

# Delineating Masculinity Belief in Guy de Maupassants' Three Short Stories

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## Abstract

This study aims to delineate masculinity issues in Guy Maupassant's *Father Milon*, *A Duel* and *The Colonel's Ideas* short stories. This study sees that the practice of masculinity in the society legitimizes the dominant position of men and justifies the subordination of the male and female population in general and other marginalized ways of being male. This study employed Stuart Hall's representation and Gramsci's hegemony theories to delineate masculinity in Maupassants' three short stories. The qualitative descriptive method was applied as the data were in the form of narration and dialogues. The short stories revealed the dominant position of men in society that justifies the subordination of the male and female population in general. Finally, with the creation of different male characters with various degree of masculine nature, Guy Maupassant in *Father Milon*, *A Duel* and *The Colonel's Ideas* tries to balance the male character he creates. Maupassant is just trying to paint pictures of different kinds the man seen in society, therefore, confirms the verisimilitude between characters in literary works and real-life characters.

**Keywords:** *domination, femininity, masculinity, performativity, power*

## INTRODUCTION

Masculinity has taken root as a general belief in society and has always been the center of endless debates. The issue of masculinity cannot be separated from femininity. A person can be said to be masculine because he is opposed to femininity. Someone will be masculine because it does not characterize feminism. On the other hand, a person is feminine because he does not have the characteristics of masculinity. Harper (2007) quoted that "*masculinity and femininity are often organized as oppositional concepts tied to particular bodies*"<sup>1</sup>. Masculinity, also called masculinity or virility, is a set of attributes, behaviours, and roles associated with men and boys. Western societies have traditionally viewed masculine traits, including strength, courage, independence, leadership, and assertiveness. Masculinity can be briefly defined as the place in gender relations, the practices in which men and women engage in that place in gender, and the effects of these practices on body experience, culture, and personality (Connell 2005)<sup>2</sup>. Masculinity can refer to sex, but masculinity and sex are different. Sex is a biological condition that every human has when born. The construction of sex has never changed in all this time, and society and culture construct gender. For a long time, gender has been made through social

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<sup>1</sup> Helen Harper, "Studying Masculinity(Ies) in Books About Girls", *Canadian Journal of Education* 30, no. 2 (2007): 509, <https://journals.sfu.ca/cje/index.php/cje-rce/article/view/2963>

<sup>2</sup> Raewyn Connell, *Masculinities*, (California: University of California Press, 2005), 44

life and social culture, which is why gender is dynamic (Kurnia, 2004)<sup>3</sup>. Instead of attempting to elaborate on masculinity as an object, focusing on the processes and relationships through which men and women do social lives is better. The relationship and domination of men in the society, thus, are also influenced by a cultural and ideological oppression, called as hegemony.

The power of men on this earth makes women the weak side. Intense male domination has become the benchmark for all policies, leading to the hegemony of society indirectly. It is usual for men to be leaders, and women are not. Men control all problems, and women do not. This has developed unconsciously when society constantly questions the absence of men in a community. Masculinity can be clearly defined from some aspects. Hegemony can be expressed as a cultural and ideological means through which dominant groups in society, including the working class, can use political creation to negotiate ideological consensus that infiltrates the prevalent and dominated group. Gramsci believes that hegemony can be understood in how capitalist ideas are propagated and accepted naturally (Holub 1992). If the dominant mode becomes a class in the rule, every concrete institution form or even temporal relations from certain products become prominent. This theory elaborates domination of one class over another class, and he emphasizes or is convinced that there is an agreement between those two classes. The agreement is agreed upon between the ruler class and the dominated one (Bates 1975). This means that hegemony in the Gramscian sense is a consensus where submission is obtained through the acceptance of the ideology of the hegemonic class by the hegemonic class. Hegemony is not a relationship of domination by using power but a relationship of agreement using political and ideological leadership. Hegemony can be the dominant position of men in society and justifies the subordination of the male and female population. This theory is essential as masculinity also hegemonies the male position toward women in society. This social life in the form of hegemony masculinities can also be found in Guy Maupassant's short stories.

