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Theme in the Stories of Macario Pineda

SOLEDAD REYES

The recurrence of several dominant and interrelated themes is discernible in the works of Macario Pineda.¹ Viewed as a total narrative, his fiction embodies a pervasive and unified view of life. There is a compelling rendering of reality which makes the reader perceive significance emerging from human experience. Pineda's stories and novels seem to embody four major themes touching on the basic forces of human experience: life, love, death and idealism.

The age-old conflict between good and evil, one of the universal themes of literature, is a central theme in Pineda's stories where inevitably the forces of good equated with life triumph over the powers of evil. From this central theme flow several interrelated themes. The war that dehumanizes, an evil force, is vanquished by the acts of good men. The abstract conflict between good and evil is concretized as the opposition one finds between city and barrio life. In these stories, the goodness and beauty in the barrio are pitted against the sordidness and illusory kind of happiness found in the city. Again, the barrio is made to represent the regenerative forces of life.

Love in its various manifestations is explored and commented on in many stories: love between a man and a woman,

¹ Macario Pineda was born on April 10, 1912 in Malolos and died on August 2, 1950.

love between parent and child, love found in youth and old age. The fertility in nature as an aspect of cosmic love is also rendered in several stories. Patriotism as a manifestation of love is found in several stories about the war. The memories of the war were still fresh when Pineda began writing stories in Tagalog. In all these stories, love becomes a manifestation of the forces of life at work in the world.

Death as an affirmation of life is the theme in other stories. Somehow, despite the painful experience undergone by the characters whose loved ones died, these characters manage to console themselves with the thought that there is another life after death. In the novels, specifically, the theme takes a symbolic dimension of death to the self. These novels which make use of the motif of the hero's exile and return feature a central character who faces almost insurmountable odds in his attempt to bring about changes in the ways of his people.

Intimately related to the preceding theme is the preoccupation with the past as a means to illuminate the present, a very strong current in Pineda's stories. The characters in these stories strive to create an ideal world which is reminiscent of the world that existed in the past.

I. Life

Macario Pineda's preoccupation with the conflict between good and evil can be explained partly in terms of the author's own attitudes towards life in general. Life is perceived in terms of opposition between the forces of life and death, the creative and destructive powers which appear in many guises.

A man reared in an atmosphere of intimate contact with nature, Pineda displays an attitude of almost sacred reverence for life led in communion with the elemental forces of nature. At the opposite pole is his innate distrust and suspicion of the big, strange city, far removed from life in the barrio. The opposition between rural life and city life is but another manifestation of the larger conflict between good and evil.

Thus, in his short stories, novels and essays, the writer projects, perhaps unconsciously, a vision of life; which though

profound is also quite simplistic. On the one hand is the positive identification of rural life as the source of affirmative forces of goodness, life and love; on the other is the association of the city with the images of sterility, evil and corruption. One gets the impression that the writer surveys the whole situation from a safe vantage point, the barrio. The city appears to him as a forbidding and complex reality.

The writer's choice of situation and characters reveals his attitudes towards the barrio, the setting of nearly all his stories. One discerns the position that Pineda has assumed in relation to the values and beliefs that his people espouse. Except for some isolated instances where he criticizes some excesses of the barrio people, the position is one of whole-hearted support. His entire body of writing is an affirmation of these values and this kind of life.

Any force, then, which threatens to disrupt the orderly progression of life in the barrio and to instill fear and hatred, instead of hope and love, is considered a force of evil. War and its grim realities are one such force that must be defeated by a determined reliance on human goodness. The abstract concept of war is concretized in dehumanized men who, for a brief moment, lose control of their reason and kill cold-bloodedly and men who in a deliberate act of the will prey on poor but honest families.

How a man can be absolved from his feeling of guilt with the help of his family and friends in the barrio is the theme of "Sa Himaymay ng Puso."² War is concretized as a malignant force which can spur a man to kill senselessly. A Filipino soldier had shot two women in the company of some Japanese soldiers. For that deed, he finds himself a totally disillusioned man.

Kardo is a soldier who is on his way home. The thought of what he had done to the two women makes him repugnant even to his own self. He feels that he has cut himself off from his own family and sweetheart. The dead women especially

² "Sa Himaymay ng Puso," *Malaya*, November 28, 1945, pp. 14-15. The Appendix contains a chronological listing of Macario Pineda's stories.

remind him of his mother and his girl. He tells his father that he feels justified in killing the Japanese. But he sees the death of the two women as a totally unjustifiable and unpardonable act, not only because they were not enemies but because they were women. He vows never to forgive himself for that single act of senseless murder.

After narrating to his mother what happened in Kiangán, he is left alone. In the barrio chapel, the women include him in their novena prayer, imploring God to have mercy on him. After that act of simple supplication, Kardo finds himself reconciled to people whom he loves, especially his mother and Neneng, his sweetheart.

In this story, even things which demand a confrontation between God and man can still be thought of as a communal activity. Guided by a spontaneous impulse that betrays a deep religious faith, the women pray for Kardo. As if God has actually manifested himself to him and absolved him, Kardo becomes a changed man. He is no longer an outcast; he has been accepted again as a member of the community which he thought would repudiate him. This acceptance is concretized in Neneng who explains to him that a man is not loved nor hated for one mistake; he is judged by his own interior being. After his terrible anguish in the battlefield, Kardo finds peace in the barrio. War and its brutalization of man are finally overcome by a simple act of communal prayer. An action and the terrible consequences, a temporary loss of reason, are balanced by a gesture that frees the central character from responsibility for the deed.

It is in "Looban sa Longos"³ that the reader is forced to confront directly and immediately the forces of evil at work in this idyllic paradise. But after the death-forces have wrought havoc, order is again imposed in the land. Life as an inevitable mixture of good and evil is reaffirmed.

The story is an account of the incidents that happen one night in a barrio called Looban. While the Santos family is fast

³ "Looban sa Longos," *Malaya*, March 13, 1946, pp. 6-7, 30, 32.

asleep, a group of thieves breaks into the house, shoots the father who tries to protect his family with a bolo, ransacks the house and flees with some pieces of jewelry and clothes. Two of the five children, awakened rudely by the commotion, are crying; the three other children are fast asleep. The story ends with the father slowly regaining consciousness. The only sounds heard are the fleeing steps of the thieves.

On the surface, this is a simple story of a family robbed of its scanty belongings. The family can be any of the many victimized by evil men prowling the country-side especially during the war. What gives significance to this story is the fresh treatment that the author gives to an overworked theme. The whole story is a continuous prayer uttered in the consciousness of the father. In the prayers themselves is a vivid account of the family's past, from the marriage of the father and the mother, through the birth of their five children, to its sufferings during the war. The impression created is that of a family that enjoys life despite the vicissitudes that accompany living.

Contrasted to the family are the thieves. The evil effects of war are concretized in human beings who become corrupt and greedy. The father realizes this:

"Nakilalala ko pong ang puso pala ng tao'y damong tuyong-tuyo sa init ng araw na sa isang titis ay dagling naglilibab. . . . Ang dakilang kabayanihan po ng ilan ay muting tinghoy na bahagya nang makagitaw sa karimlan ng pagwawalang bahala at kataksilan ng marami.

