of QCPADFI childhood through journeying back to the multidimensional data and revisiting the narratives, while the second part examines how the particular approach I used, facilitated such an accounting.

In dealing with the former I will look at the scholars' immediate milieu and examine how childhood is produced in this context. This will be followed by an exploration of their everyday life by rummaging through the various activities and social spaces that occupy them, and probe into the manner by which they engage with all these. I will then proceed to the QCPADFI and see how an additional social space, like the performing arts, has affected them and their everyday life, and draw from there further images of childhood.



The second part of this section will serve as an evaluation of the research process of how the approach and the methodology facilitated this venture, and the contribution this research offers.

### **A. Childhood in Motion: the Local Production of QCPADFI Childhood**

Examining the verbal and visual narratives, one is presented with the structured everyday life and spaces of the QCPADFI scholars that is not without their engagement. The narratives are thick with descriptions of children's active participation in their life world providing (thus) accounts on how, in this particular case, childhood is co-constructed by urban poor children within the performing arts.

Accounts in both the scholars' individual and collectively shared worlds present the production of everyday life as traversals of several spaces that require compliance to each of the space's social structure. Whether they traverse several spaces in a day or perform several roles and activities in a single social space, the scholars are seen negotiating within and without. These negotiations are apparent in the way they try to fit within their schedule, a variety of activities and engage in several institutions. Every scholar is faced with balancing the need to attend to his/her curricular and extracurricular activities, the performing arts' demands, his/her domestic responsibilities, and desire for recreation as s/he crosses the spaces of home, school and QCPADFI. Thus, in every story, one finds a scholar juggling several roles and responsibilities as s/he alternately, and at some point, simultaneously traverses several social spaces in a day. While in this process, instances of scholars creating spaces for recreation and other activities within a structured space also occur, hence, the emergence of other spaces. This is accounted by the scholars themselves and established by both verbal and visual data, with the latter having captured the marginal spaces as they occur, or more appropriately, in the instance of its creation.

#### **1. Childhood in its Most Immediate Milieus: The Scholars' Awareness and Understanding of Themselves and Their Family's Condition**

The home and their family are the children's most immediate environment. While there is a natural tendency to protect children from the harsh realities of life, they are unaware of their family's condition especially when tensions are building up within the home. In fact, most of them know of their parents' marital problems.

The children in this study are capable of understanding the complex situation of their family and are very much affected by them. They are sensitive of the things around them and are able to discern and act according to deemed appropriate behaviors as illustrated by the accounts below:



“...When I reached grade two, I was no longer part of the “honour roll” because we had a family problem. I must admit I was deeply affected by our parents’ frequent fights. I was always crying, and praying for them to stop quarrelling. We no longer had peace at home. I even thought it would result to their separation, especially when they started asking us to choose between them. I want them, both. I don’t want them to be separated. I’m really thankful that their relationship slowly regained its vigour. The only difference is that now we are rather hard up financially whereas before we still managed to eat out and visit playgrounds.” (Arandela 2004)

“I was still young when my mother went abroad to work. My father remarried so someone would stand as a mother for us. ... And you know, I am annoyed with my stepmother because I still want to be with my mother. ... I wonder why my mama doesn’t come home to us but you know I still haven’t lost hope that she will come back. You know if only I had a cell phone then I could contact her. I heard she still calls my papa. Do you know how lonely I am without my mama and papa with me?” (Hernandez 2004)

“My parents would often quarrel over my mother’s jealousy, which eventually lead them to end their marriage. When my mother left, I was left in the care of my father. He was a drunkard and he often beats me. Then my father decided to go to Manila leaving me to the care of my grandparents. When my grandfather died, I was left with only my grandmother to look after me until my auntie decided to bring me to Manila.... There she brought me to my father whom I did not recognize immediately as he became so thin due to his vices. ...It was then that I discovered he has another family... Whenever my father is away, my stepmother beats me. This made me decide to run away from home and sought shelter on the streets.” (Galanze 2004)

The scholars are aware of their parent’s marital problems and of other issues, as well. Regardless of age, the children in this study know of their family’s poverty. For younger scholars, this provided explanations on why they cannot have some things and are thus reluctant to demand more than what their family can provide. Elder scholars on the other hand, do their share in helping their family, either helping in some domestic chores or getting involved with the family’s economic activity, which they especially did prior to their scholarship.

“It was only recently that my Papa got a job. He was jobless for almost two years. We were thankful for the little earnings we got from Mama’s convenient store. Maybe we’re still short of funds, which must be why our parents seldom bring us anywhere now. As Mama always says, we better use the money for food instead.” (Arandela 2004)

"We are just a poor family. My parents' work involves buying and selling empty bottles, which I also get to experience. Everyday we wake up early in the morning, around six or seven with our push cart and we go around the neighborhood. We go to places where we could buy used or empty bottles. We work really hard yet what we earn is not even enough for us and for my father's medicine. ...In the afternoon I wash the dishes. I wash the plates and sometimes keep watch over those who fetch water from us." (Bides 2004)

"Mama used to sew. Now she sews doctor's caps (nurse's caps). We use the money they pay her, to buy food. The reason Papa works is so we can have good food. But sometimes we don't have money so I just eat *chicharon* (crispy pork rind) with rice. Sometimes they bring me to SM, but that's very seldom; we've been there only about five times. ... Papa doesn't work on Wednesdays so he and Mama sometimes bring me to SM. Sometimes I see something there I want to buy but then I don't have money—I just have very little." (Callado 2004)

"My father incurred a lot of debts from his boss. We had a really difficult time. Until now my father only earns a little, not even enough to cover our daily needs." (Balanes 2004)

The scholars' experience of poverty constrains and at times, discourages them from engaging in future relationships as articulated in the account below:

"I feel like I want to remain single because life is difficult these days. It is difficult to find work" (Cabahug 2004)

Frailty is often equated to being children and with the scholars also being poor, the expectations of vulnerability finds contradiction in the strength of character, most evident among children in this study. The accounts below exemplify the recourse children make when both poverty and family problem exists and where family assistance becomes unreliable.

"My priority is my studies. This is very important especially in my case, because I am alone. I don't have anybody to care for me. The people who look after me are strangers." (Galanze 2004)

"You know, despite everything I still have my friends who see me through. Even in my sadness they are there to make me happy. And do you know when I enrolled in MRHS it was the assistant principal who paid for my tuition fee and bought me my English textbook?" (Hernandez 2004)



While Rey survived a life on the streets and managed to pursue primary education through his personal strength and the generosity of strangers, Jeffrealz managed to finish elementary school with distinction through the help of some of his friends and teachers. These does not only show resiliency<sup>109</sup> and the scholars' ability to focus and set priorities, but illustrate as well, the dynamics of social networks which children in this study also have and which they can access, whenever the need arise as further illustrated below.

"When I went to the streets, I stopped schooling but went on with the QCPADFI. I knew someone from Kamuning and Makabayan. I washed my clothes there, in my friends' house, which I collect in the afternoon. I stayed in a vacant lot in Morato, that new building there. There used to be a vacant lot there. That's where I used to sleep. And for food, I knew the person who collects garbage from McDonald's, that's where I get some food. I saved the left over chickens. Some were still whole while the others were really left over. These, I eat. But when there's ballet lesson like during Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, I eat in Amoranto. I asked for extra bread until I got myself adopted again, this time by a fellow scholar's sister, Ate Rosabella." (Galanze 2004)

Such accounts are clear articulation of children's agency where the strong desire to achieve is found among children whose very condition of vulnerability became the driving force to succeed as the account below indicates.

"*Hay naku!* It's difficult to be a squatter. Mama said we don't own the lot our house is built on. ...Finally what Mama always dreaded came—the day our house got demolished. It was not really the whole house that was demolished, just the front. But that's where Mama's store was, her source of income. I really took pity on Mama, then. She didn't know what to do first. She had so many things to worry about like where she could fit all our stuff from the store, how to put the store back and where. She didn't even have the time to attend to our needs. Our house was demolished without prior notice. My parents were taken off-guard and didn't know what to do with our stuff; as a result my youngest brother wasn't able to go to school that day. This made me dream of becoming a popular dancer someday. I must finish my studies so I could get a good job. My dreams are quite simple. I just want to have our own lot on which to build our house. This way Mama won't be afraid anymore of sudden demolitions. Of course, I also dream of rising from poverty and helping my parents and my siblings." (Arandela 2004)

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<sup>109</sup> Resiliency as defined in most literature refers to individual traits, conditions or characteristics that have been activated by life events. Literatures on resiliency identified the centrality of human agency, or the will to be and do something (Protacio-de Castro et al 2002: 47-53).

"I don't know why I am like this. If I were rich I could do whatever I want but even though I am poor I promise to fulfill my dreams because that is the only way I could progress. I will show everybody that in spite of my unfortunate state I can succeed!" (Hernandez 2004)

Clearly, life's adversities did not just facilitate the exhibition of resiliency among the scholars but the capacity to learn from them and recognize, that which differentiates them with other children, as well as the similarities shared with some of them.

"What differentiates me from other poor children is the fact that I can take care of myself. Other children are neglected by their parents because they don't have money. No one feeds them so they are obliged to vend on the streets. Like me, they also need to be strong. They also go to school hungry, with an empty stomach." (Hernandez 2004)

"I see children in SM. Sometimes they want to eat at Jollibee, asking a stranger for French fries. I asked Mama why that was so; I somehow pitied them. "Mama (looking at her mother), isn't it that while walking on the street I sometimes see a blind beggar?" I want to give people like that, money. The reason why the person begs is because he doesn't have money to have his eyes cured. They are poor, I am also poor but in their case they don't have food to eat. It is only when they have money that they could buy food but what if they don't have money? Does that mean they won't eat?" (Callado 2004)

In addition, this has also taught them to acknowledge and appreciate their personal strength as the account below shows.

"I wonder why children do not prioritise their studies. Some do not study, at all, although their parents are doing their best to encourage them. Their parents have a hard time sending them to school. ...You know I started growing stronger emotionally when I passed my first year in high school because of the hardships and joys I had experienced." (Hernandez 2004)

## **2. Traversing the Structured Everyday Life: QCPADFI Childhood in Transitions**

The scholars' everyday life speaks of a routine that requires traversing the spaces of the home, school and the QCPADFI. As the scholars enter each of these spaces they become its co-creator, sometimes even managing to create their own space in the process.

While their everyday life appears to be dominated by adults and the social institutions that define activities for them, the scholars manage their own time by developing and following a routine appropriate for their needs. Everyday routine for most



scholars starts between five and six in the morning, when they have to get off from bed to prepare for school. Morning rituals such as taking a shower, changing into school uniforms, and eating breakfast (except Jeffrealz) are managed in different sequences according to a particular scholar's developed routine. After this, scholars are either accompanied by elders or they go to school on their own.

"Every Monday I must wake up at five in the morning. Actually Papa has a difficult time waking me up because it is so nice to sleep. Breakfast would be ready by then so I'll eat first, take a bath, change into my school uniform and head straight to school." (Arandela 2004)

"Whenever I wake up at five in the morning and breakfast is not yet cooked, I take a bath first and have breakfast, after. Then I go upstairs to change clothes and go to school." (Callado 2004)

However, the routine is different with scholars in secondary schools that use an alternate day attendance. In their case, one finds scholars who have more time for rest and recreation.

"On days when I don't have classes, I wake up at ten or eleven in the morning. I'll have breakfast first then watch television. If I cannot find anything interesting to watch I will go out and play with the other kids in my neighbourhood. ... By twelve I'll have lunch, take a bath, change into my tights and leotard and go to Amoranto. After the training, as soon I reach home, I'll just have dinner and sleep." (Uy 2004)

Whereas institutions such as the scholars' family, school and the QCPADFI have defined schedules and activities for them, the scholars' agency is witnessed in their established routine, which speaks of the way they perform, manage and/or deal with these activities. Dayan and Melissa's narratives highlight this fact as they gave detailed accounts of their weekly schedules:

"On Mondays I have classes from six in the morning to twelve noon. I have a Kumon Math session from one to two in the afternoon then I go home. On Tuesdays, I go home right after school to eat lunch then I change into my ballet outfit and we head to Amoranto. It's really tiring. I want to do other things but it's difficult because of my tight schedule. As I mentioned, I often fall asleep while traveling back from Amoranto yet I still need to do my school assignments. I can't risk being reprimanded by my teacher if I fail to do them. ... On Wednesdays my classes are from six to twelve as well. Thursdays I again have dance trainings in Amoranto. Fridays, I have Kumon Math hence I have to hurry again. Saturdays, I have majorette practice from eight to ten in the morning and from two to five in the afternoon I attend Evolve." (Arandela 2004)

"Every Monday I need to be in school from 6:45 in the morning. From Tuesdays to Fridays my classes are from 7 to 2:45 in the afternoon. The moment I wake up, I eat first and head to school. Upon coming back from school, I fix my things and do the laundry. Before sleeping I would prepare the clothes I will wear the next day. We stay at the market the whole week. On Tuesdays I go to our space first in the market to get my tights and leotard before going to my dance rehearsal. The same routine goes for me at night. On Sundays I just watch the television and do the laundry. Then I will prepare the things that I would need like the clothes I will wear from Monday to Saturday because we have to leave for the market by five in the morning. Once in the market I will just get my allowance and go to school." (Hervas 2004)

The scholars' routine and the very act of compliance to institutional expectations are evidences of negotiations. It is quite usual to notice tensions within a scholar's narrative especially where the accounting focuses on negotiating with authorities, managing an overwhelming schedules and performing the required activities. Such sentiments are apparent in the scholars' voice whenever they tell their stories or write in their journals.

