

Narratives of Male Struggle Against Patriarchy in Select Filipino Literary Works

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Article Info:

Received: 26 January 2024

Revised: 5 October 2024

Accepted: 2 December 2024

Publisher Online: 20 December 2024

Keywords:

Patriarchy,
Male struggle,
Masculinity,
Feminism,
Philippine Literature

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ABSTRACT

This study offers a more nuanced understanding of the impacts of patriarchy by exploring its complexities and effects beyond commonly held beliefs about gender roles. Using an inductive thematic analysis grounded in Braun and Clarke's framework, five Filipino literary works were examined to identify themes related to male struggles within a patriarchal society. The analysis revealed that men who fail to conform to patriarchal norms of masculinity find themselves at odds with the rigid standards of hegemonic masculinity. Their struggles against conformity and the limitations patriarchy imposes extend far beyond personal lives, gradually affecting society at large. These findings suggest that it is imperative for individuals of all genders to unite in collective efforts to dismantle a system that disproportionately privileges only those men narrowly defined as "true." Ultimately, such a system disadvantages those who fail to meet patriarchal standards of masculinity.

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INTRODUCTION

The field of gender and development studies in the Philippines has made significant strides in understanding the transformations in gender relations and identities brought about by cultural, social, political, and economic changes. However, as noted by Angeles (2001), the inclusion of Filipino men and masculinities in gender studies is rather limited and almost always a myopic unmasking of androcentric assumptions, reducing men as problematic. This gives the thrust a premature and limited view of the diverse experiences and complexities of Filipino masculinities. Angeles (2001) further asserts that bringing in men and masculinities within gender studies would not only make the scholarship holistic but also deepen the understanding and offer more insight into the groundwork laid by Filipino feminists regarding gender identities and relations in the Philippines.

Some of the developments in masculine studies in the Philippines are ventured in the person of Allen Tan (1994), which sheds light on a crucial aspect of family creation, specifically highlighting the role of fathers in this process. Tan's (1994) framework categorizes fathers into four distinct typologies: procreators, dilettantes, determinative, and generative. This typology categorizes men into the complex ways a father would navigate his ideals and aspirations for his family. In his work, Tan (1994) extends his analysis by hypothesizing about the underlying characteristics and sociocultural precursors that contribute to the development of each fathering style.

Pingol (2001, as cited in McKay, 2011), in her study based on 50 interviews with men in the Ilocos region of the Philippines, sheds nuanced light on Filipino male identity, identifying four broad categories capturing the diverse expectations and ideals surrounding masculinity. The "Prominent" category emphasizes a man's role as the provider and breadwinner for his family and achieving career success. In contrast, the "Ideal" category paints a more multi-faceted picture of admirable manly virtues - encompassing qualities like leadership, intelligence, integrity, helpfulness, decency, law-abidingness, trustworthiness, and understanding. The "Other" category focused more on outward markers like virility, physical strength, and attractiveness. Finally, the "Lesser extent" category involved risk-taking behaviors like gambling or affairs, but upholding family responsibility. Pingol's rich, interview-based research provides a rare, in-depth exploration of masculine norms in this cultural context, suggesting the local ideal of manhood centered on being a capable provider, a virile lover, and a sexual partner, as well as a strong patriarchal authority figure.

Contemporary research on masculinity in the Philippine context focuses on rethinking masculine identities. Salazar (2019) examined the *tambay* and appropriated its concept in its seemingly subtle attempt to redefine the masculine ideals in the country. The term presents a profound notion in the creation of gender constructs in the Filipino caricature of masculinity. In a similar vein, De Chavez and Pacheco (2020) examined President Duterte's brand of populism and the creation of an emergent political masculinity mostly embedded in his hypermasculine discourse through his speeches, interviews, and media appearances.

While the feminist critique rightly centers on patriarchy as a system of male dominance over women, the diverse lived experiences of Filipino men under this same patriarchal system remain underexplored. As the women's liberation movement gained traction in the mid-20th century, some men began questioning their own gendered positions, giving rise to the men's liberation movement (Messner, 1998). This emerged from the idea that patriarchal structures not only oppressed women but also confined men to restrictive "male sex roles" (Messner, 1998). However, this movement soon became two camps (Messner, 1998). On one side was the profeminist/anti-sexist branch, which viewed men's hardships as the "costs" of wielding patriarchal power. In contrast, the anti-feminist men's rights movement rejected theories of patriarchy, claiming "male privilege is a myth" and that men faced more significant disadvantages than women (Messner, 1998).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This study aligns with the profeminist perspective by examining how patriarchal expectations also oppress and constrain Filipino men's lives while avoiding the oppositional anti-feminist stance. However, attempts to integrate masculinities into feminist theorizing have met some skepticism. Parcon (2022) cautions that the inclusion of male/masculine perspectives in feminist discourse risks becoming "hostage by 'masculine thinking' that inevitably frames the issues from a male-centered worldview, potentially silencing feminist voices" (p.72). He argues masculine discourses have often excluded women's standpoints as 'different' individual experiences (Parcon, 2022). While such concerns are valid, Biana (2015) cites Parcon's (2022) work as creating an avenue for a more holistic portrayal of masculinities. This study seeks to navigate this tension by centering the analysis on how patriarchal norms and masculinity hierarchies oppress not just women but also police and marginalize Filipino men who diverge from hegemonic masculine ideals.

