MAGICAL REALISM AND SOCIAL PROTEST IN THE WORKS OF GABRIEL GARCÍA MÁRQUEZ

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ABSTRACT

Title: Magical Realism and Social Protest in the Works of Gabriel García Márquez

The technique of magical realism is relevant to the postcolonial reality and the subsequent voice of protest raised against the ways in which (post)colonialism has told upon the politico-social and cultural economy of the (previously-)colonized nations. Labelled as subversive, hybrid and mestizo, magical realism has been noted to be a significant tool of social protest. However, the effectiveness of the relationship between magical realism and social protest, with reference to the works of García Márquez, have not been focus of a detailed scholarship. The present thesis explores how and in what ways magical realism has been helpful to García Márquez in registering protest against exploitation, which is a major form of social injustice. His recourse in magical realism has a definite and visible political edge and his work not only does make the reader question the so-called absolute nature of the real, but also reviews the borders of an unconsciously politicised ideology that (de-)shapes the very structure of his worldview. This thematic research is an effort to demonstrate that García Márquez's fiction has overt political implications along with an undertone of protest against social injustice. He achieves the desired intensity of protest by the means of magical realism, in which he incorporates and juxtaposes various elements derived from disparate sources, e.g. oral/folklore culture, myth, and stereotypes. To ultimately bring forth and enhance the themes, the disparity of sources is manifested in the very structure of his fiction and is further strengthened by an essentially carnivalesque language founded on hyperbole, humour, and irony. It has been generalised that it is on the basis of these textual features that a magical realist text is able to challenge Western epistemology, proving the so-called rational as inconsistent and arbitrary in all respects.

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I dedicate this work to my father and mother.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Term
Solitude:	*One Hundred Years of Solitude*
Demons:	*Of Love and Other Demons*
Cholera:	*Love in the Time of Cholera*
Chronicle:	*Chronicle of a Death Foretold*
Tale:	*Living to Tell the Tale*
Colonel:	*No One Writes to the Colonel*
Patriarch:	*The Autumn of the Patriarch*
Storm:	*Leaf Storm*
Erendira:	*The Incredible and Sad Tale of Innocent Erendira and Her Heartless Grandmother*
Blue Dog:	*Eyes of a Blue Dog*
Labyrinth:	*The General in His Labyrinth*
Hour:	*In Evil Hour*
Funeral:	*Big Mama's Funeral*
Pilgrims:	*Strange Pilgrims*
Whores:	*Memories of My Melancholy Whores*
Wings:	*A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings*
Drowned Man:	*The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World*
Light:	*Light is Like Water*
UFC:	*United Fruit Company*

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The present research aims to explore Gabriel García Márquez's response to the political condition of Latin America in the backdrop of the postcolonial paradigm. It dwells upon exploring the way magical realism has been used by García Márquez as a device which successfully challenges the authenticity of the so-called objective reality and attempts to highlight the deliberate erasure of Latin American history by the United States of America. Latin American literature gained more importance in world literature after the 'boom' movement of 1960s, which introduced a new trend in fiction, i.e. magical realism. Critics (such as Echevarría, 1977; Jameson, 1986b; Leal, 1995; Todorov, 1970) noticed that despite the fact that the authors writing in this new way belonged to Latin America, they ostensibly represented the predicaments of the entire Third World. On the basis of magical realism's subversive potential to portray the social problems of the Third World, it was acknowledged to be "the literary language of the emergent postcolonial world" (Bhabha, 1990, p. 7). Committed primarily to speaking out against the social injustice towards the marginalized and oppressed, the magical realist fiction writers highlighted the postcolonial reality of their respective countries as well as the overall global South or Third World by creating a 'counter discourse' to challenge the hegemony of the Western/metropolitan discourse (Hart & Ouyang, 2005). This was mainly because the magical realist fiction rejected the idea of binary oppositional system, which otherwise created a discrimination among the masses on the basis of a number of cultural, economic, political, racial, and social issues. Being charged-categories, these binary divisions, particularly those of West/Non-West and First World/Third World, are replete with sedimented meanings and characterize the non-West by backwardness, ignorance, and savagery. In opposition to the 'non-West' the

construct of the 'West' has been based upon the notion of progress and modernity in every sphere of life. Reality – which is abstract and therefore an unperceivable entity – is usually seen as absolute; something that cannot or should not be questioned. As a general observation, what is removed from the present and has its roots deeper in memories seems to be more reliable as compared to something belonging either to the contemporary times or the near-past. Latin American history, and in fact the history of the whole world, can be challenged on the assumption that when given a rustic air, a lot of fiction – mingled with a little bit of fact – seems to be plausible and true. Magical realism allows a person to question such so-called [objective] realities. The present research dwells upon exploring the way magical realism has been used by García Márquez as a device which successfully challenges the authenticity of the so-called objective reality or attempts to highlight the deliberate erasure of Latin American history by the First World. While authors use it for "sharp political satire in protest" (Ousby, 1993, p. 591), magical realism gains much importance in the realm of the postcolonial writings in that it ultimately functions to help an author to express his/her feelings regarding either the colonial or postcolonial experience and to write it back to the colonial Centre.

A number of writers have produced literature in the backdrop of postcolonial theories, but the magical realist fiction proves to be an effective answer from the Empire to the Centre. By mingling subjective with the so-called objective, García Márquez and other magical realists call the thought-to-be-reality into question. In a region where literary qualities of a piece of fiction are "often subordinated to issues of the political impact of texts" (Swanson, 2010, p. 57), the use of magical realism as a narrative device in García Márquez's fiction makes his themes more relevant to the postcolonial debate. His writings not only manifest an expression of a subjective colonial experience and

comment upon the prevalent socio-political conditions of Latin America, but they are also full of aesthetic attraction or literariness. With a skilful use of magical realism, he challenges the official readings of history, the ones which were previously thought to be as absolute and, therefore, unchallengeable. In his epic novel *Solitude* (1967/1970), García Márquez apparently tells the story of a family and their village and in doing so seems to describe much of Colombia's history by analysing its successes and failures as an independent republic. Although challenging the official readings of history of a country ruled by autocrats is nearly impossible, García Márquez seems to have done so by employing the device of magical realism in his fiction. He appears to be able to do it on the basis of the idea that nothing is absolute and that everything can be called into question. The novel seems to constitute a realm of its own, demonstrating that the Colombian history can also be challenged. *Solitude* is based upon a variety of real-life incidents mingled with the fantastic. From mocking the practice of bestowing high military rank on the young heirs of autocrats to the continuous political games played between military and political leaders not only in Latin America, but throughout the Third World countries, the novelist seems to paint a portrait of terror and political repression. The novel seems to be an attempt to peep into the life of a nation living under extreme oppression.

García Márquez's *Patriarch* (1975/2007) is based upon the life of a fictional dictator, whose character has been derived from a number of real autocrats, like Gustavo Rojas Pinilla of Colombia, Generalissimo Francisco Franco of Spain, Rafael Trujillo of Dominican Republic, Venezuela's Juan Vicente Gómez, and Joseph Stalin of USSR. The novelist appears to protests against Third World's common story of the devastating consequences of the problem of concentration of power into a single person (explored in Chapter 7). The most striking feature of the novel is its unique presentation

of the protagonist, who enjoys the god-like status and respect. It appears though a casual reading of the text that the mythical aura surrounding these rulers helped them control the hearts and minds of their respective nations despite worst internal political divisions. The novel seems to encapsulate the fact that when the times change, the patriot becomes a traitor and is treated in the worst possible manner. For example, through the discovery of the General's corpse in the ruins of his own palace and the way how once-subjects are now unable to even identify the corpse of a man whose presence was too evident in throughout their lives.

First published in Spanish in 1994 by the title *Del amor y otros demonios* and then translated into English by Edith Grossman in 1996, *Demons* (1994/1996) seems to have serious political as well as social implications deep-rooted into the far troubled history of Latin America. The setting of the novella is Colombian Caribbean Coast. The plot of the novella revolves around a twelve-year old girl of a rich family. The girl is bitten by a rabid dog and her parents seek a priest's services to heal the girl. During the healing sessions, both of them fall in love with each other and the health condition of girl miraculously improves. The reason behind the girl's improving health condition seems to be the happiness she experiences on finding love in the priest. Then, one day she is found dead when locked in her cell. While telling a simple tale of love, García Márquez appears to raise a voice of protest against a number of social issues prevalent in the Caribbean society, e.g. slavery, racial discrimination, the indigenous concept of honour. Magical realism seems to play an important role in the novella, as it helps the author to reconstruct history from an indigenous view-point.

Most of García Márquez's short stories also exhibit magical realistic spirit, which seems to help him comment on the inherent-exploitation of various kinds in the social fabric (see Chapter 10). In *Wings* (1968/1996), García Márquez seems to

examine the prevalent situation of the institution of religion and its representatives on earth by juxtaposing elements from fairy-tale/folklore and real world. An angel falls down from the sky in the courtyard of a poor family and is put on display for a small amount of money. The angel seems to be a symbol for religion, the villagers stand for Colombia, and the Father of the local church may be taken as the Roman Catholic Church. In the short-story, *Light* (1992/1994), García Márquez sounds to be describing light as an unusual phenomenon to highlight the contrasting difference between technologically advanced urban materiality and the mythical-rural setting from children's perspective. In *Blue Dog* (1950/1996), the author seems to criticize the isolated life of modern man by highlighting a heightened urge of intimacy and companionship. García Márquez's use of magical realism appears to be so harsh of modernity that the two main characters of the story, the narrator and a woman, meet each other in a shared dream to highlight the desire to have a relationship.

This study demonstrates as to how and in what ways García Márquez was able to raise a voice of protest against the undesired practices and beliefs imposed by the dominant on the weaker segment of the society with the help of magical realism. Along with underlining the areas in García Márquez's work where he tried to comment on the process of colonisation and how the same resulted in (de-)shaping of the socio-political, economic, cultural, and psychological state of Latin Americans, this research draws attention toward the causes of deterioration in society at large. Upon reading his novels and short stories the readers have an opportunity to get acquainted with a 'Latin American' version of history, which had been deliberately concealed, distorted, and even erased by the colonial masters and their agents. By challenging these official/governmental versions of history and the exploitation of the 'other', García Márquez's fiction helps the reader in developing an understanding of the peculiarities

of the Latin American culture, myth and values that lie at the very root of one of the oldest social structures of the world. It can be of significance to explore how a magical realist is able to make the readers, who actually experience living in a world that is marked by sophisticated gadgets and artificial intelligence, become part of a magical-real world where carpets fly and human beings are born with a tail. The present work may also be significant in that it may help to understand and interpret the contemporary magical realist works of fiction by South Asian authors.

A considerable amount of research has been done on magical realism and the way it has been used by North American, Latin American, and European authors. The earlier research in this area can be looked at from three different dimensions. In the first place, there are critics (e.g. Bowers, 2004; Carter, 1969; Chanady, 1985; Reeds, 2006; Zamora, 1995) who have been limited to clearing the ambiguities surrounding the term and the way magical realism has evolved over the time. Each of them tried to define magical realm according to their own understanding and highlighted the identifying characteristics of the term. For example, Carter (1969) attributed the transformation of the real into the unreal or fantastic as an identifying characteristic of magical realism. Chanady (1985) stated that the defining quality of magical realism was its being exclusively based on looking at reality from an author's perspective with an objective to understand the myths and superstitions of a native people from a rather new way. In the second place, critics (e.g. Jameson, 1986b; Hutcheon, 1988; Hart, 2003; Bell, 2010) take magical realism as a well-developed and self-sufficient genre to give a voice to the Third World countries on the basis of their similar problems and predicaments. The third group of critics (e.g. Ahmadzadeh, 2011; Hart, 2004b; McMurray, 1969; Moss, 1998; Rahimieh, 1990; Rudge, 2004; Sperl, 2006) have been limited to trace the use of magical realism in various texts. These critics traced the instances of magical realism

and tried to interpret them in various ways in the light of various contextual constructs, such as events of socio-political or historical importance in the life of a nation or an individual. Scheel (1991) discussed the difference between magical realism and marvelous realism as two separate narrative modes as used in French fiction. Lackey (1992) altogether ignored the magical realist aspect of García Márquez's writings and discussed them in the context of journalistic literature and the literature of fact. Mzali (2003) examined how magical realism worked in the novels of three mainstream Indian novelists writing in English, i.e. Narayan, Rushdie, and Roy. Sultana (2009) compared García Márquez and Salman Rushdie as to how they mingled fantastical and realistic elements to express their postcolonial position in conjunction with the prevalent postmodern condition. However, her research was limited to *Solitude* and *Midnight's Children* and focused the way both the novelists used magical realism in their own ways. Sánchez (2000) explored the way magical realism has been employed by American women writers in contemporary fiction, particularly during the late 20th Century. After having compared the mainstream female magical realist authors, e.g. Morrison, Naylor, Erdrich, Marmon, Ana Castillo, and Esquivel, she concluded that the technique of magical realism has been used by these authors is conditioned by their cultural and political backgrounds. Her analysis, however, was confined to women writers and, thus, left a room for further research.

As *Solitude* (1967/1970) is considered to be the representative text of magical realism, most of the critics use it to exemplify the elements of magical realism in literature. While comparing García Márquez with other magical realist writers, critics (e.g. Garcia, 2002; Goodwin, 2006; Sultana, 2009) have emphasized satire as the distinctive feature in Garcia Marquez's texts. Some researchers (e.g. Norcross, 2013; Linguanti, 1999) pointed out the dry nihilism as a contrasting feature of postmodernism

to highlight the inventiveness of magical realism as an effective way to find ways to depict often contradictory cultural traditions and world-views. Aizenberg (1992) and Taylor (1975) discussed magical realism's capacity to function as a political discourse in *Solitude* (1967/1970) to cause an overt historical consciousness. Swanson (2010) dwelled on exploring various aspects of Garcia Marquez's writings with a focus on magical realism.

While most of the researchers have been limited to exploring various aspects of García Márquez's Nobel Prize winning novel, *Solitude* (1967/1970), and an overarching research has not been undertaken on the use and significance of magical realism and social protest in the works of García Márquez, there was a need to look at García Márquez's other fictional writings, along with *Solitude*, to see the utility of magical realism towards raising a voice of protest in a broader postcolonial perspective. This study offers an analysis of García Márquez's use of the technique of magical realism in his works with a focus on the way it addresses the predicaments of the previously colonized Third World nations, especially the Latin American ones. The present research seems to contribute to the existing knowledge in that it would offer a re-interpretation of García Márquez's works with an aim to highlight the factors that make such writings seem probable and relevant. It shall also help to demonstrate the usefulness of magical realism as a narrative technique, rather genre in its own, and its place and validity in the contemporary criticism.

Research Questions

The two main research questions that are to be addressed in this study are as follows: First, how and in what ways magical realism has been helpful to García Márquez in registering protest against the process of colonization and its after effects, mainly

exploitation, a major form of social injustice? Second, how far García Márquez's use of magical realism can be relevant in the context of the Third World countries, especially with reference to Pakistan and India? The study is delimited to a critical and thematic analysis of García Márquez's five novels and three short stories from the angle of the way magical realism has been employed by the novelist to protest against colonialism.

The present study is primarily inductive and thus exploratory due to its qualitative nature and offers detailed information presumed necessary for making such type of inquiry. The theoretical framework developed for undertaking the study comprises relevant issues from postcolonial theory and new historicism, e.g. exploitation, hybridity, identity, history, marginalization, slavery, and racism. The Close Reading method has been used to study García Márquez's texts with an overall objective to reach a better critical understanding of his novels and short-stories. A close reading of the texts highlights a pattern of themes related to the politico-social and economic circumstances of Latin America, specifically Colombia, and how these themes are related to the Third World countries. Most of the textual occurrences of such themes exhibited a deliberate juxtaposition of the fantastic and the mundane to foreground social injustice caused by the (post)colonial condition.

This research has been divided into eleven chapters on the basis of different themes in García Márquez's works. The first chapter of the thesis provides an introduction to the research and informs about the rationale and research questions behind the study. It also acquaints the reader as to how the chapters of the thesis have been structured. The second chapter offers a review of the relevant literature in the broader area of the study with a detail of the evolution of magical realism and throws light on the definitional issues surrounding the term. The third chapter of the study deals

with the methodological issues and dwells upon as to how the study has been undertaken. A theoretical framework has been developed in this chapter to be applied to García Márquez's texts in order to analyse the strength of the device of magical realism as a vehicle of protest. Apart from it, this part provides certain operational definitions of the terms used in the study, i.e. magical realism and social protest.

The fourth chapter, "Magic and/or Realism? A Journey from Aracataca to Macondo", draws on the connection between the fictional setting of García Márquez's fiction and his real native town Aracataca. The discussion has been established with the help of examples from his texts. Effort has been made to highlight that the technique of magical realism enables one to question the so-called 'objective reality' by juxtaposing the fantastic with the mundane. This chapter also states that the technique of magical realism lies at the very basis/structure of García Márquez's works. The fifth chapter "Magical Realism, Social protest and Anti-colonial Sentiments: *One Hundred Years of Solitude*" establishes that the technique of Magical Realism is relevant to the postcolonial reality and the subsequent voice of protest raised against the ways in which (post)colonialism has told upon the socio-political and economic systems of the (previously-)colonized nations, this section of the thesis explores how and in what ways magical realism has been helpful to García Márquez in registering protest against exploitation in terms of colonialism, a major form of social injustice. In this chapter, an emphasis is laid upon García Márquez's re-construction of Colombian history in *Cien años de soledad* [One Hundred Years of Solitude, 1967/1970 (*Solitude*)] with the help of the device of magical realism in order to register protest regarding (in)direct physical/psychological/verbal/mental violence against the 'other' of the society.

The sixth chapter of this study analyses García Márquez's novella *El coronel no tiene quien le escriba* [No One Writes to the Colonel, 1968/1996 (*Colonel*)] from

the postcolonial view-point. The seventh chapter, "Dictatorial Rule, Political Repression and the Third World: *The Autumn of the Patriarch*", analyses how with the help of magical realism García Márquez, in his work *El otoño del patriarca* [The Autumn of the Patriarch, 1975/2007 (*Patriarch*)], raised a voice of protest against the dictatorial rule and political repression in Latin America and the countries for which the term 'Third World' is used. The eighth chapter is "Class, Race, Slavery and Magical Realist Protest: *Of Love and Other Demons*". This part of the thesis discusses slavery as a major theme in García Márquez's novella *Del amor y otros demonios* [Of Love and Other Demons, 1994/1996 (*Demons*)]. It highlights how the author protests against slavery. A thematic analysis of the novella has been presented with an assumption that it was his subtle use of the technique of magical realism that enabled him to effectively protest against social injustice. The ninth chapter is "Honour Killing, Magical Realism and Protest: *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*". This chapter explores the use of magical realism in connection with García Márquez's protest against the double standards of the Colombian culture in his *Crónica de una muerte anunciada* [Chronicle of a Death Foretold, 1981/1983 (*Chronicle*)]. While highlighting the way the novel dissects false values of the society in the name of (so-called)honour, it demonstrates how magical realism helped the novelist to focus the miserable condition of women in the male-dominated Colombian society. The tenth chapter is "Isolation, Modernity and Magical Realism: *Wings*, *Water* and *Blue Dog*". It presents a critical analysis of Gabriel García Márquez's three short-stories by *Un señor muy viejo con unas alas enormes* [A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings, 1968/1996 (*Wings*)], *La Luz es como el Agua* [Light is like Water, 1978 (*Water*)], and *Ojos de perro azul* [Eyes of a Blue Dog, 1950/1996 (*Blue Dog*)] from the viewpoint of magical realism and social protest.

The last chapter concludes the whole argument presented from chapters four to ten. The analysis/discussion establishes that the technique of magical realism enabled García Márquez to question the so-called 'objective reality' by juxtaposing the fantastic with the mundane. His magical-real fiction not only determines a clear-cut dimension for the coming day writers, but also acquaints the reader with the general way of thinking. When explored, the true nature of the so-called Reality teaches the lesson of tolerance that is essential for the survival of the human race. It lays stress upon the fact that nothing is absolute. Nothing should be imposed on others as everyone has his own way of thinking and looking at things; therefore, everyone is right and everything can be doubted. García Márquez successfully challenges the official versions of Latin American history (written under the patronage of colonial authorities). It shows that if much fantasy is mixed with a little fact, the whole mixture of fact and fiction seems to be factual, especially after the lapse of a certain time period. Magical realism is very useful in communicating the emotions, feelings and judgments of the colonized or the previously colonized people / nations to their Centre. It helps a writer to challenge the thought-to-be-absolute nature of opinion by calling the so-called objective reality into question. In the contemporary world, fiction is no longer a replacement for or escape from a flawed or oppressive reality; instead, it is a device which increases the range of personal choice and the potential for agency (Kelley, 1993). Therefore, novelists with a social agenda in addition to their artistic agenda find an appropriate medium in magical realism to enhance the staples of realism.

Along with stating the research questions and the significance of the research, the opening chapter provides an introduction to this research. The next chapter will present a review of the relevant literature in order to establish the background that is necessary to understand the argument of this study.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, it has been endeavoured to establish a background for this study by reviewing the relevant literature from a number of perspectives.

2.1. Socio-Political History of Latin America: A world of 'mirrors and mirages'

The interpretation of Latin America has always been shaped either by modernization or dependency theory[1] (Kirby, 2003). The leaders of the region are optimistic and find their resort in describing Latin America as modern by patronizing the Western institutions, whereas the rest take it as a place having definite third world pockets (Wiarda & Kline, 2006). However, the economy of the region kept on developing and in 1975, Latin American corporations constituted 30 per cent of all Third World corporations (Sklair and Robins, 2002). Latin American countries constitute a considerable part of the Third World and have suffered from an unstable socio-political as well as economic history due to the constant intervention of military dictators in political affairs. The fate of this part of the world has been in the hands of either civil or military dictators like Hugo Chavez, Raul Castro, Fulgencio Batista, Gabriel García Moreno, Alberto Fujimori, Anastasio Somoza García, William Walker, Augusto Pinochet, etc. Superpowers have been constantly intervening in the political systems of these countries. This has resulted in the promotion of dictatorial system, which safeguarded the vested interests of the superpowers. These interests could either be of a political or an economic nature.

[1] Started around 1950s, the dependency theory denotes a situation where the economic stability of a country or nation is determined by the development and progression of another country to which the former is subject (dos Santos, 1970 and 2002).

Since the time of its discovery, Latin America has been attractive to the outside world for a number of reasons, e.g. its mysterious and less travelled places; its rich cultural heritage; its huge resources and potential in terms of raw material; cheap labour; and a potential market of foreign products. But, the attraction proved less a blessing and more a curse, for it made the outside world occupy and colonize the region and exploit its resources on a much greater scale as compared to any other excursion of such kind[2], e.g., the United Fruit Company's (UFC) rule in Latin America. In Kirby's (2003, p.1) words, Latin America contained "something of the exotic, whether in its native peoples, its fruits and vegetables, its Inca, Aztec and Mayan civilizations or its daunting geography". While it got exploited in one form or another, the region had to carry the burden of the same mystery and attraction through the whole twentieth century up till today. It is this particular context that helped Latin America emerge as the land of heroic guerrilla bands, the worst dictatorships of their kind, and of unprivileged people, who constantly struggle for equality and justice.

However, social scientists have come up with different reasons behind the extraordinary condition of Latin America. Kirby (2003) endeavoured to demonstrate how different social scientists arrive at varying conclusions about the same social setup/phenomena, e.g., South/Latin America. Taking Latin America as a case, Kirby (p. 8) observed that, following the independence of most of the region's countries in the 1810s and 1820s, a generation of Latin American writers sought to turn their backs on the past and find a new future for their countries by imitating what they saw as the progress of the United States and the great European powers. In plain words, at a specific period of time, a group of Latin American writers found their past to be

[2] Different parts of the world have been occupied by America, Great Britain, Spain, Portugal, etc. at different times. East India Company is a major example of such colonial rule in the Subcontinent/India.

irrelevant, as it was not in accordance with the so-called modern ways of the developed world. Kirby strengthened his argument by giving examples from different Latin American writers, e.g., by citing the Argentine writer, educator and statesman Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, when the latter quoted the comments of Davis (as cited in Kirby, 2003) on *Facundo*, yet another famous book written in 1845 in Latin America. The writers took Latin America's colonial and Catholic inheritance as a hurdle in the way of region's progress. Confusingly, they also found its rural and native people standing in the way of a modern Latin America. They were in a strong mood to promote a Latin America that is independent of the imported/imposed modernity and at one and the same time with natives who could evolve their own very indigenous sense of progression. There were rightist writers, who were of the view that it was the developed world, especially, North America and certain European countries, which may transform the region into the modern expansion.

So negative an analysis of Latin America, on the one hand, and a view of the super powers, e.g., the USA and Europe with so positive a mind, on the other, caused the evolution of a new group of writers, such as Jose´ Marti, who wrote in reaction to the abovementioned trends and were in opposition not only of the US imperialism towards the region, but the passivity and numbness shown to it by their forerunners. The group ultimately struggled to progress and preserve the native culture in order to found the basis of a society that was distinct, original and democratic in all respects. However, there always remained a division between the groups who believed the colonial forces to be their ideal, and the groups who thought the so-called modernity to be a curse for the native peoples of their land. According to Wade (2001), it was blacks and indigenous people or their representations that 'nourished' elite ideas of the nation; apart from being points of difference against which to define whiteness and progress,

their supposed primitive powers were also valued for their own sake. He argued that, now the indigenous people and blacks are used to create . . .

> . . . points of difference with which to legitimate democracy, while their powers, imagined or otherwise, continue to be essentialized as resources for the nation: recently the image of indigenous people . . . as guardians of the rain forest has become a popular trope. (p. 862)

A vast interest of the developed world kept Latin America underdeveloped and looted and plundered the resources of the region on a huge scale. As the result of the submissive behaviour of the people and the rapid exploitation of the resources, Latin America failed to form a strong economic, industrial base that was the most important need of the day. Wiarda and Klein stated that the major cause of the underdevelopment/delayed development of Latin America was the controversy among the masses about "Western or non-Western, First World or Third, capitalist or socialist, and the absence of consensus on these large issues" (as quoted in Kirby, 2003, p. 7). America intervened in the political system of these countries by installing/promoting the dictatorial system, as using a dictator/military ruler was much easier than moulding the opinion of an elected democratic government. The increasing American interest in manoeuvring the political system of various countries resulted in the oppression of the public at the hands of few dictators. These civil or military autocrats heavily employed the governmental machinery to suppress/silence the public opinion. Perhaps the best example of the use of governmental machinery is the use of secret police and other law-enforcing agencies. In order to sustain their existence, the dictatorial regimes continuously worked for the benefit of the economically and technologically developed countries, providing the latter with opportunities to exploit the local resources.

Since the early years of independence, the Latin American nations constantly struggled to become independent of the foreign (in this case, European) influence. This, however, proved to be a much longer struggle to liberate themselves from the political and cultural traditions they had inherited from the foreign rule (Vanden & Prevost, 2002). Sometimes, the dictatorial rule was promoted in the name of organising the scattering regional forces and the assertion of the need of autonomy by different leaders in the republic of Gran Colombia. Bolivar, known as the great liberator, is an early example of such rulers. Some other examples of the extended dictatorial/military rule are Gerardo Machado (1924-1933) and Sergeant Fulgencio Batista (1934-1940 and again in 1952-1959) of Cuba, various emperors from the Portuguese royal family (1821-1889) in Brazil, General Augusto Pinochet of Chile (1973-1990), Diaz dictatorship in Mexico, Juan Vicente Gomez of Venezuela (1908-1935), Juan Manuel de Rosas of Argentina, Augusto Leguia (1919-1930) and Manuel Prado (1949 and 1956-1962) of Peru, etc. Latin American dictatorships are spread over an extended time period, e.g. Paraguay, where Dr. Jose Gaspar Rodriguez de Francia established a strong dictatorial rule, soon after the country gained independence, from 1816 to 1840. According to Vanden and Prevost (2002, p. 48), his rule set a pattern of extended dictatorial rule that continued to plague Paraguay until 1989. This, in fact, has been the dilemma not only of the Latin American countries, but of almost all the Third World, where both civil as well as military dictators/autocrats are by design installed by the First World, so that the benefits of the latter could be protected (Katz, 1982; Schmitz, 2006).

Latin America has a diverse culture peculiar for having potential to maintaining its indigenousness. An effort to safeguard its identity is also reflected in the literature produced by the writers belonging to this region. Latin American literature claims an

international recognition on the basis of the fact that it has been translated into a number of languages. Therefore, it contributes not only to the awareness of Latin America's cultural richness, but to the whole of the Third World. An opposition to the version of history written by the colonizers from their own perspective, the Latin American magical realist writers, e.g. García Márquez, Isabel Allende, etc., endeavoured to demonstrate that reality is multidimensional in nature. Foster (1994) put his efforts to reconfigure the Latin American literary and cultural history. Lindstrom proposes to "present and discuss five concepts useful to readers who would like to approach Latin American literature in a more analytic spirit" (1998, p. 1). Intended for a readership more interested in the Latin American region and in the literature it has produced, Lindstrom's analysis provides the readers with a set of concepts which are however useful in reaching a critical conclusion about the literature produced in this region. It rather focuses on the ways in which literature of this particular region has assumed distinctive forms, due to the historical dynamic that has produced it. The writer has in particular taken into account both the unique characteristics of Latin America's literary history and the features of individual literary texts in this regard.

Leslie (1986) discussed Mexico and Central America, the Spanish-speaking Caribbean (and Haiti), Spanish South America and Brazil and paid special attention to the economic, social, political, intellectual and cultural history of Latin America from the first contacts between the native people of the America and Europe in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries to the present day. Historical facts and figures are important in the context of the present research in that the study dwells upon exploring whether the technique of magical realism suits the conditions of this region.