("I realized that the heart of man is dry grass under the heat of the sun that upon contact with a spark quickly bursts into flame. . . . The noble heroism of a few is a speck of light that can barely pierce the darkness bred by the indifference and treachery of many.")

This realization of man's dual nature, however, does not prevent the father and the mother from extending help to the needy during the war. Helping others, in the long run, means seeing their own children crying for food.

In the face of evil so ruthlessly unfolded before them, they can only pray in silence. Here is mute resignation to the will

of God. The story ends with the father asking God to forgive the thieves for they do not know what they are doing. The rising of the morning star once again heralds the coming of a new day, the imposition of order upon chaos. The family will go on living; there is a promise that the war will end soon.

The highly philosophical overtone in the story, the attempt to grapple squarely with the problem of evil, is quite evident. Agoncillo considers this attempt at philosophizing by a character who is almost illiterate a flaw in the story.⁴ The story is one of the few stories of Pineda which probes the nature of evil in an abstract fashion.

In the aforementioned stories, the conflict between good and evil is rendered without specific mention of the city as a source of evil. The novel *Sa Langit, Tulad sa Lupa*⁵ spells out in greater clarity the opposition between barrio and city life. The conflict is dramatized through the situations and the characters the author uses.

Ador, an overworked but underpaid employee who hails from Bulacan, is married to Maria, a nagger who quite brazenly pretends to be rich and who accuses her husband of a pathetic lack of ambition. She is a woman who despises everything that the barrio stands for. There is then a distinct classification of characters in terms of their loyalty to their barrio or city life. Even the three children can be aligned with one of the two forces. The oldest child, Rosita, is a good-for-nothing girl of eighteen who prefers reading comic books to household chores. Like her mother, she desperately wants to be accepted by the affluent members of her group. Dedes, the second child, seems to have taken after her father. She has a job in a factory. Like her father, she prefers the peaceful life in the barrio to the turbulent life in the city. The youngest, Toni, is a delinquent who behaves better when forced to live with his grandmother, Tandang Masang, in the barrio. Nonong is a city boy who

⁴ "Sulyap," *Malaya*, March 13, 1946, p. 5.

⁵ *Sa Langit, Tulad sa Lupa* serialized in *Ilang Ilang*, September 7, 1950-January 11, 1951.

seduces Rosita. Dading is a jobless neighbor who falls in love with Dedes.

The novel opens with a description of the big, ugly city that swarms with desperate and disillusioned creatures. One of these creatures is Ador, an underpaid employee who has not reconciled himself to the ways of the city. On a Saturday afternoon, he impulsively buys eight sweepstakes tickets. When he wakes up on Monday morning, he finds out that he has won first prize. Ador leaves for the office and never returns to the house. Instead he goes back to his mother's house in the province where Dedes and Toni are staying. Ador tells Toni to inform Maria and Rosita that he did not win anything; he has made a mistake. The two women who had earlier spread the news about Ador's luck are flabbergasted. Shame and anger make them decide to stay in the city. Much later, they leave the city for the barrio after Maria finds out that Rosita is going to have a baby.

The apparently jobless Ador returns from Manila one day with the news that his friend has decided to build a factory in the barrio and he will manage it. The girls are put in charge of the embroidery firm. Later, Rosita gives birth to a son whom she names Ador, Jr. She had earlier refused to marry the repentant Nonong. Dading now employed, marries Dedes.

The novel ends with a celebration. All the mysteries are cleared up. Ador reveals to his family that he himself owns the money used as capital for the factories. He had really won first prize, but the fear of what evil money could bring if spent foolishly prompted him to hide the truth.

In a desire to drive his thesis home more forcefully, Pineda paints a picture which has only two colors: Black and white. Characters and situations are utilized to embody the theme of the novel. Characters who prefer the city are punished: Maria's agony at being laughed at by her neighbors and Rosita's unwanted pregnancy. On the other hand, the characters who show their love for the barrio find themselves immensely re-

warded in the form of peace of mind and contentment. By renouncing ambitions bred by the desire to be rich, characters like Rosita and Maria are also given the chance to be happy. Only then can the story end: the characters all find themselves affirming values which Ador's mother, Tandang Masang, symbolizes.

II. Love

Love in its many forms is the theme in many of the short stories of Pineda. This very human relationship is explored in stories which depict love between a man and a woman, the love between parents and children, the love that is manifested by the growth of life in nature. In each of the stories, a certain aspect of love is dramatized in terms of characters and situations: a statement about love is uniquely developed. But in all these stories, one perceives a general pattern. There is always the underlying idea about the need for persons who profess to love to suffer, in different manners, in order to prove their love for the other.

A young man's initiation into the nature of love through the mystery of sex is the theme of the story "Nang Lumuha si Adan."⁷ It is the story of Pitoy and Leti, two impulsive lovers, who have sexual intercourse. Except for the sleeping children, Leti is all alone in the house that night when Pitoy arrives. Between pleas and protestations of undying love, Pitoy finally persuades Leti to give herself to him. He leaves the weeping girl later. The night is peaceful. He looks at the stars whose brilliance has not dimmed and feels a deep pain. Later he does not see nature around him because in a spasm of grief, he cries.

In this story, the joys and delight of young love and the accompanying grief and pain, are vividly rendered. Before the lovers have their first taste of sex, theirs is an innocent love untainted by sensuality. But like Adam, Pitoy loses this innocence when he deliberately participates in the mystery of sex. In a sense, then, the story is an account of a fall, the fall of man brought about by his knowledge of woman. The emo-

⁷ "Nang Lumuha si Adan." Typescript, Dizon Library.

tions accompanying this fall are varied and complex. There is the feeling of elation and triumph for having dominated a woman. At the same time, paradoxically enough, Pitoy experiences profound sadness, a searing pain that is more than physical. He realizes in the end the loss of something valuable which he has cherished all these years: his innocence. For this he weeps, for he knows that he has lost something that he will never recover. That part of himself is gone now.

In another story which is given light treatment, the central character sustains a wound while trying to prove himself before the girl he loves. The trials and tribulations of a tongue-tied lover are the subject matter of "Buhat-Araw."⁸ Love as a spur that prompts a man to try to beat a stronger rival is the theme of the story that revolves around Pendong.

While visting Neneng one night, Pendong finds himself shamefully unable to utter any declaration of love despite the fact that he has already memorized the lines. Several men arrive, one of whom is Neneng's suitor. The men engage in light banter which leads to a challenge hurled at Pendong to show his skill in a native game which is played with the use of a "muton." In the ensuing contest, Pendong loses out to his stronger rival. While being treated by Neneng, Pendong feels a burning shame. He has not only lost to his rival; Neneng has been a witness to his defeat. But Neneng makes him realize that despite his defeat, it is still he whom she loves.

