

The Women in Macario Tiu's Fiction: A Rereading

Gerardo G. Betonio

The vocal advocates of women issues are the women themselves. It is rare to find male writers or critics who have bothered to tackle women issues. The more well-known is Isagani R. Cruz who, at the First National Conference on Popular Culture held on 17-18 November 1988 at the Ateneo de Manila University, presented a paper analyzing the language used in the komiks and magazines from a feminist standpoint. He strongly points to the domination of male power over these cultural texts that continue to propagate a stereotype that debases women (Cruz 1991, 119).

In similar vein, I want to critique literary works from a feminist perspective. As a man using the eyes of a woman, I would like to review the works of a man writing about women. For this study I have chosen a Mindanawon male writer who writes about women.

A native of Davao, Dr. Macario D. Tiu published two books in 2003. The first was *Davao 1890-1910: Conquest and Resistance in the Garden of the Gods*, which delves into local history presenting what really happened in Davao in 1890-1910. The second was *Skyrose and Other Stories*, a collection of stories that are, if not anthologized, recipients of awards and distinctions. Tiu's collection can be classified into two categories: the *early years*, stories written in the '70s, and the *later years*, stories written in the late '90s and in the early 2000.

Among the first of his fiction was "Big Day for Gargantua," garnering First Prize in the 1970 *Ateneo* Short Story Writing Contest. It saw print in the *Philippine Graphic Magazine*. "Cynthia" was another First Prize Winner in the 1971 *Ateneo* Short Story Writing Contest judged by the *Tiempos* of Silliman University. "I Am One of the Mountain People," published in *Philippine Graphic Magazine* in 1979, was

anthologized in *Davao Harvest* by Tita Lacambra Ayala and Alfredo Salanga, and in *Short Stories for Social Work Education* edited by Evelina A. Pangalangan. And then there was "Skyrose," first published in 1979 in the Netherlands under pen name Felipe Granrojo. It was reprinted in Buhilaman Publications in Davao in 1990 and anthologized in *Muog* by the University of the Philippines in 1998.

Tiu's works of the later years start with "The Figurine," published in the *Philippine Free Press* on 19 September 1998. "Nanking Store" was printed in the *Philippine Weekly Graphic* on 31 May 1999, winning Third Place in the Philippine Graphic Fiction Awards 2000. Anthologized by Ida Patron in 2002 in *Interactive Reading, Responding to and Writing About Philippine Literature*, it was cited as one of the best Philippine Short Stories in the US-based RP Literature Group. "Ang Bata Nga Dili Matulog" was judged Grand Prize Winner for Short Story in Cebuano in the Carlos Palanca Awards for Literature in 2001. It also appeared in *BISAYA* magazine on 4 September 2002.

It is such a welcome surprise that majority of the lead characters in the collection are women. As a matter of fact, six of the eight stories in this collection are women stories. This initial finding led me to conduct this study by analyzing the kind of women that Tiu writes about in this collection: how his women express their womanness, whether they are repressed, free, disadvantaged, or emancipated.

To provide a proper focus to my study, I concentrate only on the image and situation of the female figures in *Skyrose and Other Stories*, using the following questions as guide:

1. Who are the female figures in the stories and how do they look at themselves?
2. To what extent are the other characters representative of the society's view of the female figures?
3. What images and symbols are employed in portraying the female figures in the stories?

Interpretative Rereading

In analyzing the central female figures in the women stories of *Skyrose*, I ground my study mainly on Luce Irigaray's interpretative rereading of discourse (Irigaray 1994c, 123). Irigaray belongs to the third phase of women's literary development. According to Elaine Showalter, there

are three historical phases: "the 'feminine' (1840-80), during which women writers imitated the dominant tradition; the 'feminist' (1880-1920), during which women advocated minority rights, and the 'female' (1920-present), during which dependency on opposition – that is, on uncovering misogyny in male texts – is being replaced by a rediscovery of women's texts and women" (as cited by Guerin 1999, 198).

Irigaray's theory is an investigation of language. Since society has privileged the male sex, what is imposed as a universal law in society is man's system, thinking, and language. As a result, women are disadvantaged because they are gauged by the standards of male society. They are oppressed because they do not have their own voice.

In a conference on women in Florence on 11 May 1986, Irigaray proclaims:

For me, working on language does not correspond to a matter of statistical surveys, nor to the registration of a *de facto* state. I use the scientific apparatus to bring out certain tendencies that we habitually misrecognize, forget. But can we speak and be conscious of the form, the forms of our discourse? Not necessarily. Indeed, it seems impossible in the immediate. Hence, the need for an investigation.

Its project is to reveal who is speaking, to whom, about what, with what means. In technical terms, it means that it is a matter of uncovering the dynamics of the utterance (enonciation) underlying the statements (enonces) produced. Beneath what is being said, it is possible to discover the subject, the subject's economy, potential energy, relations with the other and the world. The subject may be masked, bogged down, buried, covered up, paralysed, or may be engendered, generated, may become and grow through speech (en parlant). (Irigaray 1994a, 147)

This theory on the interpretative rereading of discourse is the framework of my study. It is the feminist approach that inspects the statements in the discourse. It scrutinizes the gender of the speaker and how it affects the speaker's ideas towards a particular topic. It examines the concealed contract in the discourse, "what it does not articulate at the level of utterance: its silences" (Irigaray 1994c, 124).

Basically, my work is a rereading. Some critics have already commented on *Skyrose and Other Stories* such as Jose Y. Dalisay in 1999, Alfredo Yuson, Herminio Beltran, and Christine Godinez-Ortega in 2003. In my study of the female figures in the stories in *Skyrose and Other Stories*, I take into account the reviews done on the collection based on Irigaray's interpretative rereading of discourse.

The Women Characters

Tinang, the Battered Wife (*Ang Bata Nga Dili Matulog*)

Tinang works as the new nanny to the three-year-old Bingbing whose parents are separated. Before working for her new employer, Tinang had worked at a roadside eatery where the male customers frequently got drunk. Tinang would get jittery in the presence of drunken men, and so when Bingbing's father, a regular of the restaurant, asked if she would like to take care of his child, she said yes without second thoughts.

The reason why Tinang is afraid of drunken men is because she is a victim of domestic violence. And this violence always happens when her husband gets drunk. A classic example of a battered wife, Tinang does not want to leave home because she has three growing children. And so she allows the abuse to happen time and again. She had thought of leaving her husband Berto many times, but every time he begs her forgiveness, she would relent and give him another chance. For a few days as he remains sober, Berto would be extra solicitous of her needs. But once he gets drunk again, the beatings would be repeated.