"It was really difficult for me because once I reached home I needed to hurry, change into my ballet uniform and fix my hair. I really needed Mama's help because I still didn't know how to fix my hair. I also had to eat fast so we could beat the rush hour. We really had to hurry all the time. I needed to reach Amoranto by seven. If I'm late I won't be allowed in and we would have to go home. This had already happened several times. ... I was always really, really sleepy. I often fell asleep inside the jeepney. Sometimes we would miss our stop because Mama had also fallen asleep, and we had to go back again. And then on top of all this I still had to do my school assignments. Those I failed to finish, Mama and Papa did them for me. For now I have to study hard so my parents won't ask me to stop dancing. It's difficult but this is what I love to do." (Arandela 2004)

"Whenever we have exams what I do is review in school, in between classes or during breaks. We seldom have home works, which if ever we have, I also do during class breaks." (Bides 2004)

"Whenever we are reading and Mrs. Mallari looks at me, I listen. Sometimes when we are asked to read aloud one by one I become afraid of her and when she comes near me I will start reading, at once. Then Ashley would say, 'Let me read first,' and he will make me sit, but if Teacher sees him, she just lets him be." (Callado 2004)

"During break time I chat with some of my schoolmates who go to my classroom. And if we still have home works we failed to do, we finish it before the next teacher comes." (Hervas 2004)



Focusing therefore on an instance of compliance or analyzing routines, provide accounts of a negotiated reality. Such negotiation occurs where scholars try to perform the required activities of the various spaces they traverse and fitting them where there is room for accommodation. The negotiations involve not just the act of fitting in activities, or working one's way within structured spaces, but the discernment of other characters' action and wishes and responding according to an understood accepted behavior.

"Sometimes we play at school. Karen Icalim and I often accidentally unfasten our clothes while playing. Eh one time teacher saw us. She asked us to stand in front. We were still in row four then and so teacher said: 'You two, come here!' All of a sudden we were like the undressed Christ. We paraded until we reached row one and back to our row again. She (the teacher) was not teaching, she was just sitting then." (Callado 2004)

Children's innocence and playfulness are evident both in the presence or absence of a supervising adult. Instances of such may be witnessed during short breaks or whenever a scholar perceives a lull in class (and in their dance training) that often gets transformed into spaces for play. This clearly show instances of the "child's evaluation of a situation" where actions elicited are products of a discerned act. Symbolic interactionism articulates this further as a child's interpretation of a situation. Where a child understood the teacher's act – *she was not teaching, she was just sitting* – as falling outside of the defined classroom-teaching situation --there is no class going on, it is therefore alright for students to play. Phenomenology articulates this as "common-sense-knowledge" where children, in this case Karen and her classmate, entered into a negotiated reality, evaluated the particular situation according to an internalized social order (of what is required and allowable) with what they need or want to do, thereby eliciting a compromised act –playing inside the classroom. Accounts such as these clearly illustrate negotiated realities that involved the discernment of the space's social order and of other people's reality. While spaces and time are structured by institutions with adult reinforcements, children discern situations and acts accordingly, producing thus a compromised and hence --reconstructed reality.

### **3. Childhood in QCPADFI: the Costs and Benefits of a QCPADFI Scholarship for Children**

For most scholars, learning ballet was once a major source of frustration until they discovered the dance scholarships the QCPADFI provides.

“...As early as then my parents already wanted to enroll me in ballet but we didn’t have enough money for that.” (Arandela 2004)

“I really wanted to enrol her in ballet when she was very young. I used to go to SM just to watch children while having their ballet lessons. I really dream of having a ballerina daughter and was too happy that she (Kenthkenth) got accepted.” --A scholar’s mother (Uy 2004)

The scholars’ knowledge of the foundation came through announcements in their school and the informal networks of friends and neighbours. The scholarship is a status earned which requires qualifying in the auditions. It is worth noting that for most scholars, the decision to join the audition was based on a personal desire of becoming a ballet dancer. Auditions then should be seen as instances of children’s agency where the desire to succeed outweighs the fear and anxieties that goes with it. This is best articulated in the narratives of scholars who although failed, persevered to succeed and those who upon succeeding are yet confronted with another challenge –that of maintaining the scholarship especially when their own family are against it.

“...They say I am a good dancer; maybe that’s why the principal summoned me and asked me to join the audition at Amoranto. Mama accompanied me but I was overpowered by shyness so I did not qualify. I just stood there and couldn’t dance. Mama was terribly angry with me. ...After a few months, I learned about another audition and I gathered my courage to dance. Mama was hesitant then to accompany me thinking I would refuse to dance again. But when she saw that this time I was really set on joining the ballet program she finally agreed to come with me. Finally Sir Luther noticed me and I got picked.” (Arandela 2004)

"I don't know what will happen tomorrow. I hope my aunt and grandmother will come to my defence. I wish they would still allow me to do ballet. I wish they wouldn't see my ballet uniform and burn it. You know I have to start praying now because my papa might beat me tomorrow. I wonder what will happen tomorrow. ...I must continue with my ballet so I can hone my dancing skills. Even when many are against it, I have to continue with it so I can reach my dream. I wish my father would realize how important ballet is for me. " (Hernandez 2004)



### *The Cost of a QCPADFI Scholarship*

A QCPADFI scholarship involved tremendous adjustments from the scholars that urge them to construct ways by which to cope with its demands. This required for most scholars to negotiate with their other institutional engagement like that of their school and family, as well as with their own needs and desires. The latter is articulated in the children's narratives about their life prior to their QCPADFI scholarship where it was described as a period lived as a kid.

"Before I became a performing arts scholar, I was really a kid and acted like a kid. ... I used to roam around the neighbourhood. I often got spanked because I always "hang-out"." (Bartolome 2004)

"I used to always stay out in the street with my *barkada* prior to my engagement in ballet. We just bum around and play." (Cabahug 2004)

The children's description of their life before their scholarship is dominated by carefree moments spent with fellow children or adolescents. During this period, the scholars' life revolved around the spaces of the home, school and the neighbourhood. The younger scholars( ) used to spend most of their time then, playing with fellow kids in the neighbourhood, while the adolescent scholars used to hang-around their peer group. In those days parents complain about their children's hygiene, and found it difficult to discipline and make them stay at home. Hence, when the children received the scholarship, most parents welcomed it as it provided the former with other ways of spending time away from their peer-group and the latter a partner in instilling discipline to their children.

However, the scholars' engagement in the performing arts meant lesser time spent for recreation. This admittedly, made some scholars' feel deprived of the experiences they themselves consider normal for a particular stage as maybe gathered in Marianne's narratives. Her early entrance to the QCPADFI as well as her long-standing scholarship provides insights into the opportunities and sacrifices that come with a dance scholarship.

"...On my first year in high school, I did not experience going out on gimmicks. My parents do not allow us, but if it was school parties then they allowed us to attend. But gimmick with friends –no, which is why my *barkada* would often say, 'don't bother to ask Meanne, she won't come.' ...All of their experiences are from the Internet, right? Well for me I also have Internet experiences. I once got addicted with the Internet. I was there almost every hour. That's what they share with me, but there are still

things, which they can do that I cannot. There's really a big difference. Like when they have gimmick, I cannot drink because I have ballet classes. I cannot have gimmicks, my parents will get angry. While most kids can go home anytime they like, we (Merianne refers to elder brother Gian) can't. They can do a lot of things, which I cannot." (Bartolome 2004)

More than the age related experiences, the scholars' entrance into the performing arts meant stricter time management as it adds another space to be traversed. This finds details in Dayan's account on her family's struggle with keeping her regular attendance in the QCPADFI.

Further, within Dayan's story, are instances of institutional adjustments where the family and even the school had to adjust to a scholar's engagement in the performing arts. Within the family this entails redistribution of responsibilities and role adjustments, which in school often meant early dismissals for the scholars during training days or excused absences whenever they have dance performances.

"I was having difficulties at first because Amoranto is far from our house. ...It really requires sacrifice. For instance, our convenient store has been quite neglected lately. Mama has to attend to so many things. Sometimes she couldn't find anyone with whom to entrust our store or who would take care of my siblings who are younger than me. Sometimes *kuya* takes charge of the store but he neglects it primarily because he is still young, but mama doesn't have a choice. ...There are times when *kuya* accompanies me to Amoranto. This makes my parents worry because we often come home late. Sometimes they would entrust me to Kuya Paul who lets me tag along on his way home. ...It got even harder when I was in grade three. My classes were scheduled from twelve to six in the afternoon so Mama requested my teacher to allow me to go home early during Tuesdays and Thursdays. She obliged, so we went to Amoranto on these days where I attended ballet practice from seven to nine in the evening. On Saturdays I attended ballet training and Evolve." (Arandela 2004)

"When I first came in, the training schedule was daily. I have to be in Amoranto by three in the afternoon. Being a grade three student, my classes then were held in the afternoon so what I did was, I asked my teacher to excuse me from my other subjects so that I can attend my dance training on time. In spite of this, I did not take my classes for granted. I was even surprised to have received high marks." (Bartolome 2004)

"The next thing I did (after hearing about being chosen for an international performance) was ask permission from my teachers (to be excused from class) who allowed me and even asked for *pasalubong*." (Cabahug 2004)



However, there are instances when scholars are not allowed this privilege as shown below.

"It was only now in high school when some of my teachers were against it. They said it excuses me from attending classes hence I've been missing many quizzes. They were asking me to choose between my studies and ballet. My parents objected. They said I don't have to give up any of them because ballet gives me the opportunity to travel and it is keeping me away from my *barkada*. My parents do not find anything wrong with it. Actually, it is even them who would remind me to attend my training whenever I feel lazy." (Cabahug 2004)

"I cannot really let go of the performing arts. Thus, I tried my best to convince the principal to allow me to once again join the foundation, but I failed in this pursuit. And so last summer (between March-April 2003), I went to the foundation to ask if they can accept me again. But they required me to present a written permit from the school, which I cannot produce since the principal wouldn't let me." (Galanze 2004)

Where Kimberly finds an ally in her parents, Rey did not stop from convincing the principal until he was finally allowed to continue with his dance training in October 2004. Cases such as these seem to illustrate the scholars' vulnerable status in contrast to the adults, and the institutions that define the social order for them. However, these are (as well) instances, which show children who don't just submit to adult or institution imposed order but work their way through institutionally accepted means.

#### *Counting the Benefits More than the Costs*

More than the costs of a QCPADFI scholarship, the scholars are aware of the opportunities it (this) has opened up for them. In the scholars' narratives are articulations of the opportunities provided by the performing arts, through the QCPADFI. Aside from the opportunity to travel, locally and internationally and the experience that goes with it, the children's entrance to the performing arts through a QCPADFI scholarship provided them with a variety of experiences.

At the personal level, QCPADFI facilitated the development of a scholar's personality and character through its strict imposition of discipline. While there are scholars who did not manage to last in the program for the same reason, those who stayed attested to an improved character. They even acknowledge the necessity for such styles of

training in that they believe it will do them good. In addition, the dance training itself has developed in the scholars' more refined gestures and postures improving thus their personality. And with the dance exposures scholars get to experience, they become more confident performers and hence, confident children.

"I acquired discipline and from then on seldom do I play with our neighbor's children. There are times when I envied them, as I can no longer do what a normal kid does. But I don't regret my decision because when I came in, I really like what I was doing." (Bartolome 2004)

"I used to walk like a hunchback until I joined the QCPADFI and developed a straight posture. I also became more self-confident and assertive." (Cabahug 2004)

The QCPADFI's impact on the scholars is not just manifested in their character or personality. The narratives show indicators of the scholars' changing economic status within and outside their family. Through the transportation allowance and honoraria scholars received from QCPADFI, they became less economically dependent on their family. Whereas before, scholars depend upon the family for their school allowance, with their scholarship's transportation allowance, the former has been undertaken. Scholars manage to save their transportation allowance for school use, by walking their way to Amoranto. There are also cases where scholars give the transportation allowance to their mother as their way of contributing to the family's finances making them contributor to the family's income. In addition, some scholars also mentioned giving the honorarium they receive from international shows to their parents while leaving something for their personal needs. This improved the scholars' purchasing power where they gain access to goods and services not usually within their reach (e.g. owning a cellular/mobile phone).

"I tried to bring something home for them (his family) from Hong Kong. I tried to buy something for them even when I no longer had money. It's not that I am thrifty it's just that I had already bought some things for myself like a cellular phone (mobile phone)." (Balanes 2004)

"Then there's the money we get out of it. This helped a lot in our daily needs." (Bartolome 2004)

"With regard to my parents, I give them the honoraria I receive from my shows. Papa has no work so we rely on the sales of our retail store. In reality, what I usually earn through dancing goes straight to our store because that is where we get our daily needs. Then the thirty pesos



transportation allowance provided by QCPADFI becomes my school allowance so the foundation is really a big help.” (Cabahug 2004)

Other experiences that come with an international performance is the scholar’s recognized advantage over children of same background, an example of which are the exposures to different culture, places and people, and the opportunity to represent one’s country that bring pride and joy.

