

Social Issues in F. Sionil Jose's Selected Short Stories

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Abstract - The study aimed to find out how Francisco Sionil Jose depicted the prevailing socio-economic and political issues in the selected short stories using the descriptive content analysis. This critical study ascertained the following: (1) the social issues revealed in the selected stories of F. Sionil Jose; (2) the author's depiction of class struggle, social relevance and commitment; and (3) the implications of the portrayal of these social issues in the development of Philippine literature and society. The most common social issues portrayed in the selected short stories are graft and corruption, poverty, prostitution, dishonesty, rebellion, oppression of the poor, racial discrimination, concubinage, and suppression of the freedom of the press. Moreover, the author's depiction of the social issues demonstrated relevance by vividly citing the ills of the society that were rampant at the time the stories were written. In this sense the author did not just write a story for the sake of writing, but at the same time inform the readers about the effect of these social ills to the people and the society as a whole. Social commitment is also evident in the stories by making the characters realized the gravity and impact of their actions at the end of each story. Given these portrayals of the prevailing social issues, one can say that indeed, there is a clear interrelationship between literature and society. The times and events at a given time in history and the author's experiences also shaped the materials of his stories. Based on the outcomes of this literary study, literature, especially the short

stories of F. Sionil Jose, can be a vehicle for social transformation. F. Sionil Jose can then be referred to as the Jose Rizal of the present time.

Keywords- social issue, short stories, literature, social transformation

INTRODUCTION

Many writers have attempted to present the prevailing social issues starting from the Spanish period until the Marcos regime. The Philippine national hero Jose Rizal succeeded in trying to unveil the injustice during his time through literature. During the Marcos regime, poets, writers, playwrights, and journalists, even though they were banned — continued to voice out the struggles of the Filipino people. They become the instruments why the Filipinos revolted against the dictator. In the modern times, F. Sionil Jose, a wide read Filipino writer also attempted to unveil the current social issues in the society through his works.

Francisco Sionil Jose (born December 3, 1924) is one of the most widely read Filipino writers in English language. His novels and short stories depict the social underpinnings of class struggle and colonialism in Filipino society. Jose was born in Rosales, Pangasinan, and the settings of many of his stories. Jose was of Ilocano descent whose family had migrated to Pangasinan before his birth. Fleeting poverty, his forefathers traveled from Ilocos toward Cagayan Valley through Santa Fe Trail. Like many migrant families, they brought their lifetime possessions with them, including uprooted molave posts of their old houses and their *alsong*, a stone mortar for pounding rice.

F. Sionil Jose flourished as a writer after around three (3) years after World War II. Since then, consequent years of success filled his life. His stories and pieces also mirrored his life during his childhood. Like the novel. Sionil's short stories and literary pieces reflected the present condition of the society. As he said:

Authors like myself choose the city as a setting for their fiction because the city itself illustrates the progress or the sophistication that a particular country has achieved. Or, on the other hand, it might also reflect the kind of decay, both social and perhaps moral, that has come upon a particular people (Sionil, 2003).

One of the greatest influences of Jose was his industrious mother, who went out her way to get him the books he loved to read, while

making sure her family did not go hungry despite of poverty and landlines. Jose started writing in grade school, at the time he started reading. In the fifth grade, one of his teachers opened the school library to her student, which is how Jose managed to read the novels of Jose Rizal, Willa Carther's *My Antonia*, Faulkner and Steinbeck. Reading about Basilio and Crispin in Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere* made the young Jose cry, because injustice was not alien to him. When Jose was five years old, his grandfather who was a soldier during the Philippine revolution, had once tearfully showed him the land their families had once tilled but was taken away by rich mestizo landlords who knew how to work the system against illiterates like his grandfather.

F. Sionil Jose is considered as the country's greatest living writer, not only because he is a best known Filipino writer outside the country (if one has to go by the sheer number of copies of books he has sold, most of them in translation, and lately in the original English as brought out by publishing giant Random House in New York), but also because of the amount of critical attention he has received. Quantity, of course, is no measure of a writer's worth, but even if one examines the quality of enormous output – and in the matter of taste, as conventional wisdom has it, there are no indisputable objective standard – there are major international writers including novel prize winners, who consider him one of their own to make even the most skeptical homegrown readers at least briefly consider that perhaps, the country now has a worthy successor to Jose Rizal, the country's greatest writer, incidentally Jose's literary father.