Then one time the beating gets so bad she is bedridden for several days. She finally decides to run away, leaving her children behind. She ends up working as Bingbing's nanny. In her new place:

"Dugay siya makatulog. Daghan siyag mahinumduman. Kon si Teresa, iyang kinamanghuran, motubod dayon ang luha sa iyang mga mata. Kon si Belinda, mahimuot siya...Kon si Junior, daw kumoton ang iyang kasingkasing sa kasakit. Kon si Berto, magsagol ang mga pagbating mohasmag kaniya. Gimingaw siya. Naluoy siya. Apan gikasilagan usab niya kini, ug gikahadlok. Labaw sa tanan iya kining gikahadlok." (p. 46)

Whenever she remembers the worst battering she ever received, her face swollen and her eyes almost shut, she would rage and cry. It is not so much the physical pain but the psychological and emotional trauma brought about by the inability to protect her children. She cannot even protect herself.

Tinang's thinking is certainly unreasonable, and it tells us how she looks at herself. She thinks it is her sole responsibility to protect her children and to keep the family intact, upholding the ideal concept of family despite the fact that it is falling apart. Becoming a punching bag is too high a price to pay for keeping the family together.

Another big factor why Tinang could not leave is economic. She is not financially empowered to provide for her children. In contrast, the wife of the employer of her friend Minda, or Minda's Ma'am, immediately left her husband after the first incidence of battering. A barrage of emissaries could not make Minda's Ma'am change her decision to separate from her husband. Tinang rationalizes that Minda's Ma'am could leave her husband because she is a teacher who can fend for herself and has the means to keep herself alive. On the other hand, Tinang is a rural housewife with no means of support.

But Tinang eventually realizes that the only way to solve her problem is to face her husband and humanely discuss what should be done with the children. This happens one night when her employer goes home intoxicated. She feels nervous that she hides under the bed. She is saved by Bingbing who orders her father not to hurt her "mother." In tears, Tinang realizes that she need not be the only one to take care of her children. Berto should also be given that responsibility, the way her master shares in the responsibility of taking care of Bingbing.

Choking with tears, Tinang cannot believe she has lived an illusion for so long. She is not the only guardian of the family by keeping the peace in the home. Her husband should have a big role in it, too. Indeed, she does not deserve to suffer and to put her life in danger just to save the family.

Truly, Tinang is a classic example of a battered wife, keeping the unity in the family by enduring the pain. In running away, she breaks the cycle. She must first save herself before she can save her children and her husband.

Linda, the Barren Wife (*Nanking Store*)

Linda, the beautiful and young central female figure in the story, is an educated Chinese girl from Cebu who marries Peter Zhin and comes to live in his home in Davao. After four years of marriage, they have yet to produce a son who would carry the family name. What aggravates this problem is the fact that Peter's father is the only survivor of the Zhin family. The family name is, therefore, in danger of vanishing. The worst thing that could happen to a Chinese family is to have the family name extinguished. Who would pay respects to the ancestors? As the only child, Peter is the family's only hope to carry on the family name, and he still remains childless.

Everyone blames Linda for it. Peter, the in-laws, and the whole Chinese community believe it is Linda's problem. Linda loses her status in the community. Consequently, she leaves the Bajada residence and lives in the upstairs room of Nanking Store. At first, she has command of the store, has her own desk, and acts as cashier at times. Later, when Peter sires a baby boy from a Bisayan bargirl, Linda becomes one of the salesgirls directly serving the customers. Her personal maid is fired and like the salesgirls, she cooks her own meals and washes her clothes.

Linda rarely goes out anymore. When she does, she wears a scarf to cover her head, ashamed to be seen. She evades people, even her friends. Eventually, she loses her self-respect, having no face to show to the world. Her transformation is truly saddening and her degradation baffles the Chinese community. After all, she comes from a decent family and has good educational background.

Everything changes when Peter dies in a car accident. After the burial, Linda stands her ground. She claims her rights to Nanking Store. No amount of money from the mother-in-law can make her leave. A flurry of emissaries goes to her but she is firm in her decision to stay. And when her mother-in-law finally comes to boot her out of the store, she fights back. In the end, the case is elevated for the courts to settle.

Peter's death brings hope to Linda. It is the necessary condition for her to spring back to life. As if by a miracle, she morphs into a beautiful and confident woman. Reclaiming her old self, she removes her scarf and makes herself visible to the community. Her eyes sparkle and color returns to her cheeks.

After a few months, the community starts noticing her swollen belly. Much to everyone's surprise, Linda is pregnant and proud at that! She intentionally shows to everyone that she is heavy with child. In tight pants, she walks over Santa Ana and drops by every store on the block to make sure everyone knows her delicate condition.

Linda's condition catches everybody unawares. The community presumes the quarrel over Nanking Store is enough. But not for Linda. She must exact her revenge. Just when everyone thinks peace has finally come to the community, Linda shakes it one last time. This story is, indeed, remarkable. It narrates how a decent woman is driven to the deepest shadows and how she fights back to regain respect.

A strong woman, Linda bears the pain of being singled out as the culprit to Peter's inability to produce a child. She absorbs the blame,

becoming the case for all the bad things that happen to the Zhin family. She takes the injustice with not a word of complaint about her misery nor an action to defy the set cultural norm.

But in due time, she exposes the shaky foundations of baseless opinions that have become gospel truth. She humbles the community by proving them wrong in a most dramatic fashion. When everyone has agreed that she is to blame for the discontinuity of the Zhin family, Linda tells the whole truth not by empty words but by becoming pregnant.

Her pregnancy is surely a slap on the face of the Chinese community. To their utter horror, they realize Linda is pregnant. Now, she cannot be blamed anymore for her childless marriage with Peter. But Peter is dead. Whom will the community blame? In the last scene, Linda says her goodbye to the narrator's mother.

"Hoa, Tua Poya! You're so tall!" she greeted me. "Here are some oranges. I know you like them."

I said my thanks. How heavy with child she was!

"Well, I've come here to say goodbye to your mother, and to you, too."

She smiled; it was the smile I remembered when I was still very young, the smile of my childhood.

"Tomorrow, I'm going to Iligan to fetch Oliver. Then we will proceed to Cebu to visit my parents. Would you like to go with me?" (9).

After all of these twists and turns in Linda's life, she is still not at peace. She does not receive the acceptance or the vindication from the community. She is still to blame after all. When she was childless, she was a disgrace. Now that she is heavy with child, she is still a disgrace. In the end, Linda decides to leave Nanking Store. She goes off with her man to some place where she will start a new life.