Recording the response of the locals, living in the slums of Latin American cities, regarding how violence – as one of the chief features of their society – affects

their lives, Moser and McIlwaine (2004) hold civil-military dictatorships responsible for their miseries. Corradi and Kruijt believed that "such violence manifested itself in repression, torture, 'disappearances' or deaths and numerous other abuses of freedoms of civilian populations usually perpetrated by the military, state or organizations linked with them" (as quoted by Moser & McIlwaine, 2004, p. 5). While discussing how these locals get by with the daily violence that overshadows their lives, the authors maintained that avoidance, confrontation, conciliation and other strategies are among the ways to cope with the extreme violence prevalent in the Latin America. On the other hand, Barton (1997) opined that, until the various segments of society and power relations that are embedded within the social fabric of Latin America undergo a serious change, either reformist, revolutionary or otherwise, the political geographies of the continent will continue to reflect the dominance of a small élite minority integrated into the global political economy. He further added to his argument that the democratic political geographies should reflect the face of contemporary Latin American power-space relations: economic growth and investment under neoliberalism on one face; poverty and self-help or coping strategies on the other.

As recorded by Munck (2007), Latin America, from 1978 to 1990, observed a gradual shift from civil-military dictatorships to elected democratic governments. The changes initiated in 1978 in the political system of the region have proved to be long lasting, especially in the countries that took the democratic turn before 1980s. For the former colonial powers, the experience of the Latin American countries as democratic republics, however, is hard to accept, as it was much easier for them to make a dictator go according to their will as compared to the people's elected government. The role of print and electronic media in the awakening of the nation is recognisable. Lugo-Ocando (2008) throws light on the role of diverse media systems in Latin America in relation

to the political transition in the region. He asserts that the construction of Latin America's media spaces was not the result of particular struggles for participation and debate, but a direct outcome of the spaces derived from elite power. Such power, however, was conceived as commodities to be exploited by the private sector and certain mechanisms of political and societal control.

I have taken Latin America as a region unique for many reasons: specifically for its geographical situation; its socio-political conditions; and its economic circumstances. The region is particularly suitable for a magical realist to produce fantastic-real fiction and exercise his/her skill to present the unbelievable as credible and authentic.

2.2 Magical realism: the problem of definition

Different critics have given different definitions of magical realism. Most of these

The term magical realism has been defined by critics in different and often contradictory ways. The complexity surrounding the term is three fold: First, the spatial issues attached to term have made the term enough complicated to cause a confusion in developing a clear understanding of the term; second, with the passage of time, magical realism evolved as an independent genre and new defining characteristics were added to the term; third, the term had been transported to the realm of literature from the field of art/painting. However, all critics have an agreement that the amalgamation of the fantastic with the real is the key characteristic of the term. This section of the literature review shall attempt to provide a comprehensive definition of magical realism after placing the mainstream definitions of the term under scrutiny.

The coinage of the term is attributed to the German art critic/historian, Franz Roh (e.g., Beaumont, 2007; Zamora & Faris, 1995; Nagy-Zekmi, 2004; Hart, 2005; Reeds, 2006). In his 1925 book, *Nach-expressionismus, magischer Realismus:*

Probleme der neuesten europäischen Malerei [After expressionism, Magical Realism: Problems of the newest European painting, 1925/1995], Roh indicated the demise of Expressionism in an attempt to identify a return to a more realistic style after the abstraction of Expressionism, which caused a new genre to come into being, i.e. magical realism. In other words, this new technique proved to be a revolt against realism, as the latter was accused of projecting an authoritative and absolute picture of truth to ultimately become suitable for the voice of authority. Although magical realism was not Roh's main focus and the term only occurred as the sub-title of his book, it gained popularity on a huge scale in the subsequent years. He used the term in order to characterize some reproductions of paintings, which he called a new kind of painting and that "We look on it with new eyes" (Roh, 1925/1995, p.17). He emphasized magical realism to be a way to explore the mysteries hidden in everyday reality rather than describing it as an amalgamation of the fantastic and the realistic. Once Roh's book was translated into Spanish in 1927, the term was introduced to the Latin American critics and fiction writers. Later, it were the Latin American critics to have attached the indigenous culture and mythological traditions with the term.

Opposite to the general perception, critics (e.g., Warnes, 2005a & Guenther, 1995) argued that Roh was not the first person to write about 'magical realism'; rather, it was the Romantic poet and philosopher, Novalis, who coined the term around 1798 (as cited in Schriften, 1960, pp. 384-5), much before Roh used it as the sub-title of his 1925 book. According to Warnes (2005a), for Novalis, the magical realists are

> . . . a mirror image of magical idealists: both are "prophets" simultaneously in touch with real and ideal. Novalis's use of the term was no accident, and an awareness of the legacy of German Idealism can prove productive for critics

> trying to understand the implications of magical realism's "naturalisation of the supernatural. (p. 8)

As a matter of fact, Roh was never influenced by Novalis, but the thesis of the latter was useful for him as it provided him with a starting point because it was based on the two key elements: realism and magic. Roh (1925/1995) defined the term as an art that offers "calm admiration of the magic of being, of the discovery that things already have their own faces, [which] means that the ground in which the most diverse ideas in the world can take root has been re-conquered, albeit in new ways" (p. 20). To him, this new art, was a question of representing the fact, the interior figure, of the exterior world in an intuitive way before our eyes.

In 1949, Alejo Carpentier came up with the term *lo real maravilloso* (marvelous reality) in the prologue of his *El reino de este mundo* (The kingdom of this world) to "excoriate European surrealism for its empty falsity" (Nagy-Zekmi, 2004, p. 81). His notion of 'marvellous real' was:

> . . . the marvellous begins to be unmistakably marvellous when it arises from an unexpected alteration of reality (the miracle), from a privileged revelation of reality, an unusual insight that particularly favours the unexpected richness of reality or an amplification of the scale and categories of reality, a reality thus perceived with special intensity by virtue of an exaltation of the spirit that leads it to a kind of extreme state.

Both the other related literary forms, such as Alejo Carpentier's *lo real maravilloso* (marvelous reality) and the fantastic, apparently seem to be synonymous with the term magical realism. But, in fact, the latter stands distinguished from the former two in that the fantastic literature lets the authors address social issues by defamiliarizing view-

point of fantasy. Marvelous realism describes extraordinary physical as well as psychological landscapes from an entirely objective perspective, whereas, magical realism brings reality into a sharp focus, in order to cause a paradigm shift. It was from here that *lo real maravilloso* was later transported into the realm of literature, particularly into the Latin American literary consciousness as 'magical realism'. Through the conception of *lo real maravilloso*, Carpentier saw Latin America to be the most suitable place for the occurrence of 'marvelous real', excluding the other countries by suggesting that "either their lands do not have an organic magic or that they fabricate their magic" (Sasser, 2006, p. 101). However, Carpentier's original notion of *lo real maravilloso* "was based on the idea of rediscovering Latin American reality" (Swanson, 2010, p. 58). Although a paradox, the way Carpentier uses Frenchman Perrault and the medieval-era fairies, allows countries other than Latin American ones to have the marvelous in their literature beyond national boundaries. Carpentier's definition is expresses his heightened disillusionment with surrealism, and is based on two contrasting dimensions of the world, i.e. a rational, modern and Western world-view versus a traditional, mythical and thus magical one.

Miguel Angel Asturias's view of magical realism was in the same line as that of Carpentier. According to him, there is a third category of reality that exists between the real and the magic which is characterised by a fusion of the visible and the tangible, of hallucinations and fantasy. He called this third category of reality as magical realism. While explaining the term, his main focus was on its indigenousness:

> This magic realism, of course, has a direct relation with the original mentality of the Indians. The Indian thinks in images; he sees things not so much as phenomenons in themselves but as translated into other dimensions, dimensions

in which reality disappears and dreams appear and are transformed into visible and concrete forms. (December 1967)

Asturias aimed to advocate a world-view that is different from the western one but valid, as well. Complications were added to the term when Angel Flores published an article titled "Magical Realism in Spanish American Fiction" in 1955. Flores disagreed with Roh's original idea of magical realism and asserted that the amalgamation of the real and the fantastic already existed in the works of some European writers such as Proust and Kafka. According to him realism and magic were already there in Latin America, respectively in the Colonial writings and Columbus's letters.

Zamora and Faris, (1995) objected that Roh discussed magical realism merely in the context of Expressionism and that too with reference to the field of painting, whereas Carpentier differed with the former in that if surrealism pursued the marvellous, it meant that it very rarely looked for it in reality. While defending the marvellous-real, they stressed that it is our own marvellous real which is encountered in its raw state, latent and omnipresent, in all that is Latin American. In this case, the extraordinary is a matter of routine and had always been so. A postcolonial critic, Allaston, observed that the Latin American writers have developed certain indigenous modes of cultural production and analysis for dealing with the region's complex colonial legacies (2004, pp. 229-30). Magical realism is one of such modes to occupy an important place in the Hispanophone literary tradition. The roots of this narrative technique, which equally is a philosophical stance to interpret the world around us, lie in the authoritative nature of realism, which in literary history is associated with "the effort of the novel in the nineteenth century, particularly in France, to establish itself as a major literary genre [. . .] capable of revealing the truth of contemporary life in

society" (Childs & Fowler, 2006, p. 198). But, the realist novel left the reader with only an extensive physical detail of an event as if it were not fiction, but history with a very rare use of the faculty of imagination.

Showing a disagreement with Flores, the Mexican critic Luis Leal conformed to Roh's original idea of presenting the ordinary seem supernatural. Leal defined magical realism as something in opposition to fantastic literature or science fiction in that the former never uses dream motifs or tries to distort reality or create imagined worlds. To him, magical realism is an attitude toward reality that can be expressed in popular or cultured forms, in elaborate or rustic styles, in closed or open structures. Leal observed that magical realism allows an author to face the complex natured reality and untangle it. In other words, when using magical realism, a writer is at ease to discover the mysterious side of either concrete things or abstract ideas in life and in human actions.

Carter (1969) described magical realism as the combination of reality and fantasy and examined it as the transformation of the real into the awesome and unreal. Declaring it as an art of surprises and a genre of literature, he argued that magical realism creates a distorted concept of time and space, which is directed to an intellectual minority. Carter's view of magical realism was based on the idea that the term is characterized by a cold cerebral aloofness and that the art of magical realism is not meant for catering to the popular tastes, rather it is for those sophisticated individuals who are instructed in aesthetic subtleties. Chanady (1985) explored yet another dimension of magical realism. She argued that magical realism exhibits contrasting ideas as "autonomously coherent", but separated through the cultural vision; "one based on an 'enlightened' and rational view of reality, and the other on the acceptance of the

supernatural as part of everyday reality" (p. 21-22). She conformed to the idea that magical realism is characterized by the juxtaposition of the magical and the real, but differed from most of the critics when she stressed that it is the cultural vision that plays the role of a coherent force in joining these apparently poles apart faces of reality. She defined the term as something that is exclusively based upon reality, or a realm in which the author lives and believes while expressing the myths and superstitions of the American Indians, allowing us to see dimensions of reality of which we are not normally aware.

The striking similarities and differences between magical realism and the older narrative structures, such as historical romance (Moses, 2001), realism, fantasy/fantastic literature, mythic narratives, etc. is quite helpful in tracing the origin and the subsequent development of the technique of Magical Realism. Frye's (1957) argument regarding the nature of a true myth provides an ample evidence of the same. He stated that there is no consistent distinction between ghosts and living beings in a true myth. Whereas in romance, there are real human beings and, therefore, ghosts are placed in a separate category.

While tracing the origin of magical realism, Venzalá (2002) attempts at justifying his argument that magical realism has emerged from the avant-grades movement. He observes,

> [So magical realism is an attempt to renew a close-knit literary aesthetic renovation of the European avant-gardes, because although characterized by the attempt to reflect the American reality, most authors have a strong contact with

the European world, both with the avant-garde poetry, the novel as more innovative Europe.[3] (Venzalá, 2002, on line)

On the other hand, Levine (2005, p. 310) asserted that as a technique, magical realism is an outcome of the "mixture of regional realities and European surrealism [and] was a new genre which would place Latin American literature on the world map: magical realism". It would also be pertinent to note that magical realism began to get established at the time when "Germany's reality . . . was not necessarily a beautiful one" (Reeds, 2006, p. 177). It was the reason that this new narrative technique was thought to be capable enough to show the inextinguishable horrors of that time.

Nowadays, when magical realism has sufficiently flourished and accepted as "something of a genre in its own right" (Hart, 2003, p. 115), some definitional issues have caused ambiguity to stay with the term. These issues arise from a number of directions, e.g., the way it has travelled from the field of painting to the real of literature and criticism/theory; especially, that it has crossed the international borders in terms of nation and language; how the term/genre operates within various disciplines; the authentication of a writing as magical realist in the context of the geographical locale where the same has been produced. The situation becomes even more foregrounded when a lot of definitions of the term are available from numerous critics/theorists.

All these factors make the term difficult to understand, especially when seen in the backdrop of different theories and movements, such as postcolonialism, post-modernism, post-structuralism, expressionism, surrealism, etc. Roh (as cited in Zamora

[3]*Por tanto el realismo mágico es un intento de renovación literaria muy unido a las renovaciones estéticas de las vanguardias europeas, pues aunque se caracteriza por el intento de reflejar la realidad americana, la mayoría de sus autores tienen un gran contacto con el mundo europeo, tanto con las vanguardias poéticas, como con la novela europea más renovadora.*

& Faris, 1995) defined the term as an art that offers "calm admiration of the magic of being, of the discovery that things already have their own faces, [which] means that the ground in which the most diverse ideas in the world can take root has been re-conquered, albeit in new ways" (p. 20) . . . as "the new art it is a question of representing before our eyes, in an intuitive way, the fact, the interior figure, of the exterior world" (p. 24). Drawing a comparison between the 'traditional' and the 'marvelous' realism, Harris (as quoted by Renk, 2009, p. 102) held that, "the concept of 'marvelous realism' constitutes for me an alchemical pilgrimage, a ceaseless adventure within the self and without the self in nature and beings that are undervalued or that have been eclipsed or imprisoned by models of conquest". According to Merivale (1995), Salman Rushdie's stance on Márquez's version of magical realism is the result of a surrealistic bent of mind successfully interpreting the Third World consciousness. He presents it as a way of "showing reality more truly with the marvellous aid of metaphor" (p. 336).

The term magical realism entered in literature when it was appropriated by Arturo Uslar Pietri during the 1940s as "an apt description of a literary form" (Hawley, 2004, p. 283). In literature, magical realism is used to describe prose fiction. It has an ever-shifting pattern, a sharply etched realism in representing ordinary events and descriptive details together with fantastic and dreamlike elements, as well as with materials derived from myth and fairy tales. The magical realist novels are different from standard novelistic expectations on the basis of a spirit of experimentation with subject matter, form, style, temporal sequence, and fusions of the everyday. Certain characteristics of magical realism include the juxtaposition of the real and the fantastic, a spirit of experimentation with regard to both form and content, and the extraordinarily confusing (for an urban reader) use of carnivalesque language.

Over the time magical realism has evolved and has gained an international status in terms of its use outside Latin America. It has rather become a phenomenon to destabilize the ideal standard or model oppositions. However, its indigenousness can be observed in the mingling of the mundane with the fantastic and an unpredictably changing pattern that corresponds to the Latin American socio-political and geographical conditions. The factors that lend an air of universality to the technique. The Marxist critic Jameson (1986b) has declared magical realism to be the 'national allegory' of the whole Third World.

About the universality of magical realism, Allende argued that,

> People think that it's like a literary device that you find only in Latin American literature. It's actually accepting that the world is a very mysterious place. The things happen that we cannot explain. And if we just accept them, we can add them to our lives and to our writing in ways that are totally natural. (personal communication, 2007)

At another place, she described that:

> . . . I think that life is very mysterious. Things happen that I can't control, that I can't explain. And, if I accept all that in my life, it comes naturally in my writings. But, it is not like salt and pepper that you sprinkle on anything you can write. (Personal communication in 'Frost over the world', April 25, 2008)

The characteristic features of this kind of writings are the juxtaposition of the realistic and the fantastic, having a dreamlike quality, internal time shifts, expressionistic and even surrealistic description, incorporation of fairytales and myths, and the element of surprise. Magical realism involved animals walking in the sky, and

it also showed heated heads popped like corks from overflowing bottles, while Post-Expressionism dealt with painting and pictures with frames. However, the mixture is based on the fact that everything happening in the work is ordinary and an everyday occurrence. Anything, which takes place within the boundaries of magical realism, is accepted as typical life among the characters in the story. No matter how farfetched or extraordinary the subjects are, all the characters within the work treat the action casually. This characteristic is one of the simplest ways to decide whether a piece of writing is magical realist or not because magical realism contains no action that creates another action. No action or machine or spell is necessary for any sudden transformation to happen. It is the only reason why Magical Literature or Science Fiction is unlike magical realism, where it would be necessary to use an action or a machine to do certain transformations.

By juxtaposing the fantastic with the real, a Magical realist calls the so-called 'objective' into question. When s/he makes the reader surrender in front of his fictitious and dreamlike tales, the magical realist proves that unreal things can be proved real when presented carefully. Magical realist writers write the ordinary as miraculous and the miraculous as ordinary, calling the so-called reality into question. Virtually all critics now agree that magical realism constitutes a strong narrative tendency that is completely distinct and separate from what is known as Fantastic Literature. Many would also agree that magical realism is a thematic rather than a structural term because its usefulness for literary analysis is so imprecise (Magical Realism. 2001). In magical realism, "key events have no logical or psychological explanation [and] the author does not need to justify the mystery of events" (Leal, 1995, p. 123).

While differentiating between magical realism and fantastic literature, Hambsch (2009) dwells upon various points of distinction regarding the two terms. She observes that,

> The integration of metaphysical and inexplicable moments puts magic realism in the vicinity of fantastic literature. The terms, however, are clearly differentiated. Magical Realism integrated supernatural, mysteries or mystery into an everyday experience of reality, without wanting to burst. The reader never gets into a "shock" situation, as in the fantasists. In the fantasists by unexplained incidents the existing order of the world is lost. While the readers of magic and enchantment in fairy tales, where they are part of a reality system, can easily accept (as in Magical Realism), there in fantastic literature, such a system is denied. The reader meets a "non-system". Based on the information from the text he can no longer decide whether the procedure described is an illusion, a dream, a Drogenhalluzination or "true".[4]

Contrary to realist fiction, the text written in the tradition of magical realism allows the author to challenge pre-established perceptions, providing the same opportunity to the reader, whose mind, though unconsciously, is freed from the burden

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[4]*Die Intergration von unerklärlichen und metaphysischen Momenten rückt den Magischen Realismus in die Nähe der fantastischen Literatur. Tatsächlich sind die Begriffe jedoch deutlich voneinander abzugrenzen. Der Magische Realismus integriert Übersinnliches, Rätselhaftes oder Geheimnisvolles in eine alltägliche Erfahrungswirklichkeit, ohne diese aufbrechen zu wollen. Der Leser gerät dadurch niemals in eine „Schocksituation", wie sie die Fantastik hervorbringt. In der Fantastik wird durch unerklärliche Vorkommnisse das bestehende Ordnungssystem durchbrochen, die Sicherheit der Welt geht verloren. Während der Leser Magie und Zauberei im Märchen als Teil eines Realitätssystems problemlos akzeptieren kann (ähnlich auch im Magischen Realismus), wird ihm in fantastischer Literatur ein solches System verweigert – er trifft auf ein sogenanntes „Nichtsystem". Aufgrund der Informationen aus dem Text kann er hier nicht mehr entscheiden, ob das Beschriebene eine Täuschung, ein Traum, eine Drogenhalluzination oder „wahr" ist.*

of the perceptions which society does not allow to be challenged. Peck and Coyle (2002) highlighted the same notion in the following manner:

> Like most modern literature, magical realism reflects the ontological uncertainty of our times . . . Magical realists no longer share traditional realist fiction's confident assumption of our ability to understand and describe the world [. . .] their novels challenge the traditional perception of an ordered and coherent world which underpins realist fiction's pretentions to reproduce reality in literature (p. 138).

According to Zamora and Faris (1995), magical realism is also often regarded as a regional trend that is merely restricted to the Latin American writers who popularized it as theory form. However, it was Anglo-American critics who gave the term the definition that is most commonly associated with it, i.e., it is a mixture of the quotidian and the fantastic, both in terms of content and technique. Magical realism is closely associated with Spanish-American writings and imposes a certain paradigm on non-Anglo-American literatures, especially the Spanish-American one. Essentially, to describe a work of fiction as magic realist is to impose a system of order in much the same way a colonial power imposes its idea of order on a subjugated social system.

Apparently synonymous with magical realism, both the other related literary forms, *lo real maravilloso* (marvelous reality) and the fantastic, are different from magical realism in that the fantastic literature gives authors sufficient space to address social issues with the help of the defamiliarizing lens of fantasy. Marvelous realism enables an author to describe unique physical and psychological landscapes from an objective perspective. Magical realism is even more result-oriented as it brings reality into sharp focus with a purpose to cause a paradigm shift (Rodgers, 2004, p. 284).

Magical realism allows metafictional self-reflexivity work in an equilibrium with literature and history. It is this state of equilibrium that brings forth "ironic inversions of parody" (Hutcheon, 1988, p. 140) that lead to establish the crucial and fundamental relation between art and the world of discourse, ultimately reaching the point where society and politics intermingle and affect each other. According to Hutcheon (1989, p. 3), postmodernism in fiction describes "fiction that is at once metafictional and historical in its echoes of the texts and contexts of the past". She held that historiographic metafiction is a body of the popular novels which are "both intensely self-reflexive and yet paradoxically also lay claim to historical events and personages" (1988, p. 5). In other words, it is a quintessentially postmodern art form, with a reliance upon textual play, parody and historical re-conceptualization. García Márquez's recourse in magical realism has a definite and visible political edge and his work not only does make the reader question the absolute nature of reality and makes him re-evaluate and ultimately question the authenticity of a politically motivated philosophy that makes an ordinary individual think in a certain way.

According to Swanson (2010), García Márquez, by presenting the bizarre as normal and vice versa, was allowed for "a political reading in which a 'developing world' perspective is privileged from within the implicitly 'First World' form of the novel and in which the reader is being invited to exercise his or her imagination in order to invent an alternate and more just reality for the continent" (p. 58). It is this newly invented/reached alternate and just reality that helps the reader to attempt a politically motivated interpretation of a magical realist text. In other words, a magical realist text is able to hold a political debate from the perspective of the Third World. The Marxist critic, Jameson (1986b) presented a theory about the Third World and the narrative representation – based on Latin American magical realism – according to which all

Third World literature would necessarily function as a national allegory that works as resistance to a system of global postmodernism. National allegory, according to him, is "the Third World's literary correlative to the First World's postmodern cultural logic". He further opined that the "third world national allegories are conscious and overt: they imply a radically different and objective relationship of politics to libidinal dynamics (p. 80). Ahmad (1987) responded to Jameson's national allegory construct and refuted his theory on several grounds. He objected the way Jameson declared "[a]ll third world texts" to be necessarily as allegorical as to be called 'national allegories' on the basis of the linguistic variation found in the all such texts and thus most of the texts from Asia and Africa are unavailable in the metropolitan countries. Furthermore, he highlights that when Jameson talks about the division of a First World and a Third World, his own text conforms to the system of binary oppositions. However, Campa (1999a, p. 10) argued that Jameson's "[t]heorizing the entire Third World with one totalizing stroke . . . fails to account for a historically and culturally more complex third world". Spivak's (1990, p. 228) proposed model of postcolonial mode of criticism and textuality in which "you take positions in terms not of the discovery of historical or philosophical grounds, but in terms of reversing, displacing, and seizing the apparatus of value-coding". However, Compa (1999a, p. 10) declares that Spivak's "image of postcolonial critic places the danger of assuming a fixed identity [. . .] [and] suggests more political edge to postmodern notions of ambiguity and dispersal". Another Marxist critic, Michael Bell (2010) states that the obvious literariness of a work of fiction exhibits literalistic oppositions to which it could be susceptible on various historical grounds, especially when the highly concentrated foci of national experience is put into imaginative orbit. However, I agree with the basic Jamesonian notion of national allegory, as the technique of magical realism has been exercised in García

Márquez's works to highlight predicaments of the Third World, especially when the English translations of these works are widely accepted in the First World as equivalent to their original versions in Spanish language.

Having established that magical realism provides significant support to the periphery in registering protest against the metropolis, it would be appropriate to discuss the technique as a tool used in making a nation vocalize its feelings in the form of re-construction of history from their stance. Sommer (1990, p. 78) maintained that, "literature has the capacity to intervene in history, to help construct it [. . . from a] nation-building" view-point.

Rushdie has been one of the influential magical realists from South Asia. His *Midnight's Children* (1982) is well-known for the use of the technique of magical realism. But, the understanding of magical realism as a narrative technique, which he exclusively employed throughout his texts, can be distinguished, especially the way he interpreted García Márquez. According to Merivale (1995), Rushdie's stance on Márquez's version of magical realism is a result of surrealistic bent of mind successfully interpreting the Third World consciousness. What is important to note in the canonical magical realist texts, e.g., García Márquez's *Solitude* (1967/1970), Isabel Allende's *La casa de los espiritus* [The House of the Spirits, 1982/1986], Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, etc. is the way the empirical experience of the non-subaltern is presented to the subaltern and vice-versa. The technological revolution of the advanced countries is a quite normal phenomenon to them, but the introduction of the same n a non-technological society is observed not only as something extraordinary, but is symbolic of the breech of the purity of their cultural values. Hart (2003) identified the same quality in the canonical magical realist texts when he described that a leitmotif of magical realist texts is

> . . . the sense in which occurrences seen as supernatural in the First World . . . are presented as natural from a Third World perspective, while occurrences seen as normal in the First World are presented as supernatural from the point of view of an inhabitant of the Caribbean. (p. 116)

Most of the magical realist texts have the presence of the "subalternised supernatural" (Hart, 2003, p. 118). In some cases, it is in the form of ghosts, apparitions and spirits (e.g., Melquíades in García Márquez's *Solitude*) and in others it is in the mould of a character with extraordinary supernatural abilities (e.g., Rosa in Allende's *The House of the Spirits*; and Saleem Sinai in Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*). Such presence operates as "disembodied memorialisations of a trauma experienced by the subaltern, normally in the past" (Hart, 2003, p. 118). This aspect of a subalternised presence constitutes an important feature of magical realist writings, as they are much different from the supernatural presence in most of the traditional writings, e.g. ghost in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1602). Here, the writer does not create sufficient context to introduce the element of the supernatural, but such characters and happenings occur at once. This explains much about the way magical realism is deep-rooted in the rural or non-urban cultures, especially, where the geography too has to play a significant part. According to Martin-Junquera, at the core of magical realism lies the meeting of the spirit realm and the material world (2008, p. 72). This junction causes a chain reaction leading to the formulation of a world-view in which the most important thing to note is the "indistinguishable line between fact and fiction, between act and belief, creation and conjuring . . . [and this nearly indistinguishable line] between fact and myth characterizes magical realism (Montes, 2008, p. 115).

As a universal phenomenon, adopted by the fiction writers throughout the globe (e.g., Carpentier, García Márquez, Allende, in Latin America; Rushdie in South Asia;

Morrison in North America; and Okri in Africa, etc.), the canvas of magical realism is known to have been vast enough to embody socio-political commentary on the contemporary world. Holmes (2008, p. 209) observes that the interest of the authors in the genre is due to their desire to "underscore political divisions between past and present". She argues that the prominent Latin American writers have employed the technique in order to "juxtapose often painful memories of the past in their Latin American homelands with current struggle in the United States" (p. 209). Warnes observed,

> The key defining quality of magical realism is that it represents both fantastic and real without allowing either greater claim to truth. Fantasy, fairy tales and science fiction operate in worlds that differ from ours sufficiently to preclude being called in any meaningful way realist. The uncanny and the baroque, on the other hand, usually incorporate supernatural or exaggerated elements into a world very similar to that of realistic fiction, but this is usually done in order to provoke shock or horror in the reader, thus disrupting the principle of equivalence on which magical realism depends. (2005b, p. 3)

Contrary to realist fiction, the text written in the tradition of magical realism allows the author to challenge the pre-established perceptions, providing the same opportunity to the reader, whose mind, though unconsciously, is freed from the burden of the perceptions which society does not allow to be challenged. Magical realism "blurs the line between natural and supernatural, disabling assumptions about the primacy of the rationalist world-view, and clearing space for the representation of cultural alterity" (Warnes, 2006, p. 498).

According to Zamora and Faris (1995), magical realism is also often regarded as a regional trend that is merely restricted to the Latin American writers, who popularized it as theory form. Magical realism is closely associated with Spanish-American writings and imposes a certain paradigm on non-Anglo-American literatures, especially the Spanish-American one. Essentially, to describe a work of fiction as magic realist is to impose a system of order in much the same way a colonial power imposes its idea of order on a subjugated social system.

One of the two ingredients of magical realism, 'magic', can mean, according to Ouyang (2005, p. 14), "anything that defies empiricism, including religious beliefs, superstitions, myths, legends, voodoo", etc. The other element is realism, which denotes to the ordinary, the usual, the (so-called-)real. He further suggested,

> Magical realism, however vaguely this term may explain the composition and effect of a piece of work, has served as the common ground for discussions of many issues pertinent to cultural and identity politics termed as postcolonialism and postmodernism in the past three or four decades, from the 'native' recovering 'local' or 'indigenous' cultures and writing back at empire to creating hybridities that accommodate multiplicities, and from questioning the epistemological premises of European post-Enlightenment realism to remapping the novel and the visual arts. (Ouyang, 2005, p. 14)

According to Venzalá (2002), magical realism occurs when the extraordinary is presented as if it were part of the daily life. The absence of the element of surprise on part of characters and the reader is what emerges as an important feature of the genre.