By showing that he is willing to fight against a physically superior rival, Pendong displays his love for a girl. What words cannot say can be communicated through action. This is a motif that recurs in several of Pineda's stories, like "Suyuan sa Tubigan," "Tagumpay," and "Gayuma."

Another story which has a happy ending is "Harana,"⁹ which uses the traditional plot of rich-boy-meets-poor-girl. The girl is Melang, barrio girl who has a vivid imagination in creating situations for love stories, a trick she has learned as a

⁸ "Buhat-Araw," *Liwayway*, March 7, 1949, pp. 10-11.

⁹ "Harana," Typescript, Dizon Library.

faithful reader of vernacular magazines. The story of a dashing young man courting a poor provincial girl, a situation often depicted in Tagalog stories, is transformed into reality. Rodolfo Villagracia, a doctor from Manila, courts her. The villain of the story comes in the person of Carmela, a girl from the city who insults Melang for her poverty and lack of education. Melang is forced by Tata Pedro to realize that her poverty and ignorance and her naiveté are traits which cannot be easily changed. The story ends with Rodolfo's decision to stay in the barrio with Melang. There he will open his clinic to the poor of the barrio.

In this story, the man chooses to give up that part of himself which has been identified with the city, the lucrative profession and the rich clientele, for the sake of a simple girl who will marry him on her terms. Like the stories found in the romantic magazines, this story ends happily, a fulfillment of Melang's romantic expectations.

A more complex treatment of the common plot of a poor boy falling in love with a rich girl is used by Macario Pineda in "Lalaging Liwayway."¹⁰ The happy ending which characterizes stories with a similar plot is noticeably absent in this story. Rather, the writer presents a new twist to the story.

The story is narrated in the form of a long letter Berto writes to Soledad, fourteen years after they first met. Berto first meets her when he became her servant, her "monkey." Afraid that the relationship between the two could develop into something deeper, Soledad's parents send her to Manila. Berto also decides to go to the city and try his luck there. He is determined to return as Dr. Alberto Reyes to the barrio which has despised him. Before he leaves, he asks Soledad for a picture which she gives.

The day before he writes the letter, he returns to the barrio, proud and confident and quite ready to offer his love to her. The only person who recognizes him is Mang Terio who informs him that the girl's mother is dead. To all appearances,

¹⁰ "Lalaging Liwayway," *Liwayway*, October 9, 1943, pp. 12-13.

Soledad has inherited the traits of her mother: haughty, disdainful and greedy. He leaves the barrio.

Berto realizes that for fourteen years, he has fed on illusions. He knows now that beauty can only thrive in dreams; reality often turns out sour. By refusing to see her again, he becomes a coward. But he believes that it is only in his cowardice that he can preserve the image that has sustained and inspired him in times of hardships. The letter which tells of his secret passion for her reveals his choice to continue living in an illusory world dominated by the image of a sweet and simple fourteen-year-old girl. Berto ends his letter thus:

"Duwag ako, Choleng. Duwag ako. Nguni't sa karuwagang ito'y maitatago ko ang iyong larawan: walang bahid at walang pagmamaliw na bulaklak ng aking unang pagmamahal. At ang aking umaga'y lalaging liwayway."

("I'm a coward, Choleng. A coward. It is in my cowardice that I can hold on to your image: the spotless and unfading blossom of my first love. And my day will forever remain a dawning.")

It is not only love as it exists between a man and a woman that preoccupies Pineda. Numerous stories try to explore the kind of love that a child has for the parents and vice-versa. Many of his stories which propose a definition of a mother's love have such titles as "Ang Puso ng Inang Birhen," "Ave Maria," "Inang Kalinis-linisan," "Nanay Ko," and "Ina Ko."¹¹ In the last story, Pineda presents a study of two kinds of love which is an exploration of the differences inherent in a mother's love and the love of a girl. That a mother's love is deeper than the love of a woman is the conclusion arrived at by Tonyo whose spirit after death is able to penetrate the deepest recesses of the person's being.

While painting the roof of a three-story building, Tonyo, a young man from the barrio, accidentally touches a live wire as he tries to catch a cigarette lighter thrown to him by his friend. The next moment, he sees the charred body of a man on the rooftop. In a flash of recognition, he realizes that the

¹¹ "Ina ko." Typscript, Dizon Library.

body is his. Thinking of his barrio, Tonyo sees himself standing in front of his parents' house. He calls his mother who is in the kitchen. As if hearing a human voice, the mother asks another son if he has called her. Tonyo then calls his father who is working in the field. But his father, unlike his mother, does not seem to hear anything. In Uring's house, Tonyo calls the girl whom he loved. Like his mother, the girl stops what she is doing, looks at the road and takes a deep breath.

The news about Tonyo's death has now spread. Tonyo sees Uring, her body wracked by pain and grief. He perceives the intense grief that he earlier failed to see in his aunt and cousins. In his parents' house, Tonyo sees the different degrees of bereavement reflected on the faces of his relatives. In the midst of these women is his mother who seems to experience much more deeply those emotions connected with the death of a loved one. His mother stands alone in her loneliness. He realizes with the aid of his supernatural knowledge that the tie that binds him to his mother is much stronger than the knot that ties two people in love. It is a relationship that is intimate; only a mother and her child can partake of this relationship.

Tonyo tells her not to be sad. But he knows for a fact that the wound inflicted in his mother's heart by his death will never heal. He remembers a scene: a Mother weeping at the foot of the cross where her son has been crucified. Like Mary, his mother has suffered and will continue to suffer for the sake of her children.

The love of a mother that is shown in "Ina Ko" is complemented by the love for the parents that forms the subject matter of "Kung Baga sa Pinipig."¹² The story is set against the background of the "pipigan," a custom traditionally associated with harvest when, in anticipation of a bountiful harvest, people gather in one place and prepare the "pinipig" to the accompaniment of songs and music. The story is told of Nene and Berto, a young couple who, after two years of marriage, have yet to be accepted by Nene's father. Earlier, Nene over-

¹² "Kung Baga sa Pinipig." Typescript, Dizon Library.

come with violent grief at the prospect of being disowned, tried to kill herself and the baby. She particularly wants to be reconciled with her father during this "pipigan" because it was during another "pipigan" two years ago, that she eloped with Berto.

The importance placed on the need for filial piety is quite evident in the story. This is a value which the barrio people hold dear. Thus, when Neneng impetuously eloped with Berto, the action was interpreted as a desire to cut her links with her family of which the head is Mang Bruno, Nene's father. For two years, she realizes the painful result of incurring her father's wrath. But a parent is a parent; the initial shock wears off. Two years is enough to cool the old man's anger. When Berto, Nene and the baby finally present themselves again in the highly charged atmosphere, the three become witnesses to a father's act of forgiveness—a manifestation of love.

The harvest season, the gathering of the crop after a time, is paralleled by the couple's gesture of presenting their baby to the father as an act of propitiation. The baby can be seen as the product of the couple's love for each other. Death in the story is discernible as the couple's suffering before Mang Bruno gives them his blessing.

