



Exploration of Supernatural Allusions in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's "One Hundred Years of Solitude"

Mr.R.Gopinathan, IIM.A English, Department of English, Dr. NGP Arts & Science College, Coimbatore.

Abstract

The supernatural transcends the limit of questionable state of existence in magic realism. Even if the readers are conscious about the conflicting and opposing polarities of the rational and irrational, they are not disconcerted at the coherence of elements in magic realism. This is because, the supernatural is integrated within the norms of perceptions of the narrator and characters in the fictional world. Likewise the natural is treated in a supernatural way by attributing fear, wonder, confusion, bewilderment etc. From magic realist works it is hard to get anything for sure and certain. The accuracy of events and the credibility of the world views expressed by the characters in the text are hardly discernible with perspective clarity. In spite of all the eccentricities of magic realist fiction, it is being accepted for its aesthetic and semantic value as well. This technique of authorial reticence is one of the contributory factors for it promotes its acceptance. The supernatural elements are simply left unexplained. Because it would then be less valid, the supernatural world would be discarded as false testimony. In other words, opposing the conventional view of reality, the simple act of explaining the supernatural would eradicate its position of equality with reality. So magic realist works leave the readers in a perspective mystery that challenges the reader's responsibility.

Keywords: Myth, Fantasy, Supernatural, Magic Realism.

Literature, a conjurer of past and present is rendered into multifarious ways as it plays different sorts of roles in society by bringing drastic changes in the life of every human being. Literature by extirpating ignorance leads the readers to acquire knowledge about culture, tradition, history and classical myths. As James Ellis says "Literature is the garden of wisdom," it is an artistic expression of thought, which is replete with feelings and imagination. It is usually expressed in such a non-technical form as to make it intelligible and give aesthetic pleasures and relief to the mind of common man. Literature can be classified on the basis of language, region, country periods and themes.

The novel begins with a historical disjunction. However, it is important to note that the novel is deliberately structured to trace a very definite narrative, one of epic or perhaps biblical proportions. The novel is indeed, as the critic Harold Bloom has observed, the Bible of Macondo, and, again, at the very beginning of the novel, just as in the Bible, many things have yet to be named. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* can be seen as a parable for the human quest for knowledge, expressed through the struggles of José Arcadio Buendía.

LITERARY DRUID

A Peer-Reviewed International Journal of English Language and Literature

VOLUME - 2, ISSUE - 2, MAY 2020

E-ISSN: 2582-4155

www.literarydruid.com

He and his descendants are described as an archetypal man. As Marquez describes:

At that time Macondo was a village of twenty adobe houses, built on the bank of a river of clear water that ran along a bed of polished stones, which were white and enormous, like prehistoric eggs. The world was so recent that many things lacked names, and in order to indicate them it was necessary to point. Every year during the month of March family of ragged gypsies would set up their tents near the village, and with a great uproar of pipes and kettledrums they would display new inventions. (Marquez 1)

In the Bible, Adam's job is to name the animals, exercising his power over them and cataloguing them to conform to his vision of the world. In establishing Macondo, José Arcadio Buendía does the same thing. Adam and Eve were expelled from Eden for eating the fruit and this novel conveys the same deterrent tale. José Arcadio Buendía's relentless pursuit of knowledge, arguably, drives him to foolishness and eventual insanity. He is tied to a tree that functions as a symbol of Tree of Knowledge, whose fruit tempted Adam and Eve to fall.

One way the residents of Macondo respond to these changes is by embracing solitude more and more. It is evident that, the Buendías-José Arcadio Buendía and his second son, Aureliano, first begin to turn away from society, to devote themselves single-mindedly to their crafts and intellectual pursuits. José Arcadio Buendía goes insane, his mind crumbling under the pressure of his solitary musings, and he has to be tied to a tree. Symbolically, this tree is reminiscent of Eden's Tree of Knowledge, the same tree whose fruit José Arcadio Buendía has dared to eat. Aureliano's solitude seems inborn: like the village itself, he is simply happier when left alone. He seems to feel love for Remedios Moscote, but when she dies, later in the book, he feels no great sorrow. Emotions seem beyond him, as do relationships, and he is fundamentally detached from people and feelings. It will be revealed throughout the novel that this is the curse of much of the Buendía family, whose intensity of emotion and inwardness cannot accommodate social interaction.