Reeser (2010, cited in Widodo & Mochtar, 2023) asserts that masculinity is constructed through four social norms: images, myths, discourses, and practices. Literature serves as a discursive medium that wields the power to shape certain ideologies, reflecting a society's cultural norms and practices. Consequently, this study deems it essential to analyze literary works that abundantly represent and depict masculinity to examine this concept in depth. While the extant literatures cited offer valuable insights into different dimensions of Filipino

masculinities, they predominantly analyze masculinity through specific contexts like fatherhood roles or locally constructed masculine ideals. Furthermore, much of the existing scholarship takes an ethnographic or discursive approach in exploring these gendered experiences. What remains underexamined is how Filipino men's lives are policed, constrained, and subordinated by the overarching system of patriarchal power relations and hegemonic notions of masculinity operating in Philippine society. Employing a critical masculinity studies lens, particularly Connell's (1995) theory of hegemonic masculinity that elucidates masculine hierarchies, this study investigates the ways patriarchal ideologies serve to emasculate and marginalize Filipino men who do not conform to the narrow ideals of dominant masculine scripts depicted in literary works that reflect the nation's realities.

Hence, the five literary works selected for this study were purposely chosen to investigate the underexplored phenomenon of masculine struggles against patriarchy. Central to the analysis of this study were the five literary pieces written by Filipino authors. The roster of chosen works is composed of four short stories and one poem - (a) Nick Joaquin's "Three Generations" (2017), (b) Arturo Rotor's "Dahong Palay" (2013), (c) J. Neil Garcia's "The Conversion" (2005), and (d) Emigdio Enriquez's "The Doll" (1953) and (e) Deogracias Rosario's "Walang Panginoon" (2005).

1. In Nick Joaquin's "*Three Generations*," the cyclical nature of domestic violence and generational trauma is laid bare as a son is forced to confront his own abusive upbringing when his ailing father demands the return of a mistress.
2. Arturo Rotor's "*Dahong Palay*" challenges assumptions about masculine strength, following an unassuming young man who must prove his inner fortitude by heroically saving a woman from a venomous snake bite.
3. J. Neil Garcia's haunting poem "*The Conversion*" provides disturbing context on the brutalities of conversion therapy by narrating how a young boy's feminine identity is violently suppressed through a horrific ritual of repeated drownings.
4. Emigdio Enriquez's "*The Doll*" also touches on rigid gender norms imposed on youth, chronicling how a young boy's innocent play with a doll results in shattering paternal disapproval that shapes his future desires.
5. Finally, Deogracias Rosario's "*Walang Panginoon*" lays bare the stark class divides in Philippine society through the lens of a poor man's family exploitation at the hands of the wealthy patriarchal landowner, culminating in an act of defiant revenge that symbolizes an uprising against oppression.

Collectively, these literary works provide a vital sociocultural context for understanding deep-rooted issues surrounding masculinity, gender roles, domestic violence, class conflicts, and generational trauma in the Philippine experience. Via purposive sampling, the study utilized these selected literary pieces as they depict the intricacies of the male crisis against patriarchy. These texts capture the different masculinity types outlined in Connell's (1995) theory of hegemonic masculinity - the idealized hegemonic model, as well as the subordinated, complicit, and marginalized masculinities that exist in relation to the dominant gender ideology. By examining such nuanced portrayals of masculinity, the study underscores a crucial yet often overlooked dimension of gendered politics - the male oppression under patriarchy that these literary works lay bare.

METHOD

This study adopted the qualitative content analysis design. Renz et al. (2018) show that content analysis can yield a significant understanding of cultural and historical phenomena by virtue of its examination of written materials. Using critical content analysis allowed the study to examine the unorthodox phenomena of the male struggle against patriarchy. The study drew on Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework of thematic analysis to process and analyze the data at hand. The study of determining the male struggles against patriarchy guided by feminist ethos was done through inductive thematic analysis. In inductive thematic analysis, the researcher's

perspective, disciplinary expertise, and understanding of knowledge play a significant role in shaping the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

Scope and Limitation

It is worth noting that the cited literary works are sourced from anthologies, textbooks, and published books that document these narratives. Some, if not most, of the data are difficult to trace back to their original publication, as most of the works were published in the early to late 20th century. These stories, however, are documented in full by cited anthologies, textbooks, and published books.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part shows the analysis of the myriads of struggles and consequences of patriarchy faced by the male characters present and manifested in the data sources. The themes generated constitute the coding process informed by the research aims and objectives. Following an inductive coding process, initial codes are categorized into chunks, further amassed into workable themes. The results yielded are logically arranged to describe the phenomena of patriarchy and the gradual socialization and internalization of its norms.