The various levels of love are the subject matter of "Suyuan sa Tubigan."¹³ On the superficial level, love is manifested in the feeling of camaraderie that abounds among the people of the barrio, the spirit of friendship that spurs the farmers to help one another during different stages of planting. The first meaning of the word "suyuan" refers, then, to that practise of helping one farmer plow his field. His turn will come when he helps the others prepare their fields. His debt is paid by this reciprocal gesture.

But "suyuan" does not only refer to a barrio custom. The term is also used to describe human relationships: the rivalry between Oro and Paster for the love of Pilang. The "suyuan" is a manner of courting a woman which, in this story, is done

¹³ "Suyuan sa Tubigan," *Liwayway*, November 27, 1943, pp. 12-13,

through a contest of strength and skill. The two men show their love for Pilang not in word but in deed, in a contest which challenges them to prove who the better man is. Although Oro loses out to his rival Pastor, it is he who receives the love of Pilang. There is a promise of new life in their love not only in terms of the happiness they will experience in marriage but also in terms of their children.

The fact that a promise of new life is dramatized precisely during this period of planting endows the story with a cosmic dimension. The planting of the seeds means giving birth to a new life. The seeds grow and the harvest comes. In these various stages, one discerns the cyclical pattern of life that even physical nature participates in. It is a pattern of birth, growth and death which repeats itself in a cycle. The variations of this cyclical pattern recur on the various levels of the created world: from the plants through the animals and finally, man.

In both the impersonal world of nature and the personal world of Pilang and Oro, there is the start of new life. The field will yield its harvest in the form of palay; there is a promise that the love between Oro and Pilang will culminate in marriage and children.

In "Suyuan sa Tubigan," therefore, one can perceive the different aspects of love that the story explores: the love between a man and a woman, the love that exists among the farmers, filial piety as shown in the help extended by the young people to their elders, the love that pervades even nature itself. In all these manifestations of love is the awareness of the need for one to give up something for the sake of the other.

A kind of love that demands the ultimate sacrifice is treated in the stories dealing with war. World War II, a dark period which saw Pineda not only a spectator but as a suffering actor in the drama of war, occasioned a number of stories dealing with the nature of patriotism. But one feels that Pineda is quite hesitant to deal with war's more sordid and gruesome aspects; his tone is one of restraint showing a faint trace of

bitterness. In some of his stories like "May Sinag sa Dakong Silangan," "Ang Manugang ni Nana Maria," "Patungo sa Haway," "Simula ng Ligaya," war is made incidental to the story, although the stories are supposed to be set against the background of the war. War is almost always situated at the periphery of human life, a force one should not contend with.

"Ang Bayan Ko'y Isang Pilipina" is perhaps Pineda's best story about the war. But even here, the central image of a woman looms in the background as the force which impels a man to perform patriotic deeds.

The unnamed narrator tells the story of Arturo del Rosario who, prompted by a desire to prove himself to the woman he loves, becomes a guerilla, distinguishes himself in the battlefield and later dies because of a fatal wound he sustains during one of the guerilla missions that attacked Japanese outposts. Before his death, he asks another soldier to return the picture to the girl he loves. The narrator undertakes the task. From the girl and her father, the narrator finds out that Arturo was only a rig driver of the girl's father, that Arturo only pretended to be a rich man's spoiled son. Scorn is heaped upon the dead soldier by the father. The narrator rises in defense of Arturo's memory. The sight of the girl crying makes the narrator realize that the girl has been touched by Arturo's devotion.

He leaves the house secure in the thought that Arturo's grave among the thousand's of graves in cemeteries will never look desolate as long as "she" means "my country." In the final analysis, it is not the woman for whom Arturo dies; it is for his country that he has given his life. That patriotism is a sublimation of erotic love is the central thesis of the story. This patriotism is attained through the death of the central character.

III. Death as an Affirmation of Life

The nature of death is explored in its various nuances in the stories which deal with human mortality not as an abstract idea but as an experience that one undergoes. In all these stories, one discerns a positive attitude towards something as

negative as death. In place of despair and bitterness, there is the insistence on resignation and hope. There is always a promise of life that transcends human knowledge. Underlying these stories is a deep religiosity that bespeaks a tremendous faith in God, His goodness and justice. In the end, death which is a force of evil is vanquished by firm belief in the life hereafter. When a person dies, those left on earth are assured that in the next life everybody will be reunited in perfect bliss. This promise more than balances the deep pain which one feels upon the death of a loved one.

Nature's role as a healer of pain is treated in "Bawa't Looy na Bulaklak."¹⁴ Evident is a sacramental way of viewing nature: nature as metaphor for eternity. It is this Wordsworthian view of nature that enables an old man who has lost his only son to reconcile himself to the unalterable fact.

The story opens with a description of physical nature. An old couple, Tata Teban and Nana Tasyang, are discussing the arrival of Nonong, their only son, from the battlefield. A friend of Nonong arrives and gives them a piece of paper. Inside are a crucifix and an aluminum tag. The old man is stunned; the old woman breaks out into a loud wail. Day and night, Tata Teban refuses to break his silence. He tries to pray before the small altar in the house, but prayer does not seem to help him comprehend the fact of Nonong's death. In the orchard, while racking his brain and demanding from God an answer to his question, he finds himself about to curse God. A strong gust of wind causes withered flowers to flutter to the ground. In the darkness of daybreak, Tata Teban sees the tiny seeds the flowers have left on the branches of the mango tree. He feels the light of the early morning sun. This light becomes for him the light of truth that illuminates his mind and makes him accept the death of his son with resignation.

There is no transcendental vision that changes the old man's bitterness into hope. The only argument to be advanced is the argument drawn from the Christian belief that God

¹⁴ "Bawa't Looy na Bulaklak," *Malaya*, December 19, 1945, pp. 15-17, 28.

manifests Himself in the order and design one finds in the universe. Death is an intimate part of that design in the universe. To Nana Tasyang, he offers this consolation:

“Tasyang, nakikita mo ba? Hindi nalalaglag ang isang dahon, hindi natutuyo ang isang ugat, hindi yumuyuko ang isang uhay nang hindi may sanhi sa Buhay na pinagpapala ng Kanyang Kadakilaan. Ba-wa’t looy na bulaklak ay may naging kahulugan. Si Nonong pa kaya ang hindi maging sangkap ng isang banal na sanhi at dakilang katuparan? Nauunawaan mo ba?”

(“Tasyang, do you see? A leaf does not fall, nor does the root wither, nor the stalk bend without having a reason in this life that is blessed by God’s goodness. Every withered flower had its own meaning. Why can’t Nonong’s death be part of a divine design and its glorious fulfillment. Do you understand?”)

The story ends with Tata Teban finally breaking a self-imposed silence. Instead of being a totally disillusioned man, he emerges from his bitter experience a better man who betrays an almost naive faith and trust in God’s goodness. His world is a place where there is still design and order, where everything is explainable in terms of God’s providence. There is a deep religious faith that is reminiscent of the medieval belief that sees the universe as a manifestation of God’s providence. Even death is perceived as part of God’s design.