The researchers chose to conduct this study using the socio-historical approach to examine how F. Sionil Jose portrayed the struggles and the social issues confronting the characters in the selected short stories as reflective of the time when he wrote these stories.

FRAMEWORK

The analysis of the selected stories anchored on the socio-historical approach to literature. Socio-Historical is balance in the sense that it does not “de-historicize” or romanticize the text, but neither does it reduce the text to its historical component. The approach is clearly philosophical, and yet it acknowledges the impact of social, cultural, linguistic, and historical contexts in literature.

The sociological approach considers literature as principally the expression of man within a given social situation. Often, this “social situation” is reduced to a question of economics, in which men are somewhat simplistically divided into the *haves* and *have-nots*, thus passing into the “proletarian approach”, which tends to underscore the conflict between the two clans. The sociological approach stresses social relevance and commitment, and gives importance to communicate with the reader to disseminate a “message” and to raise a question (Maramba, 1993).

The historical approach, on the other hand was based on Taine’s moment-milieu-race” and sees literature as both a reflection and a product of the author’s times and circumstances in which it was written. Men as a member of a particular nation at a particular time, is central to the approach. It operates on the premise that the history of a nation has a telling effect on its literature and that a piece can be better understood and appreciated if one knows the time surrounding its creation. Since all the selected stories reflect the prevailing socio-political and economic conditions of the time they were written, realism is another literary theory utilized in this story.

Realism is the theory or practice in art and literature of fidelity to nature or to real life and to accurate representation without idealization of the most typical views, details and surroundings of the subject. Realism rejects imaginative idealization in favor of a close observation of outward appearances. Moreover it attempts to describe life without idealization or romantic subjectivity. Realism has been chiefly concerned with the commonplaces with everyday life among the middle and the lower classes, where character is a product of social factors and environment is the integral element in the dramatic complications naturalism, in literature, an approach that proceeds from an analysis of reality in terms of natural forces, e.g., heredity environment, physical drives. The chief literary theorist on natural realism was Emile Zola, who said in his essay. In the drama, realism is most closely associated with Ibsen’s social plays. Later writers felt that realism laid too much emphasis on external reality. Many, notably, Henry James, turned to a psychological realism that closely examined the complex working of the mind stream of consciousness, in literature, technique that records the multifarious thoughts and feelings of a character without regard to logical argument or narrative

sequence. George Eliot introduced realism into England, and William Dean Howells introduced it into the United States.

This literary study attempted to present and to analyze the author's depiction of the social issues of his time focusing on class struggle, social commitment and relevance and the short stories depiction of the prevailing socio-political and economic condition at that times they were written. In a wider context, it involves the realistic portrayal in literature of the prevailing social issues and how literature was used as a vehicle to portray life's realities.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This literary study determined the (1) social issues revealed in the selected short stories of F. Sionil Jose; (2) author's depiction of class struggle, social relevance, and social commitment; and (3) implications of these portrayals of social issues in the development of Philippine literature and society.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a descriptive content analysis, a type of research study that is purely descriptive or in some manner analyzing, criticizing, and concluding a specific topic. The design was deemed appropriate since the study delved into the analysis of the five selected short stories by Francisco Sionil Jose.

Employing the socio-historical approach, these short stories were criticized and analyzed in the light of its portrayal of the social issues as depiction of class struggle, social commitment, social relevance, and as reflection of the prevailing socio-political and economic conditions at the time these stories were written. A matrix (see appendix) was used to present the common social issues depicted in each of the chosen stories.

The researchers selected 10 short stories by F. Sionil Jose, and then later on trimmed down to five (5) short stories, which showed common themes and depicted specific social issue. These five short stories namely: (*Olvidon*; *Modesty Aside*; *Wounds*; *Diplomacy*, and *Friendship* - 1988) were chosen since they tended to be reflective of the past and the present status of the country. Social problems such as

corruption, poverty, prostitution, concubinage, improper governance, abuse of power, and tyranny were discussed and its implications to the socio-political conditions of the country and development of Philippine literature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Plot Summaries

Olvidon (1988) talks about a successful Filipino doctor who works abroad. For twenty years Dr. Puro stays abroad and returns to Philippines upon the request of the leader of the country who is known to be sick with an esoteric disease. After curing the president he will come back to the states. That is his plan but he did not expect that he will stay in our country longer than necessary. The story points out graft and corruption, poverty, prostitution and the reasons behind these social issues. After finding a cure for the disease of the president, as a reward he was offered a great wealth. He is not poor, in fact he was well provided abroad but those properties offered were really tempting. The doctor enjoys all the whims that the government gives and sad to say he somehow adopts the lifestyle of the high officials who became his friends which he hated when he was still abroad. In the end, the doctor leaves with a lesson about Filipino culture. The political system is not the problem but the Filipinos way of doing things.