Finding the community hostile to her after proving them wrong is a wake up call for Linda. Even when it has become clear that her childless union with Peter was not due to her inadequacy, they still think she was at fault. She cannot do anything about it anymore. After all, she is not the problem; the community is.

As a strong woman, she liberates herself from the clutches of the Chinese community only to find out that society is deaf and dumb to the truth. Even if such society is wrong in its judgment, it will not bend itself to accommodate a woman. What does this mean? Is this a hint to Linda's strength? Or is it the final word that after all this is a man's world?

It is rather sad that after Linda has proven the community wrong in their judgment about her, she decides to leave, taking a bow when the play is not yet over. If she had stayed in the thick of the fight, she would have been a living memory to the Chinese community in Santa Ana. Thus, her leaving does not speak well of her fight. After a few years, she will be a forgotten story. In the end, the Chinese community will still have its way.

Linda is almost there but backs out at the last minute. She lacks a little more courage to rectify society's wrongdoings. Her leaving is an admission that a woman better relocate herself in another community when she finds no acceptance in the society she is in. Her departure is the final dagger that brings death to the cause of her struggle for vindication.

It is possible that Linda will find some peace in another place where nobody knows her story, possibly also start a new family there. But the truth in her heart will forever haunt her. If she had stayed in Santa Ana, she would have been a symbol to all women in the community. She would have shown that a woman can put up a fight and prove society wrong. She would be a reminder that this is not a man's world after all.

Elisa, the Vengeful Wife
(*The Figurine*)

The central female figure in the story is Elisa, a Davao-based exporter of pottery products. She is married for thirteen years to an engineer named Ricky, with whom she has a daughter Nina.

The story starts with Elisa finding out that she has gonorrhea while in an exporter's fair in Manila. Thinking it is only tonsillitis, she goes to the doctor for treatment only to find the shocking truth. She feels very angry at her husband. Feeling betrayed, she wants to go home to confront and punish him.

Elisa thought that she had an enlightened idea about men. She would tell friends, "I have no illusion about my husband's fidelity. But as long as he is a good provider and a good lover, not to mention being a good father to my child, occasional lapses aren't a problem" (21). Here, we find Elisa very practical and modern about her perception of her husband. But, if we analyze the statement, it also exposes Elisa's own perception of herself. If she can imagine her husband fooling around,

she can also think of herself fooling around. As she claims, she is a liberated woman who accepts the women's lib motto that women can do what men can (24).

Elisa's statement also pictures her strength of character. Not only does she have a realistic morality, she is also headstrong that her husband acquiesces to her wishes. But she sure knows how to feed her husband's ego. She makes sure that he is king in bed. "My formula for a lasting marriage is to let him have his fantasies. She wants me to be a nun, I'm a nun; he wants me to be a whore, I'm a whore" (22). Here, we have a very catchy statement again. It seems the most normal thing to do for a wife to please her husband. A wife can have her way with the husband but in bed she must serve, cajole, and satisfy him. But if Elisa is willing to do anything to let her husband have his fantasies, how about hers?

This is an intriguing statement about the body of a woman. It pictures a woman as a whore, an object used for the fantasies of a man. Hence, a woman need not be a sex worker to be a whore; she can be any wife who makes sure the fantasies of her husband in bed are met.

It is not surprising then for Elisa to feel insulted knowing her husband cheats on her. After indulging him of his sexual fantasies, she cannot believe her husband can still find a reason to look for another woman to satisfy him. Indeed, it seems odd that a man must look for sex outside marriage when his wife has seen to it that every possible mating acrobat is experimented on for his pleasure. But as Elisa admits, "I suppose men will always be men, but don't let me know. Don't ever let me know" (21).

But now, in her body she knows! And in a most painful fashion. The germs are still in the process of being eliminated. She feels dirty. She feels trampled upon, disrespected.

Angered by her husband's infidelity, Elisa reflects, "Leave him? Throw away thirteen years of marriage for one stupid indiscretion? She could raise their child alone. Could she live alone? Should she live alone? And could she find a better man? Whatever. She'd punish him, get even with him. That much she had decided. As to how, she still didn't know" (22).

Here, Elisa is barraged with questions, all leading to her decision to get even with her husband. If he can fool around, she can, too. There are, of course, weighty considerations. What will happen to their marriage? What does society say she should do? Can there be a better life with

another man knowing that all men will always be men? Will she have the guts to break it up with Ricky? What will happen to her daughter? Will she remain to be the guardian of the family by living with Ricky for the sake of Nina? These questions continue to boggle her mind, but at least for now, revenge comes out top on the list.

As if by some happy coincidence, she meets Dante, a college boyfriend, who has nurtured that romantic feeling for her all through these years. Dante invites her to live with him in a far away place where they can consummate the love they had fifteen years ago. Now, she is confused. She is skeptical if she really can put into action the women's lib motto she theoretically believes. Will she have an affair with Dante to exact revenge on her errant husband?

In the end, Elisa decides to have an affair with Dante. Soaked in the rain, "she felt delightfully sinful as she walked up to him unhurriedly, dramatically, aware that people were looking at them" (25). It is no easy decision for Elisa. Until the last line of the story, she has misgivings. She can, at any time, retrace her steps and buy herself some time to mull over her decision. But in the end, she succumbs to her desire for revenge and "without knowing why, she suddenly cried" (25).

Is Elisa really a headstrong woman? Now that she is taking little steps to materialize her revenge, do we find strength in her? Now that she finds herself in a cheating position to even up with her husband's infidelity, do we find her feeling any better? Sadly enough, though she thinks it delightfully sinful at the outset, that feeling does not last. Her tears signify the looming regret she already feels in the decision she has made.

For sure, there are tears of joy, of happiness, and of triumph! But none of these are the tears Elisa sheds on that night. Her tears come in the middle of a decision she is unsure of. Her tears come at time when she is about to do an act she knowingly realizes to be sinful. Her tears come at the moment she takes the side of justice, proclaiming "an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth".

Elisa feels it in her heart that her decision to have an affair with Dante is wrong but her mind tells her that she must have justice. True, her husband's infidelity is unjustifiably wrong but correcting a wrongdoing with another wrongdoing is categorically wrong, too.

Firstly, her action will not rectify her husband's fault. Her gonorrhoea is already in her body and having an affair will only ensure its transfer to her mate. That is going to be another betrayal, double betrayal, in fact.

Secondly, her affair will make it difficult to repair the damage her husband's infidelity did to their marriage. It has already smeared her womanhood. One can just imagine the complications once her affair will produce a lovechild. But even without one, she is never the same. Inside her, she knows that she has done a sinful act.