The death of a mother and her new-born baby, and the father’s eventual reconciliation to the loss is the theme of “Nalulungkot ang Mga Anghel.”¹⁵ Again, there is the implication that something goes on after death. This realization comes about not through physical nature but literally from the mouth of a babe. The grieving father hears the words from his own daughter and believes.

Though his wife died during childbirth, Pinong considers himself the cause of her death. This is so because he had disregarded the superstitious beliefs held sacred by the older people. He not only disregarded them; he had ridiculed these beliefs with impunity and scorn. But when his wife started to

¹⁵ “Nalulungkot ang Mga Anghel,” *Ilang Ilang* (November 14, 1948), pp. 6-7.

have labor pains, Pinong could not laugh anymore. The mother and the baby died.

During the last day of the traditional "pasiyam," his tongue loosened by native wine, Pinong broke his silence over his wife's death. He chided the womenfolk who were praying, saying that the object of their prayer was really good for nothing for He is an unjust God.

One afternoon, several months after the death, Pinong overhears a conversation between his five-year-old daughter and her grandmother. The child is asking where her mother is. The old woman answers that she is in heaven. The child remembers what the mother used to tell her: in heaven there are small angels like her. The child then infers that her mother had been taken to heaven because the little angels are sad. Her mother will take care of these sad angels.

Pinong hears this and understands. From the mouth of a child, he gets an answer to the doubts that have plagued him. It is not because he failed to observe the superstitious beliefs that death took place. He realizes that God must have His own reason for taking his wife and child away from him. Again, there is a mute Job-like resignation to the inscrutable mystery of existence. Like Tata Teban in "Bawa't Looy na Bulaklak," Pinong can only weep when confronted by this great reality; that there is Divine Providence at work in human life.

In "Alang-Alang sa Koronang Tinik,"¹⁶ death is presented not as an end but only the beginning of a life of bliss as a reward for the life of misery and deprivation on earth. The story takes place in a house where the last day of the "pasiyam" is being held. The people are praying for the repose of the soul of Nana Hina. Edo, her only unmarried son, is bitter over his mother's death. He thinks that Nana Hina's death has been unduly hastened by all the hardships she had to undergo in order to feed her children and grandchildren during the war.

¹⁶ "Alang-Alang sa Koronang Tinik," *Sinag-Tala*, January 10, 1946, pp. 13-16.

A question is posed by Edo to the unnamed narrator: Why do married people seem suffused with regret while unmarried people seem to be in a hurry to get married? Another question is raised: Are these married people really sorry? From the specific case of Nana Hina, the narrator concludes that married women who have suffered under the crown of thorns imposed by the pains of rearing children will be crowned again, this time with the crown of glory. The name *REGINA*—a term that refers both to Nana Hina and Marry the Queen—emblazoned on the alter seems startling in its luminosity. The story ends with the narrator listening intently to the steady hum of women's voices praying, "My Jesus, through the crown of thorns..."

The story is not only about man's initiation into the real nature of marriage. It is, perhaps, indirectly, an attempt to prove that there is no reason to bewail the apparent futility of suffering. Whatever earthly suffering one takes upon himself is never left unnoticed by God. Like Mary, Nana Hina will receive her crown of glory in heaven. Like Mary, she will be enthroned as a queen. Death does not put an end to life. Death signals the start of a new life devoid of suffering and pain.

The use of the title, taken from the litany to the Virgin Mary, shows one of the widespread beliefs of the people concerning Mary: in all ways, even in a heroic endurance of sufferings, Mary should serve as a model to all women.

In another story, Mary again appears as the source of consolation to the afflicted soul. This is the theme of "Mariang Puspos ng Biyaya,"¹⁷ where the central character lives with the hope that someday she will be finally reunited with her dead lover and their child.

Before becoming a nun, Sister Trinidad was known to the world as Leni, a girl who gave herself to the man she loved who was about to leave for battle. He left her with the promise to return. She gave birth to a baby girl later. The man did

¹⁷ "Mariang Puspos ng Biyaya." Typescript, Dizon Library.

not return. Because she wanted her lover to see their child, she left her aged mother and went to the city in search for him. Finally, she found his grave. Much later her baby died. She then entered the convent.

When asked by another nun if she would like to return to the past which childhood knew, Sister Trinidad says "A thousand No's." What she wishes to do is to reverse the passage of time so that she can see once more those persons who occupied such an important role in her life. Her name which means "trinity" is a name she has chosen herself, a reminder that the three of them—the baby, the baby's father and she—will continue living together in the other world. In that final reunion is her glory.

The story ends with the angel's greeting to Mary, a prayer recited during the Angelus: "Hail Mary, full of grace... Blessed art thou among women..." Like "Alang-Alang sa Koronang Tinik," this story makes an affirmation of life after death. The life of Sister Trinidad here on earth is merely a preparation for that promise of happiness she will enjoy in union with her lover and their child. Like the other stories treated in this section, this story ends not with a note of bleak despair, but with a subtle note of optimism and hope.

Death as a means to initiate an individual into a view of life that affirms a divine providence at work in human affairs is embodied in the first two stories discussed in this section. The latter two stories explore the power of death to release man from his bondage on earth, death as the beginning of a new life. In all these stories, death is presented as something to be welcomed.

It is in "May Landas ang Mga Bituin,"¹⁸ that one finds another aspect of death treated in a complex manner. The recurring themes of the conflict between good and evil, life and death are given a more philosophical treatment that endows the story with a certain degree of abstraction.

¹⁸ "May Landas ang mga Bituin," *Diwang Kayumanggi*, IV, Juan C. Laya (ed.) (Manila: Inang Wika Publishing Co., 1958), pp. 39-48.

A Japanese soldier and a Filipino soldier become casualties in war. After death, they assume new names. Okamoto Tani-O has become Delta while Juan Mendoza is now known as Beta. Before they proceed to their real destination, they decide to visit Bigaa, the hometown of Juan Mendoza. In the barrio, they encounter people who betray their materialism and corruption. War, they realize, has the power to transform men into creatures more like beasts than humans. The two also see Juan's grieving wife and newly born child.

On their way to their destination, they see blood in their hands. This occasions an exchange of ideas on the nature of patriotism. The Old Man of the Mountains, described as a man who seems to understand all the impenetrable mysteries of the universe, arrives. He absolves both from their feeling of guilt. He explains the reason for the existence of evil.

As long as there are people who suffer from hunger while others gorge themselves, as long as sadness is allowed to exist in the midst of happiness, as long as there is only indifference in the face of evil, blood will continue to flow, Love is the only force that can put an end to suffering. Man can still move on just as the stars follow a certain path in their movement.

Life as a mystery, life as an opposition of life and death forces, life as a battleground for good and evil, are all embodied in this short story. The basic theme in its various ramifications is formulated in this story which takes on an allegorical dimension with the presence of the Old Man who is God Himself. As he points out, once love is made supreme, the death-causing forces will be destroyed. Such is the promise.