Modesty Aside tackles dishonesty among journalists. The main character of this story is a member of the media. He is a close associate of some powerful officials in the government. In the story, he protects the reputation of these officials and their names not to be included in scandals. He is not alone. In fact they are in a group. Every time they write articles about people in authority it should be something that would please them. In exchange of the dishonesty, the journalists become rich and famous in their fields. And another reason why they summon to this crime is to acquire respect from those who are under them. Dishonesty continues till the story ends.

Wounds, on the other hand depicts rebellion among the poor. The character in the story is a leader of a revolt group who fights against

oppression. This group is composed of poor people whose lands are forcibly taken by a rich plantation owner under the protection of government troops. The only means of survival and the only option they have in mind is to revolt and to make the landlord and the government realize the consequences of their actions. They use violence to make the government aware of the. Guns and bombs are their solutions to the problem were many innocent people suffer in their revenge. The story ends with the death of the leader of the group.

Diplomacy's story revolves around the life of Don Alfredo Cadiz and the tragedy in his family (his daughter's death) and the unfair and inhuman treatment of the Filipinos in the hands of the colonizers. Even if Don Alfredo knows and befriends his personal assistant who is also educated as he is, Don Alfredo still calls him an Indio or calls him by the last name

Lastly, the story *Friendship* begins with the lives of the two friends during the Marcos Regime, Arcadio and M.B. Reyes. Arcadio admires M.B. Reyes so much and even treats him as his mentor in writing. They are very good friends but the relationship is strained when M.B Reyes's ideas of good government contradicts with Arcadio's point of view. After M.B. Reyes has voiced out the true reality of the condition of the society in the Philippines his house has been ransacked. He is tortured and is threatened of death if he will not keep his mouth shut. As implied in the story, the men loyal to the Marcos Regime have inflicted all those to cruelty to M.B. Reyes. The event made him shut his mouth so as to avoid the danger that his profession as a journalist has brought to himself and his family.

Social issues revealed in the selected short stories of F. Sionil Jose

A. *Olvidon*

In the story *Olvidon* the issue of graft and corruption is evident since the high officials in the story own massive properties and enjoy life like kings. The president himself gives away millions, house and lot, luxury cars to Doctor Salvador Puro after he is treated temporarily from his disease. It is not possible that a person would give such wealth in showing his gratitude unless he gets it for free.

Poverty that leads to prostitution is another social issue tackled in

Olvidon. In order to support the needs of their family they resort to prostitution. Dr. Puro once interviewed a prostitute in his room and asks her why she ends up doing the job. The girl answers that it's for her family back in Cebu. They are poor and she has to do something for them to survive and since finding a real job in Manila with a good pay is almost impossible, she became one. Another reason is her studies. She is a college student and in order to finish her studies, she resorted into prostitution. What makes it worst is that the government officials take advantage of the problem and use these girls for self gratification. The story portrays how the high officials in the government waste the peoples' money by maintaining luxurious lifestyles.

Injustice is also specified as a social issue in piece *Olvidon*. In the latter part of the story an unknown man appears in the door of Dr. Puro and tries to convince him not to treat the president's illness and just let him die with his illness because of the injustice suffered by the Filipinos in the hands of the president. The man believes that if there will be a change in the leadership of the country, then the country will be a better place to live.

B. Modesty Aside

Dishonesty among the media is revealed in the story *Modesty Aside*. In exchange of connections and influence, the main character in the story covers up the wrong doings of some government officials. In other words he is an alliance of the government in covering the eyes of the public about the anomalies they are doing. The main character is one of the best journalists in the country and he mentions to himself that if only he were to publish the articles he is hiding in his cabinet then many high officials will be out of their positions. But Miguel T. Cuartana remains passive because he wants to maintain the fame and the protection that these officials are giving him. If all the journalists in the country are the same as the journalists in this story then the people should be all afraid. The media are mandated to observe truth and decency in their profession and not to accept bribe from erring officials, however this is not true in this story as revealed through the character of Miguel Cuartana. The character fails to become the watchdog of the society.