In more recent studies, the development of the technique of magical realism has been linked with the growing debate/field of postcolonialism. Rather, the technique has established a firm place in literary studies as a tool to explore the experiences related to the postcolonial reality, both on an individual and a national level (e.g. Grisa, 1985; Bhabha, 1995; Angulo, 1995). Rather, it would not be an exaggeration to write that it has become the best of the devices/techniques employed in the critique of such experiences as mentioned above. The ability of magical realism to affect the degree of expression regarding the (post)coloniality in relation to the contemporary socio-cultural and political phenomena has been a significant impact upon the choice of writers to choose a potent narrative technique to record their experience. Warnes (2005a, p. 18) stated that writers choose magical realism as a narrative technique because of an "urge to reclaim what has been stolen or lost, to critique the assumptions and conventions of the metropolis, to recover and affirm identities and to assert autonomy in the face of hegemony.

The capacity to give a concrete voice to the abstract ideas of the colonized is the most significant feature of the genre that makes it universally acknowledged, whether it is Latin America, North America, South Asia, Europe or any other place in the world. The purpose of magical realism is to call the so-called 'objective' into question by viewing Reality with a touch of non-reality. Reality and fantasy are both combined not through weaknesses but through strengths. Characters accept non-reality as being completely normal. Having its own personality, each story in magical realism initiates such situations that make the reader suspend his/her belief quite willingly. Magical realism, then, makes it known to the world that there are different views of art and literature. Not everyone has the same view, so the world needs to combine all views

and understand one another's opinion, as "Everyone's reason is everyone's things" (Chanady, 1995, p. 134).

Among the purposes and functions of magical realism are: taking something for granted and breathing new life into it; letting the world know that there are different views of art, literature and life; showing one's perspective on life and how one wants it to be; and providing some relief from Reality. The objective of magical realism is much closer to Coleridge's notion of 'willing suspension of disbelief', as the latter too causes the readers to "suspend disbelief by presenting the marvelous as an everyday reality" (Levine, 2005, p. 307). It is the miracle of magical realism that ordinary things look extraordinary and are suddenly filled with new meanings. Through magical realism, people are enabled to look beyond the obvious reality of what something is. With its help, they can search deeper and deeper to find new dimensions of looking at some object. In other words, "the bizarre nature of the events and stories [in the magical realist texts] stresses exploiting myth;" in more explicit words, it aims at

> . . . a questioning of the rational cultural tradition of the West: the narrative mimic, subvert, exaggerate and parody the ways in which Western European culture has used the novel to make sense of experience. . . [It] challenges Eurocentrism by expressing a Third World experience and drawing on local cultural traditions (Peck & Coyle, 2002, p. 138).

If traced back in history, one can find the causes which initiated the trend and technique of magical realism. The question why magical realism is acceptable as something normal, despite being something abnormal, in Latin America, is also answerable. A number of Latin Americans accept this technique because they live in an environment which makes them believe in such things. Surrounded by rainforests,

the inhabitants of this region have a natural inclination towards believing what is generally difficult for a North American to believe. The psyche of a person living in an advanced country does not allow him/her to do so, because it is moulded according to the culture and tradition associated with the place. On the other hand, a person who has not yet left seeing nature and has enough time to exercise his/her imagination is more prone to believe in magical realist fiction. As suggested by Sommer (1990, p. 72), the "'positive' reality was traditionally opposed to magic; otherwise the proto-Boom style of magic realism would represent no new departure". Hence, the objective before a magical realist writer is to demonstrate that the same thing can be seen from different angles. Being abstract in nature, reality cannot be perceived from the naked eye. Therefore, it varies from person to person. Every individual may have his/her own view of Reality. Perhaps the novel most commonly described as magic realist is García Márquez's *Solitude* (1967/1970). Yet, if one takes the definition as being strictly one which must include folklore, this novel too is shifted into the realms of fantastic literature. Instead, a critic adhering to the term in this way would say that a García Márquez novel such as *Chronicle* (1981/1983) is a magical realist novel.

The above may be true – and that is all the more reason for the protest against all kinds of Imperialism and Colonialism to continue. The characteristic fusion of realistic and fantastic elements originates in the material reality not only of Latin America, but of the global Postcolonial situation. This is due to a dominant rational-scientific 'Western', and a marginalized mythical 'native' world-view. As an inherently postcolonial mode, magic realist fiction arguably undertakes to redress the cultural hierarchy imposed by the colonizer by revaluing the alternative, non-Western systems of thought, presenting them as a corrective or supplement to the dominant world view. It is a plea and protest for indigenous cultures and civilizations, values and life-ways.

It is beyond any doubt that like every other nation, Latin America also has a defiant behaviour against the colonial practices. This is reflected in the efforts in the way of decolonization. Latin American novel, in this connection, has been of particular importance. It has been employed as a powerful platform for establishing a strong stance of history, from a very native-view-point, and bringing about a revolution both in the intellect and emotion of the nation. The fiction writers touch the very soul of their targeted readership, and are projected and protected as demi-gods. As Sommer (1990, p. 73) suggested that,

> Arguments can and will be offered . . . for the coincidence between establishing modern nations and projecting their ideal histories through the novel. But perhaps the most stunning connection is the fact that authors of romance were also among the fathers of their countries, preparing national projects through prose fiction, and implementing foundational fictions through legislative or military campaigns.

He furthers the same argument by spreading it to the

> . . . North American writers who were establishing a national literature often assumed a political distance that allowed for an apparently unfettered critique of society. Latin Americans seemed more integrated into partisan struggles than given to transcendent criticism of social evils. Their extra-literary debates, like their novels, cast particular social interests into clearly identifiable actors. (Sommer, 1990, p. 74)

Rodgers (2004) noted that magical realism has a great potential "to serve as a vehicle of social protest [and this tendency] has drawn the interest of many postcolonial authors and critics" (p. 284). When factual settings, characters and situations are

combined with supernatural elements, and are presented as factual, the order of the fictive world is disturbed. The specialty of magical realism lies in the fact that the reader can imaginatively participate in the above-mentioned distorted fictive world. Thus, she projects the author to be successful at proving that if much of the fantastic is mingled with a little of the real, the whole mixture seems to be true. This becomes even more authentic after the lapse of a certain time-period. She further suggested that,

> The subversive power of Magic[al] Realism comes from this juxtaposition of objective and subjective realities in ways that call the objective into question, allowing the authors to challenge official readings of social, political, and historical events (p. 283).

When the objective and the real, though so-called, and the fantastic or the subjective are mingled, especially when the setting is realistic, the world outside the boundaries of fiction is made less credible. It is the same juxtaposition of the mundane with the fantastic, which upsets within the fiction, the category of the real. If something is looked at, with something else lying in its background, the entire scene changes for the person who is looking at it.

2.3 Giving voice to the 'margin': An articulation of subjective experience

Literature serves a dual purpose; on the one hand it is a source of pleasure for the reader who enjoys its meanings between the lines, which keep on changing with the changing times; whereas, on the other, it is a platform to bring certain issues faced by the respective societies in which the same has been produced. A piece of literary writing not only highlights these drawbacks, but most often suggests how to deal with these. The significance of Fiction among various genres of literature has been acknowledged on the basis of its being closer to life in terms of its being narrative in nature, wide in

scope and characterization, and the realistic mode of the portrayal of incidents. Allegorical in nature and is a mirror of the wants and predicaments of the society, magical realist fiction specifically serves as a metaphor to highlight all such problems, so that the readers may act wisely. A magical realist, therefore, is in the best position to voice the feelings of disapproval of either some practice or common thought; such expressions are called social protest in the course of literature.

According to the Williams (1977) the word 'social' refers to "the relationship and problems of human beings living in a community" (p. 863), whereas to protest is to complain against something or "to object strongly; statement or declaration of objection, disapproval, or dissent" (p. 727). In this context, the term Social Protest means the protest originated by the systems and sub-systems of society in the result of the strong disapproval of a trend, practice, standard, etc. According to Meyer and Lupo (2006), social protest became the centre of attention in the 1960s when the political scientists showed a propensity towards it. They further hold that politics was at the root of the social protest and that it resulted

> . . . largely in response to unfolding events, particularly the movements for civil rights and against the war[s][...], and the student and democracy movements globally. Previous work on social movements had emphasized mass irrationality, often a function of anomie, which was seen as a result of people acting out when conventional politics provided no routes for expressing influence... Political scientists from both the left and the right examined more contemporary phenomena and found the tenets of the old collective behavior approach did not withstand empirical examination, and saw both rationality and a connection with mainstream politics at the core of social movements (p. 112).

It is certain social movements that operate in a society to oppose what is not in the interest of the public at large. Tilly (as cited in Jenkins and Klandermans, 1995, p. 5) believed that social movement is a sustained series of interactions between the state and challenging groups. In plain words, it establishes a potential challenger to the political representation system and plays a major role in re-defining the relationship between the state and civil society. In this context, social protest means the "collective action of social movements that are attempting to alter the representation system, public policies, or the general relationships between citizens and the state" (p. 5-6).

West and Blumberg (1985, p. 5) define social protest in more specific terms as an "affirming collective mobilization by groups and individuals as a rational and political means of challenging the status quo in society". It is also a fact that in today's world, it is very difficult to organise social protest on a massive scale in the form of demonstrations, public meetings, marches or rallies. In every social structure, the politically dominant groups are always in the position to suppress the opinion of the public by using force against them. This not only diminishes the opportunities of protest, but also makes the powerful assert their opinion on the less dominant or the powerless. In these circumstances, fiction proves to be a source of unveiling the ways the dominant suppress the non-dominant. With a certain social and political orientation, the fiction writers manifest a strong desire for the correction of such negative practices prevalent in the social structures in their writings. Scheuermann (1885, p. 1-2) defines social protest in the novel as "the author's delineation of social injustices, inequalities, and failings, usually accompanied by explicit statements regarding the need to reform". García Márquez is one of the many fiction writers who form a group in their endeavour to unearth the politically motivated agendas of the powerful. Fiction provides the writers with an opportunity to express their feelings of protest against the oppressors.

Nonlinearly related to each other, protest and social problems play a vital role in defining the parameters helpful in determining the drawbacks and merits of a particular social structure. Like other writers, García Márquez too endeavours to communicate his concerns regarding the general political situation of his country. The technique of magical realism is pertinent in that it has been used as a powerful tool to make such communication possible. The experience García Márquez had had in his life is reflected throughout the fiction he produced. On the one hand, his writings reflect the troubled collective history of Latin America, and, on the other, it is the articulation of the subjective experience of an individual.

The present research seeks to draw attention towards how the mode of social protest – in this case the subtle use of the technique of magical realism – may highlight, mould, and ultimately decide the intensity of the undercurrents in the very structure of the social fabric. What becomes interesting is to explore how García Márquez makes the reader stand on the same plateau as the characters of his novels and the general public of Latin America does. The novelist's skill is at its height when the reader experiences the same past running through his/her veins that the colonel in the novel or any Latin American citizen is forced to breathe in.

Fuchs (2006) argues that the "social movements are dynamic communication systems that permanently react to political and societal events with self-organized protest practices and protest communications" (p. 101). The specific political circumstances of Latin America, in the present case, may be taken as the driving force originating a strong social movement, which ultimately represents the predicaments of the whole Third World. For instance, the colonel in *Colonel* (1968/1974) can be taken as a symbol for the whole Third World, which equally suffers from the state of an un-ending wait for the fulfilment of promises of peace and prosperity made to it by the

Centre, but only at the cost of exploitation. The characters of the novel are denied the right of communicating their disapproval over the way they are treated. The way the author portrays the colonel and his wife in a particular situation is a means of protest on the former's part, which he otherwise would not have been able to communicate.

2.4 Conquering the 'Other': Colonialism/Postcolonialism

Loomba (2001, p. 2) defines colonialism as "the conquest and control of other peoples lands and goods". Founding her argument on the assumption that when a new community is formed in a new land, the existing communities would necessarily be un-formed or re-formed, Moreover, she stresses that a wide range of practices like trade, plunder, negotiation, genocide, enslavement and rebellion are involved in such a process. Parker and Starkey (1995) noted that the European colonists considered vast regions of the world merely as blank spaces, lands 'without narrative' that are waiting to be mapped, mined, written into existence.

Defining and theorizing 'Postcolonialism' has been a challenge to the critics/theorists, as it overlaps two important 'isms' of the present era, i.e. 'postmodernism' and 'post-structuralism'. If categorized as an umbrella term, which includes various issues related to the consequences of the either continued or discontinued process of colonization, the term would mean to be a "period in global time-space in which most of the former colonies of Western imperial powers have gained formal independence" (Rattansi, 1997, p. 481). As a distinctive form of theorization/analysis, the term acts as a major political as well as literary theory and takes a peculiar shape as an independent field of investigation. Moreover, he observed that both 'postmodernism' and 'postcolonialism' shun the traditional disciplinary boundaries and conventional conceptions of time, narrative and spatiality. According to him, 'postcolonialism' is a "heady, eclectic mix of post-structuralism,

psychoanalysis, feminism, Marxism and postmodernism" (p. 481). While comparing both the terms, Eagleton (1998) argues that 'Postcolonialism', like postmodernism in general, is among a brand of culturalism, which inflates the significance of cultural factors in human affairs. Whereas, Lawson (1992, p. 153) attributes 'postcolonialism' to be a "politically motivated historical-analytical movement that engages with, resists, and seeks to dismantle the effects of colonialism in the material, historical, cultural-political, pedagogical, discursive and textual domains". Boehmer (1995) defines 'postcoloniality' as "that condition in which colonized peoples seek to take their place, forcibly or otherwise, as historical subjects" (p. 3).

Eagleton (1998) addresses another hurdle regarding understanding the term, i.e. the confusing distinction/difference between Postcolonialism, postcolonialism, and 'postcolonialism'. He outrightly denies the existence of Postcolonialism and stresses that rather there is something called postcolonialism. Moreover, he defines 'postcolonialism' as a particular theoretical agenda having its roots in a highly specific western intellectual history and which is much more controversial phenomenon altogether, while 'Postcolonialism' is a way of analysing a true state of affairs in terms of certain currently rather modish western theoretical concepts, some of which are true while others are not. However, Boehmer (1995) noted that there is a tendency to stress the similarity of texts written in the former colonies of the British Empire, at the expense of recognizing their differences.

Said's *Orientalism* (2003) has been acknowledged as the central text inpostcolonialism. Here, he revealed how the Orient/East was (mis)represented in political spheres of Europe and America and how the attitude of the western intellectuals formed a generalized perception of the East, especially that of the Middle East. In the Preface, he admits that the book that had been written about representations

of the 'Orient' lends itself to increasingly misrepresentations and misinterpretations, but nevertheless it forms the basis for debate on the interpretation of various colonial facts from the perspective of the colonized. In an attempt to describe his writing as an act of reconcilement between Islam and the West and making the world understand the existence of a 'pluri-cultural life', Said wrote that, his idea behind *Orientalism* was "to use the humanistic critique to open up the fields of struggle, to introduce a longer sequence of thought and analysis to replace the short bursts of polemical, thought-stopping fury that so imprison us in labels and antagonistic debate. The goal of the debate, however, was a belligerent collective identity rather than understanding and intellectual exchange" (Said, 2003, p. xvii).

Being an intellectual belonging to Arab and the Muslim world, Said's book is essentially about the way the Orient/East has been (mis)represented by the Occident/West. Referring to a lecture, delivered in 1910 by the then British Prime Minister, Balfour, Said highlights the relation of knowledge to power in the eyes of a westerner. While Balfour justifies the necessity for British occupation of Egypt, the idea of supremacy is associated not with the economic and military power, but with the Western knowledge of the colony. In other words, knowledge to him is mere surveying of a civilization from its origin to its prime, and then, its ultimate decline as a social structure; the sole purpose of such knowledge is to drive the place and the people to a blind alley where they have no choice other than the ultimate submission. In the speech, according to Said, the people of the Orient have been presented as "devoid of energy and initiative" and good for nothing except for plotting and designing, being full of suspicion about everything and lethargic in all respects. The Orientals are further shown as incurable liars, the ones to have nothing in common with the clarity and nobility of

the West. Every positive quality was shown to be the attribute of the West, whereas the Orient was (mis)represented as its binary opposition.

However, the crisis becomes intense when the textual attitude of the readers plays a negative role in reaching a sustainable, long lasting and better understanding regarding a nation. Said criticizes the propensity of a reader to prefer the authority of the text over a direct encounter with other human beings. According to him, it is the text which made the present perception of the Orient possible. Niezen (2007) notes that *Orientalism* has encouraged two kinds of secondary distortion in cultural theory: one tends toward cultural essentialism and nationalism and another expresses a kind of nostalgic futurism, with more distant reasons of influence from cultural romanticism and the Western utopian tradition. He further holds it highly ironical that Said's intellectual legacy is the remarkable difference between his professedly antinationalist humanism – 'exilic, extraterritorial, and unhoused', rooted in the 'diaspora' status of the exemplary scholar – and the decidedly non-humanist cultural essentialism. Niezen (2007) points out that Said's discourse regarding Orientalism seems to be a failure on his part to recognize that "one of the worst possible consequences of the political oppression is the political disfigurement of the oppressed, bringing out in them malignant forms of collective self-discovery and counter-hatred" (p. 715). In other words, Postcolonialism is facing difficulty in holding two heterogeneous ideas about the West simultaneously, i.e. a sweeping critique of Western cultural imperialism and an encouragement of the tendency towards a collective self-affirmation that originates from counter-imperialist rediscovery.

Parker and Starkey (1995) applauded Fanon's contribution to postcolonial discourse by considering *The Wretched of the Earth* as the acknowledged intervening text in shaping postcolonial aesthetics and cultural theory. Fanon formed the basic

argument/thought concerning the colonial and postcolonial reality in the light of his experience, when, as a psychiatrist, he observed the French doctors treating the North African patients during the Algerian war of independence from late 1950s to early 1960s. They noted that his argument that "'blackness' was a white construct of linguistic opposition disguising a deeper cultural opposition of controller/controlled, wealth/poverty, self-fulfilment/self-denial" (p. 5) was developed during the above period. He discovered that it was the language which was at the basis of the cultural displacement of these patients, as the doctors did not ask the question that should have been asked from such patients; the latter too could not express even what they were asked by the former, because they got pressurized by the French language. Egan (2007) maintained Fanon's view about colonialism by attributing it to the systematic underdevelopment of the periphery for the benefit of the core. Moreover, he affirmed Fanon's thought regarding the fact that the colonized are denied the opportunity to know themselves. Ironically, the colonizer claims to know the colonized. Boehmer (1995) re-asserts the idea when he argues that in order to "give expression to the colonized experience, the postcolonial writers sought to undercut thematically and formally the discourses which supported colonization – the myth of power, the race classifications, the imagery of subordination" (p. 3). In other words, a postcolonial writer reverses the colonial process in order to get rid of such state of mind. Dialogically interrogating European power and native insurrection, Fanon asserts that there is a continuous process of cultural resistance and disruption. He lays stress on the involvement of such cultural conflicts, and the subsequent struggle of the natives, and problems in writing a text (see, for example, Fanon, 1952/1956; Fanon, 1967; Fanon, 1980). Fanon (1952/1965) acknowledges the contribution of the natives to the cause of answering back to the Empire. He rejects the Prospero complex (i.e., a psychological

state of mind which obsesses the colonized) and dwells upon the psychology of the natives, who are subjected to change their living style, culture, language, etc. (1967). According to Patke (2004), he "reiterates the absolute need for an organized and educated counter violence if the struggle for self-determination is to succeed against the Manichean violence that created 'native' consciousness and frustrated its collective energies" (p. 167). It is also peculiar of him to have tried, as a psychiatrist, to explore the reasons behind the deep craving of a (previously)colonized people for national identity and culture to authenticate their claim for cultural emancipation. However, Said noted that Fanon, while writing in 1960, argued that in the postcolonial struggle to achieve the legitimacy of the claims of a nation, a national culture had to be fostered. In this attempt, the native intellectual, who was generally fearful of being reabsorbed into the culture of the former colonizer, can end up either making or finding a real or imagined value in native culture that preceded colonization (as cited in Patke, 2004, p. 166-167).

2.5 Review of selected critical response to Garcia Márquez

A number of critics have considered Márquez's fiction on the basis of the subtlety of its wit and its possible political implications. Robinson (2006) analyses the insomnia plague episode from *Solitude* (1967/1970) in the backdrop of Latin America and the technique of magical realism. She argues that the Indians in the course of the novel are perceived as "secretive and almost sinister in the way they notice everything by going unnoticed themselves" (p. 250). The argument is further strengthened by looking at the insomnia plague from historical view-point. She finds the plague to be standing symbolic for the history of the region of Latin American. The identity crisis and confusion about 'who we are?' is what, according to the author, gives rise to the predicament of the knowledge of self for the indigenous. As the colonizers established

their hegemony in terms of a linguistic superiority, religious dominance, and cultural importance over the locals, considering the latter's language, religion, and civilisation as insignificant and worthless as compared to the former's own. The reconstruction of history in the form of the massacre of the workers fulfils one of the objectives of García Márquez: on the one hand, to challenge the authenticity of the way historical events are recorded, and on the other, it becomes an event of social protest against the atrocities of the colonial agents, who were responsible for the Banana Plantation Massacre of 1928. The third part of the essay deals with the text as representative of the culture of the Colombians. On the whole, the article explores the work from three distinct perspectives, cultural, historical and literary, concluding that it is a work rich in historical and literary sources. The analysis presented by Robinson is dependent upon Márquez's recently published memoirs, titled *Living to Tell the Tale*.

Pelayo (2009) in the famous introduction of his *Gabriel García Márquez: A biography* holds Márquez as one of the greatest storytellers in any language. The Colombian government, which had sought his arrest a day before Márquez was declared the Nobel Prize winner, "wanted this prodigious Colombian son back in his native country" (p. xiii). The author of the book has endeavoured to enhance the understanding of the social and historical context of the time in order to make the reader see García Márquez within the flow of nations and world affairs.

A similar approach has been adopted by Aizenberg (1992, pp. 1235-1253) titled "Historical Subversion and Violence of Representation in García Márquez and Ouologuem". She focused García Márquez's *Cien anos de soledad* [One Hundred Years of Solitude] and Ouologuem's *Le devoir de violence* [Bound to Violence] as both works serve "to reveal the absent history: those Third World conditions and exigencies

that link postcolonial fiction and a desire to think historically" (p. 1236). Aizenberg held that magical realism is essentially a postcolonial device, enabling the author to challenge the official readings of history;

> In these works, manipulating the discourse of the marvelous is understood as an act intended to reproduce, puncture, and overcome the unreality imposed by the colonialist enterprise. This enterprise first read the New World through the distorted glass of a European imperialism fed by a medieval worldview, and it went on doing so, even though it was the persistence of the "fabulous" stereotypes and the on-going madness of a colonialist history that kept Latin America "magical". [. . .] Novels such as *One Hundred Years of Solitude* remain suspended between the language of the magical and the real, not because Latin America is inherently more magical than, say, Spain but because the text enacts the deliriums of a world marked by colonialism, where alien schemata interpret reality and violent discontinuities mark the configuration of time and space.

Acknowledging Aizenberg's thesis regarding the reconstruction of history with the help of magical realism as postcolonial device, the present study spreads itself over a number of related themes in the postcolonial context, such as slavery, violence, injustice, etc., to demonstrate how the author registered social protest against colonialism.

A rather similar approach had been adopted by Taylor (1975) when she tried to explore the concept of history as contained in Márquez's *Solitude*, while contending the work to be the complex evolution of "a coherent and explicit political statement about the role of historical consciousness in the evolution of a society" (1975, p. 96). While arguing about the general nature of fiction as a mode of political communication and the relation between the work and its social and historical context, Taylor held that the author's intent, reader's response and the interpretation of a work's significance is

not a matter of yielding to immediate analysis, but, for such purpose, needs a lapse of enough time for the work to fit in the social and historical context. She says,

> This novel [*Solitude*] obviously raises significant questions about reader response which could only be measured, if at all, across a longer lapse of time. One immediate task is therefore to study particular problems in enough detail to begin approaching the larger questions of its social and political significance. (1975, p. 97)

She concludes that "the idea of the imperative of historical consciousness, while often metaphorical in expression, functions as political discourse" (p. 111).Another similar approach is found in Strecher's (1999, pp. 263-298) article titled "Magical Realism and the Search for Identity in the Fiction of Murakami Haruki" demonstrates how effective the tool of magical realism is for highlighting an identity crisis in contemporary Japanese society. The present research is an effort to highlight the potency of the device of magical realism in an expanded scenario that includes a number of social problems resulting from the fire and ash of colonialism. Strecher asserts that "the concept of magical realism bears certain political and cultural specificities" (p. 268). He argues that Murakami's raison d'etre as a writer is to "expose the steady decay of individual identity in members of the generation born immediately after the Second World War, and in each succeeding generation thereafter" (p. 263). The article suggests an explanation for the fact that while Murakami's works were initially aimed at his own generation-the youngest to participate in the Zenkyoto movement-they remain consistently popular with readers between the ages of 20 and 30. Similar to Murakami's work, García Márquez efforts to highlight various societal, political, economic problems that are deep-rooted in the fact of Latin American colonial experience. The

present study will also attempt to link past and present to the future, as Márquez's work directs future generations.

Vela's (2006, pp. 7-15) study on "Terror through the Eyes of Latin American Novelists", on the other hand, chose to analyse three major boom novelists, i.e. García Márquez, Cortazar, and Vargas Llosa, for the way they have chronicled the history of violence in Latin America. He pointed out that "a number of their works address the roots of terrorism: dictatorships, *caudillismo*, corruption and the neglect of the indigenous and the poor" (p. 7). He asserted that although García Márquez is known for his works written in the tradition of magical realism, "he has, in some way or another, always focused on injustice and the history of violence in Colombia" (p.8). He has discussed Márquez as one of the boom novelists who chose for their fictional works the topic of the state-backed violence and terrorism in his region.

Macondo, the imaginary village that provides the setting to most of García Márquez's well-known works takes its origin in his real world experience. While analysing his novel, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and the works written before it, Pelayo arrives at the judgment that García Márquez's portrayal of the life at Macondo, its intact culture, and the legacy of the Buendía family had been mainly derived from the latter's own birth place and experiences. Pelayo notes that while inventing his own make-believe universe and immortalizing it as Macondo, Márquez "sketched from the history of the country and the past of the continent at large, from its discovery to colonial times and the wars of independence" (p. xiv). He furthers his point by writing that it was the memories of his childhood that ultimately helped him create this masterpiece. The idea behind *Solitude* (1967/1970) was to re-construct the modern history of Colombia from a particular angle. He told the story of Colombian history through the inhabitants of a small village he called Macondo. The name of the village

is quite significant in the context in which García Márquez was trying to embed his story. Pelayo holds that it was "during a train ride, [when García Márquez] noticed a decrepit banana plantation, with a sign announcing its name: Macondo. That name stayed in his mind" (Pelayo, 2009, p. 57). In Bantu language, the word Macondo means 'banana'. The political significance of Macondo becomes evident when the reader comes to know that one of the political themes of the novel revolves around the Banana Plantation Massacre that took place at Cienaga on May 28, 1928. More than 3200 local workers were killed in this tragic episode. He further holds that "He modeled the town in the novel on Aracataca, but he named it Macondo after the banana plantation he had seen on his recent trip (p. 57).

A number of critics have argued that the geographical condition of Colombia, the birthplace of García Márquez, is one of the most important contributory factors towards the extraordinary fiction he produced. It has a unique landscape that features both a long coast and the rugged terrain of the Andes Mountains. About the founding of the Aracataca, the very town where García Márquez was born, Darraj (2006) argued that it came into existence when a group of people escaped from the chaos of Colombia's long civil war, named the 'War of One Thousand Days'. According to him, the town is named after the river Ara and Cataca: Ara being a river in the language of the Chimila Indians who settled the region, whereas Cataca was the word for the title of the town's leader. García Márquez (2004, p. 44) himself explains the origin of the word Aracataca in his autobiography, *Tale* (2002/2008) by noting that "Therefore we natives do not call it Aracataca but use its correct name: Cataca".

Comparing García Márquez and Rushdie as two chief writers from the tribe of magical realist writers, Hegerfeldt (2005) argues that magic realist writers like the aforementioned "have been seen less as authentic colonized Others than as members of

a class of privileged Third World intellectuals". This notion is not convincing in that these writers have been not only carrying the burden of their own (post)colonial experience but that of the entire nation. But, to restrict García Márquez or any magical realist writer to the Third World countries would again be debatable. Declaring it as 'a global mode', Hegerfeldt stated that magical realism is not restricted to postcolonial literatures, but may be used in Western context as well.

Reading the interdependence of Literature Review and Literature/Literary Critique, the researcher has been dependent upon both for the present study. In brief, while Literature Review helps to have an overview of the relevant literature and provides a background for literary critique, the latter is an in-depth critical analysis of it. Thus, literature review leads to a literary/literature Critique.

Chapter 3

FRAMEWORK: THEORETICAL ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

The present study was primarily inductive and thus exploratory due to its qualitative nature, offering information necessary for making such an inquiry. Upon reading the work of García Márquez, I noticed a pattern of themes related to the politico-social and economic circumstances of Latin America, specifically Colombia. Most of the textual occurrences of such themes exhibited a deliberate juxtaposition of the fantastic and the mundane to foreground social injustice caused by the (post)colonial condition. I highlighted/marked the areas where the device of magical realism had been employed by the author to see the presence of such themes of social protest regarding the reverberations of the process of colonisation. It appeared that magical realism has been used by the author as a vehicle of social protest in order to highlight a number of socio-cultural, political, and economic factors which caused hindrance in the development of the region in general. This was mainly due to the difference of perspectives between the Third and the First worlds. The Latin Americans wanted to progress but not at the cost of their indigenous cultural values, which were against the perception of the First World. Some of such problems the region had to face due to the process of colonialism were slavery, extreme poverty, political turmoil, civil wars and the subsequent anarchy, a hybrid community that neither was overtly able to accept modernity nor could stay back in a primitive condition. However, another noticeable thing was that it was the postcolonial reality to have brought forth confusion where the dwellers of the symbolic city of mirrors and mirages were ultimately lost.