Table 1. Manifestations of male struggle against patriarchy

Theme	Category	Literary Works
Mother as Cultivator of Feminine Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Exposure to Feminine Expressions ● Learning Emotional Intelligence and caregiving ● Bond with the Mother 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Doll ● The Conversion
Home as the Origin of Patriarchy and Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physical and Psychological Abuse by the Father ● Patriarchal Scripts of Masculinity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Doll ● The Conversion ● Three Generations
Psychological Struggles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Trauma-Induced Identity Loss ● Self-Esteem And Social Anxiety ● Inner Conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Conversion ● Dahong Palay ● Walang Panginoon ● Three Generations
Societal Marginalization and Oppression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stigma and Discrimination ● Systemic Oppression and Struggle for Justice ● Societal Construction of Masculinity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dahong Palay ● Walang Panginoon ● The Doll
Cycle of Patriarchal Rule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Perpetuation of Violence and Abuse ● Normalization and Imprint of Patriarchal Norms ● Subjugation of Women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Conversion ● Walang Panginoon ● Three Generations ● The Doll

Mother as the Cultivator of Feminine Values

The first theme underscores the importance of mothers, who play an essential role as cultivators of feminine values and nurturers of children from an early age. In essence, mothers served as the arbiters of feminine values by introducing their sons to inherently feminine traits, such as tending, empathy, care, and compassion. As maintained by Lipowska et al. (2016), during early development, primary caregivers establish the initial and

most pivotal foundation for the cultivation of gender stereotypes in children. The behaviors, beliefs, and emotional responses modeled by parents are largely internalized by their offspring. In several literary works, mothers are depicted nurturing less restrictive notions of gender roles by exposing their sons to traditionally feminine domains. This exposure helps cultivate qualities like empathy, caregiving, and emotional intelligence in the young male characters.

In the short story "The Doll," Narciso's exploration of femininity begins when he discovers his mother's old rag dolls. Despite his father's disapproval, Narciso's mother supports his interest, even fashioning a dress for the doll at his request:

I didn't give him that doll,' Doña Enchay explained hastily. 'He happened upon it in my aparador when I was clearing it. He took pity on it and drew it out. He said it looked very unhappy because it was naked and lonely. He asked me to make a dress for it (Enriquez, 1981, p. 1064).

Narciso's request for a dress for his doll hints at wanting to understand femininity. Taking pity on the doll's state and wanting it comfortable shows innate nurturing. His mother fosters this through unconditional care, letting interests unfold freely across genders. This formative exposure cultivates Narciso's innate empathy and caregiving instincts, traditionally feminine virtues. His mother's nurturing facilitates an emotional intelligence essential for building relationships.

In "The Conversion" by Garcia (2005), the persona secretly wears his deceased mother's clothing, depicting a complex relationship. The poem notes the persona's pierced ears, alluding to a past of wearing earrings: "I had to stop wearing my dead mother's clothes. In the mirror I watched the holes on my ears grow smaller" (Garcia, 2005, p.38).

Like Narciso finding solace in his mother's rag dolls in "The Doll," the persona takes comfort in his mother's garments. The mention of pierced ears hints at further exploring femininity, as wearing earrings correlates to women's fashion. This behavior and Narciso's fondness for dolls exemplify "gender nonconforming behavior," or actions perceived as defying norms (Bennett et al., 2019). Society frowned upon Narciso's doll playing and the persona's mother-inspired acts. Both tapped into femininity through maternal influences, challenging traditional expectations of boys.

Home as the Origin of Patriarchy

This theme captures the emergence of patriarchy in the private spheres ruled by a dominating patriarchal figure. The codes aggregated underpin the adverse birth of patriarchy, how it burgeons and poisons every member of a particular household. In addition, this theme entails the lethal power of a patriarchal father and how he influences demands and subjugates his kin to submission. Within the study's context, much emphasis is given to the sons- who directly suffered at the hands of fathers who were often seen as rulers and omnipotent. They often found themselves under the brutal thumb of fathers who reign supreme, an authoritarian figure who demands submission and enforces patriarchal ideologies upon their family members. Metaphorically, as depicted in the stories, the home is revealed to be the breeding ground of patriarchal norms, with fathers as the gatekeepers of power and enforcers of traditional gender roles.

Fathers hold significant influence over their sons' development and well-being. However, this relationship can be negatively impacted if a father adheres to patriarchal and traditional views of masculinity. Two stories, "The Doll" and "The Conversion," portray fathers attempting to impose strict masculine identities onto their sons through various means. This perspective mirrors research explaining how inflexible gender norms stem from the belief that roles are biologically determined rather than socially constructed (Levtov et al., 2015).

Both fathers exhibit "deterministic" behaviors according to Tan's (1994) typology, seeing themselves as molders shaping sons into their ideals through abuse, demands, and rejection of feminine tendencies. In "The Doll," the father, Don Endong, is upset finding his son playing with a doll, which he believes is inappropriate for boys. He renames the child "Boy" and throws out the doll, demonstrating biological determinism in claiming the male body dictates one's role and interests (Rose, 1982, as cited in Greene, 2020). As one cited segment illustrates:

We'll call him Boy. He is my son. A male. The offspring of a male. A man is fashioned by heredity and environment. I've given him enough red for his blood, but a lot of good it will do him with the kind of environment you are giving him (Enriquez, 1981, p.1064)

Similarly, in "The Conversion," the father aggressively questions his son's gender, refusing to accept a feminine self-identification and causing the son physical distress through his rigid binary views (Levtov et al., 2015). As another cited segment portrays:

"Father kept booming, Girl or Boy.
I thought about it and squealed, Girl.
Water curled under my nose.
When I rose the same two words from father (Garcia, 2005, p.38)"

This strict policing of sons' identities replicates patriarchal norms that prioritize masculine dominance rather than acknowledging individuals' complexities (Tan, 1994). When Narciso expresses a desire for the priesthood, Don Endong rejects this based on the belief that men should not engage in traditionally feminine roles like wearing skirts (DeFranc & Mahalik, 2002, as cited in Levtov et al., 2015).

