



Conflict As Reflected in Selected Original Pinoy Music Songs

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ABSTRACT

Conflict is the agon, or the central contest in tragedy and one that holds interests to readers of literature. This study aims to investigate the conflicts embedded in the lyrics of the selected Original Pinoy Music (OPM) songs, ignite appreciation for Filipino music, and unravel its significance in areas of literary study and improving human life experiences. The purpose of the study is to discover the external and internal conflicts experienced by the characters, the conflicts' effect to them, the characters' reactions to the conflicts and the messages they bore. These OPM songs namely "Tukso", "Napakasakit Kuya Eddie", "Hagdan", "Buloy", "Hari ng Tondo", "Isang Linggong Pag-ibig", "Sirena" "Estudyante Blues", "Dukha", "Namumuro Ka Na", "Basang-basa Sa Ulan", and "Bakit Ba" were critically analyzed through the use of descriptive qualitative method confined in the psychoanalytic literary, formalism, and sociocultural theories. The findings of the study unveils that the external conflict revolves around abuse, poverty, rejection, temptations, vices and crime. It further revealed the instances of internal conflicts which revolve around fear, pain, loneliness, emptiness, desperation, self-pity, regrets, confusion, doubt and unhappiness. It was found that the characters are challenged by these conflicts, arose above it and others are transformed into better individuals. Although other songs are left hanging, with researchers offering logical resolves of anticipation and futuristic view, this study substantially presents the conflicts embedded in the OPM songs and some ways to resolving it. Therefore, this study holds its contribution not only in literary study but also in real life application.

Keywords : conflict, songs, internal, external

1 INTRODUCTION

Philippine literature is a diverse and a rich collection of various literary products which serve as part of the cultural heritage of the Filipinos.

The existence of literature from the time immemorial until today proves its enduring and lasting importance. In very real sense, life illumines literature just as much as literature illumines life (Pergamino, 2000). In fact, the various literature in the world has continued to flourish being one good avenue for enjoyment and instruction (Barce and Luniza 2014). As to the instruction, Villamarzo (1999) discloses that literature is not only a representation of life, but it is also an excellent source of truths or insights, which can help man, become a better person.

In the world of fiction, the plot being one element lets the story progress with its strings of events. However, it only commences to move when a fictional narrative exposes the important role of conflict that sets the rising action of any short story, and leads to climax – the point when every reader could not afford to let it go as emotion is at its height (Edris and Opresina 2017).

Conflict was first described in ancient Greek literature as the agon, or the central contest in tragedy. According to Aristotle, in order to hold the interest, the hero must have a single conflict. The agon, or the act of conflict, involves the protagonist (a more recent term), corresponding to the hero and villain. The story of "The Cask of Amontillado" by Edgar Allan Poe, for instance, would not have its plot move without the introduction of conflict. So the sentence is read: "But he (Fortunato) ventured upon insult, I (Montessor) vowed revenge". The preceding quote introduces the role of conflict that is anticipated to pit against with man, with himself, or with the nature that leads the story to rising action or to creating tension.

The basic types of conflict in literature have been commonly codified as "man against man", "man against nature", and "man against self." In each case, "man" is the universal and refers to women as well. Although frequently cited, these three types of conflict are not universally accepted. Ayn Rand, for instance, argued that "man against nature" is not a conflict because nature has no free will and thus can make no choices. Sometimes a fourth basic conflict is

described, "man against society", Some of the other types of conflict referenced include "man against machine" (The Terminator, Brave New World), "man against fate" (Slaughterhouse Five), "man against the supernatural" (The Shining) and "man against God" (A Canticle for Leibowitz). Man against man "Man against man" conflict involves songs where the persona is against to someone. This is an external conflict. The conflict may be direct opposition, as in a gunfight or a robbery, or it may be a more subtle conflict between the desires of two or more persons, as in a romance or a family epic.

Even in contemporary, non-dramatic literature, critics have observed that the agon is the central unit of the plot. The easier it is for the protagonist to triumph, the less value there is in the drama. In external and internal conflict alike, the antagonist must act upon the protagonist and must seem at first to overmatch him or her.

Literature is divided into two great classes – poetry and prose. Prose consist of written expression in the common flow of conversation in sentence and paragraphs, while poetry refers to those expression in verse with measures and rhyme, line and has more melodious tone (Prism 1986). Of these two great classes of literature, poetry was the first to be developed (Cataluna and Laranjo 2018).