Elisa's decision is grounded on the motto, "What men can do, women also can." This decision points to a radical liberalism on Elisa's part. She is also going to commit marital infidelity! But who will be on the losing end? Not just the husband. But she, too. And her daughter. When Elisa thinks it is sweet revenge, it really is a disaster.

Cynthia, the Aggressive Woman (Cynthia)

It is 1970. Cynthia, the central female figure in the story, is a graduating student of the Ateneo de Davao University, accorded with the highest honors of *summa cum laude*. She will also be delivering the Valedictory Address come graduation day. Indeed, she is the modern woman of the '70s: she says what she thinks and gets what she wants. She is the ideal woman who has beauty and brains.

Cynthia is very aggressive, making the moves and initiating the action. She invites Gerry to a party where she asks him if he is a virgin (36). She writes a love poem on a cigarette foil and hands it to him. When Gerry does not reply to her revelation after a month, she confronts him. In fact, she challenges him to make love to her (40).

But is she really a strong woman? Has she discovered her own identity? Is she somebody aware of the position of being a woman in this man's world?

In the opening scene, Cynthia initiates a dialogue with Gerry in the canteen. As the conversation progresses, she invites him to be her date in the Saturday night party at a friend's house. When he gave his reluctant yes, she quickly says, "It's a date then. Virgin Mary, I haven't poisoned anybody for a long time now. Did you know I could cook? Poison, that is. All of you boys just bring yourselves. Intact...Wear anything you

want, even g-strings" (33). Clearly, we see a strong woman at the outset. She has such a cocky confidence. And she knows it.

In the same opening scene, a friend tells her to act a little naïve because all the boys in the campus are afraid of her. She is too intelligent and too beautiful for any of them to be their girl. She is simply too much. To this, Cynthia replies, "I appreciate your concern for me, Jane. Honest. I'm happy for you that you have Bing and Yolly has Ernie and etcetera. But I am also happy as I am now. When I do feel it, Virgin Mary, I'll tell you immediately. I'll even tell the guy, see?" (35-36). Here, we find Cynthia's strength of character and determination. She does not have any qualms telling the guy her feelings for him. Besides, she is not at all bothered by the fact that she does not have a steady boyfriend because men are afraid of her. They cannot beat her and she is perfectly content with that.

True to her pronouncements, Cynthia reveals to Gerry her feelings for him in style. The first two stanzas of a sonnet she scribbles on a cigarette foil reads:

Cupid shot me with his arrow
Will you help me end my sorrow
Let me your mystery uncover
Offer me your bloom to discover

Your bloom I'll protect with a gentle clasp
Embrace it and shower with dews of love
Ay! This way your quintessence I can grasp
Finally understand why it's you I love (38).

Cynthia is a woman cannot be reduced to the quantifying measurements by which she is domesticated in the male systems. When she gets tired of waiting for Gerry to answer her, confronts him. And when he can not provide a convincing alibi, she challenges him to make love to her. He accepts the challenge.

Cynthia could have been the woman of the 20th century except that she has a soliloquy that tells us more about her. "It just occurred to me. I said, hey, I like him. I want him. I got you. And your hatred. Perhaps forever. Why can't women say I love you to the men they love? Do I love you? I don't know. You attract me, that's all. What's wrong with telling somebody he attracts you?" (41). She is trying to weigh the events. She questions now the very things she was very sure of before. This

seems to be an introspection, a peeping inside her own person. It is a reassessment of who she really is as she is no virgin anymore.

"Crying's silly...I like you. Everything about you: your hair and the way you part it. The way you talk. The way you frown and smile...I like the way you carry yourself. Your lovable awkwardness, I call it. What's wrong with telling you that?" (41). Here, we find Cynthia challenging the limits society has set on being a woman. It seems she hates the restrictions she feels in not being able to really express her feeling to a man she is attracted to. She questions the parameters society has laid on being a woman.

"Jane said I should act a little naïve. What for? I'm not a monster. I'm just being me. I don't want to pretend so that people will like me. I wanted to give myself to you. What's wrong with that?" (42). She is all set on what she has decided to do: give her virginity to a man she wants without explanation. "Perhaps, it's wrong because you didn't want to take me, no? Well, wrong or not, I've given myself to you. Because I like you. Perhaps I love you. And that's my only regret. Forcing you" (42). There is no remorse on her part. Her regret is his repulsion to what she did. Is this the way society treats a woman? Is Gerry a representation of society that spurns a woman who takes a move to enjoy sex for the sake of pleasure? Is Gerry a puritan moralist?

"When Rene told me 'I love you,' I said 'I don't love you.' He said, 'It's all right.' And we're the best of friends. When you avoided me I thought I'd iron it out with you. So we can be friends. Just like before. We can be friends even if you know I like you, can't we?" (42). She tries to compare Rene and Gerry. Why can't they be friends? She tells Rene she does not like him and they are friends. Why can't Gerry tell her he doesn't like her and be friends? Doesn't society allow a woman to express her feelings to a man? Can't a woman still keep her dignity after opening up to a man her feelings for him?

"I'm talking nonsense. It doesn't really matter now, does it?...Well, before you go, before you forget me or hate me forever, please kiss me. You never kissed me, you know" (42). Is there a change now in Cynthia? This is the very first time she uses the word "please." In fact, when Gerry doesn't stir and starts to make an explanation, she repeats "please" in a tone different from how she has projected herself throughout the story. And against the backdrop of thick rainy clouds, she receives a kiss from Gerry. And she cries.

This is the only time Cynthia begs something from a man. It seems, at this point, she isn't the ultramodern Cynthia Virgin Me anymore. She is pleading for a token of affection from a man. This is not the same headstrong woman of the '70s. Cynthia is not the same assertive and sure woman as she was at the start of the story. In the end, she has finally feels the weight of society's influence on everyone, she being no exception.

Cynthia achieves growth insofar as there is a change in her character. It has to be noted, though, that her awakening is one that admits defeat. The movement is not upward but downward. Her begging for a kiss at the end of the story is a complete reversal of her strong character all throughout the story. In the end, she still succumbs to the limits set by society. As tears begin to flow from her open immobile eyes (42), she comes to grips with the hard truth that this is a man's world. Her tears are a recognition that the society will not allow, for the time being, a woman telling a man how much she loves him. The norms are clear. The woman must wait. She must not be the one to court the opposite sex.

Betty, the Revolutionary Woman
(Skyrose)

Betty, also named Belen, is the central female figure of this story. She is a woman of the revolution. And though it is not easy being one, she is willing to pay the price. At the moment, she is badly shaken by the death of a young guerilla leader.

Betty knows she has changed. Though everybody changes, hers is utterly remarkable. If her friends in the convent school could see her, they surely would not believe how she has transformed herself. She is not the same giggling college girl she used to be. She does not live in the comforts of the city and no longer believes in the peaceful process of settling differences.

