

The Filipino Male as "Macho-Machunurin": Bringing Men and Masculinities in Gender and Development Studies

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As Filipino feminist scholars move beyond the stage of "women as victim, men as problem" discourse in gender studies, there is a need to discuss the place of men in gender and development studies. Academics and advocates note the pitfalls of "women-focused" and "women-only" development interventions, citing women-focused programs that succeed mostly in shifting the burden of responsibility for contraception, parenting and housework on women. There is a need to take into account the experiences of different varieties of men from marginal groups based on class, ethnicity, age, generation and position in the life cycle as gender roles react to socio-economic changes. As it is, men and masculinity have not been adequately theorized. Expressions of Filipino masculinities within the Filipino family, market place, work environment, and marital relations are complex. The inclusion of men and masculinities in gender studies has so far been confined to the unmasking of the "problematic male." By uncovering the multiple layers and forms of masculinities, feminist scholars and advocates could come up with more strategic development plans and programs and more successfully reorder gender relations.

In March 2000, I arranged a Philippine study tour for 25 Vietnamese professors from six institutions involved in a five-year capacity building project called "Localized Poverty Reduction in Vietnam." Typical of most first-time visitors to the country, many tour participants marveled at how powerful women are in the Philippines. We were met and hosted by organizations largely run by women, from the female administrators at several units of the University of the Philippines, the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in Los Baños, and Benguet State Universities; women running the church-based and non-sectarian non-government organizations (NGOs); and active women members of community organizations. A few women participants exclaimed, "You have a long 'Women's Month' celebration here. We only have 'Women's Day' in Vietnam!"

Some of the Vietnamese male participants later expressed their understanding of why Filipino women seemed so strong, independent, and powerful, able and willing to work overseas, acquire a profession, run NGOs and community projects. Filipino men seemed to have abdicated

their traditional responsibilities and roles in the family, such that the local women have to be strong, entrepreneurial, and mobile in looking for work. When they visited the housing and livelihood programs organized by Sr. Christine Tan and run by her largely female staff in the urban poor community in Lerverza, they noticed the men idly chatting, smoking, and playing a game of pool, while the women were busy doing their daily business. They saw similar scenes in another urban poor community beside a railway track in Muntinlupa, Rizal, where the men were drinking gin and beer with *'pulutan'* (food that goes with alcoholic drinks), playing cards, gambling and laughing boisterously under the blistering sun on a Saturday morning. Of course, some Filipino women could be faulted for spoiling their men and carrying too much burden on their shoulders, certainly not without complaint, but that is another story. What is fascinating is how the participants clapped their hands in approval to insights contrasting the relative seriousness with which Filipino and Vietnamese men fulfil their family responsibilities at the after-tour "reflections" session. Not only were the Vietnamese men blind to their own display of masculine national pride. They also seemed blind to similar proclivities for leisure, drinking, smoking and gambling among their compatriots in urban poor communities in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh, and the parallel tendency of Vietnamese women to take on an overload of responsibility within and outside the household.

The contrasts between the Philippines' and Vietnam's political culture are striking. But there are a lot of parallelisms between the two countries when it comes to the dynamics of gender relations, and gender culture. The double standards of morality also exist as many Vietnamese women turn a blind eye to their husbands' infidelity, extra-marital affairs or co-habitation with mistresses, and proclivities to seeing prostitutes (Vietnam however, is not a Catholic country and the courts allow divorce). Jokes about extra-marital affairs likewise bring conflating imageries of food, women and sex. A popular joke is that "Vietnamese men like rice for their meals, but sometimes they have to eat noodles." This is similar to what some Filipino men say, "*Mahirap naman ang iisa lang ang klase ng ulam. Kailangan ka ring tumikim paminsan-minsan ng ibang putahe.*" (It is difficult to eat the same kind of viand everyday. You have to try other dishes sometimes.)

The jokes about husbands, wives and conjugal relations are also similar. Vietnamese men often joke about belonging to "association of

men who fear their wives." Likewise, we often hear Filipino men speak of themselves as "*macho, machunurin sa asawa*" (a play on the word "macho" to mean "I am obedient to my wife"), as member of the "*Yukiza, yuko sa asawa*" (a play on word Yakuza, the Japanese Mafia, to mean "I bow to my wife"), or as "*Pedrong Taga, taga-luto, taga-laba*" (a play on the word "taga" (or hack), a moniker for tough men, but used here to refer to a hen-pecked husband who does the cooking (*taga-luto*) and laundry (*taga-laba*). Jokes and common sayings do tell something about culturally-specific world views. In this case, they reveal much about Filipino men's varied forms of display and different varieties of masculinities, as well as local anxieties about changing gender roles and identities.