I have chosen to use the framework of a combination of the relevant issues from postcolonialism and new historicism in order to interpret/analyse García Márquez's texts with an overall objective to find out the effectiveness of the technique of magical

realism regarding its capacity to register social protest in his fiction. To understand the phenomenon of magical realism as a tool of social protest in the works of García Márquez, the said framework was applied through close reading method. As the theoretical framework of the present study was developed from five different perspectives (as described in the literature review section of the previous chapter), each equally contributing to the central argument. First, a context for the study was developed by analysing the socio-political history of Latin America, the region where the magical realist writings took their root and had significant grooming. This was done with the help of the observations found in important writings on the subject. Second, significant writings on the technique of magical realism were explored in order to demonstrate coherence in the development of the device itself and how it enables an author play upon the genre to express his/her political reservations. Third, an effort was made to define what social protest is and how does it help various segments from the 'other' raise their voice against the dominant parts of the society. Fourth, previously written literature on Post-colonialism was surveyed, as I have hypothesised the existence of a serious connection between the genre in question and the postcolonial theory. Ultimately, this was taken as the point of junction/relevance of García Márquez's writings and the application of the said theory, as the latter was of immense help in exploring the element of social protest in the former.

By developing such theoretical framework (from readings in Postcolonial Studies and the particular conditions of the region in which García Márquez produced fiction), I have taken into account the findings/stances of the intellectual world towards the degree of potency of the technique of magical realism and how it is connected to the postcolonial debate. The framework was used to foreground the element of social protest in the fiction produced by the author.

Although the earlier form of close reading placed all critical emphasis on the text itself and the historical context and authorial intent were not taken into account, post/modern literary theory got the idea of reading back towards the investigation of the text within its context with approaches drawing on feminist theory, Marxist Criticism, and post-colonialism (Tanenbaum, 2008). The close reading of a written text is writing an essay that responds to or builds upon the ideas in the original text and takes both historical and textual context into account (Brummet, 2010). Rather than merely extracting facts from the text, a close reading initiates a critical analysis/response through writing. It is "the mindful, disciplined reading of an object with a view to deeper understanding of its meanings" (p. 3). There are four stages of close reading, i.e. Pre-reading, Interpretation, Critical Reading, and Writing. A close reading of the material isolated for the study makes possible the latter's in-depth analysis.

Through 'pre-reading', I noticed the presence of a postcolonial thematic pattern in García Márquez's texts. Such thematic patterns include various forms of exploitation, such as denial of identity, distortion of historical facts, colonization, marginalization of the 'other', political repression, slavery, etc. Interpretive reading, which is the second step of close reading, is where I developed/reached an understanding regarding what García Márquez writes about, what the conclusion is, and how that conclusion is reached. At this stage, it got established that it was the device of magical realism that has been used as the propelling force for these themes to be developed into a well-formulated social protest. It allowed me to connect the aforementioned thematic patterns to the socio-political and geographical realities of Latin America, the region where García Márquez produced his fiction.

In the critical reading stage, I undertook a questioning, examining, and expanding upon what the author says with my own arguments. I read the isolated texts critically and applied the framework of both postcolonialism and new historicism – as developed in the light of the first two stages of close reading. I found certain issues related to the general idea of exploitation, i.e. colonization, marginalization, slavery, identity, hybridity, etc., to be relevant if applied on these texts. Having had the postcolonial theory in background, these texts made a purposeful reading, especially when I read them with the question in mind as to how the author achieved the desired effect of social protest and why did he choose magical realism to carry such protest. The close reading revealed that various literary devices, such as hyperbole, humour, irony, metaphor, analogy, imagery, allusion, and inference ultimately work towards building the degree of social protest necessary to evoke the same emotion in the reader. Postcolonial theory was applied to García Márquez's selected fiction in order to draw attention to the relevant themes such as identity, history, exploitation, protest, and social injustice in his works.

García Márquez's fiction incorporates and juxtaposes elements derived from disparate sources, e.g. oral/folklore culture, myth, and stereotypes. These carnivalesque juxtapositions operate at two discrete levels of structure and language while the disparity between these sources is manifest in the very structure of his work. This incongruity is further strengthened by carnivalesque and plain language, humour, the aesthetic of the monstrous, and hyperbole. This study is concerned with the textual features, a magical realist text challenges Western epistemology, proving the so-called rational as inconsistent and arbitrary. The last stage of close reading is 'Writing'. It enabled me to define García Márquez's position in the broader Latin American literary

context. I presented my own critical analysis at this stage by applying the abovementioned methodological framework on García Márquez's selected texts.

García Márquez's fiction has been selected for the current study, as it reflects the response of its author – a major representative of the collective Latin American/Third World conscience – to various undesirable social practices (such as slavery, exploitation, marginalization, etc.) in the backdrop of the Post-colonial paradigm by expressing his specific view of the colonial experience and by challenging the official readings of history with the help of the technique of magical realism. The information contained in the first two chapters of the study on various genres of literature, i.e. post-colonialism, magical realism, and the knowledge of the socio-political and geographical conditions of Latin America, provided the necessary background to the application of the Postcolonial theory and evaluate the selected material in the light of the pre-formulated hypotheses.

As the present study was a close reading of García Márquez's fiction, I have offered certain observations resulting from the findings I came up with during a minute reading of the text. With the help of the aforementioned theoretical framework the author's assertive mode of social protest in his isolated texts has been highlighted.

The introduction of the definitional issues surrounding magical realism (see Chapter 2) helped to evolve a definition of the term as a narrative technique that comes into play when fact and fiction are blended in such a manner that the amalgam becomes sufficiently acceptable to the reader that s/he can have a better understanding of the subjective nature of reality. This blending disturbs the world inside the text effectively and makes the reader challenge the so-called absoluteness of the real world, as well. García Márquez's texts used as cases for the current study reflect the responses of the

author to the Post-colonial paradigm by expressing a specific view of the colonial experience and by challenging the official readings of history with the help of the technique of magical realism. In other words, magical realism as a mode of writing enables the author to challenge the established order and re-construct certain (deliberately-)ignored episodes from history.

Magical realism may be defined as a highly literary mode of writing – having an obvious political dimension and extraordinary subversive potential – that juxtaposes the realistic setting with fantastical characters and events within the boundaries of a text in order to destroy the established order of reality, e.g. binary oppositional system of word-view, official reading of history. A magical realist piece of writing can be distinguished on the basis of having some of the following particular features.

a. An un-explainable element of magic or the fantastic is introduced within a generally realist description. Whereas the realist description embodies usual and normal phenomena, it becomes capable to highlight the magic. What distinguishes the genre from myth or fantasy is the elevated states of mind or setting that are often used to accomplish this.

b. It allows the reader to think freely while experiencing two different, if not opposing, views of reality that nearly merge or intersect.

c. The magical realist text is often metafictional or self-referential; and creates a world where metaphors are treated as reality. The fantastic/magic/marvellous is employed in order to destroy the established order.

d. Repetition of ideas and events to suggest the notion of non-linear/cyclical movement of time.

e. Indigenous folklore, myths and beliefs often form the very basis of the text.

f. The form and language of a magical realist text is often carnivalesque in nature.

As new historicism aims to understand a work of literature through its historical context and vice-versa, it worked in the background of this research (See literature review). Through the selected texts of García Márquez, the cultural and intellectual environment of both the text's world and García Márquez's time has been explored. Postcolonialism – being a major political as well as literary theory that takes a peculiar shape as an independent field of investigation – worked in the foreground. It deals with the continued process of the effects of colonization on cultures and societies.

Exploitation can be defined as the act of employing to the greatest possible advantage, or the utilization of another person or group for selfish purposes. The term is also used in the broader context of the exploiting one nation or group of nations by another. The binary logic of imperialism is the first cause of exploitation. It is the general inclination of the Western thought/world to see the world in binary oppositions in order to establish a relation of dominance. Magical realism challenges the system of binary opposition by stressing the subjective perception of reality. In other words, the binary opposition system changes the way of viewing others. For example, the East is thought to be mysterious, magical, black, emotional and static; whereas, the West is considered as clear, white, principled and progressive. Secondly, exploitation affects the society by creating a vacuum by means of depriving it of cultural/individual identity. Such gaps can be found through situations created by the wish of the 'centre' to retain racial distinction from the natives by using repression and violence. This results in imposing the former's views and beliefs on the latter, depriving the latter of their indigenous identity.

As social justice has been characterized as engagement with and advocacy for those in the society who are economically, socially, politically, and/or culturally under-resourced, the term social injustice may be characterized as its opposite. More precisely,

social injustice is a concept denoting injustice in either one or various segments of a society. Prejudice being a major trait of social injustice plays an important role in the process of social injustice and the latter is disastrous on both an individual and a collective level. Whenever there is a divide in thinking on the basis of a binary oppositional system, e.g. white-black, civilized-barbarian, First world-Third World, etc., prejudice comes into play to cause social injustice. Among a number of forms of social injustice, 'exploitation' has been isolated as the basic unit for analysis in the present study. In the coming chapters, the theme of exploitation in the works of García Márquez has been explored from the angle of colonialism and political repression.

Chapter 4

MAGIC AND/OR REALISM?
A JOURNEY FROM ARACATACA TO MACONDO

It is of significance to note that García Márquez's overwhelming imagination and the extraordinary sense of the past always lead him to a very (extra-)ordinary place he calls Macondo, a place where most of his stories find their setting. Magical realism makes the fictional town and the real incidents work together in such a way that the intensity of protest that he wants to communicate is received at an enhanced rate and it becomes possible for him to call the absoluteness of reality into question. While reading the ordinary magical tale of the town, the readers are acquainted with the deliberately untold history of the region (in the form of banana plantation massacre; see chapter 5 for detail). The importance attached to Macondo thus foregrounds this otherwise ordinary place and makes it an extraordinary one. Wrapped in innumerable myths and a thousand mysteries, Macondo is a representation of the town where the author originally belonged and a banana plantation adjacent to it. In his autobiography, for example, there are number of places where García Márquez relates the fictional town of Macondo to the real Aracataca. While writing about his journey along with his mother to his native place after the lapse of a number of years, he writes about why he named the town as Macondo. He writes that on their way back the train . . .

> . . . stopped at a station that had no town, and a short while later it passed the only banana plantation along the route that had its name written over the gate: *Macondo*. This word had attracted my attention ever since the first trips I had made with my grandfather, but I discover only as an adult that I liked its poetic resonance. I never heard anyone say it and did not even ask myself what it meant. I had already used it in three books as the name of an imaginary town when I happened to read in an encyclopedia that it is a tropical tree resembling

> the ceiba, that it produces no flowers or fruit, and that its light, pouous wood is used for making canoes and carving cooking implements. Later, I discovered in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* that in Tanganyika there is a nomadic people called Makonde, and I thought this might be the origin of the word. (Márquez, 2003/2004, p. 19)

The truth revealing the etymological facts behind the name of Macondo tells the reader about how deeply García Márquez was affected by the (seldom-mentioned)banana plantation massacre. Throughout the autobiography, García Márquez relates his childhood memories and their impact on his evolution as an author. He acknowledges the fact by mentioning that when he was on the way to Aracataca along with his mother that "Before adolescence, memory is more interested in the future than the past, and so my recollections of the town were not yet idealized by nostalgia" (p. 5). These childhood memories play an important role in his writings. The reader can find these scattered here and there on the pages of his novels and short stories. The resemblance between Macondo and Aracataca has been mentioned more than once in the long autobiographical narrative by Márquez.

> I remembered as it was: a good place to live where everybody knew everybody else, located on the banks of a river of transparent water that raced over a bed of polished stone as huge and white as prehistoric eggs. (p. 5)

García Márquez highly disapproves of the way the Latin American region was deprived of its innocence and identity in the name of the so-called modernity. Whenever he wants to do so, he uses magical realism as a tool of protest. For example, in the very opening lines of the novel, fantasy is mingled with reality and there is an obvious presence of dreamlike atmosphere that provokes the reader to at once compare the past

and the present of the country. The length of the sentence also works towards initiating the dreaminess.

> 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. (Márquez, 1967/1970, p. 1)

The use of numbers[5] and the introduction of stones are also important. The enormous and prehistoric eggs work as a hint at the prehistoric society, devoid of any pollution,

[5] In a magical realist text, numbers play an important role in making the setting appear as realistic. The magical realists use numbers in the form of figures, dates, years, etc. to achieve the effect of Magical Realism. The reader, who is reluctant to believe in the fantastic, is made to believe in it when it is presented with the help of dates from history. In his *Midnight's Children*, Salman Rushdie (1982, p. 9), makes the readers believe in the strange telepathic impulse of Saleem by introducing him as one of the 1001 children born on the midnight between 14th and 15th of August. García Márquez himself uses this as a strategy to give verisimilitude to his stories: "If you say there are elephants flying in the sky, people are not going to believe you. But if you say there are four hundred and twenty-five elephants fighting in the sky, people will probably believe you" (Roper, 2009, p. 14). In *Wings*, García Márquez uses phrases like "On the third day of rain" (1968/1996, p. 186) or the "world had been sad since Tuesday" (p. 186) and makes the improbable seem probable. Other magical realists, e.g., Isabel Allende, also employ the same technique to give an air of authenticity to their narratives. For instance, in her *Spirits*, Nívea had given birth to the "fifteen children, [of Servo del Valle] of whom eleven were still alive" (Allende, 1982/1986, p. 3) and the undesirable incident, which had brought a lot of humiliation to the family name, in the church had happened on a "Holy Thursday" (p. 3), are significant in the above context. Garcia Márquez uses numbers to make the improbable seem probable. For instance, the rains after the Banana Plantation Massacre start and continue for "four years, eleven months and two days" (1967/1970, p. 320). Colonel Gerinaldo Márquez had "escaped three attempts on his life [and] survived five wounds" (p. 249) till his death. Having gone to find her lost son, Ursula comes back "Suddenly, almost five months after her disappearance" (p. 36). Making the ground for a story that concerns itself with both the marvellous and the realistic, the repetition of certain names and incidents makes things even more plausible creates a deep impact on the minds of the readers. While narrating something extraordinary, when the latter are exposed to certain references from history like Nostradamus etc., the reading appears to be more authentic. Even when certain plain incidents are explained without making exaggerations, these happenings become more likely as far as the readers and the world within fiction is concerned. The number three is related to witchcraft and superstition – like the three Mora sisters in *The House of the Spirits* (Allende, 1982/1986) and the three witches of *Macbeth* (Shakespeare, 1606) In *Solitude*, it is after "three days of useless searching [that Colonel Aureliano

whether moral or physical. The reader can feel the velvetiness of the shining stones by just visualising them lying at the bottom of the river full of clear water. The protest here lies in the matter-of-fact kind of beauty of an atmosphere that has now been developed into a battle field with Colonel Aureliano Buendia facing the firing squad. Apparently, the history of Macondo follows a linear development of events. Beginning with its biblical-styled founding, Macondo is gradually integrated into of the rest of the world. It sees the military struggles in the form of civil wars and is eventually invaded by modern technological advancemt. Civilisation makes its way through the previously Edenic society of Macondo and the journey of the so-called progress ends with the decadence of the societal fabric. Towards the end of the story, Macondo sees a complete physical destruction and is faded from the face of earth. García Márquez connects definite points in history to weave the plot, e.g. a definite beginning with the exploration of Sir Francis Drake and continuing until the banana workers' go on strike to demand their rights. But this apparently linear history of the place inscribes circles within its movement from one event to another. Úrsula, the central female character, is constantly haunted by the idea that time progresses in a circular movement and events keep on repeating themselves. Pilar Ternera observes that "the history of the family was a

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Buendía, along with a group of well-equipped men,] returned to the village" (Márquez, 1967/1970, p. 35) subsequent to a failure in finding a route that connects Macondo to the outside world. In order to get rid of the nothingness resulted from the insomnia plague, the people of Macondo "worked so hard that soon they had nothing else to do and they could be found at three o'clock in the morning . . . counting the notes in the waltz of the clock" (p. 46). Colonel Aureliano Buendía happens to attempt seven revolts other than the first armed uprising on the western border" (p. 148). Magical Realism comes into play with the confident use of certain numbers, the repetition of various incidents, and the narration of extraordinary happenings without preparing the minds of the readers and in so plain a way that the latter do not take the former as extraordinary. The unusual becomes usual. People believe in such happenings just like they have believed in the presence of sun, moon, air and earth.

machine with unavoidable repetitions, a turning wheel that would have gone on spilling into eternity were it not for the progressive and irremediable wearing of the axle" (p. 402). For both Melquíades the gypsy and Jose Arcadio Segudo,

> ". . . it was always March there and always Monday, and then they understood that Jose Arcadio Buendia was not as crazy as the family said, but that he was the only one who had enough lucidity to sense the truth of the fact that time also stumbled and had accidents and could therefore splinter and leave an eternalized fragment in a room." (*Solitude* 1967/1970, p. 355)

Past, present, and future all exist simultaneously, and with time flowing out in every direction, the very opening sentence of the novel is the manifestation of the idea of a circular nature of time. *Solitude* (1967/1970) has many layers, as it has many stories of numerous characters, with striking resemblance in their names. The stories often go parallel to each other, as if they coexisted all at once. The simultaneous existence of both an 'apparent' linear time and an 'obvious' non-linear one is an example of the use of magical realism at the novel's structural level. 'The non-linear movement of time, on the one hand, helps the reader develop an ability to consciously compare the peaceful societies of the early days of Macondo with what it has become for Colonel Aureliano Buendia when he is waiting to be shot by a firing squad; and, on the other, when the reader unconsciously compares the peace and serenity of the village with the real Latin American world. The tone of protest gets more pinching when the idea of pre-historicism is reinforced by a description of the world "so recent that many things lacked names" (p. 1) in a world where innocence prevailed and people lived happily without any grief and fear. The description of how various scientific inventions destroyed the 'prehistoric' society of Macondo projects the author's disapproval of the

defilement of the social structure not only of Colombia, but the whole region. Melquíades brings some ordinary things from the world of science to Macondo, where these ordinary things are taken as the most extraordinary ones; it is extremely magical for the Latin American mind to see certain scientific miracles happening around, just as the myths, culture and traditions of Latin America are something alien to the developed world. The trivialness of the outcome of the import of scientific equipment in the Macondian society in a magical-real manner is also an expression of protest against the violation of the innocence of the place. The two magical ingots brought to the town by the old gypsy amaze people on the basis of the ability of the former to make the "pots, pans tongs, and braziers tumble down from their places and beams creak from the desperation of nails and screws trying to emerge" (p. 2). An oxford coma separating ordinary household objects capable of being attracted to the magnet from the extraordinary piece of cloth worn by women as an undergarment which cannot be drawn towards the magnet, add to the triviality of the nature of an imposed version of science rather than a need-based invention. The usefulness of science as compared to the local myth has also been challenged to assert that such exhibitions of European and North American scientific marvels are insignificant for an indigenously rich and self-sustaining culture, i.e. Latin American one. An exposure to various scientific inventions, brought from the outside world, made people confused to an extent that they "found themselves lost in their own streets" (p. 17). Such technological and ideological bombardment ruined the indigenousness of people, leaving them without any identity. The satire is even stronger when the patriarch of the society sets out to explore the surroundings for the possible presence of treasures, but finds nothing of importance. However, the armour that he is able to dig out from the marshy earth gives an obvious clue of the region being destroyed and then re-established after several colonial

adventures. The attempts of the Colonel to find new routes that may connect this rather (pre)mature society to the rest of the world work on both intellectual and practical grounds. Melquíades' gift of some Portuguese maps and instruments of navigation also tell about the attempts the Portuguese had been making to colonise the region. With the scattered references to the pirate Sir Francis Drake, Queen Elizabeth, the Spanish galleon, etc., the author leaves the readers to decide for themselves the responsible forces for deterioration in the primitive Macondian society. The effect is even enhanced when the reader learns that despite a heightened level of accuracy in both theory and practice/reasoning and experimentation of Jose Arcadio Buendía – not unlike Marlowe's Dr. Faustus – is unable to achieve the desired degree of accomplishment.

The government officials manipulated history to bag the benefits and cast the rest into the sea of oblivion. The author highlights that if a lie is repeated in a certain way, everyone is prone to believe it as if it were truth. It is the same way authorities throughout the Third World use propaganda-tactics to achieve their vested interests.

> The official version, repeated a thousand times and mangled out all over the country by every means of communication the government found at hand, was finally accepted: there were no dead, the satisfied workers had gone back to their families, and the banana company was suspending all activity until the rains stopped. (p. 315)

The way gringos exploited the resources of the nation was scientific and well-planned to carry far-reaching effects. By diverting the river to bring its waters to the plantations and laying a rail road to transport the rich resources of the place to their cities and countries (Márquez, 2003/2004), Aracataca, Catenaga and the other indigenous towns

and villages and their innocent inhabitants, who were never known to the outside world, got exploited. Perhaps, the single sentence by Dr. Alfredo Barboza summarized an entire life for García Márquez: "You cannot imagine what this town has gone through" (p. 26).

The thin line drawn between the real town of Aracataca or Cataca and the fictional world of Macondo enhances the overall sentiments of disagreement between the author's desire to enjoy a life without troubled realities and memories of a violent past. Also, García Márquez wants to communicate to the reader that when the utterly magical becomes impossible, the ugly reality can be confronted with the help of adding a tinge of beautiful magic to it. Among numerous incidents that resemble each other in both the worlds of fiction and reality is that of García Márquez's memories regarding his uncles with cross of ashes on their foreheads. He mentions:

> I had one of the great fantasies of those years one day when a group of men came to the house, dressed alike in gaiters and spurs, and all of them with a cross of ash drawn on their foreheads. They were the sons fathered by the colonel across the entire length of the Province during the War of a Thousand Days, and they had come from their towns almost a month late to congratulate him on his birthday. Before coming to the house they had heard Ash Wednesday Mass, and the cross Father Angarita drew on their foreheads seemed like a supernatural emblem whose mystery would pursue me for years, even after I became familiar with the liturgy of Holy Week. (p. 66)

Whether it is the cross of ashes of virginity carried by Amaranta on her forehead (Márquez, 1967/1970, p. 264) or the cross of ashes on the foreheads of the eighteen sons of Colonel Aureliano Buendia who were killed by the government one by one in

the most brutal way (pp. 380-81) and the real sons of Márquez's grandfather, the thin demarcation between reality and fantasy becomes even thin and ultimately invisible, making the fantastic what is real.

The prayer of Ursula regarding the terrible fate of the miserable town embodies the intensity of protest of the author against the way modernity brought by the Americans ruined their social, cultural, economic and political life;

> "Dear Lord", she begged, "make us poor again the way we were. We founded this town so that you will not collect for this squandering in the other life." (p. 197)

Overwhelmed by the grim undertone of exploitation, *The Incredible and Sad Tale of Innocent Erendira and her Heartless Grandmother* (1972) has also been set in an isolated place that resembles Macondo (or in other words, Aracataca) in almost all respects. When the reader comes across the narration of the incident of killing of the Amadises, s/he is at once reminded of the unpredictable atmosphere in *Solitude*, where murder is a normal thing.

> The enormous mansion of moonlike concrete lost in the solitude of the desert [that] trembled down to its foundations with the first attack [. . .] but Erendira and her grandmother were used to the risk of the wild nature (Márquez, 1972/1996, p. 1)

The enormous mansion of moonlike concrete carries the same magical tone as the "twenty adobe houses, built on the bank of a river of a clear water that ran along a bed of polished stones, which were white and enormous, like prehistoric eggs" (Márquez, 1967/1970, p. 1). It can be rightly assumed that the mansion is one of the twenty adobe

houses mentioned in *Solitude* (1967/1970). Intense civil war is yet another point of common experience in Cataca and Macondo. The world of the colonel in *Colonel* (1968/1974), who did nothing but wait for "nearly sixty years – since the end of the last civil war" (p. 1) presents the terrible picture of an Aracataca that is still suffering from the aftermaths of colonialism. Whether it is *Solitude* or *Colonel*, *Erendira* or *Funeral*, the way these works by García Márquez share the same setting of Macondo/Aracataca and the story of struggle and resistance against colonialism and its after-effects, it shows to what extent he is enchanted by his magical-real memories that his present always revolves around Macondo where he spent his early years.

Having established (in the previous chapters) that the technique of Magical Realism is relevant to the postcolonial reality and the subsequent voice of protest raised against the ways in which (post)colonialism has told upon the socio-political and economic systems of the (previously-)colonized nations, the coming section of the thesis explores how and in what ways magical realism has been helpful to García Márquez in registering protest against exploitation, a major form of social injustice.

Chapter 5

MAGICAL REALISM, SOCIAL PROTEST AND ANTI-COLONIAL SENTIMENTS: *ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE*

A close examination of his work reveals that García Márquez treats colonialism as the most significant form of exploitation. Considering it a contributory factor towards colonialism, he is openly hostile to his country's politics and is critical of the power game going on between the Conservatives and the Liberals, as this power game leads to exploitation and ultimately towards anarchy. Its after-effects (or Postcoloniality) have been one of his major concerns. More precisely, he has been very critical of the colonial forces' act of subjugating a nation in order to exploit/(mis)use its social, political, economic, material and intellectual resources. Deeply embedded in the situation arising from the colonial excursions of Spain and North/English America in the South/Latin America, Márquez's work cannot be fully understood without reading it in the context of the (post-)colonial experience of the people of this region. From the exploitation of the Black community in the form of 17th century slave-trade to the infamous Banana Plantation Massacre in 1928 and the miserable condition of postcolonial Colombia, Márquez's fiction is replete with instances of exploitation at the hands of colonists. He judges the arrival of the rail road and modern technology to be a curse and a source of corruption for the indigenous people not because he did not want them to become modern, but for the very reason that the colonial masters used technological revolution to exploit the resources of the so-called non-civilized people rather than to revolutionize the lives of the indigenous population.

García Márquez's recourse to magical realism has a definite and visible political edge and his work not only makes the reader question the absolute nature of reality, it makes him re-evaluate and ultimately question the authenticity of a politically motivated philosophy that makes an ordinary individual think in a certain way

(Swanson, 2010). On the basis of the close reading of his work, it would be appropriate to hold that he was able to raise such strong protest against colonialism only because he chose to write in the tradition of magical realism. His writings smack of his firm belief in magical realism. In other words, through the device of magical realism, one can make a person on both individual and collective level believe in anything that is communicated with enough conviction. His multi-layered fiction can be interpreted on several levels of meanings, an evaluation and analysis of Márquez's work on the level of criticism of the process of colonization and its effects on the indigenous land and people makes it interesting and yet useful in terms of a positive contribution to the society; particularly, when the Latin American region constitutes a major as well as representative part of the Third World. A journalist turned fiction writer, Márquez's writings reflect a blend of journalistic and fictive bent of mind in that he highlights the plain instances of social injustice in his fiction (Taylor, 2010). Having "strong political and historical views" (Bell, 2010, p. 186) embedded in Latin America, his disapproval of the colonial practices can be taken as a prime example of it.

The door of García Márquez's magical-real world of *Solitude* opens in the newly established village of twenty adobe houses. The village is called Macondo. It is a place far off from the rest of the civilization, as the people living here are quite ignorant of their surroundings; they have no knowledge of a route that may connect them to the outer world. The isolation of the community has been emphasized when Jose Arcadio Buendia, the leader of the 'prehistoric' Macondian community, "was completely ignorant of the geography of the region" (Márquez, 1967/1970, p.10). Being the leader of his community, Jose Arcadio Buendia was bound to feel the agony of the whole tribe on living a life of isolation. His desperate efforts, in the form of scientific experiments and expeditions, to find a route that may connect Macondo to the rest of

the world are directly proportional to the collective agony of the population of the village. If on one side of the village lay un-crossable great swamps, the other was invisible north. In fact, for a considerable period of time he keeps on trying to discover any routes that could connect them to the rest of the world, butthe expeditions prove to be fruitless. Magical realism plays its role in highlighting the graveness of the situation in the (post)colonial context right from the beginning. Macondo's geographical location and the failed expeditions of Jose Arcadio Buendia to connect the village to the outside world hint at that fact that the village is removed from the Centre and forms what is called periphery. Because the setting is plain and realistic, the magical events, occurring without any prior make-up of the readers, do not let the latter challenge their authenticity. In the first place, Márquez raises a voice of protest against the Spanish incursions aimed to colonize Latin America, whereas, in the second, he condemns the North American advances in the South to capture and subsequently make use of the resources of the latter. There are mentions of Sir Francis Drake, the 16th Century English sea captain, who is known as 'the pirate Sir Francis Drake' (p. 19) in Latin America on account of his expeditions to exploit the Spanish American world in number of ways. According to Bennezet (n.d., p. 48-49), Francis Drake and John Hawkins, carried out the third English slave-trading expeditions to make fortunes through the abduction and transportation of West African people, and then exchanging them for high-value goods. As a result of the brutalities of the colonisers in the region, people suffered from certain physical as well as mental diseases. Both kinds of trauma can be observed in Ursula Iguarin's great-great-grandmother's sufferings on both physical and mental level when the Pirate, Sir Francis Drake, attacked Riohacha in the sixteenth century.