Today, she is an active guerilla fighter, a scarred war veteran most familiar with life-and-death encounters. Married for three years to another rebel, she is sure that living in the mountains is the only life for her.

Yet, she becomes suddenly sad while perfectly being content. She is sure it is the only life for her and yet something tugs at her. She recognizes

it vaguely as a sense of nostalgia, a longing that has no shape, like a pain that is there but has no specific tender spot. Perhaps the changes are taking place so fast that a little reflection can be jolting (62).

Betty is trying to rationalize her feelings. She is trying to make out if truly this is, as she says, the life for her. She cannot be content with the ordinary life of a common citizen in the city anymore. And yet, she feels a sense of loss knowing that being a guerilla fighter is the only life for her now. Surely, she is not the same after all the killings and bloodshed.

The untimely death of Rolly, a 20-year-old guerilla zonal leader, troubles her. His death in the hands of another squad of guerilla fighters is a terrible reality to accept, most especially that she is a member of that other squad. Surely, it is a case of mistaken identity! Life in the revolution is difficult. You kill and get killed, even by a stupid mistake at times. And her mind continues to ask, "Where is Rolly?" (79).

In the end, Betty slowly recovers from the momentary setback of her faith in the revolution. The waiting for the sunrise through the long night is a sure proof that she will be able to handle these changes in her life. She is willing to face the test and pay the price. She will continue the cause, after all, she is a revolutionary woman.

The ending of the story points to the strength of Betty's character. She endures the pain and bears the anguish that slices through her womanhood. After months of crying over the untimely demise of a rebel leader, she is slowly beginning to understand it all. As she waits for the dawning of a new day, Betty takes a hold of herself and painfully accepts the mountains as the only life for her now.

Mama, the Traditional Woman
(Big Day For Gargantua)

Mama is the traditional wife who takes care of the family. She is a full-time housewife to her husband and a loving mother to her three children. She specializes in cooking the favorite food of family members. She tells her son, "Don't go out in the rain, Junior. You stay here and Mama's going to cook your favorite food" (12). She seems content with her life as there is no direct statement signaling her bitterness over her role in the household.

The mother is a typical domestic manager. She takes care of her husband and children. She sees to it that they are properly looked after. However, there is no instance where we find the mother looking after her own needs. As it is, nobody takes care of her. In fact, she has forgotten about her own needs as she is engrossed with her family. She has sacrificed her own happiness for the welfare of the family.

Ate Sylvia is the I-narrator's elder sister. She is another typical woman in the family. Young and beautiful, prim and proper, she has plenty of suitors whom she receives only at home. Yet, she dotes on her kid brother by making sure he is in the house, tidy and clean. Like her mother, she is responsible for the I-narrator. "Where have you been? Come, wash yourself. You're all mud" (17). There is none in her lines that would reveal a liberal or modern *day* woman attitude. She is an obedient daughter and a caring sister.

Aling Minda is your regular, good-natured neighbor. When she passes by and sees the young boys playing in the canal, she tells them "Stop playing with mud or I'll tell your parents" (15). She cares for the young boys as much as she would for her own children. Concerned about the kids getting diseases from the dirty water, she threatens to tell their parents. Common sense dictates that the kids must be warned because they might not know the possible sickness they may develop from playing in the canal. She is the mother next door who keeps an eye on the kids for a while.

The other women characters mentioned by the I-narrator are Aling Petra, Inday, and Nita. Aling Petra is the community albularyo. She is the medicine woman who applies her saliva to cure one of the young boys who had a bloated stomach. Inday, on the other hand, is the mother's assistant in the household chores. She does the laundry and some other menial jobs in the house. While Nita is the girl who is the object of teasing among the boys. She lives by the seashore and she has a perennial running nose.

These women reflect the low status in which women are momentarily pictured in this story. Though mentioned only in passing, the sad fact of the roles they play in the family speaks of the woman's place in the society. Aling Petra's practicing fake medicine is a very demeaning projection of women. Inday's role as a laundry woman is a traditional depiction of young girls as the choice over boys as househelpers. Nita being waged as the prize of the last runner to finish the race is a contemptible show

that poor and ugly girls are disadvantaged because they are the natural choice for losers.

The women in this story are but stereotypes, chained by the limits of culture. They remain as marginalized and demeaned by the dictates of society.

The Voiceless Woman (*I Am One Of The Mountain People*)

The women in this story are voiceless, not given any dialogue. They are simply minor characters who are silent until the story ends.

The women in this collection fall under three categories corresponding to the phases of women's literary development. The first category is the stereotyped women who belong to the first phase, the feminine phase. Here, the female figures are without an identity, masked, buried, and covered up. These women have not yet escaped the influence of society on them. They remain without a voice, oppressed and exploited. Stories of this type of women are the two non-women stories and "Ang Bata Nga Dili Matulog." The mother, Ate Sylvia, and Aling Minda in "Big Day for Gargantua" are traditional women. They are still very much within the confines of society for the roles they take are those which society mandates. Imbibing the system tells gives their own, they happily pursue the vocation which the system tells gives meaning to their lives. Nana Loling, Elenita, and Ina are the voiceless women in "I Am One of the Mountain People." Merely mentioned as characters, no amount of importance is given to them since not one of them has influenced the decision of the main character to join his people in the mountains. Tinang in the Palanca winning piece is the classic battered wife. She is unable to find her true worth as a woman. All of these women are victims of the system of society that does not understand nor respect them.

The second category is the struggling women who belong to the second phase, the feminist phase. Here, the female figures advocate their rights and protest against the norms and laws of exploitative society. These women have tried their best to fight society only to succumb to defeat in the end. These women are strong at the outset and try their best to fight society only to succumb to defeat in the

end. The stories with this type of women are "Nanking Store," "The Figurine," and "Cynthia."

The third category is the free women who belong to the third phase, the female phase. They have liberated themselves from the chains of patriarchy because they have discovered who they are. These women are beyond the reach of society. They are the women who stand for what they believe in and hold on to it until the end. There is only one story with this type of woman. It is "Skyrose," the story of Betty, the woman revolutionary. She has made a choice for herself. And though she momentarily wavers in her decision, she takes a good grip on it until the end of the story.

Among all the women in the collection, Betty is the sole female character who shows consistency of strength from the very beginning. She is the only woman figure who embodies the woman who weathers the changing of the seasons and who takes responsibility for her decision. She is the only one who has lived her faith and principles in life being the woman of the revolution.