C. *Wounds*

The story focuses on the issue of oppressing the poor. The lands of the poor people in the story are taken by a multinational company under the protection of the government; these lands are their only possession and source of income. Rebellion is an additional social issue portrayed in the story *Wounds*. A group of people in the story revolts against the government. The consequence of the oppression is the endless terrorism in the country. When their lands were forcibly taken away from them, they have no choice but to rebel and to avenge the injustice done to them and their loved ones.

D. *Diplomacy*

Graft and corruption is unveiled in the story *Diplomacy*. The Spaniards steal the Filipinos' rights: their freedom, their properties and their identity. Don Alfredo Cadiz and his family's properties are stolen from the common people. Since they are mestizos, they are treated with favor. All of their properties are given by the Spaniards through the so-called "Spanish Grants". Through these grants, the family are able to acquire acres of land with no monetary dealings involve. This social issue is not alien to Fransisco Sionil Jose's life. In fact, when he is a child, the land they owned and tilled is also taken forcibly from their hands. Sionil Jose's grandfather is a victim of the Spanish colonization.

The Filipinos at that time became strangers in their own lands, deprived of their rights, and treated as prisoners. Filipinos are forced to work for the Spaniards and received no benefits from their efforts, even health care, whatsoever. This is also mirrored in another short story of Sionil *Men in War*, wherein the Japanese troops give money to some Filipinos to connive with them and spy for them. That sad experience of Sionil Jose could have inspired him to write *Diplomacy*, a piece of him that explains and portrays graft and corruption. Another social issue that is presented was racial discrimination.

Lastly, concubinage is another social issue that is visualized in the story *Diplomacy*. Don Alfredo has an affair with another woman while his wife is in other country. He makes excuses just to visit his concubine secretly. Don Alfredo Cadiz treats his wife unjustly just as the Spaniard treated the Filipinos -- they lied to them and get anything or took advantage from them.

E. Friendship

Suppression of the freedom of the press is highlighted in this short story, wherein whistle blowers, propagandists, and newspapers are banned and forbidden to bring out facts and the truth for public awareness, also, any acts that would threaten the administration.

Filipinos at this time are afraid of those in power. If they disagreed, they would be imprisoned. They were threatened or worse murdered. As for the main character, M.B. Reyes, the people in power did not kill him, but threatened him instead. The incident made M.B. Reyes swore not to write or say anything against the administration.

How the portrayals of social issues depict class struggle, social relevance, and social commitment

Class Struggle

In the story *Olvidon*, the class struggle as a social issue is emphasized in every part of the story. Wherein the poor strives hard to survive for living and a responsible daughter resort to prostitution to finish college and support her family's needs while the government does not care about the plight of the poor.

In *Modesty Aside*, though class struggle is not about the poor who struggles for a living, or the rich and the government officials' abuse of power, hiding the truth from the eyes of the public and suppression of freedom is still a form of class struggle wherein the people has to fight just to know the real situation and activities of the government and its officials.

Wounds is the story where class struggle is pointed out the most. The story depicts how the lands of lowly farmers were forcibly taken from them by the multinational companies. As a result, they rebel and live in the forest for a long while; sacrifice their lives and the comfort of living in a more decent home, and a peaceful life with their families. They stand by their principle and what they believe to be right amidst the danger that it poses to their lives.

Likewise, *Diplomacy* shows a class struggle between the people in power and the poor masses. The mestizos are given the privilege to live a luxurious life and treated with favor, while the Filipinos are treated

like slaves and unjustly. The Filipino character in the story tries to get the respect and attention he longs for which the Spaniards took from him. Although the Cadizes are not from a Spanish descent, but since their skin is like a Spaniards they were given respect and treated like Spaniards. They are given acres of lands and freedom to do the things they want. Contrary to that, the Filipinos suffered and are maltreated.

Friendship presents a class struggle between the government and the media. The journalists try to unveil the ills of the administration through broadcasting and print media, but in exchange of telling the truth their houses were ransacked, and were threatened to be killed. M.B. Reyes tries to reach out to the people and tells them to fight for their rights. He lost the friendship of Arcadio because of his beliefs, his job is curtailed and he is threatened for spreading the truth. Because of M.B. Reyes' dissatisfaction with the system, he decides to go and help the guerrillas gain the freedom they longed for. That act of M.B. Reyes leads to his nightmares.

Social Relevance and Social Commitment

The story *Olvidon* has social relevance in the sense that F. Sionil Jose presents the prevailing corruption and dishonesty among government officials at the time it was written. The author presents the that man is naturally corrupt; he can be bad if he chooses it to be; and can be vulnerable to the temptation of money and power. *Olvidon*, in the modern times is very relevant. It shows that graft and corruption is a pervasive disease in the Philippine society.