Women and/or gender and development studies in the Philippines have already been analyzing transformations in gender relations and identities brought about by cultural, social, political and economic changes. The inclusion of Filipino men and masculinities in gender studies however, has often been confined to the unmasking of androcentric assumptions, the "problematic male" and images of masculinity. What is rarely analyzed are the varieties of men and the varieties of masculinities which are not necessarily problematic, but often destabilizing, contradictory, and unsettling, and sometimes disempowering. Bringing in men and masculinities within gender studies would not only make sound scholarship, but could also qualify some of the insights and conclusions reached by Filipino feminists about gender identities and relations in the Philippines, and potentially carve a role for men in gender liberation and empowerment.

Many Filipino feminist scholars, male and female alike, have already passed that stage of polarizing, oppositional, and dualist discourses on "women as victim, men as problem." The place of men in the Philippine women's or gender liberation movement is beginning to be discussed, and I have not heard of any Filipino feminist who had claimed that "men cannot be feminist." In this essay, I do not wish to privilege men and men's position in the gender liberation movement; nor do I wish to valorise non-problematic expressions of masculinities and over-inflate their potentials in changing gender identities and relations. I only wish to contribute to the already on-going task of Filipino feminists to seriously consider how mainstreaming gender discourses could create the widest level of public support for women's issues, and transformation of gender relations.

Missing Men in Gender and Development Studies

There are at least two points of controversy that may be noted in current debates on gender and development discourses in Asia and elsewhere. First is the shift from "women" to "gender" focus, which began in the mid-1980s as a response to the limitations of the earlier Women-In-Development (WID) framework's attempt to integrate women in development processes. Second is the inclusion of men, male identities, and masculinities in mainstreaming gender within development discussions. These two points are actually two sides of the same coin, as the shift from women to gender necessitates the adequate inclusion of men as "the other half" in any discussion about gender issues and gender relations.

In their seminal essay, "Who Needs [Sex] When You Can Have [Gender]?", Baden and Goetz (1997) noted the discomfort and dissatisfaction of women activists and WID professionals, especially in developing countries, over the need to refocus their programs on women to accommodate men's needs and interests in response to international development agencies' call for "gender mainstreaming." Such discomfort and dissatisfaction have to do not only with issues of resource allocation and imbalance in North-South power relations, but also with the possibility of crowding out women and feminist interests as women's voices get drowned and men, once again, take the driver's seat in gender and development initiatives. A few Filipino feminist activists have often claimed a rather accurate, but bordering on the malicious-conspiratorial, view that the shift from women to gender was largely borne out of the need to appease men advocates within international development circles, and to make gender and development more palatable to international agencies.¹ Many Filipino women's advocates and civil servants have also expressed difficulties in operationalizing "gender" in their programs and projects. Front-line service social workers within the Department of Social Welfare and Development have found limitations in so-called "gender training" sessions and have mainly paid lip service to including men, or problematized men as "the problem."² Such difficulties also come in the wake of budget cuts at a time when women's programs and gender mainstreaming efforts at various bureaucratic levels are only at their infancy.

The Western academic feminist response to these debates has been equally lively and passionate. Feminist writers have raised problems with the tendency to conflate women and gender. Proclaiming that "gender is not synonymous with women,"²³ this conflation, they argue, has led to the treatment of gender as women's issues, the inscription of gender as primarily women's concern, and the lack of attention to gender relations and how men and masculinities figure in such debates. Indeed, we can ask why feminist scholars often end up talking about women when they want to talk about gender, which necessarily include men and relations between women and men. The obvious response is that since women's perspectives and voices have often been subjugated or marginalized in mainstream studies, it is necessary to not just "add women and stir" but to question the very flawed assumptions and conceptual lenses used and provide a necessary corrective by focusing on women. Mainstream academic studies may be considered *de facto* men's studies because they tend to take the male actor and male experiences as the norm. However, such studies have never really considered gender as an important social variable, and even if they do, they are unable to take into account experiences of different varieties of men from marginal groups based on class, ethnicity, age, generation, and position in the life cycle.

The international development agencies have given an overwhelmingly positive response to the gender shift, and to the call for the integration of men and masculinities in development work. And herein lies part of the problem, or more precisely the "credibility problem" of bringing in men and masculinities in development work. For unlike the women and development movement, which was borne out of the second wave of activist women's movement in the 1970s,²⁴ the "gender, men and masculinities" drive does not have a counterpart social and political movement that inspired its growth. Ruth Pearson,²⁵ in particular, has raised questions about the composition, vision, motivations and political connections of the participants behind the current clamour for the integration of men in Gender and Development (GAD), by asking:

Is the enthusiasm for men borne more out of a politically impotent 'postist' politics, which is based on deconstructing universalist social identities and has used postmodernist analysis to celebrate difference rather than seek commonalities? Does the 'men in development' movement also carry a transformatory vision of equitable relations between men and women and a liberation agenda in terms of freeing

men from the burdens and frustrations of outmoded gender performances and scripts? ... Is the "men in development" movement led by men seeking to transform development policy and practice by implementing an anti-sexist and inclusionary agenda? Is it led by activists seeking to confront the problems and frustrations of inequitable gender relations? Is it being driven by theorists who accept, or reject, a "personal is political" position, or even by those who assert that the political is not just the personal? To what extent is it being driven by men or by women? By feminists or technical gender specialists? And do its proponents share the vision of gender solidarity and internationalist fraternity which inspired the WID movement of the 1970s onwards?⁵