Beyond influencing identities, fathers also assert power through physical and psychological abuse. In "Three Generations," abuse is normalized as Celo recalls his violent father, who whipped and verbally degraded him. As one cited segment describes: "He stared instead at his hands, huge, calloused, and ugly, and suddenly they were his father's hands he was seeing, and he was a little boy that cowered beneath them and the whip they held" (Joaquin, 2017, p. 2).

For Tan (1994), deterministic fathers actively seek to control their child's destiny and steer him towards definite directions. Both fathers are controlling and rigid, forcing their children into specific paths according to their own wishes and plans without considering the children's desires or potential. Ultimately, Tan (1994) asserts that "The determinative father sees himself as a MOLDER of men." (p. 31).

Psychological Struggles

Psychological struggles of men towards masculinity encompass the internal challenges and conflicts that men face when they conform to traditional masculine norms and behaviors that are widely accepted in society. These struggles arise from societal expectations, cultural norms, and personal beliefs about masculinity.

In the poem, *The Conversion*, the persona is forcibly placed inside a metal drum by their family. The persona's father, uncles, and neighbors play significant roles in the traumatic experience by the persona. They exert dominance and control over the persona, subjecting them to physical and emotional abuse. The persona's sense of self is stripped away, as they are objectified, degraded, and forced to conform to the expectations and desires of others. As the traumatic incident unfolds, the persona's gender identity becomes a focal point. He is coerced into declaring himself as a boy, conforming to societal expectations, and rejecting his previous identity. This forced transformation contributes to a sense of identity loss and the internal conflict between his authentic self.

I sometimes think of the girl
 Who drowned somewhere in a dream many dreams ago.
 I see her at night with bubbles
 Springing like flowers from her nose.
 She is dying, and before she sinks, I try to touch
 Her open face. But the water learns
 To heal itself and closes around her like a wound.
 I should feel sorry but I drown myself in gin before I can.
 Better off dead, I say to myself (Garcia, 2005, p.39).

The reference to the girl who drowned in a dream represents the persona's lost and buried self, submerged in the depths of his traumatic experiences. "The Conversion" portrays trauma-induced identity loss through the persona's experience of coercion, abuse, and the internal struggle to reconcile his true self with the roles imposed upon him.

Men who have experienced traumatic events can undergo a disruption in their sense of identity, including their understanding of masculinity. The trauma may challenge their beliefs, values, and self-perception, leading to a loss of connection with their previous sense of self. This can result in confusion, self-doubt, and a struggle to reconstruct their identity within the framework of traditional masculinity.

The interplay between self-esteem and social anxiety in the context of masculinity can create a cycle of negative thoughts and behaviors. Low self-esteem can contribute to social anxiety, as individuals may fear rejection, judgment, or criticism for not meeting societal expectations of masculinity. At the same time, social anxiety can further erode self-esteem, as men may perceive their anxiety symptoms as signs of weakness or failure. Such is the case of Sebio in Rotor's *Dahong Palay*. He is characterized as being physically deficient in comparison to his peers and was made fun of because of his apparent infirmity. Thriving in a humble community of blue-collar workers, his peers revealed their ability to finesse their physical strength and prowess, a quality he seems incapable of. During one of their huddles, they engaged in a display of strength where Sebio became the laughingstock.

Sebio felt himself growing hot all over. Pablo had challenged him; everybody had heard the challenge. Although his eyes were intent on his work he could feel everybody looking at him (Rotor, 2013, p. 185). ...compete with him, which he knew would be another trial before a mocking, unsympathetic crowd – another effort doomed to failure (Rotor, 2013, p.185).

These lines depict Sebio's struggle with self-esteem and social anxiety. He is keenly aware of the attention and judgment of others, leading to feelings of vulnerability, self-doubt, and fear of failure. The perception of a mocking and unsympathetic crowd exacerbates his anxieties, making it difficult for him to assert himself and feel confident in his abilities.

Men often experience inner conflict when adhering to traditional masculine norms and expressing their authentic emotions. Society often expects men to be strong, stoic, and unemotional, which can create an internal struggle between conforming to these expectations and embracing their full range of emotions. This conflict can lead to the suppression of emotions. Such is the case in the character of Marcos in "Walang Panginoon," evidenced in the following cited segment:

Si Marcos ay hindi kumibo. Samantalang pinapangaralan siya ng kanyang ina, ang mga mata niyang galling sa pagkapikit kaya't nanlabo pa't walang ilaw ay dahan-dahang sinisiputan ng ningas, saka manlilisik at mag-aapoy. Hindi rin siya sumasagot. Hindi rin siya nagsasalita. Subali't sa kanyang sarili, sa kanyang dibdib, sa kanyang kaluluwa ay may pangungusap, may nagsasalita (Rosario, 2005, p.131)

[Marcos remained silent. While his mother was lecturing him, his eyes, which were still recovering from being shut, gradually grew hazy in the absence of light, flickering with a dim glow, then gleaming and kindling. He didn't respond either. He didn't speak. However, within himself, in his heart, in his soul, there was a statement, someone speaking."]