> She became so frightened with the ringing of alarm bells and the firing of cannons that she lost control of her nerves and sat down on a lighted stove. The burns changed her into a useless wife for the rest of her days. She could only sit on one side, cushioned by pillows, and something strange must have happened to her way of walking, for she never walked again in public. She gave up all kinds of activity, obsessed with the notion that her body gave off a singed odor. (Márquez, 1967/1970, p. 19)

On the one hand, García Márquez makes the description of the terrified lady even more gruesome by mentioning that "she did not dare fall asleep lest she dream of the English and their ferocious attack dogs as they came through the windows of her bedroom to submit her to shameful tortures with their red-hot irons" (pp. 19-20). On the other, the same description exhibits humour to such extent where the reader feels like laughing in the middle of tears. A feature of magical realism, humour plays an important role not only in making the reading of the text interesting, but adding to the irony of a situation. An apparently humorous detail of the effects of the attack on one of the prominent inhabitants of the place, Ursula Iguarin, leads the reader to think what would have been happened to the ordinary men and women of the village.

As a magical realist, García Márquez deliberately omits certain events and descriptions noticed by the reader. One of the defining features of magical realism is authorial reticence. The author withholds certain information to be worked at by the reader's mind. These gaps and pauses play an important role in the context of García Márquez's social protest. As a work of fiction need not be "a deviation from history but a concentration of its meaning" (Bell, 2010, p. 189), certain moments in history inspire the writers of the coming generations. They comment on such moments and by doing so endeavour to re-establish truth/reality out of a "lived experience of history" (p. 189)

from their particular perspective. The significance of such writings is two-pronged. On the one hand, such writings remind the present generation of long-forgotten events, and on the other, the re-construction of historical events give the author an opportunity to pass his (and his generation and culture's) judgement on it. Fiction has been the most significant of all genres in this context, as it allows the author to give descriptions of certain events in such detail that is the province of fiction only. Like the rest of the clans of writers, e.g. realists, naturalists, or surrealists, reconstruction of history has been an important subject of the writers of the boom movement, who found magical realism, as a narrative technique, well-suited to give their particular views on past events. These writers especially challenged the official readings of certain historical moments in the course of time. Hegerfeldt (2005, p. 63) acknowledged that "a considerable number of magic realist works may also be categorized as "historiographic metafiction" or "fantastic histories"" that effectively challenge the Western epistemology. A re-writing of the official versions of historyoffers substitute accounts that sometimes are altogether different from the real ones. By telling the story from the perspective of the oppressed, they reveal the extent to which history never consists of purely factual and impartial accounts, but serves the interests of those who write it.

An abstract and, thus, unperceivable entity, reality is a mere question of perspective. As a general observation, something belonging to the past and having its roots deep in the memory seems to be more reliable than something which belongs either to contemporary times or the near-past. Latin American history, and in fact the history of the whole world, can be challenged on the basis of the abovementioned assumption. Especially, when a little fact is mingled with a lot of fiction, or some ordinary incident is narrated with a deliberate incorporation of myth, or the incident placed and set in the past, the whole juxtaposition seems to have an air of authenticity

around it; and the fictitious seems to be reliable, plausible and true. When the entity of the real is upset within the realm of narrative, it becomes questionable outside the boundaries of fiction as well.

As compared to the other boom writers, e.g. Cortazar and Vargas Llosa, García Márquez has chronicled the history of violence in Latin America very eloquently throughout his literary career (Vela, 2006). With a subtle use of the technique of magical realism, he is able to re-create Colombian history to protest against the policies of the colonial masters and the way capitalism told upon the socio-political and economic structure of the region. His epic novel *Solitude* presents a synthesis of historical events in symbolic episodes of exploitation of the natives at the hands of the American banana planters. The capitalist exploitation has been exposed by the author in such episodes. The reader finds most of his fiction set in an imaginary town of Macondo that stands allegorically for Colombian history in particular and Latin American in general. The way Márquez used Macondo as a place where most of his fiction originates attaches extraordinary importance to this place and urges the reader/researcher to explore this in detail.

Being postcolonial in nature, *Solitude* (1967/1970) is an embodiment of a compacted/concentrated version of history. The non-linear time format of the novel stands allegorical for the lengthy process of colonization and how it affected public and private lives of people. A major subject of the novel is the way colonizers established a distorted version of history and used it as a weapon to damage the identity of the local population to affect the general perception regarding the way the former adapted to overcome or suppress the latter. Just as Ursula becomes heavily disturbed because of the concert of so many different birds that she "would plug her ears with bee wax so as not to lose her sense of reality" (p. 10), García Márquez and his countrymen are deeply

concerned to preserve their history lest the reality gets lost in the noise of the colonists and the conservative government. The colonisers' attempts to achieve the aforementioned objectives include the erasure of certain events from the history and the projection of a fabricated version of 'truth', imposed on the indigenous people in the form of books taught at school, college and university level. As the result, the young minds began to accept a forged version of history. García Márquez's fictional work is an effort to neutralize such attempts of the colonisers to use history to safeguard their vested interests.

It would not be wrong to say that García Márquez's fiction reveals that a deliberate attempt on his part has been made to re-tell the modern history of Colombia. One of the prime examples of his use of magical realism as an aide to challenge the official/colonial versions of history is the insomnia plague episode and the incident of banana plantation massacre. The troubled history of the region has been synthesized through the characters' overwhelming struggle against an unfriendly and unsympathetic environment which establishes an amalgamation of politico-social and economic tribulations. It is these evils to tell upon the general environment of the continent and ultimately connect the novel to the Latin American condition.

As a consequence of colonialism, political violence and repression affected ordinary life in Latin America. Embedded in the innumerable civil wars, colonial incursions, and the stagnant political condition of the region, the turbulent history of Colombia has been made the central theme of his novels, e.g. *Colonel* (Márquez, 1968/1974), *Demons* (Márquez, 2004/2006), etc. It is pertinent to note that being a Latin American product, the technique of magical realism corresponds to the region's violent history and acts as "a mirror of its surreal politics and the disorienting influence that politics has had on people's daily lives" (Phoenixzeze, 2011). The modern Colombian

history reflects a mixture of the catastrophes such as Spanish colonisation, dictatorial rule, and violence brought to the nation and a substantial quantity of folklore about the way the local population established a resistance against them. A propensity to mythologize such real events of struggle by mingling these with fantastic stories enabled them to create a new kind of truth that is appropriate to the very situation they breathe in; a fantastic-real truth. As a magical realist, García Márquez tried to portray the version of reality from the perspective of the 'other' by mingling history and Literature, truth and lies in an inseparable way. The intersecting boundaries of lies and truth make the magical real world of fiction more confusing and uncertain. It is this uncertainty that makes it attractive enough to lead the readers to believe in this amalgamation.

The manifestation of disapproval of colonialism has been found in instances reported in the novel: the introduction of the modern ways as compared to the traditional ones, episodes of violence, comments upon the dichotomy of class, the consequences of moral degeneration, etc. Magical realism plays a pivotal role in highlighting such instances of social protest, sometimes in the form of hyperbole and the carnivalesque language juxtaposed with happenings of serious nature; and sometimes by portraying the serious incidents in a highly plain and simple language. Throughout *Solitude* (1967/1970), colonial excursions have been protested against and it has been highlighted that it was colonialism that caused not only the endless civil wars, military repression, labour strikes and the ensuing massacres in the Macondian society, but it has been badly affecting the psychological condition of the people to the extent that they forgot everything and lost their sleep. The author makes the readers realize that science, which is thought to be of a miraculous nature, has been used as a tool to subjugate nations. The overwhelming biblical tone of the work is an example of

the use of magical realism that operates at the narrative level to enhance the idea that everything is possible and plausible in the world. The biblical land of Macondo is violated by the reaches of external world. The magical modern, scientific, and technological inventions have been taken as a source of defilement of the purity of the unadulterated land of Macondo. Not unlike other Spanish settlements, Macondo is founded on a river bank, a place where there were so many new things, birds, trees to be discovered that they had to name them in order to avoid confusion. "Science had eliminated distance" (Márquez, 1967/1970, p. 3), but had created that of another kind, horrible and crude. The code of the primitive society of Macondo – unity and an acute social consciousness – was broken now. The revelation that the "earth is round like an orange" (p. 5) and not flat like a loaf, is symbolic for the propensity towards a life full of isolation from each other. They were happy that through influence of the external world, "man will be able to see what is happening in anyplace in the world without leaving his own house" (p.3), but they did not know that it would be fatal for their social life. The way García Márquez explains various scientific inventions and revelations is important in the context of the use of magical realism. He uses extremely plain language to explain the modern devices. For example, the way two metal ingots attracted ordinary things towards them; and the telescope and the magnifying glass (pp. 2-3)

The indigenous ways were to be kept safe and secure as compared to the modern ones. For example, Jose Arcadio Buendia finds nothing significant despite his desperate attempts to discover something of value; instead of finding some treasure of gold with the help of Melquíades' aforementioned magical ingots, "the only thing he succeeded in doing was to unearth a suit of fifteenth-century armour" (p. 2); and that too eaten up by rust. With the help of the latest discovery of the Jews of Amsterdam, the telescope, they could only amuse themselves by watching a gypsy woman an arm's length away.

The magnifying glass not only burnt Jose Arcadio Buendia, but brought him disgrace in front of the authorities, as his experiment of showing its effects on the enemy troops got failed. All such episodes and incidents manifest a negative effect of technological revolution as compared to the primordial and biblical Macondian society. The ironical undertone is constantly at work when the novelist efforts to unveil what the inhabitants of the Third World countries really get from the bombardment of the Western technology. It is true that the colonial masters established systems of communications at their own cost by building hundreds of miles long railway lines and roads to connect far-off and unreachable places. But, the hidden motive behind putting the Third World on the so-called way of progress was just confined to the places where they wanted to establish military bases or where there were no means to transport raw material. The rest of the places, devoid of these attractions, remained isolated and underdeveloped. Though the patriarch of which was always engaged in efforts to find a route that could connect it to technologically advanced and rich places. Macondo too remained a remote village until the colonial masters found some attraction in it in the form of the extraordinary ability of its marshy land to grow bananas.

Latin American writers have responded in their own manner to the numerous ways of interpreting the world and events they are immediately exposed to. One of the examples of such responses is the insomnia plague episode in García Márquez's *Solitude*, which serves as a metaphor to comment upon the imposed version of reality by the colonists or the governmental authorities under their influence. It is of importance that the plague invades the Macondians, ultimately leaving them without any history. From a tribulation of the people of Macondo, the insomnia plague emerges as a metaphor to manifest the disgust of the colonized regarding the distortion of historical facts by the colonists. In the broader sense, through the metaphor of this

disease, the author challenges the (so-called) absolute reality and efforts to emphasize the very subjectivity of what is supposed to be the real. Considered to be "a powerful form of indirect political resistance" (Bowers, 2004, p. 39), magical realism plays an important role in building a paradigm of protest in form of insomnia plague episode, as well.

Albeit in earlier times, plagues used to destroy human lives on a large scale; the reason behind García Márquez's naming and treating this disease as a (magical-) plague is extraordinary. The very word 'plague' establishes an entity directly derived from the distant human past and has its roots deep in the oral/folklore tradition. Had the author given it some modern name, e.g. some kind of viral infection, etc., most probably he would not have been able to create so powerful a magical impact of his protest upon his readers; the plague is clearly thought to have magical causes and effects, but the Macondians always find medicinal cures. The voice of protest becomes even louder if the whole episode is seen in the backdrop of the traditional Greek or Sophoclean conception of plague, i.e. the whole society has to suffer because of a single sinner, even if the sin is committed unconsciously. In a society where people are already forgetting the centuries old traditions of Chivalry and honour to transcend into a world that is new and modern in all respects and where people are suffering from injustice, one can easily anticipate a plague to come and sweep away the entire population. Here, the plague's magical causes and effects can be directly referred to the guilty conscience of society at large and that of an individual, i.e. Jose Arcadio Buendia. The way Prudencio Aguilar is killed on a petty issue of so-called honour tells a great deal about the general perception regarding honour, which is not found in tolerating each other, but in killing the one accused of causing dishonour. By killing Prudencio Aguilar, Jose Arcadio Buendia was able to silence one voice only; the idea of his impotence remained

there in other people. Having realized it, but only after killing his enemy, the latter dared to consummate his marriage with Ursula Iguarin. The sudden disconnection from their past left people startled and identity-less in a whole new world, where there is so much that has yet to be done. But the plague has other implications, as well. The Guajiro Indian woman and her brother are part of Macondo because they had to flee from their home in search of refuge from the disastrous effects of plague. The plague of modernity acts like a viral infection to kill the past of a tribe, rich in tradition and culture, so rapidly that they are left without any memory or identity. It is the extraordinarily factual approach of the townspeople which makes them believe that the plague is a kind of contagious disease for which no cure has been discovered and that can only be escaped by the avoidance of an infected individual or his/her things.

The way plague arrives in the town has enormous significance in the context of social protest. A Guajiro Indian woman, "who had arrived in the town with a brother in flight from a plague of insomnia that had been scourging their tribe for several years" (Márquez, 1967/1970, p. 38), is the carrier of this viral infection. Magical Realism comes into play when the reader is told that the insomnia plague is the result of a viral infection. The connection the author established between the realistic and the fantastic makes the reader accepts the fantastic as common and normal. It is significant that the plague first affected some other people of some other nation, i.e. the Indians, and then reached Macondo, which was a place so innocent and prehistoric that even it lacked the names of the things. The moment Visitacion, the Indian woman, learns that the plague has already affected young Rebeca, she becomes "terrified and exhausted by her fate" (p. 44) and desperately tries to warn Jose Arcadio Buendía about the disease "whose threat had obliged her and her brother to exile themselves forever from an age-old kingdom where they had been prince and princess" (pp. 44-5). But, Jose Arcadio

Buendía's response was disappointing to her, as it was totally against the ferocious nature of the disease.

> "If we don't ever sleep again, so much the better," Jose Arcadio Buendía said in good humor. "That way we can get more out of life". But the Indian woman explained the most fearsome part of the sickness of insomnia was not the impossibility of sleeping, for the body did not feel any fatigue at all, but its inexorable evolution toward a more critical manifestation: a loss of memory (p. 45).

The inability to realize the devastating nature of the plague on the part of Jose Arcadio Buendia is similar to the response of the colonized throughout the world towards the colonial incursions (e.g. Latin America, Sub-continent, and Africa). At first, the technological revolution is celebrated and the colonizers are recognised as saviours, but later, when the noise of revolution and modernity sweep away the indigenous culture, language, resources, etc., the latter realize the severity of the situation. There are voices to warn people regarding the gravity of the state of affairs, such as the warnings of the Indian woman in *Solitude* (1967/1970). As Robinson (2006, p. 250) put it,

> The Indian woman connects the plague to herself and her people. This plague is apparently no indiscriminate bug, but a specifically targeted virus attacking her tribe. She warns the town of the symptoms but Jose Arcadio Buendía reacts with characteristic self-assurance: he concludes that it is just a superstition and not to be taken seriously. However, several weeks later, the family notices that they cannot fall asleep.

On the one hand, the indigenous culture disappears in the noise of drums and kettles of modernism brought by the gringos; and on the other, the erasure of certain historical events and the distortion of history, at the hands of the colonial masters, has been highlighted in the form of incidents like that of the banana plantation massacre. The insomnia plague episode is the author's way of protest against the colonial version of the so-called historical reality (i.e. the region is uncivilized and inferior in culture and is dependent upon the Centre to become educated and thus economically/culturally developed) imposed on the Latin American world. Visitacion, Cataure and Rebeca represent the real inhabitants of the region, who have been deprived of their past and subsequently their true identity. The Spanish conquerors not only invaded their lands, but imposed their language, culture, religion and tradition on them. The invasion was so intense that the original inhabitants of Latin America fell prey to a state of utter confusion and depravity. The concept of mulatto (as discussed in chapter 8 on slavery) is important in this respect. The Europeanization of a whole race became the chief goal of the colonizers. García Márquez's use of magical realism is not unlike dramatic irony. According to Hegerfeldt (2005, p. 214), when

> . . . the characters' rejection of events as fantastic is contradicted by the reader's knowledge that they are true, the resulting tension underscoring the events' outrageousness. Though rejection and rationalization differ from dramatic irony in that the characters are not necessarily ignorant of what is going on, but may merely be dissembling, the strategies resemble dramatic irony in that the text sets up two contradictory perspectives to make its horrible point.

When the plague fully takes the inhabitants of Macondo in its clutches and they forget the names of even ordinary things of everyday use, they paste name-signs onto

almost every object they have. While establishing that reality is not absolute, as is generally thought, but may have a number of perspectives, García Márquez takes a firm position on the attempted cultural invasion by the outsiders. It was Aureliano Buendia who conceives the formula of how to protect his people from getting completely mad. "With an inked brush, he marked everything with its name: *table*, *chair*, *clock*, *door*, *wall*, *bed*, *pan* [. . .] *cow*, *goat*, *pig*, *hen*, *cassava*, *caladium*, *banana*" (Márquez, 1967/1970, p. 48). By mixing magical beliefs (e.g. belief in extraordinary concepts and happenings like spirits and ghosts, flying carpets, angels landing in the courtyard, a presence of myth and magic in the daily affairs, etc.)and postmodern ideas regarding language (e.g. the ideas regarding language, knowledge and power; and the uncertainty of the relation of sign to the signified and signifier), the author emphasized the notion of poststructuralist theory – of the place and power of language in creation – by depicting incidents to propagate language as a source of bringing forth reality. García Márquez seems to be relating that it is language that makes our abstract beliefs and ideas to form a concrete world-view.

The arrival of insomnia plague in the House of Buendia stands symbolic for the deliberate attempts of the governmental authorities to erase the local culture and ways from the collective memory of the Colombian nation. Through the insomnia plague episode, the author registered his protest against the manipulated version of history. The massacre of the workers of the banana plantation is ultimately made to sink into the sea of oblivion, which denotes a corrupt government's deliberate attempt to manipulate reality to form a shield of complete ignorance. The whole episode, as portrayed by García Márquez in *Solitude* (1967/1970), becomes a means to reflect the a directed or manipulated reality by a corrupt government, until there remains not even a single believable version of events, but just what can be called an amalgamation of

some conflicting self-contradictory accounts. It is such accounts without any evidence that the people of Macondo are left with. The notion of jumbled time equally contributes to the central idea behind the insomnia plague episode. Every single character had had a unique experience of time that is extraordinarily of a no-linear nature. Disruptions of linear time on so large a scale is of peculiar significance, as when looked at in the backdrop of the self-repeating genealogy of the Buendia family, insomnia plague, the vanishing of the town itself from the history, and the attempts – on part of Aureliano Buendia the first – to invent a memory machine is a direct attempt on part of the author to attach a higher level of importance to be attached to history.

Perhaps the most important factor which drove the colonial masters to colonize different lands and subjugate people was the economic one. The colonizers exploited the natural resources of colonies on so huge a scale that the colonies were literally drained of the raw materials they naturally produced. Due to the rapid process of industrialization, Europe, especially England, France, and America were in great need of raw materials like cocoa, palm oil, peanuts, cotton goods, tea, indigo, etc. In order to meet these needs, these powerful countries colonized a significant part of the world and made sure not to let go of any opportunity to exploit the natural resources of the colonized lands. Colombia, being a part of the world that is full of natural resources, was equally exploited by the colonists. In the beginning of the 20th century, North America exerted a powerful influence on Colombia, which is reflected throughout its history. In the beginning of the 20th century America started its interference in the affairs of Panama in the guise of assistance regarding the matters of succession of the latter. But the assistance was extended to the coming decades. Prior to the 20th century, the economic condition of Colombia depended upon the plantation of the banana, which was considered as the country's chief export. Bananas however were replaced by other

natural products like petroleum, minerals, coffee, cocoa, etc. On his way back to Aracataca, his native place, many years later, García Márquez recalls that,

> The Sierra Nevada de Santa María and its white peaks seemed to come right down to the Banana plantations on the other side of the river. From there you could see the Arawak Indians moving in lines like ants along the cliffs of the sierra, carrying sacks of ginger on their backs and chewing pellets of coca to make life bearable. As children we dreamed of parched, burning streets. For the heat was so implausible, in particular at siesta time, that the adults complained as if it were a daily surprise. From the day I was born I had heard it said, over and over again, that the rail lines and camps of the United Fruit Company had been built at night because during the day the sun made the tools too hot to pick up. (2003/2004, p. 5)

The passage is important as it carries a feeling of disapproval of the exploitation of the indigenous population and their resources. The Arawak Indians provided a much cheaper and problem-free replacement of labour, as the indigenous labourers could be paid in the form of vouchers usable only at the Company's stores and they did not resist either (Márquez, 1967/1970).

Based in the United States, the United Fruit Company (UFC) invested huge sums of money in the business of bananas in Colombia. Not unlike the East India Company that entered India in the guise of traders only to occupy the whole Sub-Continent and remained in possession of the rule for more than two hundred years, the UFC gradually assumed full control of the Banana Zone – an area in Colombia specifically suitable for banana plantations. The UFC exploited the resources of the area as much as it could. It adopted a particular strategy for this purpose; the company

would enter an area, build a company town, attract workers, and pay them in scrip redeemable only in the stores established by the company itself. On recognising that either the land is not that productive due to over-cultivation or the workers are being unionized, the UFC would leave the project and seek another place for banana plantations. The same episode would be repeated at the new banana plantation. It was this "false splendor of the banana company" (Márquez, 2003/2004, p. 62) that made the deprived workers even poorer and gradually a strong hatred developed against the UFC's administration. It was October 1928, when a number of people working on the banana plantations of the UFC went on strike. They demanded proper sanitary facilities and cash salaries. At last the catastrophe occurred when a huge crowd gathered in the central plaza of Cienaga to protest against the atrocities of the company. While the workers were demonstrating for their rights, troops, who were being paid by the company in the form of cigarettes, beer and other commodities of daily use, opened fire on the crowd. As the result of the incident, more than 1500 people died on the spot while some 3,000 others were left injured. Ironically, the conservative government denied any such occurrence and, as a result the incident was not included in the history (text-)books. While portraying the after-effects of the strike of the banana plantation workers García Márquez employs the device of magical realism by blending history and myth and by presenting events in a non-linear style of time.

> Next to José Arcadio Segundo there was a barefooted woman, very fat, with two children between the ages of four and seven. She was carrying the smaller one and she asked José Arcadio Segundo, without knowing him, if he would lift up the other one so that he could hear better. José Arcadio Segundo put the child on his shoulders. Many years later that child would still tell, to the disbelief of all, that he had seen the lieutenant reading Decree No. 4 of the civil and military

> leader of the province through an old phonograph horn. It had been signed by General Carlos Cortes Vargas and his secretary, Major Enrique García Isaza, and in three articles of eighty words he declared the strikers to be a "bunch of hoodlums" and he authorized the army to shoot to kill. (*Solitude*, 1967/1970, p. 309-10)

The denial of the mass killing of the banana workers, even their very existence, would be taken as 'fiction' by an Anglo-American as compared to the residents of the Third World, as most of the latter live in countries with autocratic governmental system where suppression of human rights is a normal phenomenon.

La massacre de la bananeras [the massacre of banana workers] "has been acknowledged as the worst and most violent repression of the labour movement in Colombia's history" (Darren, 2006, p. 13). Despite the fact that the conservative government made every effort to make people forget the terrible incident of the ruthless killing of innocent labourers, when the election was held in 1930, the conservatives lost their rule over the country. According to Kristal (2005, p. 93), in Márquez's mind a "visceral anti-imperialist sentiment was implanted early, by his grandfather's descriptions of the striking United Fruit Company workers". Much later, the same memory of censuring the incident out of history books provoked Márquez to recreate history through his *Solitude*.

In the second chapter of his *Tale*, García Márquez (2002/2008) recalled his memories regarding the massacre and what happened right after it was carried out. Some critics have doubted the number of those killed in the massacre and thus questioned the authenticity of the description García Márquez has placed before a vast readership in *Solitude* (1967/1970). It has also been alleged that by doing so he has

made a mountain out of a molehill. Admitting that he himself was troubled by a sense of frustration, he investigated the massacre incident and "spoke with survivors and witnesses and searched through newspaper archives and official documents [and reached the conclusion that] truth did not lie anywhere" (Márquez, 2002/2008, p. 62). All the major stakeholders differed from one another;

> Conformists said, in effect, that there had been no deaths. Those at the other extreme affirmed without a quaver in their voices that there had been more than a hundred, that they had been seen bleeding to death on the square, and that they were carried away in a freight train to be tossed into the ocean like rejected bananas. (p. 62)

García Márquez (pp. 14-15) acknowledged how deeply he was affected by the banana plantation massacre:

> It was there, my mother told me that day, where in 1928 the army had killed the undetermined number of banana workers. I knew the event as if I had lived it, having heard it recounted and repeated thousand times by my grandfather from the time I had memory: the soldier reading the decree by which the striking labourers were declared a gang lawbreakers; the three thousand men, women, and children motionless under the savage sun after the officer gave them five minutes to evacuate the square; the order to fire, the clattering machine guns spitting in white-hot bursts, the crowd trapped by panic as it was cut down, little by little, by methodical, insatiable scissors of shrapnel.

Like most of his works, the setting of García Márquez's *Solitude* revolves around a mythological village called Macondo. From the very beginning, it is presented as a place characterized by an extraordinarily peaceful environment, the idiosyncrasies

of its inhabitants and an extraordinary process of evolution. The meaning of the word Macondo in Bantu language (See the previous section for detail) is sufficient to prove the purpose behind Márquez's writing *Solitude* and to what extent he was affected by the incident of Banana Plantation Massacre. Equally important in this regard is that Macondo is the setting of the most of his works. To be precise, it was the name of a banana plantation near Aracataca, his hometown. Márquez (2002/2008, p. 41) stated how the UFC approached the native lands:

> The gringo engineers navigated in rubber boats among drowned mattresses and dead cows. The United Fruit Company, whose artificial system of irrigation were responsible for the unrestrained waters . . .

The language the author used to narrate the arrival of the foreigners smacks of a sense of disappointment. The author reconstructed history and held a pen-protest against the official denial of so catastrophic an incident as the massacre of the poor workers of the banana plantations, when José Arcadio Segundo cannot convince anyone that the massacre of strikers he witnessed had actually occurred.García Márquez's skill lies in the fact that he "presents a supernatural occurrence and then immediately draws the reader's attention to a relatively banal detail" (Warnes, 2005, p. 1-16).

The novel deals with the incidents related to the civil war and is autobiographical in many senses. According to Johnston,

> The seemingly endless civil war portrayed in the novel one can see as directly based on the civil wars in Columbia from 1885 to 1902, and the character of Colonel Aureliano has many affinities with General Rafael Uribe Uribe, under whom the grandfather of the author fought. (March 28, 1995, Public Lecture)

However, the struggles of General Uribe came to an end in 1902, when he signed the Treaty of Neerlandia, an event also portrayed in *Solitude*. The first three decades of the Nineteenth Century witnessed the notorious colonization of Colombia by the UFC, based in Boston, United States of America.

It would not be wrong to say that *Solitude* (1967/1970) is the reconstruction of the history of the evolution of a human settlement, as it tells the story of the six generations of the Buendía family which plays the central role in the novel. Here, like any great epic, the reader comes across a picture of how at a particular moment in human civilization a particular group of people organized its life. It deals with a particular nation's historical reality; in this case, it is the development of the Latin American country of Colombia since its independence from Spain in the early decades of nineteenth century. The seemingly endless civil war portrayed in the novel directly corresponds to the civil wars in Columbia from 1885 to 1902.

García Márquez is quite ironical when he talks about Mr. Herbert and the ulterior motives behind his trip. The underlying ironical tone of the below-mentioned statement tells a great deal about the way the natives have been exploited by the colonisers throughout the globe. Not unlike Caliban in Shakespeare's (1995, p. 38) last play, *The Tempest*, José Aureliano Segundo serves his guest with the highest degree of hospitality, but feels his worst disappointment and the same sense of indignation towards Mr. Herbert – once felt by Caliban for the colonisers of his inherited island – when he is paid back in the form of slavery:

> ...and then I lov'd thee
>
> And show'd thee all the qualities o' th' isle,

The fresh spring, brine-pits, barren place and fertile;

Curs'd be I that did so…

If compared with the United Fruit Company in the novel, Melquiades' character as a trader becomes useful in highlighting the overall protest of the novelist. In Marxist terminology, the anti-proletariat activities of the UFC as a huge enterprise are more clearly visible if seen in the background of the dealings of Melquiades. At the beginning of the novel, Melquiades is reported to be an "honest man" (p. 2) who warns Jose Arcadio Buendia that his magical irons would not work for extracting gold from the bowels of earth. But the latter who "at time did not believe in the honesty of gypsies . . . traded his mule and a pair of goats for the two magnetized ingots" (p. 2). In the coming March, the gypsies came back to Macondo. This time Melquiades brought gigantic magnifying glass as a proof that "Science has eliminated distance" (p.3). Despite the efforts of the gypsy to dissuade him from buying it, Jose Arcadio Buendia again hurriedly traded the magnifying glass for two magnetized ingots and three colonial coins. After the failure of both the intended ideas, he waited for Melquiades for another several years. This time the gypsy "gave him back the doubloons in exchange for the magnifying glass, and he left him in addition some Portuguese maps and several instruments of navigation . . . [along with some notes] so that he would be able to make use of the astrolabe, the compass, and the sextant" (p. 4). What adds to the irony is the difference of the purpose of the trade for both the parties. The intended use of things Jose Arcadio Buendia buys from the gypsy is either destructive or negative, e.g. extracting gold from earth with the magical ingots in order to pave the floors of his house with gold; and using the magnifying glass as a weapon of destruction instead of using it for amusement. The poor workers of the UFC sell their time and efforts to the UFC in order to get themselves food and shelter. In the first case, Jose Arcadio Buendia

fails to achieve what he wants from the trade, yet Melquiades is honest enough to warn him every time the trade takes place between them; while in the second one, the workers of the banana plantation are ensnared by the dishonest company to work for its benefit without having been paid in a desired manner. Melquiades' honesty as a trader and Mr. Herbert's deceitful nature help the reader even more intensely sympathise the condition of the workers of the banana plantation. The hidden agenda of Mr. Herbert to survey Macondo and prepare a feasibility report for the establishment of a banana plantation in the town highlights the UFC's deceitfulness and corruption. The way he hurriedly eats bananas at the house of Buendias without letting anyone even notice is a direct manifestation of the lust of the UFC to consume the indigenous resources.