Perhaps the most comprehensive and rigorous response to the integration of men and masculinities have come from feminist writers like Pearson, with one foot in the academe and the other foot in international development work. They point out the reasons behind and outcomes of "missing men" from GAD discourse and practices. Some of the reasons are obvious. Challenging men and masculinities (as well as women and femininities) is important in improving women's lives in the context of unequal gender relations. It is also important in addressing different kinds of inequalities in men's lives on the basis of gender, class, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, and sexual orientation.⁷ Because men and masculinities have not been adequately theorised, GAD has mainly replicated the polarizing, oppositional, and dualist "women as victim, men as problem" discourse, evoking negative stereotypes of men, but rarely directly engaging with them as part of the solution to gender issues.⁸ This is most common in anti-poverty projects and interventions that address issues of male violence, domestic violence and forms of violence against women.⁹ Hence, there is a need to go beyond hunting the "problematic male" by unpacking the category "men," examining the diversity of their identities and experiences, and questioning the assumption of a "hegemonic masculinity" that see masculinity as fixed, uniform, and singular, rather than diverse, unstable and contradictory.¹⁰

Other reasons for the inclusion of men and masculinities within GAD arise out of political (read power relations) and practical concerns for the less-than satisfactory outcomes of GAD interventions that focus mainly on women. These include the obvious gendered forms of rivalry and hostilities emerging from men's exclusion in resource allocation to women's projects or livelihood initiatives.¹¹ There is also the increased

overload on women's work and missed opportunities in utilizing male labor, participation and other resources.¹² There are also serious limitations and constraints in the operations and success of "women-only" projects,¹³ most obvious in family planning and reproductive health and AIDS/HIV projects,¹⁴ and in community-based natural resource management.¹⁵

Men, Masculinities and Development in the Philippines

Filipino academics and advocates have already noted the pitfalls of "women-focused" and "women-only" development interventions. For example, women's rights advocates have challenged ineffective women-focused family planning and reproductive health programs. These women-focused programs not only abdicate men's share of the responsibility in limiting biological reproduction, let alone parenting, housework and other forms of social reproduction, but also exact heavy burdens on women as they bear the greater responsibility for contraception. As David¹⁶ notes in her study on marital decision-making patterns on family planning:

(T)he wishes of husbands emerge more dominant, even as there is no clear rationale why husbands should have the greater or final say (on the matter). Neither is there a clear acceptance of husbands' authority on family planning matters by their wives. This may partly explain the slower adoption of family planning by married couples in the Philippines when compared to other countries of similar development.¹⁷

These more commonplace insights, however, are the easier ones to bring into the picture. Bringing in men and masculinities into gender and development discourses in the Philippines is much more complicated as it entails more than the tasks of interrogating the "men-as-problem" line of argument or bursting the "hegemonic masculinity" bubble. It entails bringing in the layers and multiple grids of intersectionality between gender, class, race, religion, generation, age, life cycle position, and other social variables that affect both women and men. Particular attention needs to be paid to how the (re)assertion of men's masculinities takes place in the context of changes affecting the Filipino family, market and work place, and migration trends. Each of these is given attention below, and more can be added to the list. These may include the representation and expressions of masculinities in advertising and media; sexuality and gay/lesbian/bi-sexual identities; the churches and religious culture; farm, service, and industrial work; the military and

police; political culture and institutions; gambling, drinking, cockfights and other local vices; among others. Some of these are already being explored in the growing field of Philippine anthropological and cultural studies.

Men, Masculinities, Marital Relations, and the Filipino Family

The absence of a consolidated patriarchy in the Philippines has brought about more egalitarian patterns of decision-making in the family and value placed on sex-role complementarity. This parallels the situation in Ladakh in the northern Himalayan Jammu-Kashmir region of India, where Angeles and Tarbotton¹⁸ noted the complexities of understanding gender based on local knowledge:

Behind (Ladakh) women's exuberant humor about the "fear" they generate in the hearts of Ladakhi men is a profound anxiety around the proper role of men in their society and organization. [Women's Alliance in Ladakh] members for example claim that they are "just donkeys" when it comes to money matters. They insist that they need men's help in business matters, especially since it is widely recognized that men have more education, expertise in accounting, and mobility to connect the household economy to markets and other outside agencies.