These lines depict Marcos's inner conflict between his personal emotions and the expectations imposed upon him by societal and religious norms. He suppresses his true feelings, possibly due to a conflict between his own beliefs or desires and the traditional customs and rituals surrounding the bell tolling. His silence and the hidden dialogue within himself reflect the suppression of his emotions as he struggles to navigate the conflicting demands placed upon him.

Men may also develop learned helplessness as a result of societal conditioning and the reinforcement of traditional gender roles. When men perceive that their efforts to express their emotions, seek help, or challenge societal expectations are met with resistance or invalidation, they may learn to feel helpless and powerless in their ability to change or navigate these expectations. This learned helplessness can contribute to a sense of resignation, passivity, and a feeling of being trapped in a cycle of conforming to expectations that may not align with their true selves.

In a similar vein, *Monzon* in "Three Generation" felt these mental constraints as he grappled with his son's profound devotion to becoming a priest, a calling he once declined.

Monzon knelt down himself, and tried to compose his mind to prayer, but there was suddenly, painfully, out of his very heart, a sharp, hot, rushing, jealous bitterness toward that devout young man praying so earnestly over there. He did not understand the feeling. He did not want to understand it. Enough that this thing was clear: that he hated his son for being able to kneel there, submitted utterly to his God. Yet why should he resent that so bitterly? (Joaquin, 2017, p.3).

These lines illustrate Monzon's internal struggle and learned helplessness. He does not understand his bitter resentment towards his devout son but cannot deny the intense hatred he feels. This inner conflict arises from recognizing that he has been unable to find the same devotion and submission to God that his son exhibits. Despite his virtuous efforts, he remains trapped in a cycle of conforming to expectations that conflict with finding inner peace.

Research by Emslie et al. (2006) found that men may encounter difficulties in acknowledging and seeking help for depressive symptoms, as this contradicts norms of emotional control and invulnerability associated with masculinity. Expressing emotions, a common symptom of depression is seen as a feminine quality that threatens masculinity. Similarly, the lack of control and feelings of weakness in depression conflict with masculine competence and strength. As a result, men may deny depression to uphold masculine ideals.

Societal Marginalization and Oppression

This theme revolves around individuals or groups within a society that often suffer from disadvantages, social exclusion, and various forms of oppression due to their identity, characteristics, or circumstances. This

originates from deeply entrenched patriarchal systems, power dynamics, and stereotypes, particularly affecting the male characters who grapple with societal perceptions of masculinity. The perpetuation of this oppression is driven by power dynamics and privileges. Within the study context, it emphasizes the impact of societal standards and rigid gender roles. While conforming to these norms provides advantages, those who deviate from them experience marginalization and oppression.

In the short story "Dahong Palay," these remarks made about Sebio underscore the pervasive prejudice and discrimination prevalent in society. The judgmental language and derogatory tone used to describe Sebio's appearance and physical abilities reveal deep-seated biases and societal expectations surrounding masculinity and physical prowess.

"He was one of those boys who, the village people said, "grew too fast." "No wonder those who knew him called him Sebio Pasmado (Sebio the weakling) because of his slight figure, his spindle shanks, his timidity (Rotor, 2013, p.180)"

"What strength can there be in those puny arms, in that flat chest?" He would hear people say around him (Rotor, 2013, p. 181)"

This stigmatization implies that he differs from his peers and does not conform to society's expectations for men. His choices become constrained, and his integration into the community is hindered by the stigma and discrimination he experiences, which deprives him of fair treatment and the chance to demonstrate his true worth. As Prentice and Carranza (2002) asserted, as women are supposed to be strong and independent, men are regarded as strong and independent in line with society's expectations. The short story reinforces the societal construction of masculinity that values specific physical characteristics as manifestations of manliness; hence, by abjecting Sebio's physical appearance, it shows how they cast off those individuals who do not conform to the societal standard of masculinity. Sivakumar and Manimekalai (2021) argued that masculinity is not a single, uniform concept. Instead, it is shaped by sociocultural factors, including caste or race, socioeconomic class, whether one lives in an urban or rural area, geographical boundaries, family influences, and other social variables.

In another story, "The Doll," this line implies that Don Endong decides to call his son, Narciso, "Boy." By using this name, his father's authority in naming indicates his control over the narrative of Narciso's identity. "We'll call him Boy...." Don Endong told his wife in a tone as crowy as roosters after pecking a hen" (Enriquez, 1981, p. 1064).

In addition, it reflects how language can enforce identity and contribute to the societal construction of masculinity. By assigning the name "Boy" to the child, Don Endong establishes a specific role and identity for the child based on gender. This act of naming implies that the child's gender will be a significant aspect of their identity, potentially shaping their behavior, expectations, and societal roles, highlighting how language can be a tool for patriarchal socialization and enforcing expectations related to masculinity.

The cited scenarios depict that men engage in physical feats and demonstrations of strength within the performative arena of masculinity. It emphasizes the importance placed on physical prowess within societal expectations of masculinity, as well as the disbelief of others, which may contribute to the individual's desire to demonstrate and prove their strength. The fact that others find it hard to believe the male character's feats contribute to the performative aspect of masculinity.

In the "Walang Panginoon," Marcos grapples with the pursuit of justice while enduring exploitation and acts of violence at the hands of the ruling class.