Mr. Herbert had an air of friendliness around himself as he got mixed up with the townspeople and was enjoying the beauty of the countryside. With his net and a small basket, he was often found hunting butterflies on the outskirts of the town. Although everyone in the town waited for him "to pass a final and revealing judgment, [Mr. Herbert] did not say anything that allowed anyone to guess his intentions" (Márquez, 1967/1970, p. 232). Just like the townspeople, it is equally disturbing for the readers when,

> On Wednesday a group of engineers, agronomists, hydrologists, topographers, and surveyors arrived who for several weeks explored the places where Mr. Herbert had hunted his butterflies. (p. 232)

So evident is the proof that the reader at once relates the suspicious visits of Mr. Herbert and the entrance of Mr. Jack Brown after the arrival of a whole team of scientists, geographers, surveyors, etc. in apparently so insignificant a place like Macondo. The dwellers of the town, however, were also struck with the notion that the

visits had some connection with war. Things closed in on them so hurriedly that they could not do anything to check, or even criticise these visits, and were left only with a sense of wonder over the strange change that had marked their town:

> There was not much time to think about it, however, because the suspicious inhabitants of Macondo barely began to wonder what the devil was going on when the town had already become transformed into an encampment of wooden houses with zinc roofs inhabited by foreigners who arrived on the train from halfway around the world, riding not only on the seats and platforms but even on the roof of the coaches. (Márquez, 1967/1970, p. 232)

Colonel Aureliano Buendía, comments on the barefoot policemen walking on the streets with their wooden clubs: "This is a regime of wretches" (p. 244). His words could be interpreted in another way in the light of the Colonel's statement that, "We fought all those wars and all of it just so that we didn't have to paint our houses blue" (p. 244), which is the colour of their opposite political force.

The foreigners, who were dictatorial in their approach as compared to the local functionaries, lived in the 'electrified chickenyard' due to their security concerns. Another reason of their isolation may be to keep their motive hidden as far as it was possible. However, the 'barefoot policemen' were gradually replaced by "hired assassins with machetes" (p. 244). The colonel's decision to "shut up [himself] in his workshop" (p. 244) and being disappointed over his "mistake not to have continued the war to its final conclusion" (p. 244) tell a great deal about the gravity of the situation due to the colonization of Macondo by the North America-based United Fruit Company.

There follows the catastrophic incident of the brutal killing of one of the brothers of Colonel Magnifico Visbal and his grandson; the child was cut into pieces by a policeman when the former happened to accidently spill the drink on the uniform of the latter. The grandfather too was chopped up by the sharp machetes of the officer.

> The barbarian cut him to pieces with his machete, and with one stroke he cut off the head of the grandfather as he tried to stop him. The whole town saw the decapitated man pass by as a group of men carried him to his house, with a woman dragging the head along by its hair, and the bloody sack with the pieces of the child. (p. 244)

The abovementioned incident is also referred to as a real one by the author in his autobiography:

> It began on a Saturday worse than the others when a respectable townsman whose identity did not pass into history went into a tavern to ask for a glass of water for a little boy whose hand he was holding. A stranger drinking alone at the bar wanted to force the boy to take a drink of rum instead of water. The father tried to stop him, but the stranger persisted until the frightened boy knocked over his drink without meaning to. Without hesitation, the stranger shot him dead. (Márquez, 2003/2004, p. 46)

It caused among the townspeople a revolt, which got its roots even more firmly in their hearts. The feelings that were suppressed either by force or voluntarily, could no more be bottled up. "For Colonel Aureliano Buendía it meant the limits of atonement" (Márquez, 1967/1970, p. 244) and he felt the same indignation which he had experienced once a long time ago, when people clubbed a woman to death because she had been bitten by a rabid dog (p. 104). Being resolved now, the Colonel declared a

rebellion against the colonisers: "One of these days . . . I'm going to arm my boys so we can get rid of these shitty gringos!" (p. 245). But, "so many changes took place in such a short time that eight months after Mr. Herbert's visit the old inhabitants had a hard time recognizing their own town" (p. 234). In a place where people believed and talked about miracles and strange happenings like the rising of Remedios the Beauty to the heavens, the centre of attention had been changed from such strange happenings to the atrocities of the government towards the Buendía family.

> Perhaps there might have been talk of nothing else for a long time if the barbarous extermination of the Aurelianos had not replaced amazement with horror. (p. 243)

This, however, brought the worst disaster to the Buendía family, which one could have ever thought of. Seventeen sons of the Colonel were "hunted down like rabbits by invisible criminals who aimed at the center of their crosses of ash" (p. 245). Not unlike most of the Third World countries, the president of the country expressed his grief over the tragedy that had befallen the Buendía family, as he "sent a telegram of condolence in which he promised an exhaustive investigation and paid homage to the dead men" (p. 246). But the Colonel, knowing very well that it was the government who had been responsible for the brutal killing of his sons, refused to accept the funeral wreaths which were to be placed on the coffins by the mayor. He rather wrote a letter to the president in order to protest against the atrocities carried out against his family by the people backed by the authorities. On the basis of his experiences, Colonel Aureliano Buendía held that "The only difference today between Liberals and Conservatives is that the Liberals go to mass at five o'clock and the Conservatives at eight" (p. 248).

Gradually, the foreigners established themselves in the town; they built houses and colonies separate to those of the natives, and made a discrete identity. They brought their families and settled in. They had an air about them as if they are to do something very important. The presence of the foreigners in the town was not something the townspeople were alien to. They already knew the stories of far flung lands and the strange inventions from the gypsies. But this time, the arrival of foreigners was altogether different from the earlier ones; they had brought a heightened degree of disturbance with them. The episode of modernity that was started by the gypsies, who brought with them new things from the outside world, was now moving towards its climax.

> No one knew yet what they were after, or whether they were actually nothing but philanthropists and they had already caused a colossal disturbance, much more than that of the old gypsies, but less transitory and understandable. (p. 233)

Rightly does Colonel Aureliano Buendía point out that the whole situation had been caused "just because [they] invited a gringo to eat some bananas" (p. 234).

Similarly, magical realism can be seen working in full in the description of the unfortunate incident in which Jose Arcadio shot himself and, despite the numerous corners and long distance, the blood went up and down all the way to ultimately reach the Buendia house, so that the blood relatives may know about the tragedy. The extraordinarily long sentence is a perfect blending of magical and the real; the reader voluntarily accepts what is magical. The element of protest manifests in the fact that the political upheaval causes the unnatural death of Jose Arcadio. It is to be noted that

upon reaching the dead body, they found no wound on it; and the blood flowed only from the ear of the corpse.

> A trickle of blood came out under the door, crossed the living room, went out into the street, continued on it in a straight line across the uneven terraces, went down steps and climbed over curbs, passed along the Street of the Turks, turned a corner to the right and another to the left, made a right angle at the Buendia house, went in under the closed door, crossed through the parlor, hugging the walls so as not to stain the rugs, went on to the other living room, made a wide curve to avoid the dining-room table, went along the porch with the begonias, and passed without being seen under Amaranta's chair as she gave an arithmetic lesson to Aureliano Jose, and went through the pantry and came out in the kitchen, where Ursula was getting ready to crack thirty-six eggs to make bread. (Márquez, 1967/1970, p. 135)

The journey of the blood ended when it reached where it originally belonged. The clear defiance of the laws of physics makes the magical description of an un-scientific flow of blood acceptable for a Colombian/Third World read. In other words, a culture which allows people to have a belief/faith system particular for myths of magical nature helps people to believe in happenings in the world of fiction that have no scientific explanation. On its way, it did not stain the rugs of anything else. The episode is symbolic for the native's wish to be buried where they originally belonged, a desire seldom fulfilled in the colonial times and during the long civil wars fought due to colonialism.

The Company exploited the poor natives, even their own people, on so large a scale that their socio-economic condition became more terrible by every coming day.

The introduction of a special payment mode, which obliged the workers of all types to be paid not in currency notes, but in coupons which could only be cashed in goods at stores set up by the company. The workers protested, as,

> They were not being paid in real money but in scrip, which was good only to buy Virginia ham in the company commissaries. José Arcadio Segundo was put in jail because he revealed that the scrip system was a way for the company to finance its fruit ships, which without the commissary merchandise would have to return empty from New Orleans to the banana ports. (pp. 305-6)

One of the other reasons behind the mass strikes of the banana plantation workers was that they were not provided with sufficient medical and sanitation facilities. The poor workers, who worked day and night for mere scrip, were even denied these basic facilities that were considered to be the right of the workers all over the world.

> The company physicians did not examine the sick but had them lined up behind one another in the dispensaries and a nurse would put a pill the color of copper sulphate on their tongues, whether they had malaria, gonorrhoea, or constipation. (p. 306)

It is of particular significance to note that the narrator is unable even to name the medicine. The only fact he is able to relate about the medicine is its colour of 'copper sulphate' and that the pill was used to cure all kind of diseases, irrespective of their nature and severity. Magical realism works to build a tone of protest throughout the episode. The description of plain reality about the way the patients were administered the pills and the sudden use of scientific terminology to explain the colour of the pills heighten the bitterness of the narrative in that the reader is made well aware that the

patients were deceived by the company physicians. The patients, on the other hand, could not even tell between the tablets because these were of the same colour, i.e. copper sulphate.

About the poor condition of sanitary facilities, the narrator reveals that,

> The company workers were crowded together in miserable barracks. The engineers, instead of putting in toilets, had a portable latrine for every fifty people brought to the campus at Christmas time and they held public demonstrations of how to use them so that they would last longer (p. 306).

Despite a number of appeals to the authorities, when the workers could not succeed in getting their problems solved, they "turned away from the authorities in Macondo and brought their complaints to the higher courts" (p. 307). But the high ups of the Banana Plantation Company were too influential to suppress the voice of the workers. The perverted system of justice only turned a deaf ear to the petitions of the workers, and some "sleight-of-hand lawyers proved that the demands lacked all validity" (p. 307) and that the banana company could not entertain the demands of the workers, as "they were all hired on a temporary and occasional basis" (p. 307). The workers got flared up on such an unjust attitude of the governmental authorities, higher courts and their employers. It was then the "great strike broke out" (p. 307) and the cultivation stopped altogether. The situation got even worsened when the owners of the United Fruit Company saw their huge sum of capital invested in the banana business going wasted in the form of "the fruit rotted on the trees and the hundred-twenty-car trains remained on the sidings" (p. 307).

> . . . [The protests began and] the idle workers overflowed the towns. The street of the Turks echoed with a Saturday that lasted for several days and in the

> poolroom at the Hotel Jacob they had to arrange twenty-four-hour shifts. (p. 307)

The banana plantation company tried to curb the protests with the help of the force government provided them. One day, the authorities opened fire on the workers gathered to demonstrate against the company.

> The captain gave order to fire and fourteen machine guns answered at once. [. . .] The people in front had already [got down], swept down by the wave of bullets. The survivors, instead of getting down, tried to go back to the small square, and the panic became a dragon's tail in the street across the way, where the machine guns were also firing without cease. (p. 311)

The only individual who survived among a mob of more than three thousand people was José Arcadio Segundo. The rest of the people were now left dead by the soldiers killing on the orders of the owners of United Fruit Company.

> José Arcadio Segundo dragged himself from one car to another in the direction in which the train was heading, and in the flashes of light that broke through the wooden slates as they went through the sleeping town he saw the man corpses, woman corpses, child corpses who would be thrown into the sea like rejected bananas." (p. 312)

The curse set by Úrsula Iguarán on Colonel Aureliano Buendía when the latter declines the requests of the former regarding the death sentence awarded to Colonel Gerinaldo Márquez. The bitterness of Úrsula's curse characterizes the anger of the colonized;

> I know that you're going to shoot Gerineldo . . . and that I can't do anything to stop it. But I give you one warning: as soon as I see his body I swear to you by

> the bones of my father and mother, by the memory of José Arcadio Buendía , I swear to you before God that I will drag you out from wherever you're hiding and kill you with my own two hands. (p. 173)

She further declares it as "the same as if [Colonel Aureliano Buendía had] been born with the tail of a pig" (p. 174). Úrsula's curse is the manifestation of indignation and resentment of the oppressed for the oppressor.

Hyperbole and humour play a pivotal role to initiate intense social protest in *Solitude* (1967/1970). In the first place, they work towards developing readers' interest in the narrative, and in the second, the turn into the interesting ironical remarks of protest. *Solitude* (1967/1970), is full of such instances of hyperbole turning into humour that ultimately end up in serious ironical notes of protest. The biblical tone echoes throughout the episode with some modifications in the original story, e.g. Ursula and Jose Arcadio instead of Eve and Adam; Macondo instead of Paradise; a fighting cock instead of serpent; killing of Prudencio Aguilar and consummation of cousin marriage instead of eating the forbidden fruit. Such serious parallels with the biblical story of mankind when combined with the trivial mock-incidents make a significant impact on the reader; as the latter's level of interest unconsciously increases and results in a heightened degree of belief in the fantastic. In the opening pages of the novel, the reader comes across a strange remark that the "only animals that were prohibited, not just in this house but in the entire settlement, were fighting cocks" (p. 9). Having enjoyed the humour in the sentence, the reader at once thinks why a fighting cock, which is an un-harmful domesticated bird, instead of animals of prey like dogs, tigers, lions and other beasts, is prohibited in the place. The situation becomes even more humorous when the author establishes connection between the banishment of an ordinary domestic bird and Ursula Iguarin's chastity belt. The chastity belt is used against the attempts of her lawful

husband, Jose Arcadio Buendia, to consummate the marriage, because cousin marriage was thought to be a sin in those times and such incestuous marriages always resulted in children with a pig's tail "in the shape of a corkscrew and with a small tuft of hair on the tip" (Márquez, 1967/1970, p. 20).

> Fearing that her stout and wilful husband would rape her while she slept, Ursula, before going to bed, would put on a rudimentary kind of drawers her mother had made out of sailcloth and had reinforced with a system of crisscrossed leather straps and that was closed in the front by a thick iron buckle. (Márquez, 1967/1970, p. 21)

The situation becomes even more interesting when it is revealed that it was a mere rooster to cause the most important human settlement to come into existence in the world of the novel. Ursula and Jose Arcadio are married but their marriage has not been consummated,

> . . . until the tragic Sunday when Jose Arcadio Buendia won a cock fight from Prudencio Aguilar. Furious, aroused by the blood of his bird, the loser backed away from Jose Arcadio Buendia also that everyone in the cockpit could hear what he was going to tell him.
>
> "Congratulations!" he shouted. "Maybe that rooster of yours can do your wife a favour."
>
> Jose Arcadio Buendia serenely picked up his rooster. "I'll be right back, he told everyone. And then to Prudencio Aguilar:
>
> "You go home and get a weapon, because I'm going to kill you." (Márquez, 1967/1970, pp. 21-22)

In the next ten minutes, he killed Prudencio Aguilar, the ghost of whom later takes away the sleep of Jose Arcadio Buendia, though he thought it a killing in the name of honour. Not unlike the ghost in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1602), the ghost of Prudencio Aguilar works as a latch-pin in the course of the whole narrative in that the migration of the Buendia family occurred in the result of the founding of the town of Macondo. It is quite ironical that the most important events in the history of Macondo take place in the consequence of an otherwise insignificant cockfight.

In the beginning of chapter two of *Solitude* (1967/1970), a well-perfected use of hyperbolic language makes the description of Ursula Iguarin's great-great grandmother's pain more visible and definite. At first, the reader is amused by the humorous situation of the lady, who sat on a lighted stove and throughout her life did not walk in public, as something strange had happened to her way of walking. It is much later, when the reader realizes the graveness of the situation and out of the humorous language comes forth the ironical undertone of a tragic incident in which a young lady turned into a living-corpse. The description is typical of magical realist nature and leaves the reader with an assurance of a successfully communicated protest against the colonial (mis-)adventures.

The incident of tying the humble and defeated Jose Arcadio Buendia in the end of chapter four of *Solitude* is yet another example of such exaggerated humour of ironic nature.

> He was about to finish off the rest of the house when Aureliano asked the neighbors for help. Ten men were needed to get him down, fourteen to tie him up, twenty to drag him to the chestnut tree in the courtyard, where they left him tied up, barking in the strange language and giving off a green froth at the

> mouth. When Úrsula and Amaranta returned he was still tied to the trunk of the chestnut tree by his hands and feet, soaked with rain and in a state of total innocence. They spoke to him and he looked at them without recognizing them, saying things they did not understand. Úrsula untied his wrists and ankles, lacerated by the pressure of the rope, and left him tied only by the waist. Later on they built him a shelter of palm brandies to protect him from the sun and the rain. (p. 81)

It is to be noted that Jose Arcadio Buendia, who was once able to put together "a manual of startling instructional clarity and an irresistible power of conviction" (p. 3) was "tied up, barking in the strange language (p. 81) that nobody was able to understand. The way the patriarch of the Macondian society is tied to a tree carries much greater significance in the magical realist structure and scheme of the novel. The picture becomes clear when seen in the light of the biblical undertone. If Macondo is taken as the Garden of Eden on the basis of its being "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 [and the] world was so recent that many things lacked names" (p. 1), the chestnut tree can be seen as a symbol of the tree of knowledge, forbidden to Jose Arcadio Buendia and Ursula Iguarin, who can be seen as Adam and Eve in this context. In his quest for knowledge, Jose Arcadio Buendia crossed the predefined limits and his limited mind could not bear the weight of knowledge it was exposed to. As a punishment, he became mad and he was banished from the place he originally belonged to, where the dead of his family were buried. Now he was exposed to the hardship of a world that was full of violence and plagues of many kinds. Sometimes, Márquez uses the device of magical realism in describing his extraordinarily fictional characters as the realistic ones. He makes the reader believe in the magical lives of these characters

through his carnevalesque language. For instance, it is unbelievable for the readers that the character of Melquíades is a "fugitive from all the plagues and catastrophes that had ever lashed mankind" (p. 6), as if it were some extraordinary being, beyond from any kind of destruction and decay; but, the author persuades the reader to believe it by associating Melquíades' fugitiveness with his survival from a number of deadly diseases of that day. He had "survived pellagra in Persia, scurvy in the Malayan archipelago, leprosy in Alexandria, beriberi in Japan, bubonic plague in Madagascar, an earthquake in Sicily, and a disastrous shipwreck in the Strait of Magellan" (p. 6).

Chapter 6

'ORPHANS OF THE SON', CIVIL WARS AND POLITICS OF PROTEST: *NO ONE WRITES TO THE COLONEL*

After having given his prime years to the civil wars, the protagonist of García Márquez's *Colonel* (1968/1996) is condemned by the authorities to wait for a letter, and to go every morning to the post office to check whether the long-awaited letter has arrived or not. The wait the old man is cursed to suffer is not without method; the letter would not only bring him financial sustainability, in the form of a per-month pension, and take him out of the economic crisis, but would be an acknowledgement regarding his position as an army officer of senior-ranking. It would satisfy a consciousness that gropes for the prosperity, honour, dignity he, along with many others, deserves.

The pathetic economic condition and his degenerated standard of living do not match the military rank the colonel carries. The opening paragraph of the novel establishes a clear cut economic as well as social background of the colonel when he finds almost nothing in his coffee pot. It is pitiable to see a person, who should have been enjoying a much better and stable socio-economic status, doomed by the authorities to so dejected a state. He has to wear clothes and the shoes that "look like the shoes of an orphan" (Márquez, 1968/1996, p. 10). They are literally "rotting alive" (p. 4) in the town that is as indifferent to both their spiritual as well as material needs as the government is. The way Márquez has portrayed the colonel as preparing for the funeral is remarkable; every minute detail smacks of the worst economic condition of the old man.

> After shaving himself by touch – since he'd lacked a mirror for a long time – the colonel dressed silently. His trousers, almost as tight on his legs as long underwear, closed at the ankles with slip-knotted drawstrings, were held up at

> the waist by two straps of the same material which passed through two gilt buckles sewn on at kidney height. He didn't use a belt. His shirt, the color of old Manila paper, and as stiff, fastened with a copper stud which served at the same time to hold the detachable collar was torn, so the colonel gave up on the idea of a tie. (p. 4)

Instead of being celebrated as the emblem of struggle, honour, loyalty and dignity, the colonel has been driven to wait for a petty pension-letter. It has been "nearly sixty years – since the end of the last civil war – [that] the Colonel had done nothing but wait" (p. 1). While society denies him the dignity he deserves, the military-authorities denied the colonel the pension he is entitled to. Every day, the old man goes to the post-office in the hope to receive the letter, but even after the lapse of fifteen long years he has to return empty handed. Somehow, the colonel has become so used to waiting as to have found the very purpose of life in this act. The un-ending wait, mixed with the sleepless nights "tormented by the whistling of the asthmatic woman's lungs" (p. 9) make the days and nights of a retired military officer. With the young generation killed in the wars, when the colonel's wife describes themselves as "the orphans of our son" (p. 10), she becomes the voice of all those victimised by the troubled history of Latin America.

The colonel's rooster is a powerful image of hope in the novel. It belonged to his supposedly dead son. The old man does not have enough money to buy clothes, food or even the medicines for his ailing wife, yet he spends whatever he has got in hand on the maintenance of the fighting-cock. The apparently insignificant bird is the symbol of hope in a critical time, not only for the colonel, but for the whole town.

While on their way to attend the funeral procession of the one dead of natural causes, Sabas's question that "what's new with the rooster" (p. 7) projects the image of the bird as something important in the whole context, especially when the reader already

knows that despite all his poverty the colonel is resolved to provide the bird with the best of his care and attention. While the rooster is being prepared to participate in a fight, the self-esteem of the townspeople reaches its peak. The rooster provides the colonel and the people around him with a constant source of courage and determination against the atrocities of the military regime.

The whole town is preparing for the cock-fight. They have saved their last pennies to bet on the cock. The cock-fight parallels the final battle between the people and the military regime. Their hopes rest on the rooster, the symbol of defiance in the face of the worst despair. The cockfight fanatics are symbolic as the rebels. The way the colonel's wife shows her disgust over the cockfight is the external manifestation of the fear of the old woman regarding the increasing death toll in the target killing of the people having rebellious inclinations.

The town in the novel represents Latin American society in miniature. The political chaos prevalent in the society is also highlighted through the fact that the colonel's wife is never told that Augustin, her only son, is not dead, but is in hiding. To save her from the terrible effects of waiting, which is more disastrous for a mother than the shocking news of the death of her son, she is told that Agustin has been killed by the opposed political force. The reason behind the concealment of the truth is perhaps the uncertainty and the political turmoil that Latin America was facing. Agustin remains in hiding out of the fear lest he is killed at the hands of the military-dictatorship. In fact, Sabas, the godfather of Agustin, was the only one to have "escaped political persecution and had continued to live in town" (p. 7). The colonel waits for a favourable time when his son no more needs to remain in hiding. However, in the face of hope, his wait for the good time never ends, just like that of the pension letter. The movement of time becomes slow for the old man, and he gradually loses the sense of change particularly

associated with the passage of time. His desire to pass time is quickly manifest in his act of winding the clock for a prolonged period of time.

The country is passing through the worst phase of its history, as people are forced to leave their dear ones and remain in hiding in order to save their lives. Nobody is allowed to talk about the way the masses are oppressed by the military government, so strict is the system of surveillance on the part of the latter. The politics has proved to be so brutal as to have taken the lives of a huge a number of people merely on the basis of assumptions regarding their rebellious inclinations. The colonel is preparing for attending the funeral of a person, who has died of natural causes, as if it was an occasion to celebrate. The colonel's wife expresses her amazement over her husband's extraordinary preparations;

> 'You look as if you're dressed for some special event', she said
>
> 'This burial is a special event,' the colonel said. 'It's the first death from natural causes which we've had in many years' (p. 5)

The colonel feels uncertain about the news that a person could die of natural causes. For the first time the colonel becomes sure that the man was dead when he notices the lack of a trumpet, which was thought to be necessary on the funeral of a politically murdered person. People are so afraid of the dire consequences of defiance that they are unwilling to pass by the police barracks. In a time where people do nothing except for passively waiting in silence for something to happen out of the blue to rescue them from the devastating political and economic situation, the colonel is courageous enough to say that "'But this isn't a rebellion' [...] 'It's a poor dead musician'" (p. 8). The authorities suppress the opinion of the masses to such an extent that even the newspapers are censored unless they mould the general opinion. When, on being asked about any news,

the doctor hands him over some newspapers, the colonel expresses concern over his inability to get some real news out of the censored ones. The situation is too bad to imagine especially when the front page is full of paid funeral announcements. The hope for elections remains a mere hope and only a naive can hope for the Messiah to get them rescued.

Once again the colonel and the doctor meet at the post office, where the former goes in the futile hope of the never-to-come letter and the latter to get the newspaper. The discussion between the two serves as a comment upon the prevalent political condition.

> ... 'Ever since there's been censorship, the newspapers talk only about Europe,' he said. 'The best thing would be for the Europeans to come over here and for us to go to Europe. That way everybody would know what's happening in his own country.'
>
> To the Europeans, South America is a man with a mustache, a guitar, and a gun,' the doctor said, laughing over his newspaper. 'They don't understand the problem.' (p. 22)

Márquez (1968/1974) relates real events from history in an extremely plain language. The scattered references to the civil wars, the way Congress passes the new law regarding pension for war veterans, the Treaty of Neerlandia are mentioned as passing remarks. The reality portrayed in the novella is extraordinarily grim and it is such heightened grotesqueness that makes the fiction work towards the development of the central idea. The incorporation of mythical substance is blended into the mundane fiction. When the *Colonel* was written, it had already been established that the dictatorship of President Gustavo Rojas Pinilla had made the country suffer from

poverty, general uncertainty and political restlessness (Pelayo, 2009).Time and again does García Márquez (1968/1996) refer to certain events from history, embedding his tale in reality. References to civil wars, the famous Treaty and the subsequent surrender of Neerlandia, and certain the use of certain dates help the author achieve the goal of making the readers voluntarily accept his fictional story. Often regarded as a non-magical realistic work of fiction, *Colonel* possesses magical real qualities in that it has serious incidents such as the wait of the colonel and the grief of loss of his only son along with an unsatisfactory economic condition in a highly plain language, devoid of sentiments and feelings. Second, it exhibits authorial reticence or the deliberate withholding of certain important information (See section 3.3.1), which is one of the features of the technique of magical realism. Authorial reticence comes into play when the reader comes to know that in the realistic world of *Colonel*, no information has been given regarding the names of the main characters. Another important feature of magical realism is that it provides implicit criticism of society and the elite. In this sense, magical realist literature detaches itself from the privileged Centre of literature and makes itself more inclined towards the issues of the marginalized of the periphery. *Colonel* also provides a critique of socially dominant forces and is subversive in nature, as it instigates the reader to think how the economically and socially leading forces suppress the marginalized and the unprivileged. The Colonel belongs to a non-conformist segment of society which is being deliberately kept below the poverty-line.

The opening paragraph of the novella smacks of the bitterness behind the protest over the socio-economic and political situation that marks the setting in the Latin American countries/ the Third World. What are peculiarly criticized in the *Colonel* (1968/1996) are the policies of the rapidly changing autocratic governments of the Third World towards the rights of an individual. The poor condition of citizenship is

portrayed through the character of the colonel, who has been made to wait for his long-pending decision on a pension. His hope in a hopeless world is in itself the odd juxtaposition of the real and the fantastic.

Repetition of certain events in the course of the novella projects the notion of non-linear nature of time, a very Latin American phenomenon as compared to the Western world. García Márquez reconstructs history, and thus, registers his protest against the unfavourable social realities related to the aftermaths of a long era of colonial influence. He takes a real character from past, studies the problems it faced, and projects these in a generalized scenario. In his *Tale* (2003/2004), García Márquez writes about his grandfather, a revolutionary colonel, who took active part in nearly all of the civil wars, especially the one known as the 'War of a Thousand Days'. The fact that "when the law on war pensions was passed he filled out the forms to obtain his, and he as well as his wife and closest heirs continued to wait for it until his death" (p. 86) proved to be a permanent image regarding the indifference of the military regime towards the rights of the people. He further writes that his grandfather:

> ...in person organized the file with surfeit of sworn testimonies and probative documents, and he took them himself to Santa Marta to sign the payment protocol. According to the least happy calculations, the amount would be sufficient for him and his descendants to the second generation (p. 86).

Even after the death of her colonel-husband, the author's grandmother told the author in her final moments: "I can die in peace because I know all of you will receive Nicolasito's pension" (p. 86). So optimistic were the families of all who fought for revolutionary causes that they would get the pension one day or another and live a life free of financial worries. García Márquez's protest is at its peak when he chooses the un-ending wait and hope for the pension letter as the central theme of his *Colonel.*

Latin America is no different from rest of the Third World in that it has been exploited by a number of colonial rulers and military dictators. García Márquez responds to the specific conditions of their region by giving vent to his views about the effects of colonial experience, which still continues in the form of military dictatorship. Written in 1958, his *Colonel* criticizes the way it suppresses the public. Although written a long time ago, it continues to serve as an event of social protest and is quite relevant to contemporary society in that it continues to be a source of awareness among the masses about the social as well as political realities of the region. Among its chief purposes are registering a protest against the exploitation of the masses at the hands of the military dictators. Dealing with the social struggle of an individual, the novella, with all its historical roots and political implications, proves to be a potent source of protest against the military dictatorships, brought onto the scene by the imperialists in order to guard their vested interests. It shows that despite economic prosperity and material prospects, moral and spiritual values decline so rapidly that the people are left barren with their empty souls.