“...I will never forget about my first International show that was in 2000 and was held in Japan, in Chiba. It was the first time I’ve been to another country. I was a level four scholar, then. The experience was new to me. I got rattled during the show but was happy because we performed the different dances in the Philippines. Through us and by our talents, we were able to show what the Filipinos are capable of. It was just a day show and the rest was spent on tour. The tour felt good, it was like being on vacation.” (Bartolome 2004)

“While performing somebody shouted, ‘*Pinoy yan! Mabuhay ang Pinoy!*’ I will never forget that. Other nationalities were amazed with us. They said we are great dancers. We were the youngest performers. We can never forget as well our performance in Hongkong. This is because those who watched us are *malalaking tao*. The *Pinoy*s can’t help but cry. They are crying. *Pinoy*s usually go abroad to work. Isn’t it the *Pinoy*s there are working? And seldom see our native dances, *Pinoy* dances. So they can’t help but cry. We were proud because we managed to remind them not to forget where they came from. ...On our part, we are proud. We are proud because we received applauses and standing ovation. We were admired. ...It’s different when you perform abroad because there you can say, ‘look at me! I am a Filipino. Witness how lovely our indigenous dances are. They are totally different from yours’.” (Cabahug 2004)

“...I cannot forget about our last dance, “Sabihin Mo.” The Filipinos could not help but shed tears especially when the Philippine flag was raised while we were all wearing costumes depicting the OFWs’ jobs abroad.” (Uy 2004)

While the QCPADFI served as venue through which scholars experienced the fulfillment of their dreams, some scholars were inspired to dream more, and still another saw in QCPADFI possible avenues to meet their dream. For a number of scholars and their parents, who used to just dream of sending their daughters to a ballet school, QCPADFI was a dream come true. However, some scholars found inspiration in their mentors and aspire as well to become choreographers, recognized ballet dancers and dance instructors. One of the respondent (Merianne, and still some who were not covered

by the individual narratives) even wishes to teach disadvantage children like her, for free. While Rey, who was among the choreographer aspirant, sees in the performing arts, opportunities for reunion with his long lost mother and sibling. His was a street child's dream, of longing for a sense of real family and home. And while he found temporary shelters and families in different forms and in several places, his dance exposures keep his hope of being found by his mother, one day.

“Ten years from now, I hope to also share whatever it is that I've learned to children for free.” (Bartolome 2004)

“Whenever I am dancing I am happy. It is as if all of my problems are way behind me and my dreams are just within my reach. Like, I can have everything... I would like to believe that I would still see my mother and my sibling. I am holding on to this, which is why I don't want to let go of the performing arts. This might lead to the fulfilment of my dreams and who knows, one day my mother might see me on the television and say, ‘I know him.’” (Galanze 2004)

#### **B. Childhood and Children's Spaces within QCPADFI**

Among the spaces the scholars' traverse, it is the QCPADFI where adult authority are strictly enforced and where children's voices have little space especially when dance training is on its way. This is because the dance trainings are conducted with strict observance to discipline and obedience. The arrival of student teachers marks the beginning of the dance training. During this time the studios retain its legitimate function with scholars submitting to the training design and to the mentors', as well as the assistant instructors' authority. Inside the dance studios are thus competent-serious dance trainees, whose full attention are committed to the on-going exercise and are completely aware of what is expected of them and capable of responding appropriately. Concretely this are manifested in the way scholars seriously take their dance training to heart as indicated with the way they avoid talking to each other and focusing their attention on the training and the instructors.

##### *Spaces for Children and Spaces by the Children*

Within the QCPADFI are spaces for children as defined by adults thus, (1.) adult defined spaces, and by children themselves, hence (2.) children defined spaces. The former are those spaces that exist according to its legitimate function and which requires



discipline, obedience, respect and submission to adult authorities (e.g. mentors, assistant teachers, and the QCPADFI staff and guests). These spaces include the dance studios, QCPADFI office, and performance sites such as the stage, theatres and alternative (open air or indoor) performance venues. In these spaces scholars take on the status of either a dance trainee or a young dance performer and are thus expected to assume these roles that require a certain degree of independence from adult care, competence, professionalism and confidence. In these spaces, children are expected to be responsible, and (hence) actively engaged in the social construction and maintenance of their life world. Here, spaces as they appear in the instance of its use are within its legitimate-recognized functions.

With the latter however, children defined spaces, are play and recreation spaces that allow a show of innocence, playfulness and a carefree spirit. These include the studio lobby, theatre corridor, and grounds within Amoranto. These are “children created spaces” within pre-existing spaces in Amoranto where the formers’ use endowed it with an otherness that stands in contrast to its legitimate use. These spaces are temporary in nature and exist only in moments of the scholars’ play. At times these also include the dance studios, especially before the start of the day’s training. Here children are actively engaged in the creation of the spaces, which are fashioned when there is a discerned time for recreation.

“I attended ballet practice again then was given my allowance. Whenever Ate Jacky is not yet around I play with my friends Marienar, Dayanara and others. We always play.” (Callado 2004)

#### *Childhood on Stage: the Performing Children*

A dance performance, be it local or international, displays the professional young performing artists in every scholar who manage personal routines with minimal adult assistance. Here is the space where children are recognized professionals and acts accordingly. The event allowed the scholars the opportunity to: 1.) Demonstrate teamwork and organization skills, 2.) realize the significance of their performance, 3.) appreciate their talents, and 4.) recognize their role in promoting their country and its culture, as young ambassadors in their own right.

“My first show was in 1996, a musical performance entitled, *Munting Pangarap* I think it was held in UP Theater. I was still in grade three then.

I remember we had a picture where we were forming the shape of a bird. Whatever our costume was, we formed its shape. There was even a part there where we acted like we were riding a bus that goes round and round. Then we pretended to have reached Amoranto and went inside for our ballet classes, some would pretend to be singing and some dancing. That was really fun. It was my first show ever. Imagine at grade three, even though I was not yet in front, still I am part of the show and was featured in a magazine. I still have that magazine. Also I will never forget about my first International show that was in 2000 and was held in Japan, in Chiba. It was the first time I've been to another country. I was a level four scholar then. The experience was new to me. ...I got rattled during the show but was happy because we performed the different dances in the Philippines. Through us and by our talents, we were able to show what the Filipinos are capable of. It was just a day show and the rest was spent on tour. The tour felt good, it was like being on vacation." (Bartolome 2004)

"I remember our first show at Circle. We performed a lot of dance numbers: *Beautiful Life*, *Kapayapaan*, *Lemon Tree*. It was a lot of fun because lots of people were clapping and Mama and Papa were there. When I took part in the show I was really happy because I became part of it. Sir Tony chose me. Sonny Belmonte held us, and I also saw Bistek. The people in the audience were so happy when we danced 'A Beautiful Life'." (Callado 2004)

"With regards to the dance performances, I cannot forget about our last dance, *Sabihin Mo*. The Filipinos could not help but shed tears especially when the Philippine flag was raised while we were all wearing costumes depicting the Overseas Filipino Workers' jobs abroad." (Uy 2004)

The front and backstage are spaces where children's versatility and competence are most visible. These are the spaces where character shifts drastically and more swiftly according to the dance repertoires, and the scholar's particular role and space. Unlike in other spaces, the character shifts on-stage (front stage) are deliberate and consciously managed. Here the scholars' take their cue from the music and fellow performers. Thus, more than the dance studios, it is in these spaces where they exhibit greater attention to details and are more focused. While on stage, scholars contend with a mixture of feelings (e.g. excitement, nervousness, pride and joy) which they have learned to confront through various mechanisms such as psyching oneself up or rehearsing a dance number just to ease out the building tensions while waiting backstage.

"I am overwhelmed with joy every time we have shows. Before a show starts, I often get nervous. I say to myself, 'this is big time now there's a lot of people there to watch you. While before it's just you practicing by yourself, alone, in front of a mirror.' But once onstage, everything goes



smoothly although I still feel a bit nervous. It is as though you can't believe what you are hearing, that you are an excellent dancer. It is as if you are famous." (Galanze 2004)

At the backstage, children as young as six years old perform tasks such as changing into different costumes, waiting for cues, and entering and leaving the stage in coordination with other young performers. In this space, organized and systematic behaviour is demonstrated by children who acts independent of adult but in coordination and cooperation with fellow scholars. Here they have developed the perfect timing for everything: an estimated time for changing costumes and putting on accessories, and the precise moment to leave the changing area and enter the stage. They are organized and systematic. They know their stuff and can identify them from those of fellow scholars even when they have exactly the same costume and body built. The scholars keep in mind the dance sequences and the music that goes with it, as well as the fellow scholars who are to perform the particular dance with them. Hence it is in this space where children's agency, are put to test as they are somehow on their own.

## **II. In Search of the Local Production of the QCPADFI Childhood: Revisiting the Approach and Methodology**

The QCPADFI scholars are children of urban poor background who are engaged in the world of the performing arts. Taking them as focus of this particular research, and with the emergent paradigm in mind, I realized the complexities in which this research has trodden. For one, the research subjects are not only children, but urban poor performing (dance trainee) children. Second, the research setting is multifaceted as it is where urban poverty, childhood and the performing arts converge –the QCPADFI. Where the research's interest lies in accounting for the production of Childhood in such a complex social milieu, the primary task would be to define the approach and method that would best facilitate this endeavor.

Studying children from an adult social space would yield “adultic” images of childhood. However, one does not have to go back to childhood just so s/he can approach it without bias. The need is for the adult researcher to define the best location by which s/he can view the children and their world and the method by which to approach these -- one that would render the children's spaces more visible, and their voice audible. Defining therefore, this location would require the sensitivity to the distance between the spaces of childhood and adulthood, which first and foremost necessitates the recognition of the child as separate from the adult. Fortunately, studies on children and childhood, over the years, have explored this concern and have come to realize it as a permanent feature of society that is by itself worthy of study. Of major significance along this movement is the emergent paradigm defined by James and Prout (1990 and 1997). Central to the tenets of this paradigm is the view that children's lives are worthy of social investigation (James and Prout, 1990 and 1997). The paradigm does not only promote the study of children and childhood, but the recognition that the latter is a social construction and the former are social actors. In its view, childhood is taken as a variable for social analysis with childhood as a structured-permanent social space (an institution) in society, and children --agents in this social space. In this context, the children's voices find primacy hence the preference for qualitative methodology, in particular ethnography.

Ethnography, visual and verbal in my research's case, proved to be an appropriate method by which to approach children and their social world. The strength of this method



lies not only in its capacity to provide a direct voice for the children and allow the researcher, room for appropriation, but the ability for multilayered accounting. Ethnography allowed me with flexibility with which I defined and refined my fieldwork as it made apparent on the complexities of the spaces and characters in my research. The incorporation of some of Sikolohiyang Filipino's method, in particular *pagkukuwentuhan* and *pakikipagkuwentuhan*, allowed me access to even the very personal data. The method bridged the uneasiness between the scholars, making the sharing of information more symbiotic. This certainly opened a wider space for children's voices and (hence,) participation in research where children's voices are not only accounted, in its literal sense --by interviews (*pakikipagkuwentuhan* and *pagpapakuwento*) but are even more expressed into writing where a number of them provided autobiographies in addition to the journals, most of them wrote. Because of these the narratives become multivocal and with the integration of visual ethnography multilayered. The visual narratives provided by visual ethnography endowed the research, multilayered accounts rendering the entire accounting process more visibly present, the children's lives more alive, and their social spaces in sight. The latter makes more concrete the social process or image of childhood, or space that is being accounted as it literally provides visual presentations of these. Hence with the incorporation of visual accounts the research offers a more holistic accounting of children and childhood.

Looking at the narratives through the emergent paradigm I find articulations of childhood as social construction, with children's agency exhibited in the various structured spaces (e.g. home, school, QCPADFI) the QCPADFI scholars constantly traverse. The data shows that as the scholars engage in these social spaces they do not just submit or assume their role passively. They recognize each of the social spaces' requirements of them and act according to a discerned situation without totally neglecting their own needs or desires. Sometimes responding to the latter is postponed, at times it even gets dismissed, whichever case maybe, (in) the narratives are articulations of a discerned act, which by itself, an illustration of children's agency. The elicited-discerned act may then be expressed as a product of the negotiations scholars make with fellow scholars, children and/or the adult characters in a particular social situation of specific social space. At times this also involved negotiating with a social space's structured reality hence the adjustment in the domestic activities and responsibilities of the family or

the accommodation of the scholars' request for excused absences or early dismissal etc. At the personal level, these are illustrated in every scholars': 1.) individual routine, 2.) manner of complying with situational/institutional expectations, and 3.) creation of a time and space for recreation and play, and for those requirements the scholars' fail to accomplish within its designated social space (e.g. doing school assignments or reviewing for an examination during break time).

The home alone speaks of scholars(') whose mere presence, co-define their most immediate milieu –the family (*mag-anak*). The narratives show scholars who are not just conditioned to act according to their expected roles as an offspring (*anak*) or a sibling (*kapatid*), but are conscious of their part in doing their share in running and maintaining the social order within the family. The scholars are sensitive and are able to discern their family's most pressing problems. They are never spared from the hardships of life stemming either from their family's poverty or their parent's marital problems. They are very much affected by these and are doing whatever they can to improve their family's condition. Not only do they share domestic and economic responsibilities they assist in increasing the household income by engaging in the family's economic activities, investing whatever they received from the QCPADFI in the family's micro-economy. Their active role within the family is therefore, unquestionable.

The scholars' entrance to the performing arts through the QCPADFI further exemplifies their active engagement in their life world. The scholars' weekly schedule itself, tells of the adjustments they have to make within their own routines and between their institutional engagements. This alone is a clear manifestation of the interaction between their agency and that of the structures. There are even instances where other institutions give way to the scholars' performing arts engagement. In school, this is evident in certain privileges their teachers allow them, like dismissing them earlier than the rest of the students or excusing them from class attendance in the occasions of a performance. This is more evident in the home where families make structural adjustments that requires even the cancellation of economic activities and role adjustments so that a young scholar can pursue her/his dance training.