Pagdaramdam at panghihinayang ang ngumatngat sa kanyang puso. Gaanong pagod ang kanyang pinuhunan upang ang palay nila'y magbungang mabuti? Saka ngayo'y pakikinabangan at matutungo lamang sa ibang kamay (Rosario, 2005, p.135)

[Sorrow and regret rose in his heart. How much effort did he invest so that their rice would bear good fruit? Then it will only be used and be owned by other hands.]

Nagunita rin ni Marcos ang marami pang ibang kasama, katulad din niya, na sa kamay ng mayamang si Don Teong ay walang iniwan sa mga leeg na manok na unti-unting sinasakal hanggang makitil ang hininga sa hangad na mahamig na lahat ang kayamananang gayong minana sa kanilang mga ninuno ay iba ngayon ang may-ari at nagbubuwis pa (Rosario, 2005, pp.135-136)

[Marcos also remembered many other comrades, like him, who in the hands of the rich Don Teong left nothing in the necks of the chickens who were gradually strangled until their breath was taken away in the desire to cool down all the wealth that was inherited from their ancestors are now owned by other and still pay taxes.]

The extracted lines from the story entail Marco's feelings, revealing his personal experiences of injustice and disappointment. He puts a lot of effort and money into cultivating their rice crop, but he gets to witness the results of his labor taken away and exploited by his abusive landlord. This emphasizes the character's sense of loss and inherent inequality in the system. His investment is an embodiment of the struggle and sacrifices made by individuals within the community to maintain their livelihood and survive under oppressive conditions. Thus, this starkly highlights the inherent inequality in the system, with resources and productivity being exploited by the privileged while marginalized individuals have little influence over their hardships. This unequal distribution of benefits illustrates how the system is structured by perpetuating economic and social disparities between the ruling class and the lower strata of society.

Cycle of Patriarchal Rule

This theme reveals the damaging and cyclical nature of violence and abuse within a patriarchal system, especially within the household. This also highlights the role of societal norms and expectations, such as the rigid definition of masculinity, in contributing to the perpetuation of violence and abuse. Additionally, it sheds light on the complex dynamics involved, including the interplay between oppressors and the oppressed, and for those children who grow up experiencing violence and abuse from their dominant and authoritative fathers who enforce traditional gender roles, demand submission, and exercise control over family members. Over time, these sons internalized these patriarchal norms and values, accepting them as the standard way of conducting themselves within the family and society, leading to subordination and oppression of women and children.

In the short story "The Conversion," the perpetuation of violence and abuse is evident in the persona's traumatic past, marked by his father's forced conversion, which leads him to conform to a narrow definition of masculinity that involves aggression and domination.

It does not hurt to show who is the man
A woman needs some talking sense into
If not, I hit her in the mouth to learn her
Everytime swill drips from her shredded lips (Garcia, 2005, pp. 38-39)

This highlights how he adopts a dominant form of masculinity, mirroring his father's behavior and imposing it on his wife. This reveals how patriarchal standards become ingrained in one's identity and shows how patriarchal upbringing is being transferred from one generation to another. Morrell et al. (2012) and Ratele

(2015) found that some men faced ongoing public and domestic assaults, leading them to adopt violent ways themselves over time. This suggests that violence may be transferred intergenerationally as a result of such experiences, affecting how masculinity and behaviors are learned.

The short story "Walang Panginoon" shows the nature of colonial rule in the narrative, where exploitation, oppression, and violence are prevalent in the society. Marcos's father passed away as a result of his deep resentment towards Don Teong, their landlord, and his sibling likewise perished while working in Don Teong's household. The oppressive behavior exhibited by Don Teong has an enduring impact on Marcos and his family, resulting in more instances of revenge.

"Kailangang maputol ang kalupitang ito!" Ang tila pagsumpa sa harap ng katalagahang ginawa ni Marcos" (Rosario, 2005, p 136).

[This cruelty must be stopped!" The seeming curse in front of what Marcos actually did.]

"Inihahanda ko po iyon sa pagiging panginoon natin, paris ni Don Teong," ang nakatawang sagot ng anak. "Kung tayo po'y nakaalis na rito, tayo'y magiging malaya," ang tila wala sa loob na tugon ng anak" (Rosario, 2005, p 136).

[I'm preparing that for our master, Don Teong's," answered the son with a laugh. "If we can get out of here, we will be free," was the son's apparently absent-minded response.]

Ang totoo, ang naturang kalabaw ni Marcos ay nakapugal sa hanggahan ng lupang sarili ni Don Teong. Kung takipsilim ay isinusuot na lahat ni Marcos ang pulinas, ang gora, at ang suwiter, saka dala ang latigong katulad ng pamalo ni Don Teong. Pagdating niya sa pook na kinapupugalan ay saka aasbaran ng palo ang kalabaw hanggang sa ito'y umuungol na ang alingawngaw ay abot hanggang sa kalagitnaan ng bayan (Rosario, 2005, p 136).

[The truth is, Marcos' buffalo is anchored at the border of Don Teong's own land. When it's dusk, Marcos puts on his hat, hat, and sweater and carries a whip similar to Don Teong's cane. When he arrived at the place to be slaughtered, he would hit the buffalo with a stick until it roared so that the rumor reached the middle of the town.]