To gain more insight into the masculinity theory, in this study, the writer applies Raewyn Connell's masculinity theories as to the most influential theory in men and masculinities. Connell (2005)<sup>4</sup> attempted to elaborate on masculinity as an object (a natural character type, a behavioral average, a norm), focusing more on the processes and relationships through which men and women do social lives is better. As Connell (2005) state that a study of masculinity in a deeper understanding on the "*view of men in gender relations, and so allowed a decisive move beyond the abstract 'sex role' framework that had been dominant earlier.*"<sup>5</sup> Masculinity could be briefly defined as a simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage in that place in gender, and the effects of these practices on bodily experience, culture, and personality (Connell 2005). The culture has then a role in constructing and stereotyping masculinities. Therefore, masculinity is not just a personal, private, or intimate identity. Lennes (2020) stated masculinity "*is considered a political, cultural, and social marker that inherently shapes other social identities and dynamics of power and domination*"<sup>6</sup>.

Masculinity theory then developed into gender order theory that recognizes multiple masculinities. It varies across time, society, culture, and even individual

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<sup>3</sup> Nooi Kurnia, "Representasi Maskulinitas dalam Iklan", *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Politik* 8, no. 1 (July 2004): 18. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jsp.11056>

<sup>4</sup> Raewyn Connell, *Masculinities*, (California: University of California Press, 2005), 71

<sup>5</sup> Raewyn Connell, *Masculinities*, (California: University of California Press, 2005), xiv

<sup>6</sup> Lennes, Kostia, *Chicano Masculinities*, (New York, NY: Routledge, 2020), 74,

(Wedgwood 2009). Masculinity differs from specific characteristics of man, which means it dictates men what should and should not do. According to Patten (2018), in hegemonic masculinity, men and women are different and are not innate to individuals are none other than patriarchal, in which one is more superior to the other. Madsen (2006) also stated that masculinity could be related to oppression, which can be translated and expressed in traits such as competitiveness, exploitation, greed, and violence. They are tied with certain societal features. There are several differences between men and women, and those differences can also acquire the attributes of masculinity. Patten (2018) differs between men and women. Men should be or are expected to be masculine, dominant, assertive, aggressive, intelligent, rational, and active (do things). Meanwhile, women should be or expected to be feminine, submissive, weak, passive, intuitive, emotional, and communicative (talk about things). Considering those patterns of men and women, the masculinities issue in the general society then considers those as men's pattern of masculinities. The differences are caused by the circular social structures that continuously serve society (Patten 2018). Those masculinity issues are one of themes found in Guy de Maupassants' short stories.

Studies regarding masculinities have been done in some literary works. This issue has mostly appeared in television and film industries (Gürkan and Serttas 2017) which brings female identity masculinity constructed by the society. Furthermore, the society also constructs different form of masculinities such as ones in the U.S., Africa and Australia. The studies done by Alsyouf (2018) focuses on 'hypermasculinity' on African's novels while Nowatzki (1999) analyzes on African American masculinity inside three American novels which represents conflict of black man against white supremacists. Nowatzki reveals that Black manhood is shown by Black men struggling for political freedom against hostile white supremacists<sup>7</sup>. Potter (2007) focused the study on 'hybridisation of the masculine and the feminine' in Australian novels. While Khan, Khan, and Samad (2020) in their study explore the masculinity issue by using the discursive interpretation perspective and found out the power relations, hegemony, and dominance as well as violence. Kurnia (2004) in her study believe that the hegemonic masculinity phenomenon is a medium for contestation between masculinity and femininity. Those studies create certain important chance that there is certain important study especially masculinity formed in the society during French and German war as the major setting in Guy Maupassant's work.

Moreover, the possibility to study further on Maupassants' work is till needed as there were many of his short stories collection. Some studies has been done delineating some short stories form Guy de Maupassant. Those studies focused on the delineation some issues toward woman position in the society. Woman has been created and constructed by the society as the figure they want. However, man masculinity has been constructed better. Pager-McClymont (2021) analyzed 'fetishism' as mental illness in *La Chevelure*. Marsih (2021) in *Boule de Suif* revealed the 'stigmatization' on female sex worker<sup>8</sup>. Syafrina (2020) analyzed Guy de Maupassant five short stories in *The Kiss*, *The Diamond Necklace*, *the Dead Women Secret*, *The Umbrella*, and *A Family Affair* describe 'women stereotypes' that include 'formlessness, instability, irrationality, piety, spirituality, materialism'.