Poetry is the oldest of the arts. Long before, people learned to write, they sung or recited lines of verses. The charm of the early poetry lies in music and ideas it conveyed. Like music and dancing, poetry is instinctive to human beings. Its basic pattern seems to be a pattern of life and nature itself (Lapid. 1974).

Poetry is divided into three great classes whether it tells a story, voices the author's own thoughts and feelings or portray life and character through action. These classes are narrative, lyric and dramatic poetry (Rich, 1974).

The subject of the study is a "song" – a type of lyric poetry. A song and experience have always been intimately related. It holds a strong, essential, and definitive role in reflecting the conflict and culture of society. It helps express emotions, exposes the conflict the people experienced and moves them to a common action.

There are two types of conflict that can drive a song. The first is an internal conflict. In this case, the struggle actually occurs inside the persona. With internal conflicts, the persona could be struggling with a decision he must make or with his own weaknesses in his personality. An internal conflict is the struggle occurring within a persona's mind. Things such as things the character vies for, but can't quite reach. As opposed to external conflict, in which a persona is grappling some force outside of him or herself, such as wars or a chain breaking off a bike, or not being able to get past a road block.

In the Philippines, through Original Pinoy Music (OPM), the diversity, uniqueness, and richness of the Filipino culture, as well as the distinctive values and sentiments of the Filipino people are clearly expressed, exposed, and reflected at its most honest and rawest form.

OPM songs create a way for people to record their thought and experience in a way that is accessible for others to enjoy and learn. It also offers the readers the potential to escape from troubles of everyday life. The materials are human beings, their problems, struggle and dilemmas. These conflicts that Filipino people experienced can be heard and reflected in songs.

With these observations, the researchers are encouraged to undertake a study to identify conflicts experienced by individuals which

are reflected in Original Pinoy Music songs. This study ventured external and internal problems and as such will be a humble trace to also find significant guiding principles that will lead readers as they go through life. Through the use of psychoanalytic literary theory, formalistic theory, sociocultural theory, and conflict theory, the OPM songs were critically analyzed and discussed.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

This study employed the descriptive qualitative method in order to determine some conflicts as portrayed in the selected Original Pinoy Music songs. The analysis is confined to psychoanalytic literary theory, formalism theory, sociocultural theory, and conflict theory.

2.2 Research Procedure

To present a clear analysis study and to attain its objectives, a careful study of the literary works was done. The researchers gathered literary pieces relevant to the study – Original Pinoy Music songs reflecting conflicts. Twelve Original Pilipino Music songs were comprehensively, analyzed critically focusing in the problems presented aided by the objectives and theories used in the study.

2.3 Research Materials

The researchers gathered all the necessary materials like books, journals, magazines, dictionary, researches, encyclopedia that were useful on the study.

The twelve Original Pilipino Music songs are (1) "Tukso" by: Eva Eugenio, composed by: Roll De Asis, (2) "Napakasakit Kuya Eddie" by: Roel Cortez, composed by: Rimas, Jerico, (3) "Hagdan" by: Ron Henley, composed by: Ron Joseph A. Henly and Lester Paul M. Vano, (4) "Buloy" by: Parokya ni Edgar, composed by: Chito Miranda, (5) "Hari ng Tondo" by: Gloc9, composed by: Aristotle Pollisco (Gloc 9), (6) "Isang Linggong Pag-ibig" by: Imelda Papin, composed by: Mon del Rosario. (7) "Sirena" by: Gloc9, composed by: Aristotle Pollisco (Gloc 9). (8) "Estudyante Blues" by: Freddie Aguilar, composed by: Freddie Aguilar, (9) "Dukha" by: Aegis, composed by: C. Ilacad V. Sotto, (10) "Namumuro Ka Na" by: Lukas, composed by: Lukas, (11) "Basang-basa Sa Ulan" by: Aegis, composed by: Abenoja Celso and (12) "Bakit Ba" by: Siakol, composed by: Palomo Noel.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The songs were carefully read, analyzed and summarized using four approaches – Psychoanalytic, Formalism Sociocultural and Conflict theories, to the literary texts, specially, on the conflicts – both external and internal experienced by the characters in the songs.

In the song, "Tukso" the evident external conflicts are broken homes, broken relationships and temptations itself that drives the persona to internal conflicts such as pain and weakness. These conflicts boost the persona to stand against temptation. It encourages him to move forward with the hope that he himself will not give in to temptation as he witnessed its devastating effects to other people. The writer's purpose is raise awareness about the effects of yielding

in to temptation (such as broken hearts, home and relationships) and the struggles of the persona and how he manage it. Also, let readers ponder about making the right choices and decide themselves which path to take based on presented conflicts and results in real-life situations.