Social commitment is highlighted through the symbolic and ironic characterization of Dr. Puro who is a highly respected and acclaimed medical practitioner abroad. His name "Puro" means pure or untainted as expected of his track record. However, as the story progresses, we see an ironic twist. While he is at the peak of his career, the 'Leader' calls him back to the country to cure him of a disease that seems to be incurable. Dr. Puro is offered a large sum of money for his services and provided with everything he needs, including women to entertain him in between work. He is aware of the illegal and dishonest activities of the 'Leader,' but he chooses to be blind about it as he is surrounded with all the material things which he knows come from the coffers of the government.

As he continues with his medical experiment, he finds a temporary cure for the 'Leader's disease,' but he still need to conduct more medical experiments but it seems that the disease could not be treated. At the end, Dr. Puro finds himself also contaminated by the dreaded disease, which he thinks he is immune from. The character of Dr. Puro is a symbolic representation that a man, no matter how principled can also succumb to the temptation of money and power. The disease represents the ills of the society that need to be totally eradicated rather than temporarily cured. Through the story, F. Sionil Jose is conveying the message to us that temporary measures are not the solution to the on-going graft and corruption in the country, but the total eradication of its roots. If this 'social cancer' is not arrested at its early stage, it will infect the whole system.

Modesty Aside has a social relevance in a way that it tells that man is corrupt in different ways. It is not only the government officials who are corrupt but the media also demonstrated the corruption of the mind in the story. The media practitioners can choose to tell the truth and expose the flaws of the administration if they want to, but they can lie and feed the public's mind with false information regarding the government if they can benefit from it. It shows that corruption comes in many forms. Funds and money of the people are not the only thing that can be corrupted but the minds of the people and their right to know the truth.

Social commitment is seen through the acts of the group of journalists in the story. This group is secretly contending with each other on who among them are favored best by the palace. These journalists are tested in terms of their loyalty to the government through the articles they write in favor of the administration. If they are chosen to be favored, then they would be invited in every occasion held in the palace. If the officials are not satisfied with their work, then they are not recognized.

These journalists are aware that these officials have hidden stinks in their closets but they choose to be silent about it and in return, they receive the benefits given by the officials in the palace. "Adu" thought that the government already throws him off the list of favored press, he did not regret his act, his conscience did not bother about the false articles he had written. Instead, he fears of losing his connections in the palace and be left with nothing.

Adu T. Cuartana's character represents a bad example among

the press. F. Sionil Jose is somehow telling his readers that one must be aware of the situations and issues around him. One must not be satisfied by looking but one must really see. He is also conveying a message that the people in the present time must be choosy with what to believe and what to ignore in the reports presented by the media. The fact that the press can also be controlled and bought by the government, the Filipinos should be a keen observer and not to rely much on television news all the time.

Wounds presents social relevance in a sense that man is like a pail of water, that has its limits, and if that limits get crossed, water will definitely flow out from it. Meaning, a person will not stay quiet at all time. There will be a moment that he will stand against the abusive people even when the situation does not give them a chance to win. Oppression of the poor that resulted to rebellion is the social issue in this context. In the story, the people farm and own small pieces of lands and their daily needs are sustained by tilling that small piece of land. Stealing that land from them is like stealing the very air they are breathing.

"Ka Tony" dies and fails to fulfill the principle he is fighting for and the government is not even aware that someone dies fighting against their misdeeds. The war that he wages against the oppressors ends up with his death. One message that this short story delivers is that common people must fight for their rights and stand for what they believe is right. Moreover, the author is sending a message to the government officials and owners of multinational corporations that if they will not stop the oppression of the common man, then it will result to a series of rebellion.

Diplomacy is relevant in giving the Filipino people a greater understanding of what is discrimination and the feeling of being discriminated. Lots of people did not get the jobs they want because they were discriminated with their physical features and appearances. The Cadizes hide their true identity from the Filipinos; that they are just an immigrant who are treated with favor because of being fair-skinned even if they are not really of a Spanish descent. Don Alfredo Cadiz is living a favorable life, a kind of life the Filipinos are deprived to have. Because they are not Filipinos, they are exempted from injustice and discrimination.

Don Alfredo Cadiz, as a character, is a free-lancer and he enjoys

every benefit of being white and the special treatment that the Spaniards bestow on the family. But instead of treasuring that favor, and live happily with his family, he cheats his wife. He uses his money as a tool to pleasure himself with another woman. These instances in the life of Alfredo, generally brought him into harm, in the end, he left his wife and his sick daughter (in another country) alone. It was too late when Don Alfredo Cadiz received a call from his wife that his daughter is dead.