But the story does not end with the figure of the Old Man. It ends rather with the sharp wail of a baby who seems to pose a question which demands an answer to the problem of suffering and evil. In a way, then, the author shows that life will go on, thriving on this perpetual opposition between life and death forces. The final impression, however, is the eventual triumph of goodness.

IV. Idealism vs. Reality

The longer works of Pineda exhibit a profound awareness of the clash between what should be and what is, the discrepancy between the ideal and the real. Perhaps because the novel encourages a more sustained portrayal of life, this literary form is used by Pineda to serve as the vehicle for his ideas on the need for social consciousness, a spirit or an attitude towards life which compels men to work for the common good. For all his idyllic presentation of the barrio and its people, Pineda still tries to depict the harsh and glaring reality of the barrio's pathetic lack of progress, its widespread ignorance and poverty.

His novels betray his inherent idealism, his dream of seeing the barrio lift itself from the mire it has wallowed in for centuries. All his novels' heroes seem to be fired with this idealism; his novels reveal a certain thematic pattern. There is a hero, a native of the barrio, who leaves the place for different reasons. He later returns to his place of birth after several years, a changed man, burning with a desire to help his people in several concrete ways. He meets obstacles which he finally overcomes. The novels end happily.

*Isang Milyong Piso*¹⁹ and *Langit ng Isang Pag-ibig*²⁰ are novels which embody this theme. Both have the barrio as their setting. The central characters of both novels attempt to alleviate the conditions in the barrio. The hero of the first novel gives money to the poor people; in the second novel, he introduces them to science.

Jose de la Kurus, the hero of *Isang Milyong Piso*, saves the life of an American soldier from Texas during the war. The American asks Jose what the latter wants as a gift. Thinking that the American is not really in earnest, Jose replies that he would appreciate a million peso reward. Jose later forgets the incident. He emerges from the ruins of war a totally disillusioned man: he has seen the cruelty and bloodshed that war has caused. He himself has become almost an invalid; his

¹⁹ *Isang Milyong Piso* serialized in *Liwayway*, August 28, 1950-May 28, 1951.

²⁰ *Langit ng Isang Pag-ibig*, Aliwan, 1948.

arm is badly mutilated. When he reaches his mother's house, he finds out that his mother is dead. She lies buried in the town cemetery. His only brother lives with his uncle. The house is in total disarray. His girl, Selya, seems to have found another man. He realizes that with only one good arm, he cannot even till the soil. Jobs are scarce for anyone like him in this war ravaged country.

Realizing that nothing will happen to him if he just stays idle, he shakes off his lethargy and consents to help his two cousins in their work. The war had made him a sharp-shooter and this comes in handy in his new job: acting as a bodyguard to his cousins who pilfer goods from warehouses filled with supplies from America. For the risk he takes, he demands a large cut of the money earned from the sale of these smuggled goods. Now a bitterly disillusioned man, he finds himself killing without any compunction anybody who attempts to defy him. In no time, he is tagged as a notorious criminal, a killer, a one-armed bandit who stages all the hijacking jobs in the city.

One day, he disappears. Posing as a beggar, Jose travels from town to town in order to know for himself who really needs his money. The American, true to his promise, has sent him a sum of money amounting to a million pesos. Using a foundation as a front, he sends various sums of money to those widows and children whose husbands and fathers died during the war. The novel, at this stage, becomes starkly realistic in its depiction of the abject poverty gripping Bulacan towns. He does not stop until he runs out of money. By the time he reaches this stage, there is a reconciliation between him and Selya. The novel ends with Jose finding himself a less bitter man, a change brought about by his contact with those people who suffer more than he does.

A young doctor, Julian Gracia, is the hero in *Langit ng Isang Pag-ibig*. He is torn between two forces: the desire to serve his people and the ambition to become famous in the city. Staying in the barrio means being of help to the people who still cling to superstitious beliefs and the miraculous powers

of quacks or the village medicine men. His stay in the barrio will also mean the love of Felicita, a girl who has promised not to marry anybody who refuses to cast his lot with her people. Her father died because there was no doctor in the barrio.

On the other hand, leaving the barrio will mean further training as an assistant to the famous physician, Dr Lantin. Another attraction offered by the city is Celia Lantin, the doctor's daughter who seems to like Julian a lot. Before leaving for the city, Julian finds himself attending to various emergency cases: a man bleeding profusely because of a gun shot wound; a man in need of an appendectomy. For a time, Julian stays in the house of Dr. Lantin where he helps the old doctor perform surgical operations. But he feels dissatisfied. He yearns for the barrio and Felicita.

The problem is solved when Dr. Lantin promises to establish a hospital in the barrio with Julian as his chief physician. Dr. Lantin himself is an interesting character, a highly idealized figure who possesses at his age an idealism that one would expect only in the young. He is depicted as a grand old humanitarian who wants to devote his whole self to the afflicted but is bitterly aware that time is running short. He embodies all the traits one expects in a physician: intelligence, resourcefulness, patience. For a man of his fame and stature, he still fears his own limitations and shows a deep religious piety. His mission is a commitment to the whole of suffering humanity. He expresses dissatisfaction with life in the city. The hospital in the barrio is a concretization of his commitment to the poor people who need him more than the rich patients in the city.

Two other novels of Pineda, *Mutyang Taga-Ilog*²¹ and *Magat*.²² although not directly concerned with the barrio, have something in common with the two novels discussed earlier. In these semi-historical and semi-legendary novels, the past is relived. The first novel fluctuates in time—from the 1940's

²¹ *Mutyang Taga-Ilog* serialized in *Daigdig*, December 23, 1947-May 11, 1948.

²² *Magat*, co-authored with Emilio Mar. Antonio' serialized in *Lidayway*, January 12, 1948-May 14, 1948.

back to the 16th century during the historic battle between the Spanish forces and the people of Tondo led by Rajah Soliman. Dakila, a brave Tondo warrior, becomes reincarnated to claim the love of Dalisay who has been reincarnated as Imelda. The other novel is a reenactment of the ordeals of Magat, the "Father of the Brown Race," as he goes in search of the place promised to him by the Old Man in the mountain. This is the country to be known as the Philippines.

V. The Past as the Light of the Present

The last two novels briefly discussed show how the past can illumine the present. By making use of characters drawn from both the historical and legendary past, the writer shows how the past inevitably impinges on the present. Both Magat and Dakila, the hero of *Mutyang Taga-Ilog*, are heroic Filipinos imbued with a profound sense of patriotism. They were men who did something concrete for their country: Magat by founding the Filipino race and Dakila by defending the country from the Spanish forces. The novels are attempts to prove the relevance of the past to the present.

One aspect, then, of this preoccupation with the past, is concerned with the eventual illumination of the present. The present can always draw lessons from the characters who crowd the pages of history and legends. An awareness of this relationship between what is and what transpired is vital to a better understanding of the contemporary scene and events.

This time, the search for the past to illumine the present, is best embodied in the novel *Ang Ginto sa Makiling*.²³ In it the historical and legendary materials of the past are interwoven with a story of tremendous faith and love.