Yet, the fact that women in general have limited ability and control over this critical aspect of organizational and economic life may be easily interpreted by Western feminists as a sign of women's disempowerment, instead of being seen simply as a concession to men who have minimal roles in running the farms and the informal household economy. This is a result of household negotiation and bargaining dynamics that are mediated by cultural norms and local conceptions of "power" and "gender".¹⁹

Ladakh, like many places, is affected by new forms of agricultural technology, regional border conflicts, international tourism, and global movement of people and goods. Despite its relatively isolated and stable village life, these changes are slowly changing the terms of bargaining and negotiation of gender identities and roles within and outside the household. Such dynamics however are mediated by local conceptions of "appropriate" gender roles:

In Ladakh ... great value is placed on domestic harmony and gender role complementarity. There is a natural acceptance of existing gender differences, comparative advantages, and division of labor, which are not necessarily equated with gender-based inequality and injustice. Deference to men in some aspects of decision-making is not seen as an admission of women's inferiority or men's superiority, but as a recognition of cultural, temporal and spatial dimensions of men's and women's separate but complementary spheres of influence.²⁰

Does the Philippine cultural context speak of similar complexities in the (re)negotiation of gender roles and identities? The absence of a consolidated patriarchy provides women and men greater room for maneuver and flexibility in negotiating their gender roles and identities in Philippine society, and also within the Filipino diasporic communities abroad. Social anthropologists have noted the presence of sex-role complementarity and interchangeable gender roles in the Philippine and other Southeast Asian societies. Bilateral and egalitarian patterns in marital decision-making are often used to demonstrate the "less patriarchal" character of the Filipino family.²¹ Joint decision-making, and the dominance of wives and mothers over the household budget, education and discipline of children are shaped by factors such as the place of residence of the family (i.e. joint decision-making is more common in urban areas), level of education of husband and wife, and the wife's earnings and employment in the market economy.²²

The flip-side of sex-role complementarity in family and community relations is the value placed on domestic peace and harmony, and the esteem of the family and kin group in the eyes of the community. In many Asian societies, including the Philippines, domestic peace and harmony, and family esteem are largely derived from the fulfillment of one's ascribed gender roles. These roles – the husband and father as family provider; the wife and mother as dutiful partner and nurturer, filial piety on the part of the children – change, however, depending on economic circumstances and one's position in the life cycle. These gender roles are also open to bargaining and negotiation, as well as decomposition and recomposition, as the Ladakh case has shown.

The display of Filipino masculinity within the family is tempered and circumscribed by gender role expectations and value placed by individuals, family and kin group on family togetherness and domestic peace.

Domestic peace and harmony at all costs have aided Filipino women's perfection of the use of indirect power strategies. These strategies include non-confrontational ways of argumentation and negotiation, control over the family budget, and their emotional hold and disciplinary influence over their children, or the extreme case of women perpetually suffering in silence. The role of Filipino women within the family is so important that they are called *"ilaw ng tahanan"* (light of the home), or jokingly referred to by husbands as their "boss" or *"kumander"* (commander). Some of my Filipino friends, male and female alike, have jokingly or seriously challenged the need for the greater empowerment of women in the public sphere when I raised feminist issues. They note that Filipino women are already powerful in the domestic sphere and certainly active and visible in the public sphere. When men express this view, are they simply trying to preserve power for themselves and for men in general? Or are they also simultaneously voicing their awareness of the considerable power, influence and authority that women wield within the family, and their concern for domestic peace and harmony should the family's focal person – the wife and mother – get enamoured by the very public realm of politics? When women express the same view, are they simply complacent about gender role expectations, or are they suggesting that it is not women who should change, but men and what we expect of them and their behavior as fathers, husbands, brothers and friends?

Filipino fathers and their notions of fatherhood have already been studied in relation to social psychology and change. These studies are relevant for their potential explorations of masculinities within the family and should inform feminists writing on gender and development issues. Tan²³ for example talked about the four archetypes of fathers and their differing perceptions of fatherhood using the dimensions of activity (high or low) and affection (positive or negative). The first is that of a *procreator* (low activity, negative affect) who see himself mainly as a provider and reproducer of the species. The second is the *dilettante* (low activity, positive affect) who may be a weak and dysfunctional father but nevertheless able and willing to develop a warm, friendly relationship with his children. The third is the *determinate* father (high activity, negative affect) who does not particularly enjoy spending time with his children and has a clear-cut view of a father's role, which is to control his children's destinies and directions in life. The fourth is the *generative* father (high activity, positive affect) who sees himself as a guardian and finds personal fulfillment and rewards in rich-quality family life and becoming

a competent parent by getting involved in his child's activities and development as a person.²⁴ Each of these categories has a counterpart masculine identity, thus demonstrating the varieties of masculine behavior in the fatherhood experience alone, let alone that of a husband, son or brother. The procreator father, for example, is typified by womanizing husbands who revel in impregnating as many women as possible, best seen in the real lives of famous actors Joseph Estrada, Lou Salvador Sr. and Dolphy and numerous politicians better left unnamed. Here, expressions of masculinities as fathers derive from their primary concerns: family tradition, continuity of the family name and economic provision for the Procreator Father; play, companionship and relief from strain for the Dilettante Father; extension of self and parental aspirations for the Determinative Father; and pleasure in children's growth, enriched family life and personal growth for the Generative Father.²⁵