Marcos is portrayed as someone who is getting ready to assume and take on the persona of Don Teong, wearing his clothes and stuff to seek vengeance since Marcos cannot take all the wrongdoings that Don Teong did to them. To mimic Don Teong's appearance and exude a similar sense of power, Marcos obtained specific items like a whip, boots, and a suit. As a result, it becomes evident that Marcos buffalo is mistreated while on Don Teong's land. When Marcos is alone, he channels his anger towards Don Teong onto the buffalo, subjecting it to fits of rage and cruelly striking it, causing the poor animal to howl in agony, the sound echoing throughout the town. Marcos sought retribution against the oppressive figure, Don Teong, by using the buffalo. His motivation stemmed from the deaths of his loved ones caused by Don Teong, as well as the mistreatment and complete subjugation endured by his family.

Subalit isang hapon, samantalang payapang inihahanda ng mag-ina ang kanilang pag-alis, walang iniwan sa putok ng bulkan ang balitang kumalat sa bayan na si Don Teong ay namatay sa pagkasuwag ng kalabaw. Sinabi ng mga nakakita na pagkakita pa lamang ng kalabaw kay Don Teong ay tila may sinumpang galit sapagka't bigla na lamang sinibad ang matanda at nasapol ang kalamnan ng sikmura ng matulis na sungay ng hayop. Pagkasikwat sa katawan ng asendero ay tumilapon pa sa itaas at paglagpak ay sinalo naman ng kabilang sungay. Ang katawan ni Don Teong ay halos lasug-lasog nang iuwi sa bayan, wasak ang suwiter sa katawan at saka ang pulinas. Kumilos agad ang maykapangyarihan upang gumawa ng kailangan pagsisiyasat subali't ang lahat ng matuwid ay nawalan ng halaga sa hindi kumikilos na ayos ng kalabaw na animo'y wala sa loob ang ginawa niyang napakalaking pagkakasala (Rosario, 2005, p 136).

[But one afternoon, while the mother and son were peacefully preparing for their departure, the news spread through the town that Don Teong had died after being mauled by a buffalo. Those who saw it said that as soon as the buffalo saw Don Teong, it seemed to have cursed anger because it suddenly attacked the old man, and the animal's sharp horn pierced his stomach muscle. After twisting the body of the ascender, it was thrown up and caught by the other horn. Don Teong's body was almost in tatters when he was brought home; the sweater on his body and the clothes were ruined. The powerful acted immediately to make the necessary investigation, but all the authorities were dumbfounded by the mundane. The buffalo seemed as if he did not understand the great crime he had committed.]

As Marcos embarked on his mission, he was burdened with anger and resentment. However, he mustered all his rage and bravery to confront Don Teong in revelation. Ultimately, his portrayal highlights Marcos's innate strength and determination as he fights for his rights and freedom, especially the justice he wants to serve. Connell (2013, as cited in Mshweshwe, 2020) posits hegemonic masculinity theory may help explain the link between domestic violence and socioeconomic status. Specifically, men with less wealth and power in society may adopt more violent behaviors as a way to assert a form of masculine dominance within the home due to feeling their masculinity is threatened or weak in other areas of life. This action symbolizes a vicious cycle of violence and abuse, where Marcos, aspiring to become a master, mimics the behavior of his oppressor. The fear Marcos's mother expresses about a potential encounter between Marcos and Don Teong highlights the volatile nature of their relationship.

Furthermore, the mention of Marcos and his buffalo exchanging glances suggests a possible mutual recognition or understanding of the buffalo's resentment towards Don Teong. This ambiguity serves to emphasize the complexities involved in perpetuating violence and abuse, raising questions about the relationship between oppressors and oppressed as well as the potential for those who endure abuse to perpetuate it themselves. From another perspective, Marcos's longing for revenge symbolizes a risky route that fuels an ongoing cycle of violence. Although his anger is reasonable and comprehensible, the pursuit of revenge can result in additional pain and tragedy. This prompts us to consider the effectiveness and ethical aspects of violence to confront oppression.

In the story "Three Generations," Celo's mother and sister endure severe mistreatment, with the women being subjected to brutal physical and emotional abuse, highlighting the cycle of violence perpetuated in their family. This underscores how patriarchal values and norms influence family dynamics, shaping the role of women as submissive and powerless. Mshweshwe (2020) found that in some cultures, traditional views of gender roles continue to prevail in ways that enable domestic violence. For example, notions that the husband should lead the family and enforce normative gender behavior can contribute to the acceptance of men using violence against wives who are seen as transgressing their expected roles. The notion of male dominance and leadership in marriage is considered an important part of relationship functioning in these contexts (Tonsing & Tonsing, 2019, as cited in Mshweshwe, 2020).

Hence, the story also explores how Celo Monzon's unhappy youth, because of his father's violence, influences his belief in the acceptability of using physical harm as a disciplinary measure towards his son Chitong.

They were standing almost face to face. Suddenly, the father lifted his clenched fist and struck the boy in the face. "Not in the face, father!" the boy cried out, lifting his hands too late to shield himself; the blow had already fallen (Joaquin, 2017, p.15).

Celo Monzon uses force to harm Chitong, demonstrated by hitting him in the face, which shows physical violence as an extreme display of authority. This act of aggression reveals Celo's inclination to use force to assert his dominance and control over his son, emphasizing a power dynamic rooted in abuse.