## CONCLUSION

As a social production, the childhood shared by the QCPADFI scholars is shaped in the various social spaces (family, school, the performing arts, and the institution of childhood) they engaged with. While these are structured spaces, defined and implemented by adults, the children are nonetheless actively involvement in its construction, maintenance and reconstruction. Their interaction with fellow children and the adult characters of the corresponding social spaces, show instances of negotiations that enabled them to comply with its requirements. The negotiations they make are illustrations of their agency that implies an acknowledged social order and the capacity to discern situations. The end of negotiation is thus a compromised reality resulting from the children-deemed appropriate act that takes into account the particular institution's requirements and/or adult wishes and the child's own desires and needs.

With or without the QCPADFI, the children in this study exhibit the character of active agents in the various social spaces (e.g. the family, school, the QCPADFI, and recreation sites) they traverse. Their capacities to alternately traverse these spaces and comply with its requirements are without doubt demonstrations of their agency, which finds further manifestation with their entrance to the QCPADFI. This is very much evident in the remarkable ways by which scholars manage their time, respond to situational demands, and create time and space for recreation and other yet unaccounted activities. They are co-creators of the realities particular to these social spaces. By their mere presence, they co-define the institutions (e.g. family, school, the QCPADFI) they take part with. Their assumption of roles in these institutions (e.g. daughter/son, sibling, student, classmate/schoolmate, dance trainee, young performer, etc.), facilitate the maintenance of its structured reality.

### **A. The Performing Arts Impact on the Scholar through the QCPADFI and their Perception on the Latter**

Data shows that while the QCPADFI unlocked the world of the performing arts to urban poor children, it also opens other spaces for them. There they gain access to spaces to show their talent, fulfill their dream, and access experiences not normally within their reach.

In the scholars' narratives are articulations of the opportunities provided by the performing arts, through the QCPADFI. Aside from the opportunity to travel and the experience that goes with it, the children's entrance to the performing arts through a QCPADFI scholarship provided them with a variety of experiences. At the personal level, the QCPADFI facilitated the development of a scholar's personality and character through its strict imposition of discipline. The scholars, on the other hand, acknowledged the necessity for such a style of training, which to their belief bring good results. While there are scholars who did not manage to last in the program for the same reason those who stayed attested to an improved character. In addition, the dance training itself has developed in the scholars' more refined gestures and postures improving thus their personality. And with the dance exposures scholars get to experience, they become more confident performers and hence, confident children.

The QCPADFI's impact on the scholars is not just manifested in their character or personality. In the narratives are indicators of the scholars' changing economic status within and outside their family. Through the scholars' transportation allowance and honoraria, they became less economically dependent on their family. Whereas before, scholars depend (up) on the family for their school allowance, with their scholarship's transportation allowance, the former has been taken care of. Scholars manage to save their transportation allowance for school use, by walking their way to Amoranto. There are also cases where scholars give the transportation allowance to their mother as their way of contributing to the family's finances making them contributor to the family's income. In addition, some scholars also mentioned giving the honorarium they receive from international shows to their parents while leaving something for their personal needs. This improved the scholars' purchasing power where they gain access to goods and services not usually within their reach (e.g. owning a cellular/mobile phone, going to video arcades, etc.).

Other experiences that comes with the QCPADFI scholarship is the scholar's recognized advantage over children of same background, an example of which are the opportunity to travel, exposure to different culture and people, the opportunity to represent one's country, as well as the opportunity of bringing pride and joy to fellow Filipino.



### **B. Children's Spaces within QCPADFI: The Scholar's Collective World**

The scholars traverse several spaces in this study. However, two kinds of spaces seem to exist in terms of its accessibility for children, they are: (1.) adult defined spaces, and (2.) children defined spaces. The former, are those that required discipline, obedience, respect and submission to the space's structured reality and adult authorities (e.g. parents and elders; teachers, the principal and other school elders; mentors, assistant instructors, and QCPADFI staff and guests). In these spaces scholars take on the status of, an offspring/a sibling, a friend, a student/classmate/schoolmate, a dance trainee/young dance performer and are thus expected to assume the corresponding roles. Here, spaces as they appear in the instance of its use are within its legitimate/recognized functions.

However with children defined spaces are play and recreation spaces that allow a show of innocence, playfulness and a carefree spirit. These are "children created spaces" within pre-existing structured spaces, where the formers' use endowed it with an otherness that stands in contrast to its legitimate use. These spaces are temporary in nature and exist in moments of the scholars play. Here children are actively engaged in its creation and hence define the rules and boundaries within.

### **C. Images of Childhood**

Within Amoranto, various images of children exist. In spaces where trainings are held, are found the competent-independent-rational children. They are the student scholars who take to heart their dance trainings. They are responsible-disciplined-courteous-focused-obedient dance trainees. They are aware of what is expected of them, recognize the dance studios structured reality and submit to it discerning and willing. These are adult-defined spaces hence their voices are most of the time unheard. Nonetheless, they take part in the construction and maintenance of its social order.

Within the spaces for dance performance in Amoranto (Theatre and main dance studios) are child dance performers. Apart from the above characteristics they also exhibit confidence. Although these spaces are adult defined, they are however, its main characters. They submit to its orders and get drastically transformed into different personalities and characters according to the dance repertoire's demands.

Outside of the studios are carefree-playful-innocent children. They redefine the spaces that are available to them and define its rules according to their games or their

need for it. This they do within acknowledged/discerned adult restriction showing thus their rational/sensible-independent-responsible-obedient character.

### **The Local Production of the QCPADFI Childhood: A Summary**

Variables such: as childhood, poverty and the performing arts have produced the specific childhood particular to scholars of the QCPADFI. As the discussions above demonstrated, among the QCPADFI scholars are several, NOT one, childhood. Each of these images is created in the various social spaces the scholars' traverse by the interaction between these spaces' structured reality, the adult characters in these spaces and the scholars themselves. More appropriately, the process is then a social production, where childhood in each space is an instance of a scholar's engagement in that space. Hence, the resilient child is witnessed in an instance of resiliency, an economically empowered child in an experience of greater purchasing power, the carefree-playful child in moments of play, the serious dance trainee in an episode of dance instruction, a young dance performer in an occasion of performance and so on and so forth.

While childhood is in itself a structured space defined through time, that defines the on-going childhood, as a social production it MUST recognize the essential participation of children --where an instance of the child's engagement is a moment of childhood production. This finds further articulation in what James and Prout's saw in their work's evaluation on *the time of childhood*, where they observed the latter to be defining and in turn is being defined by a *time in childhood* (1997:240-250). However, while my research did not go into a detailed demonstration on the social production of childhood through time, my research reveals its social production in the instances of childhood within the multifaceted spaces of urban poverty, the performing arts, and childhood, where none other than the children themselves are the best source of such accounts...

*"Hay naku!* It's difficult to be a squatter. Mama said we don't own the lot our house is built on. Finally what Mama had always-dreaded came—the day our house got demolished. It was not really the whole house that was demolished, just the front. But that's where Mama's store was, her source of income. I really pitied Mama then. She didn't know what to do first. She had so many things to worry about like where she could fit all our stuff from the store, how to put the store back and where. She didn't even have the time to attend to our needs. Our house was demolished without prior notice. My parents were taken off-guard and didn't know what to do



with our stuff; as a result my youngest brother wasn't able to go to school that day. This made me dream of becoming a popular dancer someday. I must finish my studies so I could get a good job. My dreams are quite simple. I just want to have our own lot on which to build our house. This way Mama won't be afraid anymore of sudden demolitions. Of course I also dream of rising from poverty and helping my parents and my siblings. ... For now I have to study hard so my parents won't ask me to stop dancing. It's difficult but this is what I love to do." (Arandela 2004).

"I am a strong child because I still study even when I don't have money for school. I must do well with my studies even when there are many obstacles. I strive to be happy within my broken family. In spite of the many hindrances that came along the way of my ballet training I still continue to reach for my dreams. I must continue with my ballet so I can hone my dancing skills. Even when many are against it, I have to continue with it so I can reach my dream. I wish my father would realize how important ballet is for me. I wish he could see that there's good in ballet. Who knows, five years from now I may be teaching ballet? I wish I could go abroad like Kuya Gary and teach ballet like Sir Tony and Sir Luther." (Hernandez 2004)

"When I went to the streets, I stopped schooling but went on with the QCPADFI. I knew someone from Kamuning and Makabayan. I washed my clothes there, in my friends' house, which I collect in the afternoon. I stayed in a vacant lot in Morato, that new building there. There used to be a vacant lot there. That's where I used to sleep. And for food, I knew the person who collects the rubbish from McDonald's, that's what I used for food. I save the leftover chickens. Some were still whole while the others were really leftover. These I eat. But when there's ballet lesson like during Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, I eat in Amoranto. I asked for extra bread until I got myself adopted again, this time by a fellow scholar's sister, Ate Rosabella.

...I don't have anybody to care for me. The people who look after me are strangers. I would like to believe that I would still see my mother and my sibling. I am holding on to this, which is why I don't want to let go of the performing arts. This might lead to the fulfillment of my dreams and who knows, one day my mother might see me on the television and say, 'I know him'." (Galanze 2004)

## PROLOGUE

### **Revisiting the Research Process: A Researcher's Reflection**

The entire research maybe likened to a journey to a not so familiar, yet not quite alien terrain. Metaphorically speaking, it was like going to an unfamiliar place I once visited without a map and having found something valuable. I decided to come back, this time with a road map. However, there are as well set backs along this process especially where the problem lies with access to the most recent map or the skill in map reading. Where the latter could be remedied, the former finds recourse on getting hold of at least the blue print. Proceeding with what best I could have has put me in a disadvantaged position where I have to stop from time to time and see where I am, through looking for markers that will provide reference points by which I can proceed. And like going on a journey, unavoidable and unexpected circumstances occur that renders a traveller helpless and at times lost thus the stagnation in the journey, the need to retrace steps, and gather stuff necessary for its continuation.

This research is literally a journey from literature, to the field, back to literature, field data again, and literature, that require in-between pauses for reflection and critical evaluation. Sometimes, the pauses are longer than the continuation of the journey itself. And at times the temptation to leave and just forget about the journey becomes very tempting.

#### *Proceeding with the journey*

Taking on the challenge my research presented, I recognized beforehand the distance between my position as an adult researcher studying childhood to that of my research participants. However, this does not imply the impossibility of proceeding with the project. The need is to acknowledge and see as clearly as possible the distance and identify the methodology by which best to approach it --one that would render the children's spaces more visible, and their voice audible. Realizing this led me to the fields of ethnography. Ethnography, especially in this case visual and verbal, proved to be an appropriate method by which to approach children and their world. The strength of this method lies not only in its capacity to provide a direct voice for children and allow the researcher room for appropriation, but the ability for multilayered accounting. The latter



is essential in this particular research since children's voices have a history of being muted by "adutic" representations of their world.

As a methodology, ethnography makes apparent the complexities of spaces and characters in the observed world. It renders visible the multiplicity of spaces and characters of a social setting thus having that potential for multivocal accounting, and allows the researcher flexibility with methods.

With ethnography the methods of gathering data does not end with defining the research design. As a researcher goes through the fieldwork, methods gets modified, appropriated, and where indigenous methods exists, this becomes incorporated in the research, as well. This process happened in my research where the incorporation of indigenous Filipino methods (Sikolohiyang Filipino), allowed me access to even the very personal data. Here, methods such as pakikipagkuwentuhan bridged the distance between the scholars and myself, and in doing so lead to a more symbiotic sharing of information. This certainly opened a wider space for children's participation in research where children's voices are not only accounted through interviews (pakikipagkuwentuhan and pagpapakuwento) but are even more expressed into writing through the scholars' journal and autobiography, and by the visual data.

The narratives are thus multivocal and with visual ethnography multilayered. The visual narratives provided by visual ethnography endowed the research multilayered accounts rendering the entire accounting process more visibly present, the children's lives more alive, and their social spaces in sight. Thus, with the incorporation of visual accounts the research offers a more holistic accounting of children and childhood.

It was late in the fieldwork where I realized the value of a scholars' journal in accounting for their subjective and inter-subjective reality. Where my study also employed journal writing this was not required in every scholar. The decision to make this method optional was motivated by the recognition of a research's exploitative nature. Where the concept of eliciting information from the respondents is, in itself exploitative, as the researcher alone gets a definite benefit from the process, doing so in these means would impose so much on the scholars' schedule. However, recalling my own childhood and recognizing most children's fondness for story telling, led me to experiment on the said method which I incorporated in my ethnographic fieldwork. This I introduced with autobiography, as options by which the research respondents could participate in my

study, while long interview is a must for all respondents. This is as well the reason why I am using the concept of research participant in this study instead of research respondents to refer to the scholars. The idea is to emphasize children's participation in the research that, in this case, has chosen the manner by which to participate. It is worth noting that unlike adult respondents, children are more enthusiastic when it comes to participating in researches. Aside from the fact that most children loves chatting and likes their picture to be taken, they are very accommodating and candid about information, hence the danger for exploitation. The only hindrance in my attempt at maximizing their participation in this research lies in the scholar's tight schedule. Recognizing this I feel the social obligation to make sure they don't suffer from stress or fatigue. This I did by allowing them options by which to participate in my research. Late did I realize that journal writing was therapeutic for children as indicated by their tendency to share as well the very personal struggles, fears and frustrations they experiences.