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<sup>7</sup> Robert Nowatzki, "'Sublime Patriots': Black Masculinity in Three African-American Novels." *The Journal of Men's Studies* 8, no. 1 (October 1999): 60, <https://doi.org/10.3149%2Fjms.0801.59>

<sup>8</sup> Linusia Marsih, "Sex Worker Stigma in Maupassant's 'Boule De Suif' and Tirtawirya's 'Catatan Seorang Pelacur'." *Anaphora: Journal of Language, Literary, and Cultural Studies* 4, no. 2 (December 2021): 162

While Ratna, Zuriyati and Rohman (2021) delineated that the 'heroism' of women in *Mademoiselle Fifi* is still considered under male control. Those research proved that the delineation of three short stories from Guy de Maupassant's *Father Milon*, *A Duel* and *The Colonel's Ideas* have not been done.

This study focuses on the issue of masculinity in Guy Maupassant's three short stories. The short story of Guy Maupassant results from the life experiences of Maupassant, who was a soldier. After various experiences during his time as a soldier, he wrote dozens of short stories. He decided not to marry, and the experience of manhood became various issues that colored his short story. This study discusses three of Guy Maupassant's short stories, *Father Milon*, *A Duel*, and *The Colonel's Ideas*. The three short stories center on four male characters who become soldiers. In the first short story, the character of father Milon is a grandfather who struggles and takes revenge for the death of his daughter. Alone he managed to kill dozens of soldiers. The second character in the short story *A Duel* focuses on the feud of two soldiers about a case that ends in a fight. The manliness of the two soldiers had offended each other. The third short story is about a colonel who boasts of being a successful male soldier. He also admires women, and women raise his enthusiasm to go to war.

This study focuses on various male characters representing different masculinities. It investigates the dominant position of men in society from Guy Maupassant's three short stories. The study justifies those stories' subordination of the male and female populations. Guy Maupassant delineates different masculinities of French and German society, especially in the 19th century. This study aims to determine the masculinities represented in three of Guy Maupassant's short stories.

## METHOD

This research is descriptive qualitative because it covers the nature of certain events. This qualitative descriptive research process is generally characterized by simultaneous and well-organized data collection and data analysis (Ally and Kasih 2020, Kasih 2018). The researchers then "adopt a descriptive or interpretative approach which aims to understand and report the views and culture of those being studied" (Ritchie 2003, 103). In this research, the data source is from Guy Maupassant's short stories, *Father Milon*, *A Duel*, and *The Colonel's Ideas*. The data are in the form of word, sentences, narration and dialogue from three short stories. After collecting data, the analysis was done by focusing to the issue regarding masculinities and its dominance in the society found in the short story. To analyze the work, the study also employed Antonio Gramsci's hegemony theory dan Stuart Hall's representation theory (Wood 1998). Representative theory has a close relationship with culture, because Hall (2003) believed that culture is a shared meaning, while language is the privileged medium that can make sense of thing. This study has relation with sociocultural condition in Guy Maupassant's life of French and German setting.

## Finding and Analysis

Guy de Maupassant was a naturalist and realist writer. His literary career began in 1880 and lasted only ten years. He was a writer of short stories with themes as diverse as war, prostitution, infidelity, religion, madness, cultural misunderstandings between France and England, and life in the French provinces, especially his native Normandy. Maupassant served in the French Army and later became a government employee. He moved from Normandy to Paris after the war and worked for several leading French newspapers. In his

20s, Maupassant experienced with syphilis because of his prostitution life with many beautiful women. Maupassant eventually suffered from mental illness and spent his life in a Paris mental hospital.