Society's View of Female Figures

Society takes three views of the female figures in this collection. The first banks on the premise that women are bogged down and paralyzed, without an identity, and are easily manipulated by society. They are without speech. If they speak at all, it is one that propagates society's economy, not theirs. The second is characterized by conflict because the female figures pose an opposition to the mandates of society. They speak thoughts and follow dreams that are not sanctioned by society. And though society keeps a leash on them, they continue to generate an undercurrent that disturbs the normal flow of family and societal life. The third respects the identity the female figures have for themselves. They are no threat to society because they are not restricted anymore by rules and norms. They have a voice of their own that proclaims their identity as emancipated women.

Hence, based on these three viewpoints of society on women, three classifications can be derived, namely: the subservient women, the fighting women, and the independent women.

Three stories show the subservient women. In "Ang Bata Nga Dili Matulog," Tinang is a docile woman whom society considers a mere

object for the husband's use. A physically abused woman, she becomes the target of her husband's ire when intoxicated. She keeps the brutality to herself and allows the abuse to happen repeatedly. As a subservient woman, she finds it difficult to muster the strength to resist the violence which her husband has inflicted on her. "Big Day for Gargantua" shows the I-narrator's mother, his Ate Sylvia, and Aling Minda as chained women, and therefore, manifesting the poor state of women in society. The three characters somehow signify the faithful wife, the adored lady, and the concerned neighbor which are manifestations of man's dominance over women. The woman is man's property. She has to be a devoted lover to her husband. Though desired by many, she has to be at the service of her spouse and no one else, hence tolerating his play and understanding his caprices. Her meaning is in the fulfillment of the role society has assigned to her: a loyal wife, a beautiful woman, and a helping neighbor. Therefore, it is only when her actions and goals are directed to the well being of her man that she enjoys the recognition she seeks. In "I Am One of the Mountain People," the women are silenced, never having the voice to express their own sentiments and thoughts, and following only the laws proclaimed by men for their own advancement. If they have any statements at all, it is but a declaration that upholds the primacy of men in society.

On the other hand, the fighting women are those whom society has a difficult time pinning down because they resist the accepted communal reality. They are, therefore, a force to reckon with. In the end, however, society's pressure becomes too much for them to bear and they eventually cave in. Three stories have this kind of women. In the "The Figurine," the impetuous Elisa strongly resents her husband's infidelity. As she contemplates the wrong inflicted on her, she decides to have an affair with a former boyfriend. Such decision cost her anguish because it only worsens the problem. In "Cynthia," we find a superior woman humbled by a man to teach her a lesson. Cynthia tries to get free of bias and prejudice, but society is too strong in blocking the way out. In fact, the door is slammed on her face and she learns the hard way that this is still a man's world. Lastly, "Nanking Store" presents Linda as a scandalous woman. Here, society frowns upon the woman who cannot produce a son to perpetuate the husband's family line. She becomes the object of derision and ridicule by the community. Eventually, she proves she can be pregnant. Nevertheless, with her husband dead and she not having remarried yet,

society considers her pregnancy an unforgivable act. Her delicate state becomes an affront to the morals of the Chinese community.

Laplana (2004) validates how society's double standard can be a detriment to women's cause. In "Cynthia," she analyzes that while society admires and commends a woman of beauty and brains, it does not allow her to compete with men. Cynthia's female friends and male acquaintances admire her for being intelligent and pretty. But she becomes a threat when openly showing her feelings for a guy and aggressively pursues his attention. Society frowns on her for treating sex casually. Cynthia tries to defy the rules set by society about how women should behave, but she is trapped by the response of those around her.

Lastly, the independent women are those who have found an identity for themselves beyond the control of society. Unafraid to live a life they have decided on, they gain the admiration and respect of the people they come in contact with. In "Skyrose," Betty is a woman who rises above the set limits of society. She is a rebel determined to achieve the dream of a just and humane society in the mountains. She is firm in putting her life for the cause as well as singular in her aim to live a life which she believes fits her under the circumstances. It is not astonishing, therefore, to find that she has a command over her comrades who look up to her as an authority figure.

Symbols and Images

Images are a portrait or a pattern that articulates the kind of a person a character is. It expresses the uniqueness that the character alone has, giving the person an understanding of who s/he is.

The Weaking

There are two images used in "Ang Bata Nga Dili Matulog" to portray the central female figure. The first image is Tinang herself as a suffering mother comforting her child, and the second image is her tears. The former symbolizes weakness of Tinang's character, and the latter symbolizes Tinang's powerlessness.

At the start of the story, Bingbing, her charge, hides under the bed for fear of the "mumu." Crawling out, she embraces Tinang tightly, burying her face in her yaya's bosom. This scene recurs in the ending in reverse order. This time, it is Tinang who crawls under the bed to

hide from Bingbing's drunk father, and it is Bingbing, the little girl, who brings her out from under the bed. As tears well up in her eyes, she buries her face in the child's little bosom.

This is a most ironic situation, clearly picturing Tinang's weakness. The opening scene demonstrates the logical scenario in real life; a mother comforting her fear-stricken child. The closing scene reverses that: a protector of the child, Tinang instead becomes the one protected by the child. All in all, the image shows Tinang's inability to protect not only her charge but more so her very self. The tears that ensue from the experience symbolize the powerlessness she experiences in her life as a wife, a mother, and a nanny. There are three scenes in the story where Tinang is shown crying. In all occurrences, Tinang is a reflection of sorrow and pain over her inability to protect herself, her children, and even her little Bingbing.

It is no surprise, then, that Tinang is such an inferior character. She is emotionally damaged and needs healing. Only when that happens can she come to the aid of her children and Bingbing. It is only in experiencing this restoration of her worth as a person and as a woman that she can be the light to her children.

The Blight

In "Nanking Store," the act of ruffling the narrator's hair is an image that speaks of the state of mind of the central female figure. It is used twice in the story in connection to the main woman character: in the opening scene and in the parting scene of the story. This action of ruffling the narrator's hair is also coupled by Linda's giving of Mandarin oranges to the narrator. These two separate actions become one image to symbolize Linda's capacity to live a happy family life. Instead of being a blight as viewed by the community, she is actually a nurturer of life.

The food image relates well to the major character. Linda is a woman and culture mandates that she is the one tasked to provide nourishment to her children. Hence, this choice of giving oranges speaks of the importance she gives to this particular role society has vested on her as a nurturer of life. The oranges, then, is a symbol of Linda's capacity to be a mother. It signifies her excitement to become a giver of life to a child. She is aware of this role and she is dying to fulfill it. The only problem is that she is not blessed with a child in her marriage to Peter.