Chapter 7

DICTATORIAL RULE, POLITICAL REPRESSION AND THE THIRD WORLD: *THE AUTUMN OF THE PATRIARCH*

Dictatorial rule has been a serious threat to the progress of most of the under-developed part of the world. Since Latin America constitutes a substantial part of the Third World and is mostly governed by either civil or military dictators, dictatorial rule and its causes and effects has been a favourite subject of the fiction writers of this region. The magical-realist fiction writers have been most eloquent in highlighting flaws inherent in such type of governments, weather in Chile, Colombia, Argentina, or Venezuela. García Márquez's *Patriarch* (1975/2007) is a protest against the dictatorial system in Latin America. He used the technique of magical realism to establish that autocrats and despotic rulers are a challenge to the development of a place and prosperity of its people. The dictators govern their people not on the basis of the latter's will, but by an iron fist. Spread over decades, these dictatorships suppress people's rights to reject their governments. The extraordinarily lengthy sentences in the novel are magical realist in nature, as they evoke dreamlike and magical feelings in the reader, making the latter accept whatever magical or dreamlike as something common and ordinary. Written in long paragraphs, the novel's suffocating atmosphere corresponds to the despotic rule that leaves no space for the public to breathe freely.

The invaded and occupied presidential palace in the world of the novel is metaphorical of the decaying despotic presidential system. The "stagnant time" (p. 1) referred to at the very first page denotes the stagnancy in all the governmental affairs during the decades-long rules of the autocrats. In order to prolong their rule, the dictators suppressed the public and worked against the interests of the latter. So weak the system would become that,

> . . . all that was needed was for someone to give a push and the great armoured doors that had resisted the lombards of William Dampier during the building's heroic days gave way. (p. 1)

Prolonged dictatorial or military rule has been the root cause of social, political and economic upheavals in Latin America in particular and the Third World in general. Colonial powers choose military heads that are inclined to rule the country, install them as presidents in uniform, and use them for their own vested interests that cannot be fulfilled by a democratically elected leader. García Márquez's work can be interpreted as political struggle against military rule. Whether it is his *Solitude* (1967/1970) or *Funeral* (1992/94), *Patriarch* (1975/2007) or *Erendira* (1972/1996), García Márquez's pen writes with the ink of a desire for democracy. *Patriarch*, in particular, tells the story of a fictional dictator, whose character has been derived from a number of real autocrats, like Gustavo Rojas Pinilla of Colombia, Generalissimo Francisco Franco of Spain, Rafael Trujillo of the Dominican Republic, Venezuela's Juan Vicente Gómez, and Joseph Stalin of USSR. The most striking feature of the novel is its unique presentation of the protagonist, who enjoys god-like status and respect. It is amazing that despite the worst internal political divisions, Stalin, Franco, and Trujillo, and many other dictators managed in a significant measure to control the hearts and minds of their respective nations, because of the mythical aura which surrounded their persons. The same has been very effectively symbolized here. But, when the wheel of fortune turns, the 'patriot becomes the traitor' and his last time becomes extremely pathetic. The pitiable situation has been exhibited in the novel through the discovery of the General's corpse in his own palace. His most loyal subjects are now unable to even identify the dead body of a man whose presence in the federation is symbolic for [the so-called]

fact that God is with them. His perception as god is so strong in their lives that they cannot perceive him as a human being, a person of flesh and blood.

Magical realism is once again fully utilised in the novel to protest against the military rule, not only in the very form of the novel, but the substance itself. The six chapters of the novel denote the six major dictators of the region. The extraordinary length of these sections is a symbol of the long and un-ending rule of these autocrats. Not unlike the uniformity of the style and objective of the rule of many Latin American dictators, all these sections begin and end in the same way. Quite contrary to *Solitude* (1967/1970) which is full of so many characters that the reader at once feels confused and has to depend on the genealogy tree given just before the novel commences, Patriarch (1975/2007) has just one character around whom the whole novel revolves. According to Kulin (1988, p. 147) the novel tells about the life of "an unimaginably old dictator, who remained alone in his palace, in which cows were wandering about". Dictatorial rule does not allow the general public to even breath freely, and the reader of *Patriarch* is left with no space to breath. The stagnant atmosphere of the fictional world of the novel is so suffocating that it is difficult for even an ordinary reader to easily go through two or three pages in a sitting.

The author uses postcolonial silences to develop the serious undertone of the novel, i.e. protest against dictatorial rule. Throughout the novel, the autocrat has been described as an individual who enjoys the heights of popularity, one that has never been reached or thought by any other human being. The over-emphasis on his popularity tells the reader a great deal about the irony lying between the lines. The "six assassination attempts" (Márquez, 1975/2007, p. 9) on the dictator are in fact an indication that he is not that much liked. The device of hyperbole –a contributory factor to magical realism – has been employed by the author as a tool to develop the character

of the dictator. The extraordinary description of his authority in the country, the way he hires imposters to appear at different places at the same time and to secure himself from any possible attempt on life, all work towards the theme of the work. In his specific humorous manner, García Márquez reveals all the tactics of the despotic rulers to strengthen their rule;

> . . . [The dictator] made some officers believe that they were being watched by others, he shuffled their assignments to prevent their plotting, every army post received a ration of eight blank cartridges for every ten live rounds and he sent them gunpowder mixed with beach sand while he kept the good ammunition within reach in an arsenal in the presidential palace the keys to which hung on a ring with other keys that had no duplicates . . . (p. 11)

At times, the dictator has been ridiculed by the novelist in a degradingly humorous manner in order to show his disgust with the former's character and way of government. For example, the way the despot "would become reconciled with himself when his personal physician the minister of health would examine his retina with a magnifying glass every time he invited him to lunch" (p. 170). But, unfortunately, the most neglected segment of the country is its people, who, at any level, are given no importance at all. Their needs and problems are of no value in the eye of the godlike ruler who has been ruling the country with an iron fist for ages. He is rather concerned about how to save his government, increase his financial assets, and suppress his enemies. A fear of rebellion among the people is always in his mind. Ironically, the patriarch

> . . . paid no attention to what people were saying about him but scrutinized the shadows of their eyes to guess what they were not saying to him, and he never asked a question without first asking in turn what do you think . . . (p. 9)

He is so interested in looting and plundering the money of the nation that he does not let go of any opportunity to do so. Never bothered to attend the meetings of the cabinet (p. 159), he even manipulates the results of the draw of lottery tickets to increase his wealth.

In the course of the novel, the narrator directly addresses the dictator and mentions the seriousness of the situation regarding his ever decreasing popularity. The nation has become so sick of his long and unending rule. The disgust is so intense that the narrator had to prepare him for the bad news. It is the news that he already knows within his heart that only the imposter general dares to articulate in front of him. He says that he is

> . . . the only one honourable enough to sing out to you what everyone says that you're president of nobody and that you're not on the throne because of your big guns but because the English sat you there and the gringos kept you there with the pair of balls of their battleship . . . (pp. 21-22)

The mentioning of the fact that the government of the dictator is solely dependent upon the way the English and the gringos safeguarded his rule – and by doing so safeguarded their own self-interests – in fact symbolises a propensity of autocrat rulers throughout the Third World to look towards the 'centre' for gaining power to make their regimes survive for a longer time. Although the general derives all his power to rule from the English and the gringos, the former feels so entrapped in the latter's clutches that he cannot do anything about it and is often seen "scurrying like a cockroach this way and

that, back and forth when the gringos shouted to [him] we're leaving you here with your nigger whorehouse so let's see if you can put it all together without us" (p. 22). Apparently the general is a strong dictator who rules the people of his country with an iron hand, but as a matter of fact, all his strength is due to the English and foreign support. He is so afraid of the situation that he cannot face the general public and never gets out of his chair, lest his weaknesses become marked and visible in the eyes of people. If compared to the situation of the Third World countries ruled by military dictators, the 'Centre' literally makes the rulers hostage to make them do as they are told by the latter. Through these dictators, the 'Centre' manages to control the economic resources and impose their ideology.

The very fact that he was worshiped like a demigod had become the Patriarch's greatest fear, as he knew very well that he will have to reap what he had sown. He is warned by the narrator that when he got out of his chair, shed his military uniform, and went into the public, he shall be dealt with as a traitor. As a matter of fact, the President has been so barbarous to his people that there was no chance that he is spared from the erupting wrath of people. Not unlike his long rule, there is a long list of his crimes against his own people. Sanches (2006, p. 178) observed that violence has been a prominent social response to the applications of structural adjustment policies throughout Latin America". The dictator too, for almost the same reasons, suppressed the voice of the people by every possible means.

> The moment they see you on the street dressed as a mortal they're going to fall on you like a pack of dogs to collect from you in one case for the killings at Santa María del Alter, in another for the prisoners thrown into the moat of the harbor fort to be eaten by crocodiles, in another for the people you skin alive

and send their hides to their families as a lesson. (García Márquez, 1975/2007, p. 22)

Throughout the novel, the general public is constantly trying to escape the so-called truths imposed by the dictator. The way the government rejects and suppresses people's right to be spontaneous in their conversation and acts is an example of how fearful it is regarding the latter's emerging identity. So violent are the ways of suppressing the rebellions (or any possible rebellion) that it is very difficult to even think of denying the authority of the regime. After a rebellion against the dictator, a young soldier is skinned alive to teach the people a lesson and to make rest of the rebels confess what he wanted them to. The General . . .

> . . . chose one of the main group and had him skinned alive in the presence of all and they saw his flesh tender and yellow like a newborn placenta and they felt the soaking of the warm blood broth of the body that had been laid bare as it went through its throes thrashing about on the courtyard, and then they confessed what he wanted . . . (p. 30)

There are times, e.g. in the abovementioned part of the text, when the author explains the events in an extraordinary detail. On the one hand, an extended explanation of such kind adds to the overall dreamlike effect of the text, and on the other, foregrounds the realistic-fantastic relationship within the text. According to Newell (1997, p. 42), the "people have been exiled from language and meaning, forced to be no-where and no-one by the dictator's supreme 'I'".

The motive behind these atrocities was to suppress the general public so much that they could not think about a revolt against the tyrannical rule. The presence of a foreign hand has been obvious in all the dictatorial rules throughout Latin America in

particular and Third World in general. Vela (2006) contended that the CIA and the Defence Department and the office holders of the highest rank, e.g. Vice President of America, have vigorously defended methods of torturing people. She held that the "Colombian military, aided by the United States in logistics, training, and financial aid, has been repeatedly accused of atrocities against civilians" (p. 9).

García Márquez achieves the effect of magical realism by weaving the mythological beliefs of past into the advancing reality of the present. The people of the republic have already accepted the presence of the dictator as a myth for various reasons. There is an air of suspicion about the character of the despot that contributed towards wrapping his personality in a kind of confusingly heightened voluntary doubt to make him a mythological figure, a godlike entity.

> . . . during his times of greatest glory there had been reasons to doubt his existence and his own henchmen had no exact notion of his age, for there were periods of confusion in which he seemed to be eighty years old at charity raffles, sixty at civil receptions and even under forty during the celebration of national holidays. (Márquez, 1975/2007, p. 72)

The extraordinarily long life and rule of the despot are the primary factors behind the development of his personality as a myth. So mythical a character he was that even after seeing his dead body in the presidential palace, the president's fear does not let people believe that he is dead. The long sentence that explains the discovery of the dead body speaks volumes about how the dictator was believed to be invincible and eternal.

> . . . and then we pushed open a side door that connected with an office hidden in the wall, and there we saw him, in his denim uniform without insignia, boots, the gold spur on his left heel, older than all old men and all old animals

> on land or sea, and he was stretched out on the floor, face down, his right arm bent under his head as a pillow, as he had slept night after night every night of his ever so long life of a solitary despot. (p. 3)

Quite interestingly, even then, nobody was ready to believe in his death, "because it was the second time he had been found in that office, alone and dressed and dead" (p. 5).

The novelist informs the reader, in a rather light manner, regarding the undemocratic happenings and results of the unending rule of the dictator. Banning the information provided by Ambassador Palmerston, one of the last diplomats to present his credentials, in his memoirs is one example of such undemocratic practices (pp. 72-73). The lyrical language along with the rich narrative detail renders a magical effect to the novel. Corresponding to the lengthy reign of the dictator, the lengthy sentences throughout the text initially cause boredom in the readers, and eventually make them abhor the institution of dictatorship. The complex sentence structure may also be taken as the complexities of the autocratic government. If the novel is taken as a symbol of the whole region, this can also be interpreted as an effort to demonstrate the existence of dictators in many countries of the region. The long sentences of the novel sometimes resemble those of *Solitude* (Márquez, 1967/1970) and create the effect of magical realism in the projected circular/jumbled movement of time. For example,

> That was how they found him on the even of his autumn, when the corpse was really that of Patricio Aragones, and that was how we found him again many years later during a moment of such uncertainty that no one could give in to the evidence that the senile body there gouged by vultures and infested by parasites from the depths of the sea was his. (Márquez, 1975/2007, p. 72)

The author successfully raises a voice of protest against the presidential tyranny and highlights that the dictatorial rule is what contributes towards the underdevelopment of the Third World countries. The effect of magical realism is achieved by mingling the ordinary with extraordinary. There were surprisingly large reception rooms in the presidential palace, for instance, "where hens were pecking at the illusory wheat fields on the tapestries and a cow was pulling down the canvas with the portrait of an archbishop so she could eat it" (p. 73). The reception rooms were once the focus of all (a)political activities, the emblem of control and discipline, a symbol of art and beauty. But, now they are but the ruins that are only of interest because they have been of great importance in the past. The way García Márquez is able to make the reader feel the difference in the past and the present is remarkable. The extraordinary and lengthy detail of the destroyed palace works, which sometimes seems to be extremely unnecessary, creates a contrast with the passages telling about the glory of the Patriarch. Ultimately, these helps the reader to imagine the hatred for the Patriarch in the hearts of people. The interesting juxtaposition of "a barefoot Guajiro Indian . . . with a small entourage of congressmen and senators whom the dictator had appointed himself with his finger according to the whims of his digestion" (p. 73) to escort him simultaneously reveal how Guajiro Indians were subjected to inhumane ways and how governmental affairs were run not by the will of the people, but by the pointing figure of the autocrat. And the whole affair was staged and set according to the whims of his digestion. There is also a lot of protest against the dictator's sense of immediate governance, as on the way "he ordered a butcher to cut off the hands of a cheating treasurer in a public spectacle" (p. 74). It is the same sense of immediate governance and sole authority that makes one of the chief characteristics of any dictator. Through the 'cut-off-the-hands incident', the authority and the ways of dictatorial rule in some Arab countries has also

been criticized. The incidents of repression, barbarity, despotism and tyranny have been highlighted in the text with the help of the technique of magical realism. The murder of Dionisio Iguaran is not the result of an action against the state, but because his cock won in a cockfight, which was supposed and planned to be won by the despot's grey cock. This is an example of the barbarism of the despot (p. 75). The humorous description of the cockfight blended with the terrible reality of the tyrannical rule of the despot is magical real in nature and serves as an ironic comment upon the suppression of the masses in the autocratic governmental/political system.

Chapter 8

CLASS, RACE, SLAVERY AND MAGICAL REALIST PROTEST: *OF LOVE AND OTHER DEMONS*

Unveiling exploitation at different levels in various segments of society has been a main concern of the literary writers. People usurp the rights and belongings of the 'other' or the 'marginalised' in order to either get themselves to a better material position or merely soothe their minds by the feeling of other's deprivation. In specific terms, exploitation has been defined as the "unfair treatment of someone or the use of a situation in a way that is wrong, in order to get some benefit for yourself" and "the process of making use of something so that you gain as much as possible from it" (MacMillan English Dictionary, 2002, p. 485). Amongst the most significant forms of exploitation frequently been made subject of discussion by García Márquez is colonialism. More precisely, it is the subjugation of a nation in order to (mis)use its social, political, economic, material and intellectual resources by the forces of colonization. His criticism of colonial practices would not have been that subtle without the help of the technique of magical realism, which he employed throughout most of his works. As his fiction is multi-layered and could be interpreted on several levels of meanings, an evaluation and analysis of his works on the level of criticism of the process of colonization and its effects on the indigenous land and people makes the works interesting and yet useful in terms of a positive contribution to the society; particularly, when the Latin American region constitutes a major part of the Third World. In the first place, García Márquez raises the voice of protest against the Spanish incursions to colonize the Latin America, while in the second, he condemns the North American advances in the South to capture and subsequently make use of the resources of the latter.

García Márquez's *Demons* (1994/1996) is set in a remote South American seaport during the colonial era. The port is a typical place for the trade of African blacks, who were abducted from their native places to be brought there in order to be sold to the local rich either to serve them or to be re-sold for a profit on the original expense. These slaves were treated as a commodity. The present part of the thesis highlights that it was a subtle use of the technique of magical realism that enabled García Márquez to highlight the practice of slavery in this novella. The opening of the novella clearly demonstrates a deliberate attempt on part of García Márquez to foreground the exploitation of the black community at the hands of the indigenous people. Carried by the mysterious South American geography, the reader is made to feel the screams and shouts of the crowd present at the drawbridge in the slum of Getsemani, right in the heart of the slaver's port, "where a shipment of blacks from Guinea was being sold at a discount" (p. 5). In the opening pages of the novella, the way the narrator describes the enchanting beauty of an Abyssinian female slave "whose beauty was so unsettling it seemed untrue ... she was put on sale for the simple fact of her beauty" (p. 6). The novelist employs magical realism by highlighting the most 'untrue' beauty of the slave on the one hand, and on the other, by letting the readers to depend upon their imagination by means of holding the other possible information about the girl. A preserved imagination, on part of the readers, through a deliberately created uncertainty is an example of authorial reticence which is one of the features of the genre. The only thing that works as an equivalent of an impossibility of description of such dreamlike beauty is so high a price only the Governor could pay "without bargaining and in cash ... her weight in gold" (p. 6). The readers are well aware of the fact that determining a sale price for an innocent girl and the act of selling her on the price of gold equal to her weight is synonymous to attributing mankind even below the so-called costly stones

dug out of earth. Magical realism helps the readers elevate themselves to world of fiction and, at the same time, think about the moral implications of objectifying and putting a human being on sale. An unusual act of selling a girl in an auction for her beauty is significant in postcolonial terms. The extraordinary beauty of the Abyssinian female slave is proportional to art, somewhat abstract that will go waste if attempted to be explored by the physical means. In other words, the girl who is "almost two meters tall . . . [having] a slender nose, a rounded skull, slanted eyes, all her teeth and the equivocal bearing of a Roman gladiator" is put on sale because of her beauty and virginity. The authorial reticence leads the readers' imagination to create a link between the girl's unexplored virginity and dreamlike beauty to the unexplored regions of the world that are ready to be exploited by the colonial forces because of the attraction they have in the form of minerals, indigo, archaeological sites, etc. The girl's being Abyssinian and slave even adds to the protest of the author, as it creates an analogy between the girl and the regions of Africa and the Caribbean. But, towards the end of the novella, when the governor, "an effeminate bachelor, gave a luncheon, for men only, in honor of the Viceroy" (p. 104), the beauty of the girl is exposed and remains no more a matter of suspense and mystery. The magic of beauty vanishes away with one single stroke of reality:

> As a finale, a curtain at the back of the room was raised to reveal the Abyssinian slave purchased by the Governor for her weight in gold. She wore an almost transparent tunic that heightened the peril of her nakedness. After showing herself to the ordinary guests she stopped in front of the Viceroy, and the tunic slipped down her body to the floor.
>
> Her perfection was alarming. Her shoulder had not been profaned by the slaver's brand, the initial of her first owner had not been burned on her back,

> and her entire person breathed an air of intimacy. The Viceroy turned pale, inhaled deeply and with a movement of his hand erased the unbearable vision from his memory. (p. 105)

The governor orders her to be taken away. "For God's sake", he shouts, "I do not want to see her again for the rest of my days" (p. 105). The reaction of the governor reflects the guilty conscience of the colonisers. The fact that the girl's skin is unravished/untouched by a slave-owner's brand adds to his fear and guilt. The way she has been described to be 'alarmingly perfect' splits his mind and heart. He comes to a realization that enslavement has brought impurity to her unmatched beauty, despite the fact that she was physically unharmed. His reaction can be interpreted as an acceptance and denial of the way slavery affects mankind, as the colonisers still have some concept of morality, however an un-materialized one.

Just like the rotting palace of the Patriarch in García Márquez's *Patriarch* (1975/2007), the house of the Marquis is also described as a colonial mansion that is constantly decaying with the passage of time. Authorial reticence is at work when present emptiness and vacancy is mentioned and it is left for the reader to imagine the stories of the heightened glory it exhibited in the past.

The house that "had been the pride of the city until the beginning of the century" (p. 8) is now "a melancholy ruin with its large empty spaces and the many objects out of place made it seem as if the occupants were in the process of moving" (p. 8-9). So shattered he is that the Marquis "fell on his knees in front of [Bernarda] and burst into the harsh weeping of a useless old man" (p. 116). Like the rotting mansion, the Marquis is also rotting and suffering constant deterioration on both physical and psychological level. When Father Cayetano inquires after his health:

'God keep you, Senor Marquis,' he said. 'How are you?'

'Here,' said the Marquis. 'Rotting away.' (p. 118)

The Marquis, just like his daughter, is the victim of hybridity. When "[w]ith a languid hand he brushed aside the cobwebs of his siesta and sat up inn his hammock" (p. 118), he appears to be the weakest man on earth. He is living both in the past and the present, with no hope for future at all. His past is filled with the guilt of the sin of colonisation and his present is full of fear of the black slaves. The guilt of colonisation kept him from mourning his failed loves, while the fear of death by the hands of black slaves did not let him become closer to his own daughter and understand her. Haunted by the guilt for "having abandoned her to her fate in the courtyard of the slaves" (p. 119), he confesses his inability to develop an understanding with her when he says, "I feel as if the more I know her the less I know her" (p. 118). On the one hand, he loves her so much that "You cannot imagine how much [and that he] would give [his] soul to see her" (p.119), and on the other, he thinks that the "greatest obstacle to knowing her was her habit of lying for pleasure" (p. 119).

The description of the drawing rooms is a comment upon the dying attempts of the colonisers to maintain their authority in the colonies. The "checkerboard marble floors" (p. 9) stand symbolic for the colonisers' chessboard where they opt for different moves to 'check and mate' the resistance of the colonised. Dreamlike description of the house that still maintains the past glory helps towards development of a magical-real effect "in the oppressive damp of neglect and gloom" (p. 9) and the coolness of the rooms because of "their thick masonry walls and many years of enclosure, and even more because of the December breezes that come whistling through the cracks" (p. 9). The "five haunting mastiffs that guarded the nights" (p. 9) outside the mansion serve as the external manifestation of the colonisers' internal fear of a possible revolt by the

colonised. The Marquis' finding paper birds with the confessional message after Donna Olalla's unnatural death when she was struck by lightning is yet another example of the (out of guilt) fear of the colonisers regarding any possible rebellion. The magical real tone in which the incident has been described is significant:

> One ninth of November, when they were playing a duet under the orange trees because the air was pure and the sky was high and cloudless, a sudden flash blinded them, a seismic detonation startled them, and Donna Olalla was struck down by lightning. (p. 38)

The magical effect is achieved by musicality in repetition of 'ninth' and 'November' and the dreamlike ideal situation where the Marquis and Donna Olalla were experiencing a very beautiful phase of their lives, playing a duet under the orange trees and enjoying the freshness of air in a high a cloudless sky. But the grave reality creeps in and ruins the highly romantic mood both on part of the characters and the readers. Suddenly, the most romantic atmosphere of the fictional world vanishes when Donna Olalla is struck down by the lightning, that too out of a clear cloudless sky. The reader knows the degree of impossibility of the situation, but feels its graveness as if s/he was struck down by the lightening. The situation grows even more serious when the Marquis is encounters a "storm of little paper birds falling like snow on the orange trees in the orchard" (p. 38). He catches one of the paper birds and unfolds it. To his highest possible disappointment and fears, the note read: "*that lightning bolt was mine*" (p. 38). The paper birds might be a representation of the (self-)realization/ knowledge of the colonisers that brought about the long denied revelation of a uprising by the colonised. The psychological state of the colonial masters turns pathetic by each passing day. Their fears grew and their lives became miserable:

> Alone for the first time in the gloomy mansion of his forebears, he did not sleep well in the darkness because of the congenital fear of American-born nobles that their slaves would murder them in their beds. [. . .] He would tiptoe to the door, open it with a sudden movement and surprise a slave spying on him through the keyhole. He heard the blacks, naked and smeared with coconut oil to elude capture, slip away with tiger steps along the corridors. Overwhelmed by so many simultaneous fear, he ordered that the lamps be kept burning until dawn, ejected the slaves who, little by little, had been taken over the empty spaces and brought into the house the first mastiffs trained in the arts of war. (p. 39)

The Marquis' fear gradually increases. It becomes so intense that towards the end of the novella, when

> Sprawled in his hammock, the Marquis again felt the terror that his slaves would attack him with knives and he forbade them to enter the house even during the day. (p. 117)

The basic cause of such terrible fear on the part of the Marquis was due to his heightened sense of perception. He feared them because he thought them to be completely different from him; they were black and he was white. At times, he expresses his feelings regarding their being different. The "blacks lie to us but not to each other" (p. 119). This reflects the basic division between 'us' and 'them' that drives the Marquis to fear the black slaves.

The way the Marquis makes a "donation to the Church of the lands that sustained his grandeur" (p. 119) reflects the colonisers' guilty conscience on having used the resources of the colonised territories on a huge scale. In order to wash away his sins, the Marquis gives away,

> . . . a cattle ranch in Mompox and another in Ayapel and 2,000 hectares in Mahates, just two leagues from here, with several herds of riding and show-horses, a farm and the finest sugar plantation on the Caribbean coast. (p. 119)

Being representation of the colonisers, the Marquis' act of making huge contributions to the church symbolises the large scale exploitation of the indigenous resources. Massive mansions, fine sugar plantations with numerous black slaves working on them, vast cattle ranches, and large herds of riding and show-horses, tell a great deal about the extent to which local resources were being exploited. The undertone of this episode demonstrates the novelist's use of magical realism towards the cause of social protest against the aftermaths of colonisation.

At the very outset, the readership is made aware of the seriousness of the threatening atmosphere of the port; and it can be anticipated that slavery is a major theme of the text. Despite the fact that the ship belonging to Compania Gaditana de Negros was at about half an hour distance from the shore, the dead bodies of slaves were thrown into the sea and were not brought to the land for burial. The fact that the slaves were not given a proper burial after their death indicates the way the African Blacks were treated by their masters. The abducted Blacks who were brought to the Colombian Caribbean Coast to be sold as slaves were treated in an inhumane way. Compania Gaditana de Negros, one of the major traders in the slavery business, had suffered a financial setback when one of its ships, which were to arrive at the port, had to throw the un-weighted corpses of the slaves into the water because of an unexplainable series of deaths on board. Unfortunately, the tide brought the corpses to the surface and the beach was full of bodies "disfigured by swelling and a strange magenta colouring" (p. 5). The White authorities were so fearful lest the 'African plague' break out and destroy their plague-free world that they decided to keep the

vessel anchored outside the bay. It was much later that the reason of the mysterious African deaths was discovered to be food poisoning. It is, however, shocking to note that it was only the blacks who fall victim to food poisoning. In other words, the food they were given was different from that of their masters. The novelist's way of depicting the incident is itself a comment on the differences founded on the basis of creed and race and how they affected the lives of people.

In the beginning of the novella, the author employs the technique of magical realism in order to verbalize his feelings of protest against certain social problems – such as exploitation of the Black, human-trade – prevalent in that time society. To make the readers believe in the fictional tale presented in the novella, Márquez paints different objects in colours and uses certain dates and numerical figures in such way that they seem to be realistic for the reader. By doing so, the author intends to question the authenticity of various historical propositions as well as protest against social evils/problems. The story opens with an 'ash-grey dog with a white blaze on its forehead' running violently on the 'rough terrain of the market on the first Sunday in December' (p. 5). The magical effect achieved in the first half of the sentence is made to cross the line of the 'magical' and enter into the realm of the real.

> An ash-gray dog with a white blaze on its forehead burst onto the rough terrain of the market on the first Sunday in December, knocked down tables of fried food, overturned Indians' stalls and lottery kiosks and bit four people who happened to cross its path. Three of them were black slaves. The fourth, Sierva María de Todos los Angels, the only child of the Marquis de Casalduero, had come there with a mulatta servant to buy a string of bells for the celebration of her twelfth birthday. (p. 5)

The dog bites four people, three of whom are black slaves and the fourth is Sierva María de Todos los Ángeles. The proportion is significant in the context of the colonial/postcolonial debate in that nearly same is the ratio of the colonizing and the colonized world, i.e. ¼ Whites and ¾ blacks/browns (and that too slaves). The dog may be taken as a symbol of colonization. When gone mad, the dog of colonization bites – and in other words affects – the whole world. The presentation of the beast as having an 'ash-gray colour and 'a white blaze on its forehead' is also significant; 'ash-gray' colour is symbolic for something peaceful, quiet and sombre, while the 'white blaze' on the very forehead of this ash-gray animal is a bad omen, telling a great deal about the forthcoming terror that it is about to unleash upon the world. People, who presented themselves as the most civilized of all and the carriers of the sacred torch of knowledge, at once turned into the worst of the exploiters. It is beyond the imagination of the public that the process of colonization would be of so far-reaching effects even after the end of the real-time process of colonization; the descendants of the actually colonized people still suffer from a particular state of mind responsible to alter their course of thought and action, making them feel themselves inferior to the colonizers' descendants. The opening sentence of the novella, therefore, smacks of the over brimming feelings of disapproval and protest against the colonial process carried out in Latin America first by the Spaniards and then the North Americans.