There are of course, procreator, determinative, dilettante and generative mothers as well,²⁶ but leaving that aside, what makes most Filipino fathers more of procreators or dilettante than a generative parents? Tan²⁷ notes that this phenomenon may have to do with the limited role given to Filipino fathers in child rearing and the strong role of mothers in the family, especially among the lower classes. He also writes that the generative parental role is common among the upper social classes in the urban areas more exposed to mass media.²⁸ Citing a study done by Decaeslercker,²⁹ he also noted the dominance of the procreator-dilettante archetype among the urban poor. More than half of the children interviewed had poor interaction with their fathers who were considered "inaccessible and unapproachable" and "some daughters even saw their fathers as threatening persons who were potential rapists."³⁰

There are different facets of Philippine social and cultural life that nurture masculinities and male role expectations and experiences. I will mention only two here, the "*barkada*" (gang) phenomenon and the "*querida*" (mistress) system. Socialization into gender roles, from childhood to adulthood, shape men's and boys' proclivities for certain things like guns, forms of behavior like womanizing, and forms of leisure like long-range shooting, gambling, and drinking. These proclivities are glorified in movies and television shows that display hypermasculine and homosocial behavior along with images of guns, gangs, gore, and girls. Women, violence, and forms of violence against women mark many of these films:

in reel movies and real life, wives, mothers, daughters and sisters have to contend or put up with the *barkada* (gangmates) of their male relations. The regular drinking of the father with his *barkada* and/or taking on a mistress had been frequently mentioned by streetchildren as among the circumstances that disrupted their family life.³⁴ The *barkada* of adult Filipino males is both an expression of homosociality and masculine solidarity, and a form of escape from daily grind of work and family. It needs further exploration, along with forms of leisure and recreation popular among Filipino men, such as basketball, gambling and cockfights. All these suggest the greater availability of leisure time for men and boys, compared to women and girls who are more expected to be home-bound and assist their mothers in domestic work. This has partly to do with the complicity of adult women in the way they socialize children and tolerate male behavior, thus, raising the stereotype "dutiful daughters" and "defiant sons."

Adult women's complicity and tolerance of men's philandering and taking on mistresses ("*querida*" system) is even more complex to analyze in relation to masculinities. Womanizing-as-virile masculinity is often tolerated, not only by women who are economically dependent on their husbands for support, but also by highly educated women from the affluent classes. Men only get a slap on the wrist and slight public censure when they are caught with a prostitute, a mistress or a second family. Extra-marital affairs on the part of men are often tolerated and even become a source of "symbolic capital." This symbolic capital comes in the form of social reputation for virility (personal looks do not matter as much), consumption or buying power (i.e., in hiring the services of prostitutes), or earning power (i.e., ability to support as many wives and families). However, similar activities on the part of women become cause for personal shame and social ostracism. Such double standards of morality or one-sided chastity/monogamy have for a long time been reflected in laws and immortalized in songs and movies.

Men, Masculinities, and the Market

Modernity and the marketplace have been transforming gender roles in ways that are sometimes vulgar and radical, sometimes subtle and invisible. Such transformations are best seen in workplaces, particularly in urban cities, that include huge numbers of women working alongside (or for) men. The urban landscape and structures within it have also been

changing as cities expand to accommodate new offices, housing complexes, squatter colonies, transportation, cinemas and recreation centers, and advertising billboards. Each of these places provides rich sites for the investigation of gender identities and expressions of femininities and masculinities. The hypermasculine Filipino male is not only valorized and glorified in the movies and related advertising billboards, but also in real life encounters between kidnapers, criminals, police and urban hit men. The hypermasculine-violent culture they generate gives rise to heinous crimes such as murders and rape and increased reports of domestic violence and sexual abuse.³²

Market reforms have provided new opportunities for women to work in the expanding industrial and service economy. The expansion of female dominated work in both domestic and global economies may be partly due to gendered patterns of inter-generation resource allocation and wealth transfer within the household. While sons are generally preferred over daughters in land inheritance, daughters are given more education in the Philippines.³³ The common focus by feminists on land and agrarian reform as main determinants of welfare and intergenerational wealth transfer may miss out on other factors such as education, which may be a more valuable asset in new knowledge-based economy filled with non-agricultural work opportunities.³⁴

Economic restructuring and market reforms have been associated with the rise of "female-headed households," a concept often used in targeting poverty groups. Chant³⁵ has already convincingly argued here and in her other works "that 'the poorest of the poor' is a misleading stereotype for female-headed households in urban areas of the South," especially the Philippines. Urban poverty estimates show that male-headed households are on the average poorer than female-headed households, as their contribution to urban poverty is above 80 percent.³⁶ Hence, bringing men and masculinities in the studies of market reforms may help us understand how and why unemployed men, disabled persons and the elderly may need more special attention than female-headed households where older children may bring in extra household income, or have access to preferential funds in a micro-credit or micro-enterprise project.³⁷