The story is told by Tata Doro who is approached by the "I", a writer from the Ramon Roces Publication assigned by the editor to check the news involving the mysterious disappearance of Susana delos Santos or Sanang, a sixty-year old woman. Tata Doro is the nephew of the old woman. Having

²³ *Ang Ginto sa Makiling*, Aliwan, 1947.

been one of the participants during the events of the 1900's, Tata Doro is well equipped to give first-hand information. The old man tells the writer the story of Sanang and her lover, Edong.

During one of his trips to Laguna, Edong fails to return and is thought dead. He returns, however, a little bit thinner but otherwise in perfect health. The announcement of his forthcoming marriage to Sanang is made. Before the wedding day, Edong, accompanied by Doro, leaves for Makiling. But before the journey, Edong divulges to Sanang the identity of the person who saved him from death. She is Mariang Makiling whom he describes thus:

"Siya'y isang liwanag, isang bulaklak, isang patak ng hamog sa dulo ng isang dahon ng damo kung dapit-umaga, isang ningning, isang bango, isang magandang tula, isang diwa...."

"She's a ray of light, a flower, a drop of dew on a blade of grass in the early morning, a radiance, a fragrance, a beautiful poem, a thought....")

She is the counterpart of the Greek goddess of fertility, the goddess who presides over nature. The images associated with her are all images of life and fertility. She is the beneficent nymph of the river and fountains. People in need of her help are never disappointed.

Pineda offers a new twist to the legend when he creates an imaginary town found in the heart of Makiling. The place is a Utopia where people live together without experiencing emotions such as envy, fear, despair, greed and hatred. They live simply by tilling the soil; their happiness consists in helping others. There is no hypocrisy in that place ruled by Mariang Makiling. Characters from Philippine history inhabit this place: Soliman, Urduja, Lakandula, Rizal and others who have been oppressed in their lifetime.

Edong's request that Sanang be allowed to live in Makiling is denied by Mariang Makiling. However, he is enjoined to ask Sanang to wait for forty years during which time she is supposed to remain a virgin to prove her love for Edong. As proof of the compact, a golden medallion is given to Sanang.

Doro is given a basketful of what appear to be pieces of ginger. When they arrive in Malolos, they find out that the pieces of ginger are actually pieces of gold. The nuggets are sold and the proceeds divided equally among Sanang, Sanang's parents, Doro's parents and Edong's parents. An expedition undertaken by Doro's father and grandfather to hunt for gold proves to be disastrous. A mysterious voice warns the men never to return again to Makiling.

The only incident that mars these forty years of waiting takes place when men from an adjoining barrio stage a raid on Sanang's barrio because Sanang has rejected the suit of a man from the other barrio. After the incident three bodies lie dead: Sanang's suitor, Sebio, Doro's father and Sanang's aged father.

The novel ends after a lapse of forty years. Sanang is over sixty now, a bed-ridden woman. One night, she mysteriously disappears; Edong's promise has been fulfilled. The epilog contains the discussion that takes place between Tata Doro and the writer. The latter asks Tata Doro for the meaning of all these strange events. Tata Doro expresses the belief that the inhabitants of Makiling will someday live with the people without revealing their identities. Tata Doro says:

"Naiisip kong sa kalagayan ng ating bansa ngayon ay dapat sanang pakisalamuhain sa bayan ang mga ulirang yaon. At sa kanilang halimbawa'y akayin ang bansa sa landas ng matwid, ng katapatan, ng katinginan ng loob, ng katotohanan. Kung magkakagayon ay masasabing tunay na ngang nabuksan ang pintuan ng ginto sa Makiling at ang kayamanan ay sumabog sa bayan."

("I think that the country's condition today demands participation in our life by those heroes. Through their example, the country should be led to the path of righteousness, honesty, courage, fortitude and truth. If these things happen, one can truly say that the door leading to the gold of Makiling has been opened and the riches scattered among the people.")

From legend and history, Macario Pineda draws characters and situations which can shed light on the present. The past is concretized in those heroes and heroines of history; the present is concretized in Tata Doro who knows the need of his people

by virtue of the education he has received from the Ateneo. But Tata Doro is old now. The real characters from the present who are more socially conscious are the writer himself and the emerging breed of articulate and intelligent Filipinos. Sanang herself is a symbol of the past and its women who knew how to endure whatever hardships love had to offer. Sanang lives in Makiling as a fitting reward for her heroic display of love.

The past as a world that can never be recovered again forms another aspect of this strain of idealism that runs through Pineda's works. In several short stories, he illustrates this preoccupation, harking back to the past that constitutes a paradise that has been lost and can never be regained. The attempt to depict this kind of life results in stories characterized by a realistic rendering of experiences familiar to the past generation, but strange to the generation that has severed its ties with the past due to forces brought about by the war. In these stories, one discerns an authenticity and vividness of details used to make real for the present what appears as hazy, foggy scenes, customs and manners. Like the *costumbristas* and local colorists, Macario Pineda displays a desire to perpetuate through literature what is worth salvaging from the past—its ideals and values that constitute a whole way of life.

Because there is a nostalgic haze that blurs the view of the past, the writer tends to idealize it: the virtues are magnified and the weaknesses glossed over, at least in the shorter works. The consequence of this blurred view is a world that is highly idyllic. The stories of Pineda are concrete illustrations of such a mixture of realism in the treatment of details and idealism in the choice of characters and situations. The tendency is to present a highly romantic picture of the barrio as contrasted with the picture of the city as a place of sin and illusion.

It is interesting to note that two of Pineda's stories published during the war showed an idealized picture of the barrio. "Sinag sa Dakong Silangan" is the story of a dying soldier whose last moments are spent in reminiscences of his past, the

activities young men and women indulge in especially when the moon is full. He recalls distinctly the faces of people, young and old alike, as they spend the evenings when the surroundings are bathed in the light of the moon. He particularly remembers his friendship with Sinziro, a Japanese who was forced to leave the Philippines before the war broke out. The chain of memories makes him realize that several of his childhood friends lie dead near him. Realizing that enemies are approaching, he courageously opens fire with his rifle. The effort kills him mercifully. One of the Japanese soldiers who reaches the dead soldier is Zinziro, his childhood friend.

In his delirium, the soldier considers his plight a terrible lie, a nightmare. War is dismissed as an illusion, for the only reality for the dying soldier is his life in the barrio. He accepts his death with calmness.

Tahamik ang kanyang paligid. Maliwanag ang Buwan at ang pilak na silahis ay bumabalot sa daigdig sa kanyang paligid sa isang kagandahang bihirang mabatid ng isang kinapal kundi sa bingit ng kamatayan.

(Everything is silent around him. The moon is radiant and the silver ray envelops the world that surrounds him in a beauty seldom perceived by a person except at the brink of death.)