One of the complexities of the novel is that even as the narrator treats the story very seriously and realistically, he also points out morals in the narrative, sometimes treating it like a fable. What is suggested in the fable of the solitary Buendías is perhaps that human society is fundamentally polarizing and perhaps ultimately unfulfilling. Man is uncomfortable in society, and as Aureliano and then José Arcadio Segundo discover when he is alone, he may find comfort, but no great joy.

There is also a real political and historical message behind this reversal of expectations. García Márquez is attempting to convey the extent of confusion that Western industrial technology created in the lives of Latin Americans, whose minds were comfortable with the mythic and the supernatural, but for whom an adjustment to modern culture was extremely difficult. The townspeople reject the cinema because technology here is the stuff of unreality and illusions, whereas the appearances of the ghosts of José Arcadio Buendía, or of Melquíades, are taken to be genuine phenomena. As readers of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, we are expected to view both magic and technology as real, accepting that the difference between them is, at least in the novel, a question of perspective rather than

LITERARY DRUID

A Peer-Reviewed International Journal of English Language and Literature

VOLUME - 2, ISSUE - 2, MAY 2020

E-ISSN: 2582-4155

www.literarydruid.com

objective fact.

The banana plantation later becomes the most tragic disturbance for the town because of the influx of new money and new inhabitants that it brings. The perfectly ordered village that José Arcadio Buendía founded becomes noisy and chaotic. Only Remedios the Beauty retains her sense of calm and her innocence. She is one of the most perplexing characters in the novel, because she seems to lack a personality of her own and she functions only as a symbol. Incapable of the deep introspection characteristic of the Buendías, Remedios the Beauty lacks a sense of self and an ability to empathize with others. She is driven only by animal emotions, and her only characteristics are innocence and heartbreaking beauty. She functions, then, not as a living person within the novel, but simply as a symbol of the beautiful innocence that Macondo has lost, similar to that of Adam and Eve before they ate the forbidden fruit and gained knowledge of nakedness and sin. As Marquez says:

Remedios the Beauty, who seemed indifferent to everything and who was thought to be mentally retarded, was not insensitive to so much devotion and she intervened in Colonel Gerineldo Marquez's favor. Amaranta suddenly discovered that the girl she had raised, who was just entering adolescence, was already the most beautiful creature that had even been seen in Macondo. (Marquez 167)

Remedios the Beauty sees nakedness as the only natural way to walk around the house. In the tainted world of modern Macondo, corrupted by too much knowledge and technology, Remedios is a relic and a reminder of the past. It comes as a tragic realization that she is, in fact, too pure for the world, and she simply floats skyward and disappears, presumably summoned back into the heavens. In the novel, Marquez used the Biblical mythology. For example, Remedios the Beauty's untainted innocence seems reminiscent of the Garden of Eden, Úrsula's musings on time to call to mind the Old Testament as a whole. She reflects that, in the old days, children grew up more slowly and time affected people more gently. This notion is similar to the early parts of the Bible, where people live for vast numbers of years; as the Bible moves on, it depicts time passing more quickly.

The nearly five-year flood that deluges Macondo, practically erasing all trace of the banana company from the land, parallels the Biblical flood that covered the earth in the time of Noah. Then, as in the novel, the world had become full of wicked people, and in the Bible the cleansing flood obliterates them. And it is possible to read the years of rain in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* as ordained by God, in mourning for the massacred workers, and as a cleansing agent in Macondo. Another, more insidious possibility presents itself, however. We have already been told that the banana company has the capacity to bring rain, supplanting the Divine prowess of God Himself, and it is certainly implied that the replacement of God by modern technology is symptomatic of the shattered reality of Macondo.

The novel hints that Mr. Brown of the banana company, the man who has replaced both God and the angel of death, has brought the rains in order to wash away all traces of the massacre and to erase memory. With the death of José Arcadio Segundo at the end of this



LITERARY DRUID

A Peer-Reviewed International Journal of English Language and Literature

VOLUME - 2, ISSUE - 2, MAY 2020

E-ISSN: 2582-4155

www.literarydruid.com

section, Aureliano (II) becomes the town's preserver of memories. As Aureliano (II) explores the town in the final pages of the book, he discovers that practically all its history has been forgotten: "the voracity of oblivion," García Márquez writes, "was undermining memories in a pitiless way." Úrsula Iguarán, who in her senility and extreme old age has become childlike, serves as a metaphor for the town. Shrunken in its old age and ignorant of its past, Macondo has returned almost to its infancy. The author focuses on the myth and fantasy in the novel. In this novel the characters are so awful and so mysterious. In this novel the characters are so amazing. The novel represents the seven generation of the family. The attitudes of these characters are so impressed by the readers. The author has some reason to keep the title as One Hundred Years of Solitude. That novel all the characters were started to fight for their rights.