Women's labor force participation, urbanization, and migration (see below) have profound effects on the Filipino family and marital relations:

Gender role reversals may sometimes occur when women play the breadwinner role while husbands stay at home to look after the children. This happens particularly in areas where declining wage work in the construction, mining, and transportation industries have adversely affected male employment, and where women are more easily in demand for lower-paid service or informal sector work. Gender role-reversal, women's integration in the labor market, and their ability to combine employment with mothering and housework had caused some resentment on the part of men. Such resentment is expressed in the dilettante tendencies of fathers in the rural areas where:

(M)ost rural men tend to be economic failures and feel insecure and threatened by their wives' efficiency as homemaker, entrepreneur and breadwinner. The men therefore tried to assert their dominance and masculinity by playing the role of sexual aggressor, withholding social support and intimacy from their wives while impregnating them as often as possible. Their love and affection are then reserved for their children.³⁰

The market economy, and women's role in it, has a double-edge effect on gender identities when women take on the breadwinner role. There is no reason to expect that old forms of masculinities may erode, decline or decompose automatically as a result of market forces and women's economic independence from men. What we may see in fact are even more destabilizing and destructive expressions of masculinities as a way of men's reassertion of their former place in society. In some cases however, men who are well-adjusted psychologically to changing gender roles could effectively manage and negotiate their new roles in the modern economy. This is where more research has to be done, particularly in view of the increased number of married Filipino women who migrate for temporary or semi-permanent overseas work.

Men, Masculinities and Migration

Men's roles and expressions of masculinities within the Filipino family, market place, work environment, and marital relations are being affected by globalization, particularly global migration. Much attention has already been given to the "feminization of migrant labor" in the Philippines. Gender and migration studies have also analyzed how migration has on the one hand ruptured "the fabled closeness of the Filipino family," and on the other, created transnational linkages of kin

support and exchange.⁴⁰ Tan⁴⁰ notes that marital separation and overseas migration often make Filipino migrants become "dilettante-provider" fathers or mothers to their children, warm and loving when they are around, but never really there as guardians on a regular basis. Migration affects not just the family as a whole, nor does it affect all family members equally. Paying attention to its effects on husbands and fathers, and the (re)assertion of their masculinities when they migrate themselves or are left behind by their female relations, would provide a necessary balance to the more common focus on the effects of migration on women migrants.

One could further tease out the insights from a few studies, which pay attention to the gender differential impact of migration. For example, Asis⁴² cited studies documenting how daughters are more perceived by parents as being more reliable than sons when it comes to remitting part of their income to the family. She also noted negative public perceptions of female migration, particularly "concerns about the migration of married women [that] seem to boil down to who will assume the tasks traditionally performed by women, a question that does not arise in the migration of men."⁴² Expectations of masculine behavior in the Philippines frame the inability of men to take on the reproductive tasks left behind by women migrants whose roles are often taken over by daughters, sisters and other female relatives.⁴³ And if sensationalized reporting in the daily tabloid such as *Abante* and *People's Tonite* are to be taken with some seriousness, increased cases of incest rape and sexual abuse of children by male relations are noted in households where mothers have migrated for work. Philippine society tends to put the greater onus on women and blame the "feminization of migration" and governments labor export policy. Less scrutiny is placed on men and their display of abusive and irresponsible masculinities when their wives take on the breadwinner role.

The generalized and universalized experience of the Filipino diaspora abroad has been related to the "overseas contract worker" (OCW) phenomenon: for men as construction workers, for women as domestic helpers, nannies, or entertainer. One may ask: how have gender identities, particularly masculine identities, among the Filipino diaspora in the Middle East, Hongkong, Singapore, Japan, Canada, Australia, Europe, and the United States, been changing as a result of the gendered patterns of migration to these places? How has the production of cultural hybridity in terms of the superimposition of Filipino culture on the cultures

of these places been interacting with multicultural expectations of gender identities and roles? Such questions have been more frequently explored in the case of women overseas contract workers in Hongkong and Singapore, many of whom are domestic workers,⁴⁴ and in the case of Filipina brides who have captured the national imagination and discourse on bodies and domestic violence in Australia.⁴⁵ Chang and Ling⁴⁶ noted the emergence of "t-bird/tomboysm" among Filipina domestic workers in Hongkong who behave in conventional masculine behavior to save themselves from sexual harassment and at the same time providing protection and intimacy to married Filipinas who prefer the "safety" of a relationship with a tomboy. This is hardly surprising given how homosocial and homosexual behavior is partly influenced by homogenous places of work, leisure, and residence, such as unisex dormitories, sports clubs, and prisons. The display of lesbian forms of sexual behavior among Filipina migrant workers has also been noted in anecdotal evidence shared by advocates of domestic workers' rights in Eastern Canada.⁴⁷ Interestingly, it is not uncommon for women who are financially independent and do not live under the protection of a male relation to become "sexual suspects." The representation of the "over-sexualized" migrant women workers has emerged particularly with Filipino women's connections to the Japanese entertainment industry as entertainers, massage parlor attendants, cultural dancers, singers, and prostitutes. This parallels the conversations I had with Filipino immigrants in Canada about the cautionary note they give (or were given by) fellow Filipinos (or white Canadians) to be wary of their Filipina domestic workers' sexualized behavior towards their male employers or friends of their employers. Others have noted how some Filipino men (single and married alike) have taken advantage of the imbalance in sex ratio among Filipino immigrants of marrying age by seducing unsuspecting young women who prefer alliances with their compatriots.