Here is where I faced another challenge, of the need to remain objective while still being child-sensitive, to evaluate and screen data necessary for the research without violating the children's privacy. This I feel I managed to clearly perform in cases where the scholars opted to write their autobiography because it provided them with the opportunity to define their own narrative. There they get to choose from where to start, what information to include, and how to end their story. I must say that while I gave them the freedom in writing their narratives, I did provided them guide questions, which I also used for the long interviews.

Where the scholars opted to write their journals, and this is where I experience the above challenge. I consulted them with the final written output. Finding the latter a "just act" as it recognizes the research participants' ownership of their own story, I did this for all scholars and gave them a copy of their own narratives for their keeping. Let me however, note that all scholars expressed satisfaction over their written stories and do not feel any need for me to alter (revise) it. While this was so, I am aware of the possibility that they were just too happy to have their own story written and get to keep copy of it as well.

Taking note and valuing the scholars' participation in this research lead me now to recognize their co-authorship of this thesis. Doing so adds weight to the scholarly character of this academic journey for even in ethnography comes the recognition of



multi-authorship. While ethnography could well be argued as the ethnographer's account, within this account are the many voices that provided the very fabric by which it was weaved. Hence as an adult researcher, I may not be able to fully and with exactness, account for the QCPADFI childhood. However, I am confident with the accounts, the scholars' themselves provided and to this end I believe this research has served its purpose in cooperation with my research participants –my co-authors.

To further this cause, let me identify at least four points by which researches on children and childhood, as well as this particular research, can still move forward.

1. In the course of my fieldwork, I have come to see the value of recall, or most appropriately “remembering”, as a method of data gathering within ethnography. This comes with the recognition that the process of accounting for the ethnographic fieldwork is by itself a method of remembering --of the adult researcher taking-note of the recalled observation s/he fails, but more appropriately does not have time to record in its instance. In this research, remembering also played a significant part among the scholars in that it assisted them in providing accounts on their everyday life. It has to be articulated that their accounting are by itself instances of remembering.
2. Another point I would like to mention is the value of ethnography in doing research about children. Ethnography still proves to be an appropriate method by which to approach children and childhood in that it: 1) allows the researcher with flexibility in terms of method and avenues for experimenting with, and appropriating methods, 2.) provides children a direct voice in research and hence, wider space for participation in this process, 3.) can increase sensitivity to children and is thus child-friendly, 4.) renders visible the multiplicity of spaces and characters of a social setting, and therefore 5.) provides multilayered and multivocal accounting.
3. Third, I recognize the need to look more closely at the children's narratives and examine how variables such as gender, age, family structure and composition, birth-order (the child's birth position), economic background, performing arts (and other) engagements, etc., produce a particular childhood. It might be interesting to see how, for example, an eldest daughter or son of adolescent age in an urban poor family engages in the performing arts compared to that of the

youngest or middle child daughter/son, of early or middle childhood. While a number of the scholars' narratives (e.g. Jeffrealz, Rey, Melissa and Dayan to name a few) urged me to go into this direction, admittedly I failed to pursue this line of analysis for lack of time and resources.

For example, Jeffrealz's narratives provided me with an insight into the gender bias a family has in relation to the performing arts. This, comes with the idea that the performing arts, especially dance (and in particular ballet), being refined and poised in movement is a female activity. This could possibly explain the unequal proportion between male and female QCPADFI scholars –with male being always of lesser population in QCPADFI's regular recruitment. However, this does not find articulation in any other scholars' narratives apart from him.

4. And lastly, analysis can still move further from the local –that is from the specific milieus of the research participants where specific childhoods maybe gathered, to the historical and global. This is to see how a particular childhood was fashioned by images of childhood shaped through time by the wider socio-historic-cultural context in as much as the current on-going social construction of childhood in that particular milieu modifies childhood or present yet other versions or images of childhood as this study illustrate.

While my research may have had its shortcomings when it comes to expounding on the interaction between its global context and the micro-world of the scholars, I feel confident that my research did manage to present what it defined to pursue –an account of the local production of childhood within the spaces of poverty, childhood and the performing arts. This research's contribution may therefore be summarized as follows, the demonstrations of: 1.) the emergent paradigm's tenets in the local production of QCPADFI childhood, 2.) the children's willingness to be researched and their capacity to actively engage in such adult-dominated endeavor, 3.) the appropriation and combination of western and indigenous techniques, 4.) the possibilities and potentials of multilayered (visual and verbal) research methods, 5.) the facts about the multivocal nature of accounting and hence the multi-authorship of this research. With the latter, I found within the QCPADFI yet another image of childhood, that of the young-willing-research participants who are pleased to have their stories told and had it co-written.





**- APPENDICES -**



**Guide Questions for the Operation Staff, Mentors, Alumni and  
Current Scholars of QCPADF**

## *Appendix A*

### **Mga Aktuwal na Katanungan sa Impormal na Panayam** *(Actual questions asked during the informal interview)* - For the Managing Director -

#### **A. Kasaysayan ng QCPADFI:**

1. Nais ko pong silipin upang mailarawan din ang naging kasaysayan ng foundation. Sa abot ng inyong makakaya, maaari po bang pakilarawan kung papaano ito nagsimula?
2. Sinu-sino po ang mga tao o organisasyon/institusyong sangkot sa paghubog ng kasaysayan ng foundation at papaano po sila nakabahagi sa kasaysayan nito? Mga tao o institusyong kabalikat at naging kabalikat ng foundation sa mga adhikain nito?
3. Anu-anong mga pagsubok po ang kinahaharapan ng foundation sa kasalukuyan?
4. Anu-ano po ang mga natamo na o naisakatuparan na ng foundation?
5. Ano pa ang mga nais nitong maitatag at ano na ang estado ng mga ito? [May tinatarget po ba ang foundation na marating o matamo at partikular na panahon para dito? Ano po ito kung mayroon?

#### **B. Struktura at Gawain ng Opisina:**

1. Pakilarawan po ang istruktura ng QCPADFI at mga gawain sa loob ng istrukturang ito. Halimbawa:
  - a. Ilang tao ang sangkot sa administratibong gawain at anu-ano ang mga nakatalagang gawain ng mga ito?
  - b. Ilang tao ang sangkot sa operasyon ng foundation o direktang nagbibigay serbisyo nito at anu-ano ang kanilang mga gawain?
  - c. May taunan o seasonal bang gawain ang foundation?
2. Anong ugnayan mayroon sa pagitan ng QCPADFI at ng lokal na pamahalaan ng QC? Kumbaga, ano ang papel ng lokal na pamahalaan ng QC sa QCPADFI at ng QCPADFI sa lokal na pamahalaan ng QC?
3. Batid ko pong mahigit isang taon pa lang po kayo sa foundation pero ano po ang mga gawaing naabutan nyo na at ipinagpatuloy lang, at ano naman ang mga gawaing isinusog nyo o inintroduce?
4. Ano naman po ang mga nakaplanong direksiyon ngayon ng foundation para sa mga scholars nito? Mga nakalinyang proyekto o programa?



5. Kung mayroon, anu-anong paghahanda po ang nakalinya kaugnay nito at anu-anong mga gawain ang naisasagawa na?
6. Papaano po binabalangkas ang mga programa para sa foundation? Nagkakaroon po ba kayo ng maaaring tawaging yearly planning o kung ano man para dito?
  - a. Kung mayroon, kailan po ito isinasagawa?
  - b. Sinu-sino po ang lumalahok dito?
  - c. Kailan po ang huling naisagawang pagpapalano?

### **C. Karaniwang Daloy ng Organisasyon: Pang-araw-araw na kultura**

Kayo po bilang social scientist, ano po ang nakikita ninyong namamayanang kultura sa loob ng foundation? Halimbawa:

- Sa ugnayan sa pagitan ng mga scholars?
- ... Mga mentors at scholars?
- ...Mga mentors at magulang?
- ...Kayong may hawak ng admisitratibong gawain?

Kumbaga anong mga pagpapahalaga ang matutunghayang lubos na pinapatupad, anong direksiyon ng ugnayan, daloy ng interaksyon, etc. banggitin ang herarkiya atbp.

#### ***Mga Suliranin at Pagharap Dito***

1. Anu-ano kalimitan ang nagiging suliranin ng inyong opisina?

- Sa pang-araw-araw na pagpapatakbo dito?
- Sa pagpapatupad ng mga programa?
- Sa mga scholars?
  - Application period/audition?
  - Probationary period?
  - Regular scholarship period?
  - Suspensions/termination of scholarships?

2. Papaano hinaharap ng inyong opisina ang mga suliraning ito?

### **D. Performance/Show**

#### ***Lokal na Pagtatanghal:***

1. Ano po ang pinaka papel na ginagampanan ng inyong opisina pagdating sa mga shows o performances ng mga bata?

2. May mga regular po bang lokal na pagtatanghal na sadyang idinaraos ang foundation? Ano po ito at tuwing kailan?
3. Maliban po sa nabanggit, anu-anong mga uri ng local na pagtatanghal ang kinasasangkutan ng mga scholars ninyo? Saan nanggagaling ang inisiyatiba rito? Halimbawa sa pamamagitan ng imbitasyon o pagsali ninyo sa mga pagtatanghal?
4. Anong proseso ang pinagdaraanang o isinasagawa ng inyong opisina sa mga pagkakataong ito?
  - a. Anu-anong proseso ang kalimitang pinagdaraanang ng inyong opisina mula sa pagkakabatid sa pagtatanghal na ito o event? Halimbawa, papaano ito nalaman ng inyong opisina at mula dito'y anu-anong mga kaukulang hakbang ang inyong isinasakatuparan?
  - b. Anu-ano kalimitan ang mga pangangailangan o requirements na hinihiling mula sa inyong opisina o sa foundation sa pagsali sa mga event na ito o pagtatanghal?
  - c. Anu-ano naman ang inyong isinasaalang-alang sa pagsali sa mga events na ito?
5. Anu-anong mga suliranin ang kalimitang hinaharap ng inyong opisina sa prosesong ito ng pagsali sa mga events o pagtatanghal?

***Paglahok sa mga Festival o International na Pagtatanghal:***

1. Sa teknikal na bahagi ng preparasyon sa paglahok ng mga bata sa anumang festival o pagdaraos ng performance sa labas ng bansa gaya ng nakaraang pagkatawan nila sa bansa sa 9<sup>th</sup> International Youth Dance Festival sa Macau, anu-anong mga gawain ang kinailangang isagawa mula sa inyong opisina?
  - a. Anu-anong proseso ang kalimitang pinagdaraanang ng inyong opisina mula sa pagkakabatid sa event o festival? Halimbawa, papaano ito nalaman ng inyong opisina at mula dito, anu-anong mga kaukulang hakbang ang inyong isinasakatuparan?
  - b. Anu-ano kalimitan ang mga pangangailangan o requirements na hinihiling mula sa inyong opisina o sa foundation sa pagsali sa mga event na ito o festival?
  - c. Anu-ano naman ang inyong isinasaalang-alang sa pagsali sa mga festival o event na ito?
2. Anu-anong mga suliranin ang kalimitang hinaharap ng inyong opisina sa prosesong ito ng pagsali sa mga festival o performance?
  - a. Preparasyon ng mga requirements mula sa host institution?



- b. Preparasyon para sa mga bata?

**E. Paglahok sa 9<sup>th</sup> International Youth Dance Festival-Macau at Hongkong  
Performance:**

Ito po ay karugtong lamang ng ating kuwentuhan nuon hinggil sa nasaksihan ninyong karanasan ng mga bata sa kanilang paglahok sa 9<sup>th</sup> International Youth Dance Festival sa Macau at pagtatanghal nila sa Hongkong.

1. May mga napansin ba kayong agam-agam o pangamba sa mga scholars bago ang pagtungo ninyo sa Macau at Hongkong, at habang naroroon kayo?
2. Anong damdamin po ba ang napansin ninyong namamayani sa mga scholars na nakasama sa Macau at Hongkong?
3. Sa mga hindi naman po nakasama sa pagtatanghal na ito sa Macau at Hongkong anong damdamin ang napansin ninyong namamayani sa kanila?
4. Sa kabuuan, papaano ninyo ilalarawan ang naganap na pagtatanghal ng scholars sa Macau at Hongkong ayon sa naobserbahan ninyong karanasan at damdamin ng mga scholars?
5. Pakilarawan naman ang naganap sa kanilang biyahe pabalik sa Pilipinas at sa regular na practice? Anu-ano ang mga naganap sa panahong ito na may kaugnayan sa katatapos palang na pagtungo nila sa Macau at Hongkong? Halimbawa'y:
  - 5.1 Ang namamayaning damdamin at pagkikipag-ugnayan sa isa't-isang kapwa nila nakasama sa biyaheng ito?
  - 5.2 Sa mga hindi nakasama sa biyaheng ito?
6. Sa kasalukuyan ano ang napupuna mong pinagkakaabalahan ng mga scholars? May hangover pa ba sila sa kanilang Macau at Hongkong trip? Anu-ano ang karaniwang kwento? Mga sentimyento na nabanggit nila o naibahagi?

-- Maraming Salamat Po! --

**Appendix B**  
- Artistic Consultant and President -

**A. Kasaysayan ng QCPADFI:**

1. Bagama't pahapyaw po nating napagkuwentuhan noon ang pagsisimula ng QCPADFI, nais ko po sanang muli itong balikan upang ganap na mailarawan ang naging kasaysayan ng foundation.