Maupassant wrote a number of stories centered on the Franco-Prussian war. Almost all have a French protagonist, at least one has a German protagonist (*Father Milon*), and there are many German antagonists to be found. German soldiers, and more often higher-ranking officers, were described as largely brutal to the French they now occupy. In one story, a member of the German Prussian army challenges a French man to a duel, after repeatedly trying to humiliate him (*A Duel*). Elsewhere a French woman took revenge on German officers who used her for sexual purposes, claiming to have spread a sexually transmitted disease. He was of the view that he should be classed as a better fighter for France than many of his compatriots, because in this way he caused the deaths of more Germans.

### Performativity Discourse of Men Figure in *Father Milon*

Performativity is a discursive practice that imposes or produces what is called and describes a certain reality, but also changes the social reality it describes. Gender performativity is the theory that gender and gender roles are complex social performances that people perform in everyday life, the hegemonic version that underlies popular conceptions of "men as masculine" and "women as feminine". The idea of performativity is then used as an assumption that underlies performativity on the nature of gender as a social category. Butler's notion of gender performativity implies that that gender identity is unstable<sup>9</sup> (Butler 2011). This condition can be seen from Maupassant's short story in 'Father Milon' character.

Guy Maupassant's *Father Milon* has the character of father Milon as the figure of the father. He has experienced some hard life as he must see his own children killed in the war. The character has been in his age, considered old and weak. In the early part of this short story, Maupassant represents this character as the normal old man who is going to have his destiny to die. By having wrinkled skin, father Milon might only do simple work in his life at the age of sixty-eight years old.

He was sixty-eight years old, small, thin, bent, with two big hands resembling the claws of a crab. His colorless hair was sparse and thin, like the down of a young duck, allowing patches of his scalp to be seen. The brown and wrinkled skin of his neck showed big veins which disappeared behind his jaws and came out again at the temples. He had the reputation of being miserly and hard to deal with. (Maupassant, 1939)

The above narrative is built by the author to show how a man can grow old and have a changed physical appearance. With a physical appearance such as wrinkled and dull skin, 'Father Milon' is represented as the man who has been old and does not have a strong physic anymore. Maupassant emphasizes the position of a man who can become weak in his old age. The description of the physical condition of 'Father Milon' is a representation of the character's performance. The performance of 'Faher Milon' can be said to be weak in the narrative because of the existing physical condition. The terms 'weak' and 'strong' performance are also influenced by humans as a social society so that these words are formed from the existing social society.

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<sup>9</sup> Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex."* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2011), 120, Library of Congress Cataloging

The character 'Father Milon' is then represented by Maupassant as a different figure. Due to the death of his son and his mounting anger, he killed dozens of German soldiers alone. The weak performance shown by Maupassant at the beginning of the story turned to the real strength shown in the war. The following dialogue reveals Colonel German's amazement at the power of 'Father Milon'.

The colonel went on: "Do you also know who killed all the scouts who have been found dead, for a month, throughout the country, every morning?" The old man answered with the same stupid look: "I did." "You killed them all?" "Uh huh! I did." "You alone? All alone?" "Uh huh!" (Maupassant, 1939)

Masculinity represents what is understood by culture in general that men are represented as having full power regardless of age and role. For this reason, people are forced to understand narratives that provoke anxiety, brutality and violence. Contradicting, the narrative goes against the norm that is and can be understood normally. Father Milon, an old man who was supposed to accept his destiny to become a weak person, is brutally represented by Maupassant as a figure who is too strong. Such a figure will be the opposite of the normal situation that exists. Maupassant is clearly very supportive of the very large role of men in society. Milon's father figure has the power until the end of his life.

Maupassant clearly reveals the man construction which can not be justified only by their performance. Butler (1988) stated that gender is institutionalized through internally disconnected actions, so '*the appearance of substance*'<sup>10</sup> is precisely a constructed identity, a performative achievement that is believed by worldly social audiences, including the actors themselves, to appear in a belief mode. Gender is not passively written on the body, nor is it determined by nature, language, symbols, or the extraordinary history of patriarchy. Gender is what is worn, always, under duress, daily and without ceasing, with anxiety and pleasure, but if this constant act is misinterpreted as something natural or linguistic, it can be done physically through subversive performances.