There are however fewer studies that relate to the men's experiences of migration in relation to masculine identities. The male experience of migration itself may be seen as integral to the masculine self, as adventurer-explorer of unknown, strange lands. Aguilar compares migration to a masculine rite of passage, "the ritual of a labor contract pilgrimage" that brings home "economic and cultural capital; economic savings, the usual appliances, narratives of exploits, and cultural artefacts."⁴⁸ Citing Asis,⁴⁹ the view that "Exposure to other cultures and other nationalities...have earned for migrants the mark of a learned man," Aguilar⁵⁰ likens migration to a religious journey, a secular pilgrimage of

achievement that is highly prized in the native country. This is not unlike other societies like Indonesia where people say, "If one has not been to Malaysia, one has not yet become a man."⁵¹

Likewise, in her study of Ilocano migrants in the Middle East, Margold⁵² noted how Filipino construction workers express pride in their work, tools and brains, a reaffirmation of the male self towards fellow Asian workers, European foremen and Arabic employers. Such display of personal and national masculinist pride was a necessary defense against the everyday humiliation of self and nation brought about by their humble, low-status occupations, stories that are often concealed even to closest relatives and family members.⁵³ Discourses on nationalism and national pride often carry masculinist connotations, here made more profound when Filipino men have to deal with the migration of "their women" to work as maids or marry foreign men.

Migration may be seen on a larger scale, as a great social equalizer as it contributes to the symbiotic and material inversion and subversion of the class, ethnic, linguistic, and status hierarchies that are deeply imbedded in the Filipino psyche and Philippine social life. The "equalization," "inversion" and "subversion" come in the form of new opportunities for non-elite Filipinos to travel abroad as tourists, consume expensive luxury goods, and frequent exclusive shops that were long the preserve of social economic elites in the country. Thus, Filipino economic and intellectual elites, in particular, have felt great hurt from the racialized humiliation and erosion of national pride suffered at the hands of border immigration officials and other encounters abroad. Their (nationalist male) egos have been bruised by the shame (*hiya*),

(Over the loss of the elite, and pretentious, face of the nation. Whereas the poverty, corruption, violence, lawlessness, injustice and large-scale loss of lives from man-made disasters in the Philippines have not been deemed sources of shame for these elites, the economic exile of OCWs who come to realize the dignity of honest labor in the international context is felt as inordinately exposing the nation to international humiliation. The nation, that is, as Philippine elites would prefer it to be seen on a globalized scale.⁵⁴

Conclusions: Beyond "Missing Men" in Development

The above discussion has profound implications for gender and development (GAD) studies and interventions. The frequent silence of GAD studies on the place of men and masculinities in gender discourses have kept the lid on qualifying the "problem with men" position and understanding the limits of "women-focused" gender intervention. Expressions of Filipino masculinities are more complex, varied and contradictory than their typically homogenous and unitary representations in most writings. Uncovering these multiple layers and forms of masculinities could assist feminist scholars and advocates in coming up with more strategic development plans and programs that not only involve men in GAD projects, but also problematize their identities and positionalities as Filipino men. Such interventions could come in various forms: economic policy and migration policy reforms, rethinking the strategy of targetting female-headed households in poverty-related programs, occupational health and safety issues for both male-dominated and female-dominated industries, re-orientation and re-integration of returning migrants to the workplace, welfare programs for families of overseas workers, media and film regulatory policies, among others.

The popularity of micro-credit, livelihood and income-generating projects (e.g. pig-raising, chicken-raising, food vending, etc.), for example tends to overlook the implications of such projects on women's workload in the household economy, community and project management affairs. Also overlooked are the effects of these projects on marital relations and masculine identities. White⁶⁵ for example talks about an interesting case study of an NGO, which was politely asked by a woman not to raise issues of family income and remittance anymore when her husband is around. This happened after an NGO inquired about their seemingly wrong calculation about the husband's sole earnings. The woman's own calculation revealed that she has been earning more money than her fisher-husband, who has publicly (and proudly) proclaimed himself as the sole breadwinner in the family, and she wanted to keep this fact secret and keep the domestic peace as well.