It may be said that Macondo's development is a story, suggestive of the run of the mill circular segment of human cultural advancement, and that the town is a microcosm for all of human progress. In the novel, the innovative and social changes that go with modernization cause the general public to turn out to be progressively cosmopolitan, containing both more noteworthy riches and more prominent social issues than Macondo did in its prior state. Expanded traffic through the town brings thriving, however it likewise carries a portion of the repulsions related with free enterprise. For instance, Aureliano discovers a tent where a young lady is being compelled to lay down with numerous men sequentially it will take seventy per night, for ten additional years, to take care of her family's obligations. The town is additionally changed by administrative obstruction that contact with the outside world permits. José Aureliano Buendía has his first experience right now the common specialists that will progressively hold onto control of the town. Bit by bit, it is proposed, alleged advancement brings loss of blamelessness and potential wellsprings of contention.

In any case, the progressions happening to the city go past a basic purposeful anecdote of political change in world history. The contention between José Arcadio Buendía's style of government and the guidelines got by the justice mirrors a political plan that is quite certain to García Márquez and Latin America. García Márquez is notable as a companion of Fidel Castro, a Communist, and progressive sympathizer. José Arcadio Buendía's Macondo is an idealistic picture of what an in a perfect world socialist society may resemble. He has mapped out the city so every house has equivalent access to water and shade, and he tells the justice that "right now don't give orders with bits of paper." Later on, we will see this early perfect world can't last, and Macondo will get entangled in an insurgency against a cruelly administrative government. On the off chance that García Márquez seems to help a hopefully socialist vision of what society ought to resemble, his solid response against tyranny and abuse demonstrates his objection to the abusive inclinations that have come to be related with the truth of socialism.

The novel incorporates authenticity and enchantment which appear from the start to be alternate extremes; they are, indeed, flawlessly reconcilable. Both are essential so as to pass on Marquez's specific origination of the world. Marquez's tale reflects reality not as it is

LITERARY DRUID

A Peer-Reviewed International Journal of English Language and Literature

VOLUME - 2, ISSUE - 2, MAY 2020

E-ISSN: 2582-4155

www.literarydruid.com

experienced by one spectator, however as it is exclusively experienced by those with various foundations. These various points of view are particularly suitable to the one of a kind truth of Latin America got among innovation and pre industrialization; torn by common war, and attacked by dominion where the encounters of individuals fluctuate considerably more than they may in a progressively homogeneous society. Through mysterious authenticity he passes on a reality that consolidates enchantment, superstition, religion and history which are verifiably implanted into the world.

References

1. Bell-Villada, Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude: A Case book* Oxford: Oxford University, 2002. Print
2. Brotherston, Gordon, "An end to secular Solitude: Gabriel Garcia Marquez". *The Emergence of the Latin American Novel*. Cambridge University press, 1977.
3. Christ, Ronald. "A Novel Mythologizes a whole continent" *commonweal*. March 6, 1970.
4. Cipli jauskaite, Birute. "Foreshadowing as Technique and Theme in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*". *Books Abroad* summer 1973.
5. Dreifus, Claudia. "An interview with Gabriel Garcia Marquez", *Playboy*, Feb. 1983.
6. Echevarria, Roberto Gonzalez. "Cien anos de soledad: the Novel as Myth and Archieve" *March*, 1984.
7. Enright, D.J. "Longer and Death". *The Listener*, vol. 84 No. 2160 Aug. 20, 1970.
8. Hegerfeldt, Anne. "Magic Realism, Magical Realism". *The Literary Encyclopedia*. 6 February 2004. <http://www.litencyc.com/php/stopics.php?rec=true&UID=682>
9. Marquez, Gabriel Garcia. *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Trans. Gregory Rabassa. NewDelhi: Penguin Books India Limited, 1989.

Cite this Article in English (MLA 8 Style) as:

Mr.R.Gopinathan. "Exploration of Supernatural Allusions in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's "One Hundred Years of Solitude"." *Literary Druid*, Vol. 2, Issue. 2, May, pp. 11-15. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.3833406.

Author (s) Contribution Statement: Nil**Author (s) Acknowledgement:** Nil**Author (s) Declaration:** I declare that there is no competing interest.

The content of the article is licensed under [Creative Commons Attribution4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) International License.