Father Milon's character despised several Prussian military officers with a greedy and indiscriminate hatred of a peasant. "Father Milon" goes on to portray the peasants in a negative light. To this end, the narrator reports that Father Milon appeared hostile to some of the Prussian military officers who were conducting the interrogation. Moreover, when he faced the Prussian critics, Father Milon put on the foolish appearance of a peasant. In this case, Father Milon had just stabbed a Prussian military officer with several sharp weapons. According to the narrator, Father Milon enjoyed this killing as much as the peasants did. This scenario highlights that farmers enjoy killing victims. Like he tries to prove that he alone can handle all his enemies by killing them all. The dialogue below shows how father Milon has been questioned for his bravery in killing his enemies. The following dialogue shows Father Milon as a man of high courage, which he showed to the Prussian colonels

The colonel, who was gnawing at his mustache, asked: "You have nothing else to say?" "Nothing more; I have finished my task; I killed sixteen, not one more or less." "Do you know that you are going to die?" "I haven't asked for mercy." "Have you been a soldier?" "Yes, I served my time. And then, you had killed my father, who was a soldier of the first Emperor. And last month you killed my youngest son, Francois, near Evreux. I owed you one for that; I paid. We are quits." (Maupassant, 1939)

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<sup>10</sup> Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory." *Theatre Journal* 40, no. 4 (December 1988): 520.

In the narrative, the Prussian colonel was astonished by the bravery of the German peasant and the grudge he had. The farmer was very satisfied with the success of killing the sixteen French soldiers. This invigorates and blinds his fears. Physically as a parent, Father Milon shows his masculinity. The stereotype given by society that he was weak made it easy for him to enter the territory of the French soldiers. Father Milon had success in killing German soldiers without fear.

The rivalry between Father Milon as a German and Colonel Prussia is a continuation of the conflict between the two countries and each felt stronger than the other. The rivalry between France and Germany (or Prussia) lasted for many years before the unification of Germany<sup>11</sup> in the mid-nineteenth century (Hensel Januari 1998). France had always felt threatened by Prussia and both France and Germany eventually continued to confront each other. Prussia or Germany won the Seven Weeks War of 1866 and the result was the addition of smaller German states to Prussian control. Germany's capabilities improved dramatically compared to France's. The level of French capability (hereinafter very clearly displayed on the battlefield). The Franco-Prussian war became a full-fledged rivalry between the two countries.

### **Men Masculinity Over Feminity in *The Colonel's Ideas***

Maupassant in his life was always surrounded by beautiful women. In the solitude of his life, Maupassant escapes in the world of prostitution and meets all kinds of beautiful women who entertain him. He who feels tired as a soldier is then comforted by a beautiful woman. This gives encouragement in the next activity. Maupassant in the short story also reveals the presence of beautiful women in the lives of soldiers on the battlefield. Colonel Laporte in the following narration reveals how beautiful women are very valuable to soldiers. Beautiful women give the will to do all activities. Colonel Laporte feels how he feels very motivated by the presence of beautiful women.

When I am in the presence of a woman, of a pretty woman, I feel capable of anything. By Jove! when I feel her looks penetrating me, her confounded looks which set your blood on fire, I should like to do I don't know what; to fight a duel, to have a row, to smash the furniture, in order to show that I am the strongest, the bravest, the most daring and the most devoted of men. (Maupassant, 1939)

The author in the text above tells 'the colonel ideas' on a pretty woman as the basis of his intention. The colonel feels more powerful to have pretty women in his side, especially special girl named 'Jove'. Maupassant as the author emphasizes that woman has power not like a man. The narration also argues the exclusion of women in the character of pretty women. Colonel finally admires women position in the war. Maupassant slightly defends woman's position and demonstrates reasoning from related cases. Maupassant narrative in this part also explain of the woman's character demonstrating that reasoning from related cases of woman and feminist. Masculinity proposed by 'Colonel' shows that men are active actors who live (and are brought to life) by masculine myths through stories and images of the dominant culture. Study (Nilan, et al. 2008) reveal that male subjectivity<sup>12</sup> is based on historically situated discourses, both social and cultural. The

<sup>11</sup> Paul. R. Hensel, "The Evolution of the Franco-German Rivalry". *Unpublished Paper*, Department of Political Science, Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois, (Januari 1998), 2.