Bringing in men and masculinities in Western development studies have been largely driven by professional women, gender technical specialists, and academic consultants within the international development business world. There is however, a large group of women and men outside development studies who have contributed to the scholarly

debates on men and masculinities. Men have yet to develop their "ownership" of the men and development agenda, as their involvement in the GAD movement is still fairly limited. There are men within international development agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Swedish International Development Agency who are already raising issues of men and masculinities, and male participation. They do this in relation to gender equity programs, especially in poverty reduction, governance, health and reproductive rights, and violence and conflict. Indeed, there is some validity to Pearson's⁵⁶ observation that it is "men in the South who, with a particularly enlightened view of men and masculinity, are prepared publicly and professionally to challenge dominant and destructive masculinities in their communities, and work towards changing attitudes and behavior in daily life" and could therefore make a big difference. It is possible then to create a future where Filipino men, male academics and professionals would become the close allies of women's rights advocates who are beginning to define their own brand of Filipino feminism. This has already become a reality in the case of the University of the Philippines College of Social Work and Community Development in the Diliman campus, and the Gender and Rural Development Program in the College of Social Forestry in the Los Baños campus, where female and male faculty members and researchers collaborate on gender and development projects. Many Philippine NGOs and grassroots organizations have also been dealing with gender issues to the extent that men in these groups are willing to undergo not just gender-sensitivity training but also support women's programs and other activities.⁵⁷

Like earlier critiques of WID writings that simply look for the "missing women" in development, there is a need to go beyond "missing men" analyses. We must challenge the rather simplistic view that bringing men into the development discourse could lead to policy, programs and projects that transform unequal and oppressive forms of gender relations and identities. There is a great need for men and women within the gender and development movement to continuously interrogate their motivations and political basis and economic rewards for doing what they are doing. There is also a need to question the analytic or explanatory and practical value of the concept of "multiple masculinities"⁵⁸ especially in non-academic settings where political expediency occasionally requires the mythologizing heroes and demonizing enemies. The "demonization of men-as-enemies" however does not sit well with men and women who see men as potential allies and not perpetual adversaries. The uncritical

glorification of "women's roles" and "feminine identities" is based on essentialist arguments and likewise dis-serving to women who find these roles and identities problematic.

One may even argue that perhaps our lack of success in improving gender relations in the Philippines has to do partly with the fact that we have paid more attention to women and girls, and not given enough help to Filipino men and boys who need it more. Policy and project or program interventions to address men's needs and interests and "models of masculinity" must be cautiously carried out. Men and women activists must continuously ensure that they are shaped by feminist orientation and visions, without replacing nor co-opting the already successful initiatives being done within the rubric of women-only frameworks of either the WID or GAD variety. •

Endnotes

1. Personal communication with Maureen Pagaduan and Trielma Pariza.
2. Angeles 2000.
3. Carver 1998.
4. Pearson and Jackson 1998.
5. Ruth Pearson 2000: 42-43.
6. Pearson 2000: 42-43.
7. Levy, Taher and Vouhe 2000: 87.
8. Cornwall 2000: 21-22; Cornwall 1998: 46; Chant 2000: 9-10.
9. Greg, Kimmel and Lang 2000.
10. Cornwall and Indistano 1994, Cornwall 2000: 22-23.
11. Chant 1995, 2000: 10; White 1994: 99, 1998.
12. Sweetman 1997: 2; Chant 2000: 10-11.
13. Chant 2000: 11.
14. Grune 2000, Greg, Kimmel and Lang 2000.
15. Cleaver 2000.
16. David 1994.
17. David 1994: 91.
18. Angeles and Tarbotton 2001.
19. Angeles and Tarbotton 2001.
20. Angeles and Tarbotton 2001.
21. Alcántara 1994: 101, Castillo 1976, Medina 1991.
22. David 1994: 78, 89.
23. Tan 1994.
24. Tan 1994: 28-33.
25. Tan 1994: 35.
26. Tan 1994: 36-37.
27. Tan 1994: 34.
28. Tan 1994: 35.
29. Decostercker 1978.
30. Tan 1994: 34.
31. Pong 1994: 43.
32. Zaico, Dandulfa-Guerrero, and Dujuyan 1995.

33. Qulsunbing, 2000.
34. Qulsunbing, 2000.
35. Chan 1997: 26.
36. Balsazar 1994: 35.
37. Angeles 2000.
38. Tan 1994: 34-35, citing Jullia 1986.
39. Asis 1994: 21.
40. Tan 1994: 30, 37.
41. Asis 1994: 20.
42. Asis 1994: 20.
43. Asis 1994: 20.
44. For example, Young 2000.
45. For example, Holt 1996.
46. Chang and Lin 2000.
47. Personal communication with Fanny Calucag and the late Janet Cuencos.
48. Aguilar 1996: 114.
49. Asis 1995: 312.
50. Aguilar 1994.
51. Cited in Aguilar 1996: 114.
52. Margold 1995.
53. Margold 1998: 292.
54. Aguilar 1996: 127.
55. White 1995.
56. Pearson 2000.
57. See for example, the case of CERD, Center for Empowerment and Research Development, in Gloffe 1999.
58. White 2000: 37.

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