Maaari nyo po bang isalaysay uli kung papaano nagsimula ang Quezon City Performing Arts Foundation at kung sinu-sino po ang mga tao at o organisasyon/institusyong nakatuwang ninyong tatlo nila Sir Eddie at Sir Luther dito sa paghubog ng kasaysayan nito?

2. Sa pagdaan ng taon, anu-anong mga pagsubok o suliranin po ba ang hinarap ng foundation at papaano po ito nalampasan?

(Banggitin ang unang pagkakatatagpo sa foundation sa telebisyon at itanong kung papaano na-revive or napasiglang muli ang foundation mula sa panahong iyon tungo sa kasaluyang pag-iral nito.)

- *Anong ugnayan po ang namamagitan sa kasalukuyan sa pagitan ng QCPADFI at ng lokal na pamahalaan.*
  - *May mga pagbabago po bang naganap bunga ng transpormasyon mula sa pagiging Quezon City Performing Arts Development Program patungong QCPADFI. O structural lang po ba ang pagbabago?*
3. Mula sa pagsisimula po noong 1994 hanggang sa kasalukuyan anu-ano na po ang mga natamo o naisakatuparan ng foundation at ano pa po ang nais nitong matamo o direksiyong nais pa nitong tunguhin.
- *Banggitin ang nasa marketing kit at itanong kung ano na ang estado nito sa kasalukuyan.*

**B. Struktura at Araw-araw na gawain sa Studio**

1. Bilang institusyon po ng pagsasanay sa sining ng pagsayaw papaano po nahahati-hati sa inyong mga mentors at founder nito ang gawain dito?

May partikular po ba o strukturadong debisyon ng mga gawain sa pagitan ninyong mga mentors dito? Halimbawa ang humahawak sa beginner? Mga higher level student?

2. Napansin ko po kasi ang mga terminong nakapaskil sa studio sa taas at bunga ng aking mga obserbasyon napuna ko pong strukturado ang daloy ng mga practices sa bawat studio. Sa pagsasagawa po ba ng pagsasanay, may modules po ba o disenyo ng



training po kayong ipinapatupad? Anu-ano po ang napapaloob dito?

1. Anu-anong mga kakayahan po ba ang dapat matunghayan sa mga scholars ng bawa't lebel o kumbaga anong mga kasanayan po ang dapat maipakita ng mga scholars upang maiakyat sila sa iba't-ibang lebel. Halimbawa po sa lebel 1 ano po ba ang sinasanay dito? Sa lebel 2,3,4,5.
  - *May mga pagkakataon din po ba kung saan naibabalik ang mga estudyante sa dati nilang lebel? Ano po ang karaniwang dahilan o mga pagkakataong ito?*
2. Anu-ano po ang karaniwang suliraning hinaharap ng inyong opisina kaugnay:
  - *sa pang-araw-araw na pagpapatakbo dito?*
  - *Sa pagpapatupad ng program?*
  - *sa mga scholars?*
3. May itinatalaga din po bang taunang gawain o aktibidad ang inyong opisina. Halimbawa, nabasa ko po ang tungkol sa pagsasagawa ng audition na tatlong beses po ata sa isang taon? At mga campus tours? O by invitation po ba ito?
  - *Nakatalaga po ba o "fix" ang iskedyul na ito?*
  - *Kumbaga, may calendar of activities po ba kayong sinusunod?*

### **C. Paglahok sa mga Pagtatanghal (Sa loob at labas ng bansa)**

1. May mga regular po bang pagtatanghal na sadyang pinaghahandaan at idinadaos ang foundation? Anu-ano po ito at tuwing kailan nagaganap?
2. Sa mga imbitasyon naman pong natatanggap ng inyong opisina para sa lokal at internasyunal na mga pagtatanghal, anu-ano po ang inyong isinasaalang-alang para tanggapin ito?
3. Sa mga paglahok pong ito sa mga festival o pagsasagawa ng mga international na performance, ano po karaniwan ang mga preparasyon o paghahandang inyong isinasagawa para sa mga scholars ng QCPADFI?
  - *Anu-ano po ang inyong isinasaalang-alang sa pagpili ng:*
  - *mga sayaw na itatanghal?*
  - *Scholars na lalahok?*
4. Anu-anong mga suliranin naman po ang kalimitang hinaharap ng inyong opisina sa prosesong ito ng pagsali sa mga festival o pagtatanghal?

*Sa pagwawakas nais ko po sanang malaman kung ano ang pinakapangarap ninyo para sa foundation o nais ninyong maging direksiyon o matamo nito at ng inyong mga scholars.*

-- Maraming salamat po! --  
*Appendix C*  
- QCPADFI Secretary -

### **I. Paglahok sa 9<sup>th</sup> International Youth Dance Festival-Macau:**

Una muna nais ko sanang ipakuwento sa iyo ang katatapos pa lamang na paglahok ng Quezon City Performing Arts Development Foundation sa 9<sup>th</sup> International Youth Dance Festival sa Macau at gayun din sa kanilang performance sa Hongkong. Simulan natin ang sa Macau, kung maaari ay pakikuwento naman ang mga naganap bago ang performance, sa panahon ng performance at matapos ito. Sa proseso ng iyong pagkukuwento nais ko sanang tumutok ka sa mga scholars kung ano ang naoobserbahan mo sa kanila.

#### **A. Bago ang Pagtatanghal:**

1. Halimbawa, bago ang pagtungo sa Macau, sa panahon ng mga paghahanda para dito, anu-anong mga bagay at pangyayari ang napansin o naobserbahan mo sa mga scholars na kasama?
2. Anong mga preparasyon o paghahanda ang napuna mong isinagawa ng mga kalahok dito?
3. Nuong gabi bago ang pag-alis ninyo patungong Macau pakilarawan naman ang mga scholars na kasama, ang kanilang damdamin at pagkilos. Ano ang napansin mo o kapansin-pansin sa kanila? Halimbawa sa preparasyong ginagawa nila ng sama-sama o sabay-sabay at indibiduwal na paghahanda?
4. May mga nabanggit o kaya'y kapansin-pansin ba silang agam-agam o pangamba kaugnay sa kanilang pag-alis o performance?
5. Sa mga hindi nakasama sa pagtatanghal na ito sa Macau at Hongkong anong damdamin ang napansin mong namamayari sa kanila?

#### **B. Mga pangyayari sa Macau at Hongkong**

1. Napag-alaman kong walong araw pala ang itinagal ng festival sa Macau, maaari bang pakilarawan ang napansin mong namamayaning damdamin at pinagkaabalahan ng mga scholars na kasama?
2. Tumutok tayo sa mga panahon na may nakaiskedyul silang performance, anu-ano ang routine nila halimbawa mga gawain bago ang performance at matapos ito?
3. Matapos ang festival sa Macau, maaari bang pakilarawan naman ang mga naganap sa mga panahong patungo kayo sa Hongkong at makarating dito?
4. Kamusta naman ang mga performance ng mga scholars? Maaari bang pakilarawan ang mga naganap bago at matapos ang mga ito at kung anung damdamin ang napuna mong namamayari sa kanila?



5. Maliban sa mga performance ng mga scholars anu-ano pa ang mga pinagkakaabalahan nila sa Hongkong? Maaari bang ipahayag ang mga gawain at pinagkakaabalahan nila dito at kung maaari ay pakilarawan mo ang napapansin mong namamayaning damdamin sa kanila sa mga panahong ito?
6. Sa kabuuan, papaano mo ilalarawan ang naganap na pagtatanghal ng scholars sa Macau at Hongkong ayon sa naobserbahan mong karanasan at damdamin ng mga scholars?
7. Pakilarawan naman ang naganap sa kanilang biyahe pabalik? Anu-ano ang mga naganap sa panahong ito?
8. Sa kasalukuyan ano ang napupuna mong pinagkakaabalahan ng mga scholars? Anu-ano ang karaniwang kwento? Mga sentimyento? Mga sentimyentong nabanggit nila o naibahagi?

## **II. Impormasyon sa Gawain/Katungkulan sa QCPADFI:**

1. Gaano katagal ka ng nagtatrabaho sa Quezon City Performing Arts Development Foundation?
2. Anu-ano ang partikular na gawaing nakaatas sa iyo dito? Papaano mo nakikita o tinitingnan ang tungkuling ito lalu pa't mga bata mula sa marhinalisadong sektor ang kliyente nyo?
3. Mula ng magsimula ka sa mga gawain mong ito sa foundation, anu-ano na ang mga nasaksihan mong mga programa o proyekto?
4. (Annual routine/seasonal works) Sa iyong karanasan sa loob ng isang taon, kailan karaniwan maraming gawain sa QCPADFI? Bakit at anu-ano karaniwan ang mga ito?
5. Mayroon naman bang panahong hindi ganuon katambak ang mga gawain? Kailan ito at bakit?
6. Ano ang pinakanagugustuhan mo sa pagtatrabaho mo dito sa QCPADFI at bakit?
7. May aspeto ba ng iyong gawain na masasabi mong hirap kang gawin? Ano ito at bakit?
8. Maaari bang pakilahad ang mga naging karanasan mo sa QCPADFI, na may kinalaman sa mga scholars? Halimbawa mga hindi malilimutang karanasan dito.
9. Anu-anong mga performance na sa labas ng bansa ang nasaksihan at nasamahan mo? Maaari bang paki-isaisa ang mga ito?
10. Sa mga ito ano ang napapansing mong namamayaning damdamin sa mga scholars?

11. Alin sa mga ito ang hindi mo malilimutan at bakit?
12. Sinu-sinong mga bata o mula sa anung lebel ang mga karaniwang nakakasama sa mga ito?
13. Lahat ba ng mga scholars na ito ay narito pa sa foundation hanggang sa kasalukuyan? Kung wala nasaan na sila?
14. Pagtuunan natin ng pansin ang mga scholars, mula ng magsimula kang magtrabaho dito sa QCPADFI marami na ring mga scholars ang nasaksihan mong nagsimula at nahasa ang husay sa pagsayaw may mga naobsebahan ka bang pagbabago sa mga ito? Kumbaga may nasaksihan ka bang transpormasyon sa kanila?
15. Sa mga panahong ito ng pagtatrabaho mo sa mga scholars may mga nasaksihan ka na bang matagumpay na nagtapos sa programa? Nasaan na sila ngayon at ano ang kanilang pinagkakaabalahan?
16. May mga kaso din ba ng di matagumpay na pagpapatuloy sa programa? Ano kananiwang dahilan nito kung maaaring malaman?
17. Kapansin-pansing malapit ka sa mga bata at gayun din sila sa iyo, may mga pagkakataon bang naihihinga nila sa iyo ang kanilang mga suliranin? Kung sakali, maaari bang malaman kung ano ang karaniwan nilang suliranin. Iwasan na lang natin banggitin ang kanilang pangalan?
18. Kung ikukumpara mo ang mga scholars nuong nagsisimula pa lang sila sa kasalukuyan nilang katayuan ngayon papaano mo sila ilalarawan?
19. May nais ka bang idagdag na impormasyon o ikuwento na hindi na-cover ng panayam kong ito na sa palagay mo ay makakatulong sa akin upang mas makilala ko ang mga iskolar?

-- Maraming Salamat po! --



**Appedix D**  
*- For the Alumni-Assistant Teacher of QCPADFI-*

*Pangalan (Opsiyunal):*

*Kasalalukuyang edad:*

*Edad ng magsimula sa foundation:*

*Taong nagsimula at umalis sa QCPADFI:*

*Kasalukuyang organisasyong kinasasangkutan at designasyon:*

**I. Kasaysayan at Istruktura ng QCPADFI**

1. Nais ko pong silipin upang mailarawan din ang naging kasaysayan ng foundation. Pamilyar ka ba kung papaano ito nagsimula?
2. Papaano mo ito nalaman? Sino ang nagbahagi sa iyo?
3. Mula ng magsimula ka sa foundation anu-anong mga pagbabago rito ang nasaksihan mo?
  - a. Sa pamamalakad?
  - b. Sa nagpapalakad?
  - c. Sa mga programa/proyekto o aktibidades?
4. Papaano ba ang kaayusan/struktura ng foundation halimbawa: ano ang papel sa scholar ni Allen, ni Jackie, ni Sir Toni, Sir Eddie, Sir Luther, Sir Jessie, atbp. Papaano ba ang hirarkiya nito at anu-ano ang bahagi nila sa foundation?
6. Ang programa papaano ang phasing nito? May module bang sinusundan sa pagprogreso nito halimbawa may partikular na ituturo para sa new beginners, old beginners, levels 1,2,3,4,5,?
7. Papaano naililipat ang bawat scholar sa bawat lebel? Papaano ito nangyayari? May eksaminasyon ba o recital?

**II. Kasaysayan sa QCPADFI**

Nais ko munang sundan ang pagsisimula mo sa QCPADFI mula sa pagkakadiskubre mo ng hilig mo sa pagsasayaw hanggang sa kasalukuyan mong katayuan bilang aluma/alumnus/asst instructor sa QCPADFI bilang scholar nito para mabuo natin ang karansasn mo dito

1. Hilig mo ba talaga ang pagsayaw o may nag-impluwensiya lang sa iyo sa larangang ito? Sino?
2. Kailan mo nadiskubre ang hilig mo dito at paano?