<sup>12</sup> Pam Nilan, Alex Broom, Argyo Demartoto, Assa Doron, K.R. Nayar, and John Germov. "Masculinities and Violence In India and Indonesia Identifying Themes and Constructs for Research." *Journal of Health & Development* 4, no. 1-4 (2008): 209.

extent to which humans are able to accept or reject, ignore or synthesize, and strengthen or challenge. This number of discourses means that no one form of masculinity can be defined because they are all integrated.

But I am not the only one, certainly not; the whole French army is like me, I swear to you. From the common soldier to the general, we all start out, from the van to the rear guard, when there is a woman in the case, a pretty woman. (Maupassant, 1939)

The author in the text above tells of 'the colonel' idea of a beautiful woman who made him able to fight hard on the battlefield. Maupassant as a writer emphasizes the role of men in war while beautiful women are complementary. The author finally underlines the great role of men in war and really only men on the battlefield and beautiful women as complements. Mosse (1996) notes that war, as far as soldiers are concerned, only strengthens the traditional feminine appeal that they idealize. This is actually in response to their longing for women and their sexual image. Mosse claims that women are merely passive images of sexuality rather than active contributors to war. Maupassant's narrative clearly demonstrates the abuse of women. However, the narrative in this short story shows that the 'Colonel' ideas about beautiful women in war actually reinforce the role of women that men have no power without women's support. Men have no 'power' without women.

Studies during the evolutionary era found that women were closed in private and 'excluded from politics'<sup>13</sup>. However, women's creativity and the flexibility of gender identity, both in France and in the colonies (Dezan 2019). Quinlan (2007) researches "many experiences of masculinity."<sup>14</sup> War produces 'republic of muscles.' But after the war, men still yearn for the living space and women to escape revolutionary chaos. Quinlan highlights the homosocial world as a site for articulating and experiencing masculinity.

It seemed to me as if we had just saved the whole of France and had done something that other men could not have done, something simple and really patriotic. I shall never forget that little face, you may be sure; and if I had to give my opinion about abolishing drums, trumpets and bugles, I should propose to replace them in every regiment by a pretty girl, and that would be even better than playing the 'Marseillaise: By Jove! it would put some spirit into a trooper to have a Madonna like that, a live Madonna, by the colonel's side." (Maupassant, 1939)

Maupassant also delineates in *The Colonels's Ideas* that female character shows too much of her feminist side. The woman can have desire to become an army commando. Through this story the character of the woman there fought against the Prussians with her confidence by becoming an army commando as mentioned above. As a woman who should have a more feminist side than men. The female character is described as a brave and strong woman. This is evidenced by him taking command of the army against the Prussians. Defeating many male personnel, he was able to lead the command that made the male soldiers jealous and talk about the woman. Imagine if all women have a strong masculine side, surely no one has a feminist side as a woman should be. Being a woman should obey her nature, by being gentle and gentle. However, it is very different from what the author describes in that the female character in the writing is described as a woman

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<sup>13</sup> Suzanne Dezan, "Recent Historiography on the French Revolution and Gender", *Journal of Social History*, 2019, p. 560

<sup>14</sup> Sean Quinlan, "Men without Women? Ideal Masculinity and Male Sociability in the French Revolution, 1789-1799," in *French Masculinities: History, Culture, and Politics*, ed. Christopher E. Forth and Bertrand Taithe (Basingstoke, UK, 2007), p. 43.



who is able to become a leader or commando of the army. In today's era, many women assume that they have the same power as a man. Whereas the strength between women and men is clearly very different, it can be seen in terms of their physical abilities and abilities. Women then have '*a competitive power*' in the political world. These women have the nature of not wanting to lose more than the men out there. A woman should be described as a beautiful and gentle figure, but in this story the woman's character has a strong and brave figure like a man. The social jealousy between the men and the women mentioned occurred because the woman dared to become the commanding officer of the war army.