In the song, "Napakasakit Kuya Eddie" tells us about the sad reality of an OFW experience. It gives a glimpse how hard it is to work abroad in a hot weather and being far from home. The persona experienced conflicts such as the betrayal of his wife, the addiction of his son, and the surprise that there's another child that's not his. He even haad withdrawn himself from his own happiness just to provide the things that his family needed. These pressing conflict led the persona to despair and in great pain. Although the conflicts expound to the great extent, his struggles had led him to come to his brother Eddie. This is a reflection of being open-minded for advices. When we get to the point that we are at the end of ourselves, we then begun to understand that it is just a means through which we can ask help from other people. The writer wants to emphasize the value of proper parenting, acknowledge the sacrifices of the OFWs and learn to faithful to the significant other even if they are far. This song also teaches a lesson to mirror our choices with what is right because it always has an effect to other people around us especially to those who loves us.

In the song, "Buloy" presents us about the value of friendship and the benefit we can get from each other at time we experienced struggles in life. The persona in the song experienced about being expelled from both home and school because of his stupidity. Whenever he encounters any problems in life, he always resorts to his friend whom he looked up to for advice and example. However, when both of them got departed from each other's company, the persona develops internal struggles of loneliness and sadness. More than any conflict that he experienced, his friend's death because of suicide had led him to feel so much pain of losing someone he loves. Although tragic, the persona still chooses to remember the things that his friend told him whenever he experienced conflict. The writer must have thought of sharing this song to everyone as everyone has his own conflict experience. The song introduces the power of collective effort in making lives better. Apart from being together, the sufferings of this life led us to depression or worst suicide. A lesson that we can always share to the world that we are in this world together and we owe to help one another to survive. And to always remember the lessons from the past as a reference to prefer better choices in the future. The choices we make always has an impact to people around us.

In the song, "Estudyante Blues" talks about the story of a student's struggles in the home. He related his experience on being scolded every day. He felt secluded in his own home. These external factors effected the persona to pity himself and become lonely. These conflicts moved the persona escape from this conflict. The comfort and support that he wished to get from home had led him to search it from his friends. The writer's purpose on this song is the value of communication in the home through listening to one another and give every child that opportunity to express themselves.

In the song, "Dukha" tells us about the realities on the life of being poor. This song offers us the glimpse that the cause of the persona's poor living conditions was his lack of education. The rejections coming from other people because of his status in life expresses a discrimination on his kind. These external factors affected the persona to feel sad and become anxious about his future. Although these

conflicts are evident in the persona's life, he did not just show what it is like to be poor but also to expect for a change in his life. He asked about how life is going now after all the things he experienced. Instead of running away from these conflicts, he chooses to face it. The writer's purpose in this song is to help us ponder on what could go wrong in our life if we lack education and to look for a way out of it if we experienced on the same thing. One thing we can learn in this song is the chance to make a better choice on our end and have this song a basis on a brighter path through pursuing education.

In the song, "Basang Basa sa Ulan" tells us about a person with so much loneliness in his heart. The external struggles that we can find in this song is the rain that brought coldness to the persona. Some internal conflicts such as loneliness, sadness, and pain are evident in the song. Although there is so much pain in the song, the persona still chooses to stand up back against amidst the struggles that he faced. The writer wants us to understand there is always hope in every problem and it pays to never give up.

In the song, "Bakit Ba" provides us that the persona suffers from a heartbreaking breakup. Conflicts such as rejection and the feeling of being exchanged with someone else are exposed in the song. It is very painful to read situations such as this however the persona still to choose the one he loves despite the pain that she brought him. Despite the fact that he knows that he was exchanged with someone else yet still the persona chooses to love her still. He is still willing to wait and is hoping that all will be well in time. The writer provides a song that we all can learn from. In a breakup we should explain vividly why there is a need to separation so that each one will know the things he/she made wrong so it can be fix, maybe not on the same relationship but other. The song teaches us also that love is stronger than pain and that no matter what happen our heart still choose to love someone unconditionally despite the pain.

In the song, "Hari ng Tondo" tell us about the story of Asiong Salonga - a kind of gang leader. The persona relates to the song that the friend of Asiong stab him to death. Although tragic, the conflicts poverty, crime and violence press other non-dominant gang group and people around in the society to keep silence because despite gang tensions. Poverty being the main reason why people resort to illegal acts to survive, led the characters in the song to feel fear. This fear resulted to shut up all those who wished to rally a change in their society. Asiong being told in the song to be his story, changed his course and way of life. Sad as it may sound but his friend had killed him while he is still on the process of changing his life. However, the song offers us the hope that no matter how worst a person can become there is always a possibility for them to change. We just need to give them a chance to do so. Crime and violence has always pave the way to rob the joy and life of many people in poor areas. The writer of the songs wants us to know that the change is within us. It is the ability to change ourselves and spark a change in the society.