In another story, "The Doll," Doña Enchay grapples with the oppressive dynamics of patriarchy in her marriage. Her husband, Don Endong, consistently subjugates her through rigid adherence to traditional gender roles and his insistence on asserting his dominance. Doña Enchay's efforts to assert her belief or defend herself against her husband's patriarchal views are met with ridicule and dismissal, further emphasizing her subordinate position in the family. Bates (2022) asserts that within patriarchal societies, women are socialized to dismiss, downplay, or make excuses for their own experiences. This illustrates the power dynamics within patriarchal households, where male dominance suppresses women's agency and desire. Additionally, according to Sultana (2012), the ways society is set up that favor men over women (like patriarchal institutions and relationships) are responsible for women having lower or less important status. These systems often make it hard for women to advance in society.

Moreover, Narciso's father strongly disapproves of his feminine behavior and destroys a doll in a fit of rage. This traumatic event deeply left a lasting emotional scar that influenced him throughout his formative years. In a later encounter with a woman, the boy inexplicably ends up killing her using the same method his father used to destroy the doll.

Lying at his feet before him was a woman, naked and broken. But a short while before, under the sheet of night, she was cradled in his arms, receiving the reverence of his kisses. Now, under the eye of light, she was but a limp mass of woman flesh, sprawled grotesquely on the floor, an upper limb twisted behind her another flung across her face as if to hide the shame of her disaster (Enriquez, 1981, p. 1071).

This shows how exposure to violence can stimulate violence and how the dehumanizing and commodification of both the woman and the doll contribute to the perpetuation of abusive behavior. These results were foreseeable, given prior research showing a link between exposure to violence and violent behavior. Veronese et al. (2022) found that witnessing aggression encourages aggressive responses. Similarly, several other studies showed that seeing violence makes people more prone to risky or hostile actions.

Kaya namatay ang ama ni Marcos ay dahil sa malaking sama ng loob kay Don Teong. Ang kapatid niya'y namatay din sa paglilingkod sa bahay nito, at higit sa lahat, nalaman niyang kaya namatay si Anita ay sapagka't natutop ng ama nakipagtagpo minsan sa kanya sa loob ng halamanan, isang gabing maliwanag ang buwan. Saka ngayo'y paalisin naman sila sa kanilang bahay at lupang binubuwisan? (Rosario, 2005, p 132)

[So Marcos' father died because of a big grudge against Don Teong. His brother also died in the service of his house, and above all, he found out that Anita died because they were caught having a rendezvous, one night when the moon was bright. And now they are forced to give up their land which they paid taxes for?]

In the final short story from "Walang Panginoon," Anita, the daughter of Don Teong, faces a tragic fate when her father discovers her secret relationship with Marcos, a man of lower social status, in the garden one moonlit night. Anita's death is a result of her father's disapproval of her association with Marcos, revealing his strict adherence to social hierarchies and his desire to maintain the family's status. The brutal beating and the deliberate sparing of Anita's eyes symbolize Don Teong's power and control over her, as well as his prejudice against those of lower social standing. Anita's tragic death emerges as a consequence of the clash between societal norms and individual desires, highlighting the oppressive nature of power within familial relationships. She becomes a victim of the rigid social structure that Don Teong upholds, which dictates whom she is allowed to associate with based on their social status. By engaging in a relationship with Marcos, who is considered beneath their class, Anita challenges the established order and faces severe repercussions. In societies that primarily value men over women, any perceived disobedience from females risks provoking violence from males. Guy-Evans (2023) posited that in societies structured around male power and dominance through

coercion, violence is used as a means to uphold women's subordinate status to men. Specifically, these systems are designed to position women as the desirable targets over which men can exert domination and control.

Anita's subjugation by her father illustrates the destructive power dynamics within families, reducing her to an object devoid of agency and individuality. Her silence and submission reflect the internalized oppression many abuse victims experience, rooted in fear of retaliation and societal judgment. According to Dahal et al. (2022), women who experience violence face difficulties in enjoying their legitimate rights, as a significant portion of rights violations and violence occur within the private sphere of the home. They further assert that violence against women not only leads to death and disability but also poses a significant global public health concern. The concept of home as both a physical place and a psychological space is often portrayed positively as representing warmth, security, and an escape from the demands of work and society. In addition to being a place of comfort and security, it is important to recognize that the home can also be a setting where inequitable relations are formed and perpetuated, leading to psychological tensions and even instances of violence (Bowlby et al., 1997). This story reveals the uncomfortable truth that family members can become sources of suffering, challenging the conventional notion of the home as a haven. It sheds light on the darker side of familial relationships and the abuse of power within them.

CONCLUSION

Drawing from the analysis of Philippine literary works published in the early 20th century, a distinct pattern of Philippine masculinity emerges, one that reflects the country's diverse cultural influences and historical periods. This diverse array of literary works, spanning various historical periods and cultural influences, suggests that Philippine masculinity is not a monolithic construct but rather a multi-faceted and evolving concept. The selected stories explore various expressions of masculinity, ranging from traditional patriarchal structures influenced by Spanish colonialism and, in essence, the religion it brought to the subversion of gender norms through the inclusion of effeminate, marginalized, and even complicit masculine narratives. Some masculinities thought to be the ideal are in many ways deconstructed, condemned, or even valorized to an extent by some of the works analyzed. Significantly, the analysis underscores the imperative of verifying and understanding the new masculinities emerging in the 21st-century Philippine context. As societal attitudes and cultural landscapes continue to evolve, it becomes crucial to examine how contemporary Philippine literature portrays and interrogates evolving notions of masculinity.

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