Ruffling of the hair is usually associated with somebody older, the action being directed on a younger person, usually a child. It is a universal sign of affection, a sign of endearment. The older person, usually, has a close relationship with the child who also welcomes this show of affection.

But more than the common meaning we associate with the ruffling of a child's hair, the personal reaction of the I-narrator occasioned by this endearing display of affection fosters an understanding of Linda's character. In the end, the act of ruffling the I-narrator's hair coupled with the giving of Mandarin oranges is an image that makes the readers see Linda's growth as a character in the story. She undergoes a pivotal improvement in her person as she reclaims the laughter of the early years of her marriage. Linda springs forth to life as she is heavy with child. She finally fulfills the promise of motherhood and family life.

The Avenger

There are two images used in "The Figurine" both connected to the central female figure of this story. The first is Tod Bulol, the Tboli war god. The second is rain.

Elisa produces and sells pottery. One of her items is Tod Bulol, a mythological character of the Tbolis. She has patterned this item from her husband Ricky. In fact, the six-inch Tod Bulol riding a horse is of darker hue as Ricky is of dark complexion. This image is intriguing. Tod Bulol is modeled after the husband. But Elisa decides to give the figurine to Dante as a gift. This reflects Elisa's decision to make her college sweetheart her new Tod Bulol, the new hero that will lead her to paradise.

In the last part of the story, Dante loses his balance and the figurine falls from his hands. Elisa recovers it from the patch of grass. Though it is smeared with mud, there is no crack. When she brings it to her breast, she suddenly cries. She succumbs to crying because she is making a lifetime change in her decision to have an affair with Dante. As she tries to pacify her revolting resentment towards Ricky, she agonizes on the fact that she has already given Dante the chance to be her Tod Bulol.

What makes this interpretation clear is the image of the rain. All this heart-rending activity happens under a heavy downpour. The rain image appears three times in the story. First, Elisa invites Dante to walk in the rain when they were still in college. Second, Elisa finds Ricky a lot

of fun because he walks with her in the rain. Third, it rains when Elisa walks unhurriedly towards Dante at the end of the story.

In the first instance, the rain signifies Elisa's easygoing impulsive behavior. She finds walking in the rain a lot of fun, much to Dante's displeasure. In the second occurrence, the rain points to Elisa's discovery of a man who appreciates walking in the rain with her. She joyfully finds that Ricky has no problem with her impulsive behavior. Last, the rain awakens the spontaneity Elisa has forgotten. After many years, she remembers "how delightfully sinful" (25) it is to get soaked in the rain.

The rain, then, has become a symbol of Elisa's impulsive behavior. Whenever it is used, there is a sense of exhilaration in getting wet in the rain for no valid reason at all. It has come to mean approval of an action. Dante does not like walking in the rain, they separate. Ricky loves it, and so they marry. Now, she rediscovers its delight, insinuating an approval to an affair with Dante. As such, the two images both point to Elisa's decision to embark on an affair with a college boyfriend to retaliate against her husband's painful infidelity.

The Virgin

In "Cynthia," the word "virgin" is a symbol portraying Cynthia, the central female figure. In this word, Cynthia's character is put to ultimate test. The variation in the use of the word signals a variation in Cynthia's character too.

First, the name Cynthia is a feminine given name taken from Greek mythology. It is the name of a virgin goddess, Artemis, the goddess of hunting. Born in Mt. Cynthus (hence, Cynthia), she is also known as the goddess of the moon, in the form of Selene, twin sister of Apollo and daughter of Zeus and Leto.

This Greek origin signals the concept of virginity as a vital element in understanding Cynthia's character in the story. Her very name directs us to her most important possession, her being a virgin. Despite her liberal attitude, she is still intacta.

Second, as Virgo, Cynthia celebrates her birthday on 10 September. As her zodiac sign signifies, she is a maiden unsullied by any member of the male species. She is pure and immaculate.

Third, the word "virgin" is part of her first expression "Virgin Mary" (33). It is all over the story. She only decides to stop using it when friends ask her to respect other people's faith by dropping the blasphemous

expression. Trying on other expressions, she finally settles with "Virgin Me" (36). The use of the word is not incidental. It is significant because it shows Cynthia's strength and weakness. It is a strategy that brings Cynthia's character to the test. Clearly, her use of the word "virgin" in her expression points directly to her womanhood. Though she believes in free expression, she believes remaining chaste is still for the man who can beat her. After losing her virginity, Cynthia shows sign of weakness. Though the man does not seem ready to be her lover, she forces him anyway. And when she does not receive the same heated passion from him, Cynthia begs for his love. This is an intriguing development. As soon as she tarnishes her reputation, Cynthia changes in her character. She loses her confidence and strength. What with all her superior gifts, there is no need for her to beg for love. But, she does. What makes it more saddening is the fact that the man does not have any real feelings for her. As she cries over this fact, she finds that she is still a woman living within the bounds of society. There is no escaping the confines of culture even for an exceptional woman like her.

The Light

Two images are used in "Skyrose" to show the development of the central female figure. Firstly, there is the heavy monsoon rains that come rather early in late April, symbolizing the pain and suffering over a dead comrade. Secondly, there is the waiting for the first streaks of light, symbolizing recovery and hope.

After Rolly is accidentally killed in the exchange of fire between two rebel squads, the early monsoon rains envelop the surrounding. The deafening sound of the heavy rains drowns any sound of the night.

Rolly's death is a blow to the organization. It is only later that Betty is able to really feel such immense loss at Rolly's tragic demise. It is not easy knowing that Rolly had died from a bullet from their guns, or probably her gun. Nobody knows, but the pain she feels is excruciating. Betty's waiting for the sunrise is a very positive image that reflects her eventual recovery from such emotional and psychological trauma. The waiting, though, will not be easy. It will happen only after Betty gets over the long night. The first streaks of light will come after the night passes by. And just as sure as the day will come, Betty is steadily recovering her old self. In the long night, Betty waits for the sunrise (80) which is a clear sign of hope.

The Object

The female figures in "Big Day for Gargantua" are portrayed as animals, witches, and objects. They are considered possessions of the men in this story, portrayed as important only because they are society's insurance to the continuance of man's culture.

First, Onyot tells this to his friends when his mother calls him, "The elephant's calling me. I have to go" (16). For a son to refer to his mother as an elephant speaks ill on his attitude towards his mother. The image of a mother as an animal is a negative representation that really boils down to disrespect. The mother is not given the recognition and esteem she deserves as the light of the family. She is treated as someone who is there for support and help but whose influence is not really considered important.

Second, the I-narrator looks at Aling Petra as a witch. Following Aling Petra's procedure, he soothes the splitting pain on his foot with his saliva. As he tries to cure his own pain, he murmurs something in imitation of Aling Petra who had treated Onyot's bloated stomach.