3. Papaano mo nalaman ang tungkol sa QCPADFI at maaari bang pakikuwento sa abot ng iyong makakaya/natatandaan ang naganap sa panahon ng iyong pag-audition para dito? Kailan ito? At ilang taon ang itinigil mo sa foundation bilang scholar nito?
4. Mula ng matanggap ka bilang scholar ng QCPADFI may mga pagbabago ka bang napansin sa iyong sarili? pakikipag-ugnayan sa kapwa (halimbawa mga kapatid, magulang, kaibigan/kaklase, atbp.)? gawain o aktibidades? Anu-ano ito?
5. May mga suliranin ka bang hinarap sa pagsisimula mo dito o maituturing na pinagdaanang pagsubok na maaari mong tingnan bilang achievement sa kasalukuyan?
6. May maituturing ka bang hindi malilimutang karanasan sa pagsisimula mo dito bilang scholar ng QCPADI?
7. Mula ng maging scholar ka gaano katagal bago ka napromote sa level 1, 2, 3, 4, 5?
8. Anu-anong mga suliranin ang iyong mga pinagdaanan o karanasang di malilimutan sa prosesong ito ng pag-akyat mo pataas sa iba't-ibang lebel?
9. Noong iskolar ka pa ng QCPADFI ilang local performance na o mga show sa loob ng bansa ang nasalihan mo kung natatandaan mo pa at alin dito ang masasabi mong hindi mo malilimutan at bakit?
10. Sa international performance naman, ilan na ang iyong nasalihan? Anu-ano ito at alin sa mga ito ang hindi mo malilimutan at bakit?
11. Ngayong alumna/alumnus ka na ng foundation nakakapanood ka pa ba ng performance? Ilang performance na ang natunghayan mo? Papaano mo ito natutunghayan/nalalaman? At bakit ka nanonood pa ng mga ito?

### **III. Pang-araw-araw na Karanasan Nuong Iskolar ka pa**

Nais ko naman sanang buuin ang karaniwang takbo ng iyong karanasan noon bilang scholar ng QCPADFI.

1. Maaari bang paki-isaisa ang mga gawain/aktibidad na pinagkakaabalahan mo sa loob ng isang araw noong iskolar ka pa sa QCPADFI (halimbawa pag may pasok sa iskwela kung nag-aaral, kung may practice at kung linggo).
2. Ngayon, ano na ang pinagkakaabalahan mo? May routine ka bang nakasanayan noon na hanggang ngayon ay daladala mo pa?
3. Ngayon naman papaano na ang routine mo bilang assistant instructor o ano ba ang opisyal na designation mo sa foundation?
  - a. Kailan ka nagsimula dito sa designasyon na iyan?
  - b. Iyan ba ay volunteer work o paid work?



- c. Papaano ka nagsimula dito sa designasyong iyon?
  - d. Ano ang pinakatungkulin o mga nakaatas sa iyong gawain sa designasyong iyan?
4. Anu-anong suliranin ang kinahaharap mo sa kasalukuyan at papaano mo ito hinaharap?
  5. Papaano mo tinitingnan ang iyong katungkulan? Papaano mo ito ilalarawan?
  6. Masasabi mo ba na masaya at kontento ka na sa kasalukuyan mong kalagayan? Bakit?

#### **IV. Tumungo naman tayo sa aspirasyon mo sa buhay.**

1. Maaari bang malaman kung ano ang iyong minimithi o aspirasyon sa buhay? Ano ba ang iyong pinapangarap sa buhay?
2. Sa iyong palagay sa kasalukuyan mong katayuan papaano mo ito makakamit? Anu-ano pa kaya ang sa palagay mo'y kailangan mong gawin para mo ito maabot o marating?
3. Mayroon ka bang mga pinangangambahan sa kasalukuyan? Ano ito at bakit?
4. Papaano mo ito hinaharap at papaano mo kaya ito malalampasan?
5. Limang taon mula ngayon, ano ang gusto mong maganap sa iyong buhay?
6. Limang taon mula ngayon , sa iyong palagay ano na kaya ang nagaganap sa iyong buhay?
7. Sampung taon naman mula ngayon, ano na ang nais mong narating na sana o naganap na sa iyong buhay?
8. Ano naman kaya sa iyong palagay ang nagaganap na sa panahong ito?
9. Sa larangan ng performing arts o pagsasayaw, ano naman ang iyong nais na matamo pa o marating?
10. Sa iyong palagay ano ang nagawa nito, ng foundation, sa iyo at magagawa pa?
11. May hangarin o pangarap ka rin ba o nais mangyari para sa foundation? Ano ito at papaano kaya ito mararating ng foundation?
12. Sa mga scholar ngayon ng foundation (na tine-train mo na rin) may pangarap ka ba para sa kanila? Ano ito?

13. May nais ka pa bang ibahagi sa akin na sa palagaymo ay mahalagang makapagdudulot ng pagunawa sa kanila?

-- Maraming Salamat Po! --



**Appendix E**  
*-For Scholars who took part in the 9<sup>th</sup> Macau Youth Dance Festival and the Dance Concert for OFWs in Hongkong-*

**I. Kasaysayan sa QCPADFI**

Nais ko munang sundan ang pagsisimula mo sa QCPADFI mula sa pagkakadiskubre mo ng hilig mo sa pagsasayaw hanggang sa kasalukuyan mong katayuan sa QCPADFI bilang scholar nito para mabuo natin ang karansasn mo dito

1. Hilig mo ba talaga ang pagsayaw o may nag-impluwensiya lang sa iyo sa larangang ito? Sino?
2. Kailan mo nadiskubre ang hilig mo dito at paano?
3. Papaano mo nalaman ang tungkol sa QCPADFI at maaari bang pakikwento sa abot ng iyong makakaya/natatandaan ang naganap sa panahon ng iyong pag-audition para dito?
4. Mula ng matanggap ka bilang scholar ng QCPADFI may mga pagbabago ka bang napansin sa iyong sarili? pakikipag-ugnayan sa kapwa (halimbawa mga kapatid, magulang, kaibigan/kaklase, atbp)? gawain o aktibidades? Anu-ano ito?
5. May mga suliranin ka bang hinarap sa pagsisimula mo dito o maituturing na pinagdaanang pagsubok na maaari mong tingnan bilang achievement sa kasalukuyan?
6. May maituturing ka bang hindi malilimutang karanasan sa pagsisimula mo dito bilang scholar ng QCPADI?
7. Mula ng maging scholar ka gaano katagal bago ka napromote sa level 1, 2, 3, 4, 5?
8. Anu-anong mga suliranin ang iyong mga pinagdaanan o karanasang di malilimutan sa prosesong ito ng pag-akyat mo pataas sa iba't-ibang lebel?
9. Mula ng magsimula ka sa foundation hanggang sa kasalukuyan ilang local performance na o mga show sa loob ng bansa ang nasalihan mo kung natatandaan mo pa at alin dito ang masasabi mong hindi mo malilimutan at bakit?
10. Sa international performance naman, ilan na ang iyong nasalihan? Anu-ano ito at alin sa mga ito ang hindi mo malilimutan at bakit?

**II. Paglahok sa 9<sup>th</sup> International Youth Dance Festival-Macau:**

Nais ko sanang magpakuwento sa iyo hinggil sa katatapos lamang na paglahok ninyo sa 9<sup>th</sup> International Youth Dance Festival sa Macau at gayun din sa inyong performance sa Hongkong. Simulan natin ang sa Macau:

1. Nabalitaan ko na hindi lahat ng may level na scholars ay nakasama, maaari bang pakikuwento kung papaano mo nalaman na isa ka sa makakasama at ano ang naramdaman mo at ginawa ng malaman mo ito? Pakikuwento na rin kung anu-anong preparasyon ang iyong ginawa sa paghahanda para rito at kung may mga pangamba ka ba o suliraning hinarap kaugnay dito?
2. Papaano ang naging arrangement mo sa iyong mga klase? Papaano ka nagpaalam at ano ang naging tugon ng iyong mga guro hinggil dito?
3. Maaari bang pakikwento ang mga di mo malilimutang karanasan na may kinalaman sa panahon bago ang pagtungo sa Macao habang naghahanda pa lang kayo dito, karanasan sa pagbibyahe patungo dito at sa Hongkong, mga di malilimutang karanasan habang nagpeperform at sa mga panahong walang performance?
  - 1.1 Di malilimutang karanasan sa paghahanda para rito.
  - 1.2 Di malilimutang karanasan sa pagbibyahe.
  - 1.3 Di malilimutang performance at bakit?
  - 1.4 Di malilimutang karanasan habang nasa Macao at walang performance.
  - 1.5 Di malilimutang karanasan habang nasa Hongkong at walang performance.
4. Sa kabuuan, papaano mo ilalarawan ang naganap na pagtatanghal ninyo sa Macau at Hongkong? Kumbaga kung makakaya ng isang salita ano kaya ang salitang pinaka maglalarawan dito at bakit?
5. Ang kabuuang karanasan mo sa Macao at Hongkong papaano mo ilalarawan?

### **III. Pang-araw-araw na Karanasan**

Nais ko naman sanang buuin ang karaniwang takbo ng iyong karanasan sa isang araw o linggo para mabuo ang karaniwang galaw o routine mo upang sana'y mailarawan ang iba't-ibang aspeto ng buhay ng kabataang gaya mo.

1. Maaari bang paki-isa-isa ang mga gawain/akribidad o pinagkakaabalahan mo mula paggising sa umaga hanggang bago matulog sa gabi kahit na sa pinakasimpleng pagsisimula sa almusal o paglilinis muna ng sarili sa panahong may pasok pero walang practice sa Amoranto, may pasok pero walang practice at walang pasok gaya ng lingo.
2. Maaari bang pakilarawan ang mga gawaing pinagkakaabalahan mo kasama ang iyong mga kaibigan? Taga saan ang iyong mga kaibigan? Sila ba ay mga kaklase? Kapitbahay o kabarangay o mga kaibigan sa Amoranto?
3. Maaari din bang pakilarawan ang mga aktibidad naman na ginagawa ninyong sama-sama ng iyong pamilya o kasama lang ang kapatid o di kaya'y kasama ang magulang?
4. Sakalit may suliranin ka kanino ka mas madalas tumakbo sa iyong mga kaibigan o piling kaibigan? Kapatid o magulang?



5. Anu-anong mga uri ng suliranin ang madalas mong hinaharap? Hindi naman kinakailangang idetalye halimbawa'y nakakategora lang gaya ng hinggil sa pag-aaral? Sa mga kaibigan? Lovelife? Relasyon sa mga kapatid o magulang? Pinansiya atbpa.?

#### **IV. Tumungo naman tayo sa aspirasyon mo sa buhay.**

1. Maaari bang malaman kung ano ang iyong minimithi o aspirasyon sa buhay? Ano ba ang iyong pangarap na makamtan sa hinarahap?
2. Sa iyong palagay sa kasalukuyan mong katayuan papaano, mo ito makakamit? Anu-ano pa kaya ang sa palagay mo'y kailangan mong gawin para mo ito maabot o marating?
3. Mayroon ka bang mga pinangangambahan sa kasalukuyan? Ano ito at bakit?
4. Papaano mo ito hinaharap at papaano mo kaya ito malalampasan?
5. Limang taon mula ngayon, ano ang gusto mong maganap sa iyong buhay?
6. Limang taon mula ngayon , sa iyong palagay ano na kaya ang nagaganap sa iyong buhay?
7. Sampung taon naman mula ngayon, ano na ang nasi mong narating o naganap na sa iyong buhay?
8. Ano naman kaya sa iyong palagay ang nagaganap na sa panahong ito?
9. Sa larangan ng performing arts o pagsasayaw, ano naman ang iyong nais na matamo pa o marating?
10. Sa iyong palagay ano ang nagawa nito sa iyo at magagawa pa?
11. May nais pa ba kayong ikuwento o ibahagi sa akin maliban sa inyong mga nabanggit?

-- Maraming Salamat Po! --

## *Appendix F*

Ika-29 ng Hunyo 2004

Sa Iskolar ng QCPADFI  
Amoranto Sports Complex  
Scout Chuatoco, Quezon City

Mahal na Bb./G. \_\_\_\_\_:

Magandang araw! Maaaring di na lingid sa iyong kaalaman na ako ay kasalukuyang nagsasagawa ng panamaliiksik sa mga scholar ng QCPADFI para sa aking disertasyon sa *University of Wales* sa UK. Layunin ng pag-aaral na mailarawan ang pagbuo ng identidad at realidad ng mga scholar mula sa mundo ng sining, kabataan at karalitaan. Mais maipakita ng pag-aaral ang aktibong pakikilahok ng mga kabataang scholar sa paghahabi ng kanilang buhay. Ang pag-aaral ay katatampukan ng indibidwal na kuwento ng bawat kabataang sasali at kabuuang kuwento ng QCPADFI. Ito ay inaasahang maisasakatuparan sa pamamagitan ng aking mga obserbasyon at pagkuha ng mga larawan at *video clippings*, pakikipanayam sa mga sasali at pagiimbita sa kanilang isulat ang sariling talambuhay. Bunga nito ay ang imbitasyon sa iyong makilahok o sumali sa pag-aaral na ito sa pamamagitan ng pagsagot sa talatanungan at pagsulat ng iyong talambuhay. Sakalit mapagdesisyonan mong sumali, bibigyan kita ng magsisilbing journal mo kung saan maaari mong isulat ang iyong talambuhay at mga karanasan bilang scholar ng QCPADFI, kabataan, mag-aaral atbp. Kaakibat din nito ang kopya ng sarili mong talambuhay at istorya ng QCPADFI pati na rin ng mga larawang isasama dito na ibibigay ko sa iyo matapos ang pag-aaral. Makaaasa ka na sa iyong pagsali ay ikukunsulta sa iyo ang mga datos at larawang ilalahok sa iyong storya.