One story that portrays one of the most beautiful customs of the past is "Kung Baga sa Pamumulaklak."²⁴ This is a love story set against the background of the "Pamanhikan" tradition. Using terms and images drawn from their experiences as farmers, the parents of the boy and the girl discuss the conditions under which the couple can get married. The dominant image in this story is the flowering of a tree which is compared to the blossoming of the girl.

The world portrayed in some of the stories of Pineda can be compared to the lovely nymph that inhabits the wooded area known as Karuhan. She is seen bared in all her splendor by Nano, a 25 year-old idiot. She shows herself only to children, to the pure and the innocent. The narrator of this story, "Ang

²⁴ "Kung Baga sa Pamumulaklak," *Liwayway*, June 12, 1944, pp. 13, 16, 18, 22.

Mutya sa Karuhan,"²⁵ and his companion are able to see the nymph only by using a piece of diamond through which they view her as she talks with Nano.

The story ends with the narrator posing a question: Why does the nymph show herself only to the pure? He answers his one question by saying that only the pure deserve the sight of her because they have with them their innocence. The nymph is a beautiful dream, a pure embodiment of what is good and beautiful in the world.

Macario Pineda's world is a world where a preter-natural being can manifest herself to a person and be accepted as a fact not to be questioned. The world in which the nymph and Nano dwell is, to a great extent, the world depicted by Pineda in his fiction. Only the people who can be child-like in their innocence and simplicity can appreciate the beauty inherent in the world that properly belongs to the past, the world lovingly depicted by the "gentle chronicler of the barrio."

²⁵ "Ang Mutya sa Karuhan," *Liwayway*, June 5, 1950, pp. 38-39,

APPENDIX

A Chronological Listing of Macario Pineda's Works*

A. *Short Stories*

- "Five Minutes," *Graphic*, January 24, 1935, pp. 10-11 (NL)
- "The Story of a Story," *Graphic*, March 14, 1935, pp. 11-12 (NL)
- "Fragments for the Young," *Graphic*, July 25, 1935, pp. 12-13 (NL)
- "Auntie Writes the Ending," *Graphic*, July, 1936, pp. 18-19 (NL)
- "Nila," *Graphic*, October 8, 1936, pp. 18-19, 20, 39. (NL)
- "Do You Remember—Father," *Graphic*, April 1937, pp. 10-11. (NL)
- "Walang Maliw ang Mga Bituin," *Mabuhay*, 1937.
- "Sinag sa Dakong Silangan," *Liwayway*, August 28, 1943, pp. 12-13. (NL)
- "Lalaging Liwayway," *Liwayway*, October 9, 1943, pp. 12-13. (NL)
- "Suyuan sa Tubigan," *Liwayway*. November 27, 1943. (NL)
- "Talambuhay ng Aming Nayon," *Liwayway*. February 8, 1944 pp. 12-13. (NL)
- "Kung Baga sa Pamumulaklak," *Liwayway*, June 12, 1944, pp. 13, 16, 18, 20. (NL)
- "Ang Langit ni Ka Martin," *Liwayway*, September 9, 1944, pp. 4-5. 21. (NL)
- "Ang Bayan Ko'y Isang Pilipina," *Malaya*. October 31, 1945, pp. 15, 17, 23. (NL)
- "Sa Himaymay ng Puso," *Malaya*, November 28, 1945, pp. 14-15. (LM)
- "Bawa't Looy na Bulaklak," *Malaya*, December, 18, 1945, pp. 15-17. (LM)
- "Alang-Alang sa Koronang Tinik," *Sinag-Tala*, January 10, 1946, pp. 13-16. (NL)
- "Looban sa Longos," *Malaya*. March 13, 1946, pp. 6-7. (LM)
- "Kasalan sa Malaking Bahay," *Malaya*, June 12, 1946, pp. 18, 26-27. (NL)
- "Alaala," *Daigdig*, November 30, 1946, pp. 7-8. (LM)
- "Narito ang Luwalhati," *Liwayway*, August 4, 1947, pp. 47-48. (LM)
- "Sumpa," *Daigdig*, August 5, 1947, pp. 18-20. (LM)
- "Ibigin Mo Ang Diyos ng Lalo sa Lahat," *Liwayway*, August 11, 1947, pp. 16, 53-54. (LM)
- "Simula ng Ligaya," *Daigdig*, September 23, 1947, pp. 18-19. (LM)

* These are the works of Macario Pineda that this writer has been able to trace. Legend: NL — National Library
LM — Lopez Museum

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- "Ang Manugang ni Nana Maria," *Ilang Ilang*, September 10, 1947, pp. 4-5, 32-33. (LM)
- "Alin ang Mahalaga: Ang Anak na Babae," *Liwayway*, October 27, 1947, pp. 8, 47-52. (LM)
- "Ang Pamasko ni Trining," *Liwayway*, December 15, 1947, pp. 4, 20, 22, 33-34. (LM)
- "Patungo sa Haway," *Liwayway*, January 3, 1948, pp. 10-11. (LM)
- "Ang Mira ng Mago," *Ilang Ilang*, January 11, 1948, pp. 4-5. (LM)
- "Ibigin Ang Inang Bayan," *Liwayway*, February 2, 1948. (NL)
- "Tagumpay," *Aliwan*, February 23, 1948, pp. 3-8. (LM)
- "Tagumpay," *Aliwan*, February 23, 1948, pp. 3-8. (LM)
- "Higanti," *Daigdig*, April 20, 1948, pp. 16-17. (LM)
- "Ang Manliligaw ni Neneng," *Aliwan*, June 28, 1948, pp. 18-19. (LM)
- "Panganay," *Liwayway*, July 12, 1948, pp. 6-7. (NL)
- "Sakuna," *Aliwan*, August 2, 1948, pp. 8-9. (LM)
- "Hudyong Lagalag," *Aliwan*, September 6, 1948, pp. 20-21. (LM)
- "Sa Sinapupunan ng Luwalhati," *Aliwan*, November 1, 1948, pp. 3, 36, 34. (LM)
- "Nalungkot ang Mga Anghel," *Ilang Ilang*, November 14, 1948, pp. 6-7. (LM)
- "Dalaga sa Himpapawid," *Kislap*, January 4, 1949, pp. 16-17. (LM)
- "Gayuma," *Ilang Ilang*, January 12, 1949, pp. 3, 53-55. (LM)
- "Halina Aking Mahal," *Liwayway*, February 7, 1949, pp. 14-15. (NL)
- "Buhat-Araw," *Liwayway*, March 7, 1949, pp. 10-11. (NL)
- "Nang Ikasal si Selya," *Liwayway*, April 25, 1949, pp. 12-13. (NL)
- "Patayan sa Pulong-Gubat," *Liwayway*, June 6, 1949, pp. 16-17. (NL)
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"Handog Pang-Kasal"

"Alaala sa Pangarap"

"Bagyo sa Paraiso"

"Dalaga sa Himpapawid"

"Ina Ko..."

"Nang Lumuha si Adan"

"Diyunyor"

"Lines to Lita"

"Liham kay Lita"

"Mariang Puspos ng Biyaya"

"Dalaginding"

"Bitag"