Here, the woman is depicted as out of this world. She gets this monicker simply because she does not follow the standards set by society. Because Aling Petra has a very unscientific way of curing sickness, she is therefore considered a witch who uses supernatural means.

Third, the narrator casually mentions Inday doing the laundry and Nita as the prize for the loser in the race. He says it with so much ease as if it is but a matter of fact. This points to how young girls are considered in society. The young boy's casual observation signifies the degrading position of these girls as easy targets of abuse and oppression in the society. The young boy's casual observation signifies the degrading position of the girls as easy targets of abuse and oppression in society. Inday represents the domestic helpers who are obedient to their masters and uncomplaining of their meager salaries. They also show loyalty to their employers even if they are overworked.

Typology of Women Based on Images and Symbols

There are three general types of women based on the images and symbols employed in the representation of the female figures in the collection.

The first general type is the pathetic woman. She does not have a recognition of the essence of her womanhood. The two stories with this classification of women are "Ang Bata Nga Dili Matulog" and "Big Day for Gargantua." In the first story, Tinang is a weakling and a very vulnerable character. She does not have an ounce of courage to cry "Foull!" nor an awareness how she can safeguard herself and her children from an abusive husband. In the second story, women are typecast as the inferior species, as animals, witches, and objects, deserving no respect from men.

The second general type is the assertive woman. She is the antagonist of society who recognizes her womanhood and tells the whole world who she is. The three stories with this classification of women are "Nanking Store," "The Figurine," and "Cynthia." Though Linda, Elisa, and Cynthia are able to voice out their sentiments, they do not get the vindication they deserve. Society still imposes the power of tradition over them.

The third general type is the radical woman. She is able to open her mind and escape the control of society over her. She is free to choose the kind of life she wants to live, how to live it, and where to live it. In "Skyrose," Betty transcends the norms of society about womanhood and becomes a rebel fighter in the mountains. As certain as the coming of daylight, she will die fighting for the cause of the revolution.

Water Symbolism

Interestingly, all the stories have water imagery in a variety of forms. We find tears a common image in all the five women stories. The rain is in four stories. The water tank and the canal are in "Big Day for Gargantua" and the river is in "I Am One of the Mountain People." Though the water image dots different parts of the story, it also has a common location in all seven stories – in the end.

The five women stories have the tears image. Tears have become a symbol of the suffering of the central female figures. Though a range of emotions and meanings can be connected to tears, they nonetheless indicate sorrow. Tinang's sorrow is the loss of her dignity and self-respect. Elisa's sorrow is the agony of involving herself in an extramarital affair. Linda's sorrow is the anguish of being unjustly judged by society. Cynthia's sorrow is the misery of living in a society that looks down on

strong and superior women. And Betty's sorrow is the regret resulting from the untimely departure of a friend and comrade.

Hence, tears are a symbol of the angst of the female figures in the women stories. It is an indication of their suffering in a world that puts importance on the male sex. It is representation of the inferior position of women who are dominated by the men in their lives. It is the common denominator that binds all the lead women characters in the collection.

The rain, on the other hand, is another important water image that characterizes the women characters. Like the tears, the rain image is a symbol of the sorrow of the central female figures. For Elisa, it is the misery over the wasted thirteen years of what she thought was an ideal marriage. For Cynthia, it is the agony over the awareness that this is a man's world after all. For Betty, it is the torment over the guilt of being involved in the death of a young leader and friend.

In the collection, tears and rain are symbols of the woman's predicament in a world that upholds the ascendancy of the male species. They speak of the utter difficulty of the woman in traversing the tightrope of cultural bias. They articulate a complex web of constraints in being a woman in a man's world.

Conclusion

Seen through a man's eyes, women are portrayed in a variety of circumstance as they engage social prescriptions in their quest for personal identity. The reading of Tiu's *Skyrose and Other Stories* is a fascinating encounter of the woman in the family and in the society. It is an avenue that reveals to us the different alternative roads a woman can take in her lifetime. The analysis of the female figures in this collection is an opportune moment to reflect upon the manner of existence a woman goes through in our society. It is a beacon reminding us the intricacies of being a woman in a territory subjugated by man. It is an alarm setting off the warning to every human being about the complexities of female-male relationships in this civilization predisposed to the privileging of the male species.

References

- Beltran, Hermie. 2003. "Karakterisasyon sa mga kuwento ni Macario Tiu." *Kabayan*. 23 May 2003.
- Cruz, Isagani. 1991. "Ang kabastusan ng mga Pilipino." *Reading popular culture*. Soledad Reyes, ed. Quezon City: Office of Research and Publications Ateneo de Manila University.
- Dalisay, Jose Y. 2003. "Journalists and fictionists." *The Monday lifestyle section of the Philippine Star*. 28 July 2003.
- De Ungria, Ricardo M. and Jose Y. Dalisay Sr, eds. 2001. *The Likhaan book of poetry and fiction 1999*. Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press.
- Evasco, Marjorie M. 1991. "Weekly smorgasbord of feminine pleasures." *Reading popular culture*. Ed. Soledad Reyes, ed. Quezon City: Office of Research and Publications Ateneo de Manila University.
- Godinez-Ortega, Christine. 2003. "New exciting voice from Mindanao." *Lifestyle Philippine Daily Inquirer*. 28 July 2003.
- Guerin, Wilfred. 1999. *A handbook of critical approaches to literature: Fourth edition*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Irigaray, Luce. 1994a. "The three genres." *The Irigaray reader*. Margaret Whitford, ed. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Irigaray, Luce. 1994b. "The poverty of psychoanalysis." *The Irigaray reader*. Margaret Whitford, ed. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Irigaray, Luce. 1994c. "The power of discourse and the subordination of the Feminine." *The Irigaray reader*. Margaret Whitford, ed. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Irigaray, Luce. 1991. "This sex which is not one." *Feminisms: An anthology of literary theory and criticism*. Robyn R. Warhol and Diane Price Herndl, eds. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.
- Laplana, Au. 2004. "Cynthia," Appended in Gerardo Betonio's "Macario Tiu's Women: A feminist reading of Skyrose and Other Stories." Unpublished masteral thesis 2004. Ateneo de Davao University.
- Tiu, Macario. 2003a. *Davao 1890-1910: Conquest and resistance in the garden of the gods*. Quezon City: UP Center for Integrative and Development Studies.
- Tiu, Macario. 2003b. *Skyrose and other stories*. Davao City: Davao Writers Guild.
- Tyson, Alfredo. 2003. *The Monday lifestyle Philippine Star*. 21 July 2003..