### **Crisis of Masculinity in *A Duel***

The definition of a crisis can be described as an event or unstable moment that is not expected and has the potential to cause chaos and threatening change. The crisis of masculinity is the role of men in society that is unconsciously lost and no longer recognized. This crisis also occurs because men do not have the confidence to carry out roles in society. This happens because of several things such as the increasing role of men in other groups, the increasing role of women in the family, and the increasing role of children in the family. Masculinity crisis occurs in every sector of life. In the short story written by Maupassant, a crisis of masculinity occurs in the warrior circles and in the world of war. There was competition between the roles of German and French men due to the situation of society at that time in a prolonged war conflict. In the short story '*A Duel*', Maupassant emphasizes the masculinity of French soldiers and their superior role over German soldiers. The narrative in the short story is about a German soldier who is arrogant and tries to scare French men. At the end of the story, the German soldiers finally surrendered to the French man who was initially considered weak.

The German sat facing the Frenchman, and, laughing still, said: "You did not want to do what I asked you?" M. Dubuis replied: "No, monsieur." The train had just left the station. The officer said: "I'll cut off your mustache to fill my pipe with." And he put out his hand toward the Frenchman's face. The Englishmen stared at them, retaining their previous impassive manner. The German had already pulled out a few hairs, and was still tugging at the mustache, when M. Dubuis, with a back stroke of his hand, flung aside the officer's arm, and, seizing him by the collar, threw him down on the seat (Maupassant, 1939)

The narrative is about a German who challenges a disobedient French man to be told to buy something. The Frenchman feels that the request is ridiculous and unimportant. For that he refuses on the grounds that the train had left the station. M. Dubuis, the French man was quite smart. In the train carriage there are also two English men who witness how German soldiers are humiliated by a French man who had no fear at all. The Englishmen watched them duel. The masculinity of M. Dubuis is motivated and becomes angry so that he then responds to German soldiers who tries to pluck his mustache. The German man is surprised that the French man has the power to attack back and the German soldier is killed and becomes afraid. "*M. Dubuis fired at random without delay, and he was amazed to see the Prussian opposite him stagger, lift up his arms and fall forward, dead. He had killed the officer.*" (Maupassant, 1939)

Maupassant underlines the weakness of the German soldiers in the story. The words of the German soldiers in the early story are so arrogant to defeat the French. The story ends differently when German soldiers run away in fear and one of them has to be killed. Maupassant in this case reflects on the situation he encountered with the German

soldiers and Boehringer (2008) acclaimed it as '*masculinity in crisis*'<sup>15</sup>. German soldiers endured years of war and eventually caused trauma. Connell (2005) argued that the social, economic, and cultural changes caused by unification constituted a form of "*historical trauma*" and gave rise to "*new forms of marginal, nonhegemonic masculinity*". Maupassant's short story delineates the crisis of masculinity to the historical trauma that was the division of Germany and the Cold War.

## CONCLUSION

With the creation of different male characters with various degree of masculine nature, Guy Maupassant in the three short stories '*Father Milon*', '*A Duel*' and '*The Colonel's Ideas*' tries to balance the male character he creates. Father Milon's character represents the manhood of an old man who can have a strong performance due to compelling circumstances. Here the social structure that defines itself as old and weak based on physical conditions fails. The second character in '*A Duel*' is a French man who is considered weak by German soldiers who are active on the battlefield. On the other hand, German soldiers showed a masculinity of crisis due to the pressure of the war. He lost to the French man. The third character is a French Colonel who considers beautiful women as support in war and raises the spirit to defeat his enemy. At the end of the story, women are recognized as valuable to French soldiers. This reverses the situation that the superiority of women is recognized more than the superiority of men.

Maupassant is just trying to paint pictures of different kinds the man seen in society, therefore, confirms the verisimilitude between characters in literary works and real-life characters. But the male character has individual characteristics of masculine, and female characters have their own distinguishing gender roles. The male and female aspects show that there are some gender roles that are not yet static and that there are transitions and transformations brought about by colonial and post-colonial realities that affect gender roles and positions at various levels across communities.

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