In the song, "Isang Linggong Pag-ibig" tells us about a week-long love story. The persona just met someone and make a love relationship immediately. The week ends with their relationship that have ended also. The persona had question how fast he came and how fast he went away. Because of this conflict the persona gripped in the loneliness, sadness and regrets of the losing of a lover. This left the persona in despair and hopelessness as to how fast everything was gone. The writer explores on the areas of fast and failed relationships teaching a lesson to know first someone well before engaging in a serious relationship.

In the song, “Sirena” tells us about a gay person with a prejudice father. Because of too much difference in disposition in life, he suffers whipping, beating and drowning from his father. Internal struggles were creeping in to the persona because of these abuses such as doubt, fear and loneliness. On the other hand, the song ends with the persona helping out his father in his old age who suffers from cancer. The writer conveys the idea of bravery. This kind of bravery is not found in masculinity and great physique but on the kind of heart that are strong enough to hold the enemy and save them from falling. The song ends with the father saying that gay are manlier than men because the persona choose to love still his father despite the abuses he gets from him. The song teaching us a lesson that we should not step down any person within our circle of family because they are the same people that held us up when we are down. The power of forgiveness and reconciliation seal relationships to restoration no matter how broken the past was.

In this song, “Hagdan” tells us about the persona who is in poor living condition. This condition had forced him to do wrong choices in life and resort to vices. He left home because of the tension he had with his mother and brother. He always dreamed to make things happen fastly. In his frustrations, he went to bad influential friends who led him to a worst life of having vices and doing illegal acts. The conflicts both external and internal encouraged the persona to change the course of his life. Nothing has gone too far when he found friends that help him change his way of life. On his way of changing, he realized that there no need of so much of hurrying to reach our dreams. The song teaches us to just take one step at a time. The writer’s purpose is for us to see hope in our situations and to always choose the right way. No matter how slow as long as we take one step at a time towards our dream, we will be able to reach it soon.

The OPM songs and the gist aforementioned suggests about the persona’s stand against conflict, their will to fight against it and the things that help them overcome. The embedded lesson within the context of the songs as to the writer’s purpose creates a medium through which we can reflect on the conflicts the persona experienced and make better choices in our own life.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings anchored in the analysis and interpretations of the selected OPM songs, the researches have arrived at these conclusions.

The selected Original Pinoy Music songs as resource of this literary study show external and internal conflicts. External problems have revolved around poverty, rejection, abuse, weather, temptations, vices and crime. The songs also have revealed instances of internal conflicts which revolve around fear, pain, loneliness, emptiness, desperation, self-pity, regrets, confusion, doubt and unhappiness. There are cases that external conflict creates more external and internal conflicts and vice versa. Conflicts are shown through in the lyrics; through what the persona and other character say or do. Some resolution on the conflicts are provided, yet, others are left hanging with the researchers offering logical resolves. Yet, generally, all the resolves provided are meant to ease character’s sufferings and for them to arise above conflicts. Other resolves are anticipatory of futuristic just like education as perceived to be a weapon to fight poverty. Other resolves allow the characters to be free from emotional tensions or turn themselves into better individuals.

5 IMPLICATIONS

Based on the study’s findings and conclusions, the researchers have drawn some implications. The selected Original Pinoy Music songs which contain external and internal conflicts allow us to see how the characters manage the different conflicts that life confronts them. There are conflicts that are given appropriate solutions and others are deviations from the society’s norms or even go against the law. These are to allow the readers to either take side or oppose the offered resolves, yet in the end, are expected to arrive at the mostsound decisions realizinfg Horace’s one of the twin purposes of literature – that is, to see its usability for life application.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Literature teachers should continue to develop analytical skills of the students on the existing conflicts in short stories, let them identify the resolves offered and consummate the activity on their reactions and comments or lead them to a debate as to the appropriateness/inappropriateness of the solutions provided to the conflicts in stories.

2. Literature teachers should consider literature as mirrors of life specifically our contry’s local songs, thus, letting the students apply what is worth life applying, and achieving the ultimate goal of literature as potent mechanism for social transformation.

3. Researches may be inspired to replicate this study using other Philippine local songs or exploring the same methodology used in the present study to other literary genres.

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