Maraming salamat at inaasahan ko ang iyong pagtanggap sa aking imbitasyon.

Gumagalang,

CARLOTA B. FRANCISCO

P.S.

Sakalit makapagdesisyon kang sumali sa pag-aaral maaari mo akong lapitan o di kaya'y pakisabi na lang sa inyong Sir Allen o Ate Jackie.  
Muli, salamat.



## *Appendix G*

### **List Of Interviews**

- Adajar, P. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 03 August.
- Arandela, D. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 03 July.
- Balanes, R. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 27 July.
- Bartolome, M. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 27 September.
- Bides, J. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 29 August.
- Bides, L. (2004) Interview by Author, Quezon City, 29 August.
- Cabahug, K. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 31 August.
- Callado, K. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 06 July.
- Callado, R. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 06 July.
- Fabella, T. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 09 September.
- Galanze, R. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 5 October.
- Guazon, L. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 29 August.
- Guzman, A. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 10 July.
- Hernandez, J. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 30 July.
- Hervas, M. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 05 September.
- Lao, E. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 29 September.
- Lao, J. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 29 September.
- Ponsaran, A. jr. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 17 July, and 14 October.
- Sunga, J. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 24 July.
- Uy, K. (2004) Interview by the Author, Quezon City, 05 September.
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### **I. ACADEMIC BACKGROUND**

#### **2003-PRESENT UNIVERSITY OF WALES-BANGOR**

##### ***MPhil Sociology Candidate***

School of Social Sciences, University of Wales, Bangor

- Funding: The Ford Foundation International Fellowship Program 2003-2005.
- Thesis title: "When the Curtain Calls: Stories of Filipino Urban Poor Children in the Performing Arts"

#### **1995-2002 UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES**

##### ***MA Sociology*** (30 units)

Department of Sociology, College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of the Philippines-Diliman.

#### **1990-1994 UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES**

##### ***BA Sociology***

Department of Sociology, College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of the Philippines-Diliman,

#### **1985-1989 HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL**

##### ***Secondary Education***

Holy Family School, Quezon City

### **II. RESEARCH AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

#### **A. ACADEMIC WORK EXPERIENCE**

##### ***1999-Present: LECTURER***

##### **Ateneo de Manila University**

- *Department of Filipino*, School of Humanities
  - *Department of Sociology and Anthropology*, School of Social Science
- Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City

##### ***1999-2000 (FIRST TRIMESTER) LECTURER-4***

##### **De La Salle University**

*Department of Behavioural Sciences*

College of Liberal Arts, De La Salle University, Taft Avenue, Manila, Philippines

**1995-1998 INSTRUCTOR-2**

**University of the Philippines**

*Department of Sociology*

College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of the Philippines-Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

**1994-1996 INSTRUCTOR**

**Philippine School of Business Administration**

Department of Social Sciences, Philippine School of Business Administration, Inc. Aurora Boulevard, Quezon City, Philippines

**1995-1996 INSTRUCTOR**

**St. Joseph's College**

*Department of Liberal Arts*, St. Joseph's College, E. Rodriguez St. Avenue, Quezon City Philippines

**B. PROFESSIONAL-WORK EXPERIENCE:**

**APRIL-AUGUST 2003 RESEARCH ASSOCIATE**

**The Philippine Social Science Council**

Philippine Social Science Center, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City, Philippines

**APRIL-JUNE 1994 RESEARCH ASSOCIATE**

**University of the Philippines Social Action Research and Development Foundation**

**(UPSARDF)** College of Social Work and Community Development, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

**October 1993 FIELD RESEARCHER**

University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies

**1992-1993 PART-TIME RESEARCH ASSISTANT**

Performed archival researches for Dr. Patricio N. Abinales for his Ph.D. dissertation in Cornell University.

**1991 STUDENT ASSISTANT**

Provided technical assistance to a then Masters Student in the University of the Philippines, Ms. Theresa Belleza.

**B. CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS/FORA**

**THE PRACTICE OF SOCIOLOGY IN THE PHILIPPINES**

**De La Salle University**, Taft Avenue, Manila, Philippines

20-21 October 2006

*Involvement: Conference Speaker*

Paper Presented: "Childhood Realities and the Social Construction of Spaces in Crossing, Philippines"



**XVITH ISPCAN INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT  
“Children in a Changing World: Getting it Right”**

**University of York, Yorkshire, England, United Kingdom**

3-6 September 2006

Involvement: *Congress Speaker*

Paper Presented: “Childhood Realities and the Social Construction of Spaces in Crossing, Philippines”

**CHILDHOODS 2005**

**University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway**

29 June 2005 to 03 July 2005

Involvement: *Participant*

**THE 6<sup>TH</sup> INTER-UNIVERSITY POST-GRADUATE CONFERENCE**

**University of Cambridge, England, United Kingdom**

19-20 May 2005

Involvement: *Conference Speaker*

Paper presented: “Childhood Realities and The Social Construction of Spaces in Crossing, Philippines” (with focus on the street children)

**THE 5<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL SOCIAL SCIENCE CONGRESS: WHAT’S WITH THE FILIPINO YOUTH**

**The Philippine Social Science Council, Philippine Social Science Center**

Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City, Philippines

12 to 17 May 2003

Involvement: *Congress Speaker*

Paper presented: “Stories from the Street: Youth Realities and the Social Constructions of Spaces in Crossing.” (with focus on the street youth)

**THE FILIPINO CHILDREN: SEMINAR ON TECHNIQUES ON FAMILY COUNSELING**

**ABS-CBN BANTAY BATA 163, ABS-CBN Compound, Mother Ignacia St. Quezon City, Philippines**

27 February 2003.

Involvement: *Participant*

**THE FILIPINO CHILDREN: SEMINAR ON LAWS AND PROCEDURE ON CHILD CUSTODY AND SUPPORT**

**ABS-CBN BANTAY BATA 163, ABS-CBN Compound, Mother Ignacia St. Quezon City, Philippines**

26 February 2003

Involvement: *Participant*

**THE FILIPINO CHILDREN: SEMINAR ON FORENSIC ISSUES IN CHILD MALTREATMENT (INTERPRETATIONS OF MEDICO-LEGAL FINDINGS)**

**ABS-CBN BANTAY BATA 163, ABS-CBN Compound, Mother Ignacia St. Quezon City, Philippines**

26 February 2003

Involvement: *Participant*

**THE FILIPINO CHILDREN: ARTS FOR HEALING INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATION:  
“ONCE UPON A TIME...STORY TELLING” (THE POWER OF STORY AND PLAYSPLACE TO  
ASSIST ABUSED CHILDREN)**

**ABS-CBN BANTAY BATA 163**, ABS-CBN Compound, Mother Ignacia St.

24 February 2003

*Involvement: Participant*

**THE FILIPINO CHILDREN: ARTS FOR HEALING INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATION,  
“GROUP ART THERAPY MODEL”**

**ABS-CBN BANTAY BATA 163**, ABS-CBN Compound, Mother Ignacia St.

24 February 2003

*Involvement: Participant*

**THE FILIPINO CHILDREN: SEMINAR ON LAWS AND PROCEDURE ON CHILD CUSTODY  
AND SUPPORT**

**ABS-CBN BANTAY BATA 163**, ABS-CBN Compound, Mother Ignacia St.

26 February 2003

*Involvement: Participant*

**RESEARCH CONCEPTUALIZATION AND METHODOLOGIES**

**FORD FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM and the  
PHILIPPINE SOCIAL SCIENCE COUNCIL**

Philippine Social Science Center, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City, Philippines

27 January – 7 February 2003

*Involvement: Participant*

**OFFICE AUTOMATION AND PRODUCTIVITY TOOLS COURSE**

**FORD FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM and the  
NATIONAL COMPUTER CENTER**

C.P. Garcia St., Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

13-27 January 2003

*Involvement: Participant*

**SEMINAR WORKSHOP ON TECHNICAL WRITING**

**FORD FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM, and the  
ATENEO DE MANILA LANGUAGE CENTER**

Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, Philippines

13-24 January 2003

*Involvement: Participant*

**KAPAG BINAGO ANG BERSO**

A three-day seminar-workshop on Philippine Poetry organized and Sponsored by the  
**Department of Filipino**, School of Humanities (formerly School of Arts and Sciences),

Ateneo de Manila University

April 2001.

*Involvement: Part of the Organizing Committee*



**ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE '97"**

An annual student interaction in Baguio City, Benguet sponsored by the **Philippine Military Academy (PMA), Fort del Pilar, Baguio City, Philippines**

February 01, 1998

*Involvement: Facilitator*

**FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR: METHODS OF TEACHING IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES**

A workshop sponsored by the **Philippine School of Business Administration Faculty Union**

Philippine School of Business Administration, Aurora Blvd., Quezon City, Philippines

June 1996

*Involvement: Resource Person*

**D. PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION****THE PHILIPPINE SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

Philippine Social Science Center, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City, Philippines

Member since 1998

**CONGRESS OF TEACHERS AND EDUCATORS FOR NATIONALISM AND DEMOCRACY (CONTEND-PHILIPPINES)**

Member since 1998

**KATIPUNAN NG MGA NAKABABATANG GURO SA DALUBHASAAN NG AGHAM**

**PANLIPUNAN AT PILOSOPIYA (KATIPON-DAPP)** (University of the Philippines College of Social Sciences and Philosophy's Junior Faculty Association)

College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

Department of Sociology Representative (1997-1998)

Pioneering member (1997)

**LECTORS AND COMMENTATORS SOCIETY**

Holy Cross Parish, Krus na Ligas, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

Coordinator from January – August 2003

Member since 2000

**UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

Bahay ng Alumni, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

Member since 1994

## F. FELLOWSHIP GRANTS

### **THE FORD FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM**

Ford Foundation, IFP  
New York  
2003-2005

### **DEVELOPMENT FUND -FACULTY GRANT**

Awarded on 15-17 December 1997 by the Department of Sociology, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City

“8th Linguistics Congress in the Philippines” sponsored by the **Department of Linguistics**, held at U.P.-N.I.S.M.E.D., Diliman, Quezon City.

### **DEVELOPMENT FUND -FACULTY GRANT**

Awarded on 21-23 November 1997 by the Department of Sociology, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City

“A Centennial Pilgrimage on Values Literacy and Governance” sponsored by the Department of English and Comparative Literature held within Central Luzon.

## **UNIVERSITY AND PUBLIC SERVICE**

### A. ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION

#### **University of the Philippines College Admission Test (UPCAT)**

University of the Philippines, Diliman Quezon City

*Examiner*

August 1997

#### **Cordillera Studies Center**

*Supervised* the Popularization Project of the Cordillera Studies Center (CSC - research arm of the University of the Philippines College Baguio)

November 1996- March 1997

### B. COMMITTEE SERVICES

#### **Committee on Faculty Development**

Filipino Department, School of Humanities, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, Philippines

*Member*

Second Semester 2005-2006 – Academic year 2006-2007

#### **Youth for Christ**

*Moderator*

Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City

Academic year 2000 -2001



**B.A. Committee (Bachelor of Arts in Sociology Committee)**

*Member*

Department of Sociology, College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City.

Academic year 1997-1998

**Discipline of Sociology**

*Undergraduate Thesis Adviser*

Discipline of Sociology, Social Sciences Division, University of the Philippines College Baguio, Baguio City, Benguet

November 1996 – March 1997

**University of the Philippines Student Catholic Action (UPSCA)**

*Assistant Adviser*

University of the Philippines College-Baguio, Baguio City, Benguet

November 1996 - March 1997

**Amnesty International**

*Moderator*

St. Joseph's College, E. Rodriguez Sr. St., Quezon City.

June 1995 - March 1996

**College Electoral Board (CEB)**

*Student Representative*

College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City.

Academic year 1993-1994

**D. VOLUNTEER WORKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**IN-HOUSE JUDGE**

Holy Cross Parish, Krus na Ligas, Diliman, Quezon City

2000-Present

**RESOURCE SPEAKER**

Holy Cross Parish Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (HCP-PPRCV)

Voter's Education and Poll Watcher's Orientation

May and October 2007

**UNANG HAKBANG FOUNDATION INC.**

Provided technical support to a drop-in center for the street children in Mandaluyong and Pasig City Philippines.

2001-2003

**HOLY CROSS PARISH**

2000-2003 Member of the Society of Lectors and Commentators  
2003 Coordinator of the Society of Lectors and Commentators  
2000-2003 Writer/Contributor for the Holy Cross Parish Newsletter  
2001-2002 Writer/Contributor for the Holy Cross Parish Fiesta Souvenir Program  
1993-1994 Editor-in-Chief of the Gulod Newsletter which later became known as Holy Cross Parish Newsletter

**UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES UGNAYAN NG PAHINUNGOD**

Volunteer teacher and team leader of the Affirmative Action Program team Assigned in Cotabato City-Philippines  
Summer 1998

**SERVANTS OF JESUS**

Founding Member/Volunteer Youth Leader  
Organized and facilitated youth leadership trainings in one of the Philippines flooded area, Tenejeros-Malabon. The community boast today of young people with great capacity for service to the community.  
1996-1998

**UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES IN CHRIST TRUST FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENT (UP-ICTUS)**

Gave free tutorial services to primary and secondary public schools in Quezon City, Philippines.  
1992-1994