The author tries to illustrate the consequences of doing things that are not right. The impact of one's action will reverberate and will have negative consequences. In the story, Don Alfredo lost his own daughter. Also, the story emphasizes that "karma" is really true. Don Alfredo is not a good husband and a good person, so as a result of his actions, the world is not good to him also, he is left behind, full of sentiments and regrets.

Friendship is relevant to the readers because it brings out a message of how difficult is the life of the Filipinos during the Marcos regime. They experience injustice and oppression. To the readers, to understand fully how it is being suppressed to have freedom of speech and being threatened for exposing the true condition of the society at that time, they should not be afraid to express their rights and opinions for the better good. This short story is relevant to the government, because the officials are reminded to do the things that are more important than selfish gains.

Social commitment was shown in a manner that being a whistle blower like M.B. Reyes, can be of help to the people, because it would make them aware of how the officials behave in private. On the contrary, it will also endanger the life of the person who performs the action. In the story, M.B. Reyes office has been ransacked and he has been maimed. The experience makes M.B. Reyes swears in his life not to tell the truth anymore and keep his mouth shut and let the government anomalies continue. The author's message -- man is really corrupt in nature, no matter how principled he is, there is always a tendency that he can be bought by money if he does not have a strong moral foundation.

The implications of the portrayals of social issues in the development of Philippine literature and society

For the past centuries, the Philippines has been beset by a turn of events that re-shape the country's history. Many people died and suffered from the so-called "social cancer" that remains pervasive in the socio-political and economic scenario of the country. National leaders come and go – who all promised hope to the wounded and weary Filipinos, but those promises were made to be broken. Filled with discontentment and social unrest, the people brought their concerns into the streets. The Filipinos then witnessed a series of mass demonstrations, then later to the ouster of a dictator.

All these series of events in Philippine history are dramatized in the literary works of contemporary Filipino writers who view literature as a vehicle for social transformation. By creating fictional characters, set against the background of the on-going struggles of the Filipinos and quest for freedom, justice, peace, and reform in the government, the writers are sending a message to their readers. F. Sionil Jose is one of those writers who ventured into using his short stories to inform the readers about what is really going on in the Philippine society.

All the analyzed short stories of F. Sionil Jose depict the prevailing social issues of the time he wrote these stories. Set against the backdrop of history, the author exposes through his characters the ills of the society and the struggles of the common people against the ruling class, and the wealthy. Indeed, the events of the country's history also shape how a writer writes.

CONCLUSION

The outcome of the study shows that literature is an effective way of informing and making the people aware of the current situations that are sometimes neglected by the society. The portrayal of class struggle, social commitment and relevance are necessary to make the people realize of the present conditions of the society and its implications to the development of the Philippine literature and society.

Almost all the mentioned social issues in the selected short stories of F. Sionil Jose depict class struggles in various forms. Social commitment is also shown in the short stories wherein the main characters realize the consequences of their actions while some adopt the deviant acts. The stories do not merely inform the readers of these social issues but

to read the underlying message that F. Sionil Jose is trying to tell his readers – to do something about the current situation or be passive, ignore it and be stuck with the system for the rest of their lives.

The results of the analyses of the short stories prove that literature and society are interrelated. Literary pieces are by products of the author's experiences and observations of the prevailing social issues that are experienced by real life characters in the society. Literature can be a vehicle for social transformation and it is then an effective way of conveying and making the people realize that these social issues are progressing and becoming a threat in the society, therefore the people in the society must find a solution to lessen these ills or be trapped in it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and conclusion of this literary study, the following recommendations are given:

1. To the literature teachers, they should strengthen the teaching of Philippine literature in the new generation by giving and assigning their students to read and analyze specific Philippine literary works for them to understand more about the present condition of the society.
2. To the schools and curriculum planners, they must enrich the knowledge of their students to further explore Philippine literature and Filipino authors through introducing literature in the Philippines and authors. How it depicts class struggle, social commitment, and social relevance and how these authors were able to come up with these social problem related pieces. Filipino values should also be emphasized in the study of Filipino literature.
3. Future researchers should be encouraged in conducting studies that tackles on other social issues not depicted on the stories selected.
4. Literature students must focus and choose to study local authors and their works than foreign writers for them to discover more about their country.

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