It is quite ironical that the families involved in the slave trade did not give even a single thought to the threat they posed to the whole humanity, but were concerned about the threat of a plague and that too of rabies. The irony is doubled when it is revealed to the reader that the families involved in slave trade, who in fact had never felt sympathy on the pathetic condition of the slave-families, were so worried about their own so-called reputation that "even a simple dog's bite might damage the family's

honor" (p. 12). Whereas the Marquis does everything to save his family's honour, the slaves did not have resources and freedom to cure the infected;

> Yet the most terrible dramas did not pass into the annals of history, for they occurred among the population of blacks, who spirited away the victims to cure them by African magic in the settlements of runaway slaves. (p. 12)

Immediately after describing the setting, i.e. the South American Seaport during the colonial era, the reader is exposed to, although narrated in the extraordinarily lightest manner, the extraordinary event of the trade of slaves abducted/smuggled from Guinea. There is a strong sense of disapproval of the way the slaves are treated in that society. The maid was "attracted by the crowd at the slave's port, where a shipment of blacks from Guinea was being sold at a discount" (p. 12).

The reader is able to live in two worlds simultaneously: in the world of fiction and his own real world. A life in the world of fiction is only possible through the subtle use of the technique of magical realism. The reader knows that the world of the text is fiction, but he experiences its existence and wants to believe in it. This makes the reader question the so-called absoluteness of the real world. And at the same time, the author makes the reader share the former's intense feelings of protest that have been made noticeable with the skilful use of the abovementioned technique. It is worth noting that in the world of the novella, the contagious disease spread by the rabid dog is attributed to a plague. The idea of plague is very relevant in the present discussion on the basis of its social and moral implications along with the medical one. According to the Athenian conception, plagues are inflicted upon a nation which - either on an individual or a collective level - has been involved in a heinous crime. Mitchell-Boyask (2008, p. 2) emphasizes the presence of a complex interplay between the theme of morality and the

imagery of disease in the 5th Century Athenian drama. Giving examples from various dramas of that era, he concludes that,

> . . . an imbalance of bad over good brings disease for the city, and most link the malfunctioning of the social and political orders to illness. Disease here is associated with disturbance in the city, and wise speech or song can bring a cure, presumably by restoring order (Mitchell-Boyask, 2008, p. 127).

The residents of the town too fear a plague. Although the background of the fear is not given, the absence of the same not only makes it appear to be significant, but makes the readers unconsciously search for it. In other words, the fear lest a plague is inflicted upon the townspeople is the indirect result of their guilty conscience regarding their un-ethical and immoral practices, such as exploitation of the enslaved and smuggled black community. Right after the readers are told about the rabid-dog-plague, another kind of plague is introduced to them: the 'African plague' that is feared to be out broken on the vessel that lay anchored outside the bay and that ultimately turns out to be mere food poisoning. The vessel is not allowed ashore until the town's prominent people make sure that the reason for the Negro slaves' death is not the African plague, but food-poisoning. In other words, the slaves were not provided with proper food by the people who enslaved them. This inhumane treatment of the black is an ample evidence of the racial discrimination and exploitation on part of the colonizers. The blacks were not only forcibly used for rowing the ships – that carried the looted raw material including minerals, fruit, artefacts, etc. – from Africa to the Americas and Europe – but later on were sold in auctions. The discrimination on the basis of region and race is manifested in the act of the townspeople to force the ship to anchor and unload the goods and people on the port, but remain on a reasonable distance from the coast. In his short story

'Monologue of Isabel Watching it Rain in Macondo' published in *Storm* (1955/2008), the miserable condition of the Indians is highlighted and can be analysed in the continuation of *Demons* (1994/1996). They are forced to move the heavy household items, furniture, etc. when their masters see them.

> . . . the Guajiro Indians, shirtless and barefoot, with their pants rolled up to their knees, were carrying the furniture into the dining room. In the men's expression, in the very diligence with which they were working, one could see the cruelty of their frustrated rebellion, of their necessary and humiliating inferiority in the rain. (Márquez, 1968/1996, p. 86)

O. Horton and E. Horton (2005, p. 27) described the horrific situation of human trade in the following way:

> About 40 percent [of the slaves] were landed in Brazil, where Portuguese colonial slave masters used huge numbers of Angolan and Congolese slaves to cultivate sugarcane. Sugar was also the major crop in other parts of Latin America and in the Caribbean, where slaves working in the cane fields produced the sugar that sweetened European food and drink and generated great wealth for European merchants and American slaveholders.

Doak (2006, p. 6) argued that the history of the African slave trade in Europe and the Americas can be traced back to 1619 when about 20 Africans were sold in Jamestown, Virginia. The major motives behind slavery were banana, sugar and coffee plantations in the coastal regions of Latin America. These plantations were run by the Portuguese,

French, and the British colonizers who kidnapped the black community from Africa and smuggled them to these areas in order to make them forcibly work. This free labour caused them huge profits, which they spent in their native lands. The coastal town in the novella also conforms to the above notion of uplifting its socio-economic condition by indulging in the slave-trade. The enslaved Negros are abducted from Africa and brought here in order to be used as free-labourers: the females as maids and 'comfort girls', and men as servants and labourers in the farms and plantations. The exploitation of the black females is highlighted when Bernarda Cabrera gets herself impregnated by the Marquis and threatens him that "she was not a black but the daughter of an astute Indian and a white woman from Castille, and the only needle that could mend her honor was formal matrimony" (p. 42). In other words, the black females had no honour as compared to the mulatto, what to say about the white ones. The fact that Bernarda dragged the Marquis into an illicit relationship serves as a comment on the increased sexual appetite of the mulatto female. The description of the first sexual encounter smacks of the heightened lust of Bernarda:

> She stormed the hammock, mounted him, gagged him with the skirts of the djellaba he was wearing and left him exhausted. Then she revived him with an ardour and skill he could not have imagined in the meager pleasures of his solitary lovemaking and without glory deprived him of his virginity. (p. 41)

When Sierva María was born, "premature and puny . . . she looked like a bleached tadpole, and the umbilical cord wrapped around her neck was strangling her" (p. 43). The strangling umbilical cord can be seen as an omen of her future life in which she was constantly suffocated by the empty norms of the society.

As Sierva María "had begun to blossom under a combination of contradictory influences" (p. 10), the influence of her rich parents and the extraordinary African slaves in her household. It is worth noting that whatever the girl inherited from her parents is of negative nature, whereas she learnt a number of positive habits from the slaves. The portrayal of slaves having a rich culture that was sufficient enough to influence a young girl of an aristocratic household is a protest against the attempts of the colonisers to impose their culture on the colonised.

> She inherited very little from her mother. She had her father's thin body, however, and his irremediable shyness pale skin, eyes of taciturn blue and the pure copper of her radiant hair. (p. 10)

Sierva María is the daughter of "an aristocrat and a commoner" who is brought up among the black slaves of the household. Such hybrid atmosphere leads to a rather lower social status for the girl. She has to suffer in both the worlds, i.e. of the coloniser and the colonised. It is this identity crisis that she remains a misfit in both the worlds, an outcast who has no place to call 'home'.

Unlike the adults, Sierva María does not have any ulterior motives leading her to suppress the black community/servants/maids in her household. She likes to spend most of her time in the servants' courtyards playing and helping them in the daily chores. The socio-cultural as well as politico-economical superiority that is the driving force behind all the activities on part of the local community in the town has not yet affected the lass. It is from here that she learns the strange and mysterious ways of the African culture;

> This afternoon, however, she looked for Sierva María in the servants' courtyards. She was helping to skin rabbits, and her face was painted black, her

> feet were bare and her head was wrapped in the red turban used by slave women. (p. 14)

However, it is these strange and untamable traits she adapted from the slaves that she is accused by the convent to have demoniac possession. The fact that Sierva María is 'culturally' an African does not allow her father to develop a patriarchal bond with her. He is unable to understand his own daughter because he is unable to understand the African culture.

So materialistic has become the approach of the adults of the town that even love, the most significant and delicate of all emotions, has become meaningless to them. The relation between parents and children is usually considered to be a powerful one, but in the miniature world of 'love and demons' even this relation has failed. The reaction of the parents of Sierva María to the knowledge of her being bitten by a rabid dog leaves the reader in a shock. Due to the indifferent attitude of her parents, the girl too has lost any soft corner for them.

> He always believed he loved his daughter, but the fear of rabies obliged the Marquis to admit to himself that it was a lie for the sake of convenience. Bernarda, on the other hand, did not even ask herself the question, for she knew very well she did not love the girl and the girl did not love her, and both things seemed fitting. A good part of the hatred each of them felt for Sierva María was caused by the other's qualities in her. (p.15)

A prominent critic, Armstrong (1994, p. xi), highlighted the paradox inherent in the practice of slavery by borrowing an example from Woolf's 1927 novel *To the Lighthouse* in which one of the characters, Mr. Ramsey, is shown as thinking of the "social inferiority of the liftman who both literally and metaphorically facilitates his

ability to move upward. He recalls, in a quickly repressed moment of guilty recognition, that the achievements of ancient civilizations were dependent upon slavery." She furthers her argument by concluding that the irony of this reflection lies in the fact that, in reality, slavery was historically much closer to Mr. Ramsey himself. In other words, to try to uplift oneself by oppressing the 'other' is both an ironical and paradoxical idea, which should not go side by side. The identification and the subsequent condemnation of this trend are quite important. Mansbridge (2001) noted that along with implementing some historical and culturally derived or borrowed strategies to condemn various forms of domination, it is mandatory to develop an 'oppositional consciousness', which is partially dependent upon recognition of "some of the ways a dominant group uses power to initiate and maintain its position" (p. 15).

The novelist establishes a link between the world of reality and the world of fiction by mentioning the archaeological expedition of the "old convent of Sana Clara" (Márquez, 1994/1996, p. 1) in the preface to the novella and the long hair of Sierva María in the novella. It is through this link that García Márquez mingles the real with the fantastic on the structural level of *Demons*. Sierva María's "twenty-two meters, eleven centimeters" (p. 3) magically long hair that are discovered in a real archaeological expedition, which was reported by García Márquez as a journalist, serve as a protest in the postcolonial terms. At the end of the novella, magical real description of the death of Sierva María is over brimming with protest against a system in which innocent people die of love. The girl, confined in the church, is bound to suffer the barbaric and torturous treatment by the Catholic Church. The magical real side of the unending growth of Sierva María's hair serve as a harsh comment on the colonial system, a system that is, on the one hand, unjust itself in its existence and, on the other, is constantly proves a source of injustice for people.

> On the twenty-ninth of May, having lost her will to endure any more, she dreamed again of the window looking out on a snow-covered field from which Cayetano Delaura was absent and which he would never return. In her lap she held a cluster of golden grapes that grew back as soon as she ate them. But this time she pulled them off not one by one but two by two, hardly breathing in her longing to strip the cluster of its last grape. The warder who came in to prepare her for her sixth session of exorcism found her dead of love in her bed, her eyes radiant and her skin like that of a newborn baby. Strands of hair gushed like bubbles as they grew back on her shaved head. (p. 160)

When she does not pluck the last grape of the cluster, Sierva María is portrayed as trapped in the clutches of impossibility and hopelessness. She is desperate to get rid of her miseries but, just like the cluster of golden grapes, they grew back in a magical way. Her dreaming of the 'window' and being unable to find Cayetano Delaura in the 'snow-covered field' out of it signifies the hopelessness of the colonised to find a way to live a free life, independent of authority and subjugation of any sort.

Although the setting of Márquez's *Demons* is the South American Seaport during the colonial era, the author has made it relevant to today's post/postmodern world, as well. Parallel can be drawn between the colonial society, as depicted in the *Demons*, and the present day post-9/11 society in a number of respects, e.g. the enslavement of the Black/Brown community and an exploitation of their resources, creating superiority on linguistic, psychological and physical levels. Language has been a major tool for creating an inferiority complex among the colonized. On the other hand, in establishing a linguistic superiority over the native population, the colonizers have always found a significant means to smoothen the process of colonization. Whereas, this linguistic superiority effectively suppresses the colonized, it does not cease to affect

the minds of the 'other' even after such processes actively end. The very term "Latin America" itself provides explicit evidence in support of the argument. As Latin is at the root of the major languages spoken in this region, e.g. Spanish and Portuguese, the origin of the term can be traced back to the French incursions in Mexico around 1860, when desperate to extend the French rule to this region, Napoleon the Third and his ministers deliberately and repeatedly used the term to propagate a kind of cultural similarity between this region and France.

At places in *Demons*, the author seems to be attempting to re-assert the lost linguistic identity of the region when he condemns the use of Latin language in the ordinary discourse. For example, when Sagunta, an Indian vagabond woman called on the Marquis to tell him about the threat of a plague of rabies, she made so many 'twists and turns' while doing so. Consequently, the Marquis lost patience and asked her "Whatever it is, just tell me with no more Latinizing" (p.13). As Sagunta belonged to the 'other' of the society, she used Latin in her effort to convince the Marquis, the addressee, about the truth of the horrible news she was about to break. At yet another place, Dr. Abrenunico's obsessive use of Latin has been ridiculed by the author, when the former's classical sentences of greeting and farewell are not understood by the Marquis. The implied meaning of the episode is the irony posed by the author that no substance of great knowledge can exist in any indigenous language, but in Latin only. Scientists, doctors and physicians do not find any expression in their native tongue that is appropriate to any given situation. Abrenunico's reply in Latin to the Marquis's aforequoted apologetic-ironic statement reveals the attitude of the educated towards the potency of the Latin tongue (p. 20). What adds to the irony of the matter is that Bible, the accepted religious scripture of the region, was not translated from Latin for a long time. The unnecessary use of Latin by certain groups of the native population resembles

the efforts of the colonial masters to establish a linguistic superiority over the 'other'. The same practice can be noticed in the Sub-Continent, where the words of the English language are still spoken in the ordinary discourse to impress the addressee.

The sweeping attacks of the masters on the supposed degenerate moral character of the slaves are meant to disguise the former's own wrongdoings. The presence of the slaves is unacceptable in the civilized society of the masters. The slaves are driven out of the rooms of the house of the Marquis with a broom when they are discovered "committing calamitous acts of sodomy or fornicating with battered women" (p. 10). But, the desire of making 'them' just like 'us' is also present in the slaves. The young slave girls would blacken Sierva María's face with soot and she was able "to dance with more grace and fire than the Africans, sing in voices different from her own in the various languages of Africa, agitate the birds and animals when she imitated their voices". "In the oppressive world where no one was free", the creation of a sort of counter-colonization, confined to the children only, was underway by the oppressed slaves (p. 10).

From slavery to the issues of gender and race, the theme of exploitation has been manifested throughout *Demons* and exploitation on the basis of colour and creed has been strongly condemned. It is highly unjust to assume that certain people, who belong to a particular race and have a coloured complexion, are not 'civilized' and it is the "White man's burden" to spend all his energies to whitewash the former's cultural values and replace it with his own in the guise of an educator.

García Márquez's fiction is helpful in the construction of an oppositional consciousness in that it condemns certain forms of domination by identifying the methods and manners of the dominant to control the 'other'. His *Demons* is helpful in unveiling the forms of dominance, e.g. the role of language in creating dominance, and

how displacement of the African Black slaves caused the development an acute identity crisis among them. On its root, the exploitation of the Black community had various issues such as language, racial superiority, and gender discrimination, etc. As a matter of fact, the miniature world of García Márquez could achieve the desired effect of his narrative only with a mature handling of the device of magical realism. The world of *Demons* is not limited to the Latin America only, but is relevant to the whole of the Third World, e.g. the Sub-Continent, where slavery is still being practised, however, in an indirect manner.

These short and apparently un-important passing remarks regarding the way Indians were treated in the Caribbean world serve as a major theme in Márquez's fiction. In *Innocent Erendira and Her Heartless Mother*, for example, the author deliberately mentions the cistern placed in the courtyard of the grandmother's house and is used "for the storage of water carried over many years from distant springs on the backs of Indians" (1972/1996, p. 3). The Indian community was being treated so badly that the narrator did not even remember since when such cruel practice was being carried out. The inhumane treatment of the Indian becomes even more highlighted when the narrator describes that a broken-down ostrich was "hitched to a ring on the cistern wall . . . the only feathered creature who could survive the torment of that accursed climate" (p. 3). Slavery was so common in the society that the wealthy people thought it normal to keep dozens of slaves and servants. Equally important is to note that when the Amedises died, "one of melancholy fevers, and the other riddled with bullets in a fight over a woman, the grandmother buried their bodies in the courtyard, sent away the fourteen barefoot servant girls" (p. 3). In his *Tale* (2002/2008) García Márquez mentions a servant girl named Chon, who had come from Barrancas with his grandparents when she was still a girl. When she grew old,

> She had a beautiful Indian color and always seemed nothing but skin and bones, and she went barefoot, wearing a white turban and wrapped in the starched sheets. Her pace was very slow as she walked down the middle of the street with an escort of tamed, silent dogs who advanced as they circled around her. In the end she became part of the town's folklore. (pp. 68-9)

One of the many reasons of her being too weak may be the improper diet she was given. Another reason may be her perturbed mental condition due to the fact that she was forced to live far away from her native place and her own family. What is noticeable in both the narratives is that after the death of Amediases, the old lady sets free fourteen barefoot servant girls, whereas in the *Tale* García Márquez mentions that "in her final years [Chon] moved to her own room in the poorest part of town" (p. 68).

Throughout the *Demons*, Indians are shown to be slaves, who are utilised only as servants, bearers, labourers, water-carriers, builders, helpers, forced concubines and prostitutes, and what not. Because they are slaves, the reader is never told that these "peaceful Indians" (Márquez, 1972/1996, p. 20) are never paid in any form. After the strange wind of misfortune of Erendira blows and leaves the palace of her grandmother burnt to ashes, the "people of the village, Indians for the most part, tried to rescue the remains of the disaster" (p. 7). Slavery was so commonly practiced that the old woman thought it normal to enslave her own illegitimate granddaughter and force her into prostitution in order to regain her wealth. She is ready to sell her for even one hundred and fifty pesos for two hundred years to make the latter payback what she has burnt to ashes. However, the Indians were treated very badly as compared to Erendira; in the cold weather, when she is bathing the grandmother, it is an Indian who is responsible for

> . . . pouring warm water perfumed with oregano into the bathtub through a tube from outside. [. . .] Suddenly the water in the tube stopped. Erendira left the tent to find out what was going on and saw the Indian in charge of pouring water into the tube chopping wood by the kitchen. (p. 48).

Slavery has been a significant theme in García Márquez's other works, as well. The language of the oppressed plays an important role in highlighting the invasion of an indigenous culture, of which language is a major part. Arcadio and Amaranta in *Solitude* are so attracted by the purity of the Guajiro language that they are almost obsessed with even when they were children and "had already begun to get their second teeth and still went about all day clutching the Indians' cloaks" (Márquez, 1967/1970, p. 41). Pertinent is the fact that they were "stubborn in their decision not to speak Spanish but the Guajiro language" (p. 41) only because Spanish was the language of colonisers, whereas Guajiro was spoken by the 'others'. The children found it natural to take refuge in the language most close to their roots, a language the speakers of which are deprived of some of their basic rights. Almost the same happened to Rebeca:

> Her greenish skin, her stomach, round and tense as a drum, revealed poor health and hunger that were older than she was, but when they gave her something to eat, she kept the plate on her knees without tasting anything. They even began to think that she was a deaf-mute until the Indians asked her in their language if she wanted some water and she moved her eyes as if she recognized them and said yes with her hand. (p. 42)

Rebeca's parents did not know the reason why she did not die of hunger. It were rather the Indians, who "were aware of everything, for they went ceaselessly about the

house on their stealthy feet, discovered that Rebeca only liked to eat the damp earth of the courtyard and the cake of whitewash that she picked of the walls with her nails" (p. 41). What is important to note on the other hand is that because the Indians had to look after everything in the house, they had to use their 'stealthy feet' ceaselessly throughout the day, and they were able to notice even minute happenings. Being too close to the Indians, a strong sense of secrecy, superstition and witchcraft is evident in the behaviour of Rebeca, as she did all this in utter secrecy when no one was looking. Hanging between the two discrete worlds of reality and fantasy, the girl had a feeling of guilt of her attempt to hide her habit of eating mud from everybody. Besides their physical activities, the Indians were able to notice it only because of their extraordinarily superstitious nature. Having such knowledge in the world of the text serves as a comment on the general perception of their knowledge and practice of the black arts and voodoo magic.

The loyalty of Indians is beyond any doubt. Two thousand Indians stood by Colonel Aureliano Buendia, when he left Riohacha after he was banned to represent the Liberals (p. 133).

In his autobiography, Márquez recalls the tradition of slavery remained alive in his own family even after it was formally abolished:

> The move to Aracataca was seen by my grandparents as a journey into forgetting. In their service they brought two Guajiro Indians – Alirio and Apolinar – and Indian woman – Meme – purchased in their own region for a hundred pesos each when slavery had already been abolished. (Márquez, 2002/2008, p. 37)

Another important issue in racial representation is that of the concept of 'mulatto' and the way it has been represented in the works of García Márquez. In specific terms, mulatto is a person having one white and one black parent (The American Heritage Dictionary of English language, p. 4771). Because they are part-Native American, part-African, mulattos are looked down upon by the Europeans and Americans and are not accepted by the either society. According to Vasconcellos (2003), this marginalised part of society has to face serious problems in practical life;

> At the same time, they were not completely accepted by their colonized counterparts because they were given an elevated status and the accompanying benefits. Furthermore, these children were labelled by both worlds. Terms such as mulatto, half-breed, mestizo, and the like would mark them all their lives. The only way to escape such a label was to adopt European characteristics and values. They married those from higher status to improve their social standing and often adopted European dress and Christianity. (p. 111)

In García Márquez's work, one finds scattered references to the individuals of mulatto community and it can be determined as how they were treated in the overall society. According to Antonio Olliz Boyd (as quoted in Hunsaker, 1994, p. 225), the literary mulatto female "is often a sex object or a symbol of primitivism, and she yearns for sexual union with the white male". Hunsaker's objection to such prejudiced description of a mulatto female smacks of the "degradation of black woman and the self-flattery of white men that Olliz Boyd finds in the stereotype of the black female surface repeatedly of this image" (Hunsaker, 1994, p. 225). García Márquez's portrayal of a mulatto woman occurs in some passing remarks and not a major part of the plot of any of his work. Perhaps, this is due to the fact that "consciousness of race appears to be much

less prominent in Colombia than in Brazil (p. 225). In *Cholera*, for example, the portrayal of the character of Dr. Barbara Lynch as a seductive mulatto female, who trapped Dr. Urbino and got engaged in an affair of short duration, works towards the stereotype of mulatto female. The short duration of the affair is a comment on the mulatto females' desire to have sexual union with a male. Her seductive power is so strong that a person like Dr. Urbino could not resist and got trapped in no time (García Márquez, 1985/1988). The magical description of the lady is helpful in the construction of an image the author wants to portray.

Chapter 9

HONOUR KILLING, MAGICAL REALISM AND PROTEST: *CHRONICLE OF A DEATH FORETOLD*

Garcia Márquez's *Crónica de una muerte anunciada* [Chronicle of a Death Foretold, 1981/1983 (*Chronicle*)] is a story of sex, betrayal and the subsequent honour killing of the individual who is supposedly responsible for striping of the respect from the name of a prominent family in the town. Magical realist as well as horrific (Danow, 1995), *Chronicle* (1981/1983) is replete with instances of protest on various levels. While taking the reader through different happenings in the textual world in a chronological order, the novelist explores and presents the nature of honour as a cultural phenomenon in the Latin American society along with registering protest against racial discrimination as an aftermath of slavery. The novella is said to be a "simple narrative so charged with irony that it has the authority of a political fable" (Buford, September 10, 1982, p. 965) on the basis of the use of magical realism. This chapter of my thesis is an attempt to analyse the novella in the backdrop of the novelist's use of magical realism as a tool to highlight social injustice in the society.

Honour is defined as "the quality of knowing and doing what is morally right" (Oxford Dictionaries online), and the "principled uprightness of character [or] a woman's chastity or reputation for chastity" (*The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, 1992, p. 3502). In this context, honour killing denotes the killing by family or family members who are believed to have brought shame on the family's name. García Márquez's magical-real narration dissects the legitimacy, granted by both culture and religion, of the traditional concept of honour and presents it as an empty norm to safeguard the so-called social reputation. The novel serves as a comment on a society where it is the murdered to be blamed for being killed and the murderer is

considered to have done an act of heroism. Like most of his magical realist works, *Chronicle* (1981/1983) also finds its roots embedded in reality, as it "reconstructs an actual murder that took place in Sucre, Colombia, in 1951. In an interview . . . García Márquez declared that Cayetano Gentile Chimento – Santiago Nasar in the novel – had been one of his childhood friends" (Pelayo, 2001, p. 112). Though he mentions Riohacha as a neighbouring town, throughout the novella, García Márquez does not reveal the name of the town where the whole action takes place. A feature of magical realism, the authorial reticence here is not without reason. It helps the reader not to think of honour killing as a problem only limited to Latin America, but as a dilemma of the whole Third World, particularly Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan.

The novella opens with the description of "the day when they were going to kill [Santiago Nasar]" (p. 1).[6] The third-person narrator explains in a magical tone how the about-to-be-killed Santiago Nasar saw two different dreams about trees. In the first dream he saw himself "going through a grove of timber trees where a gentle drizzle was falling, and for an instant he was happy in his dream, but when he awoke he felt completely spattered with bird shit" (p. 1). While in the second, "he was alone in a tinfoil airplane and flying through the almond trees without bumping into anything" (p.

[6] It is important to note that most of García Márquez's works begin with a situation where someone has already died or about to die. In *Solitude* (1967/1970), the protagonist is about to face the firing squad; in *Patriarch* (1975/2007), the dictator has already dies and his corpse is rotting in his once celebrated presidential palace; *Demons* (1994/1996) is based on the real incident of excavation of the tomb of a girl who has extraordinarily long hair; *Sailor* (1970/2007) begins with the news of the death of eight crew-members of a ship of the Colombian navy; in *Erendira* (1972/1996), the sons of the heartless grandmother die in the beginning of the story; in *Death* (1970), six months and eleven days are left in the life of the Senator; the *Chronicle* (1981/1983) begins when Santiago Nasar is about to be killed by the twins; The story of *Storm* (1955/2008) opens with the child narrator telling about the unnatural death of the doctor and the way his grandfather kept the promise of attending the doctor's funeral despite the fear of isolation in the community.

2). García Márquez's strongly surrealistic description of characters and events that are quite ordinary and not corresponding to the serious nature of the plot, exhibit the spirit of magical realism. Santiago Nasar's dreaming of the 'gentle rain' is a magical event made to happen in a realistic world as something real. The reader is informed that Placida Linero, his mother, "had a well-earned reputation as an accurate interpreter of other people's dreams" (p. 2), but the true interpretation can only be reached when "they are told her before eating" (p. 2). The soft and gentle rain of the first dream can be seen really falling at the time of his death. The way the whole town knows about the tragedy to befallen the house of Nasars denotes the collective insensitivity on part of society that does not do anything to save the life of a fellow human being.

García Márquez holds the relevant explanation of the origin of the multi-ethnic society of the town by just giving passing remarks about them. This helps him raise a voice of protest as the reader is forced by the inherent suspense in the novella to fill the gaps the former leaves within the text. For example, he highlights the massive impact of slave-trade on the fictional society – that serves as a mirror-image of the real society – even much after the abolition of the institution of slavery. The differences among people on the basis of race and creed are made the focus of such protest. The population of the town can be categorised in three ethnic groups. The First group is represented by Victoria Guzmán and her daughter, Divina Flor. They are of African descent and are a direct reference to the Spanish conquest of the Caribbean and the slave trade. In the opening pages of the novel, the readers are made to feel that the people of African descent are still victim of discrimination, mistrust and hatred, which they return to the society as their answer. Victoria Guzmán and Divina Flor, her daughter, are the servants in the house of Nasars. The slave-like treatment of servants serve as a comment on the unending repercussions of the (post)colonialism. Victoria Guzmán had been seduced

by Ibrahim Nasar, the father of Santiago Nasar, in the fullness of her adolescence "She'd made love to him in secret for several years in the stables of the ranch, and he brought her to be a house servant when the affection was over" (p. 8). Divina Flora, "who was the daughter of a more recent mate, knew that she was destined for Santiago Nasar's furtive bed" (p. 8). The way García Márquez informs the reader that Divina Flora is the daughter of a more recent mate of her mother is yet another instance of protest in that the mother's purity has already been snatched away by a number of people with good social standing. Victoria Guzmán's disgust is evident when she is described to be unable to avoid "a wave of fright as she remembered Santiago Nasar's horror when she pulled out the insides of a rabbit by the roots and threw the steaming guts to the dogs" (p. 8). Her throwing the rabbit guts to the dogs can be compared with the way dogs want to eat Santiago Nasar's guts when, butchered by the twins, his dead body is "exposed to public view in the center of the living room" (p. 73).

> They hadn't stopped howling since I went into the house, when Santiago Nasar was still in his death throes in the kitchen and I found Divina Flor weeping with great howls and holding [the dogs] off with a beam.
>
> "Help me," she shouted to me. "What they want is to eat his guts." (pp. 73-74)

The manner in which the novelist has used the word 'howl' for Divina Flora right after the dogs are described to be 'howling' outside the house of the murdered Santiago Nasar stands metaphorical for the intensity of girl's sin of helping the Vicario twins to enter the house and kill Santiago Nasar by not bolting the door. He uses magical realism to foreground the sin of Divina Flora when the reader, despite knowing that a human being cannot howl and it is only dogs and wolves who do it, accepts the animalistic imagery employed for Divina Flor just as s/he accepts it for the dogs. What is

emphasized by the novelist here is the dog-like and low status of the black servant community in the Caribbean. There are scattered references in the novella to butchering/ slaughtering other animals such as roosters and pigs. When an animal is butchered, the reader unconsciously compares it to the butchering of Santiago Nasar. The inability of the Vicario twins to get rid of the smell of Santiago Nasar from their hands and the entire population of the town suffers from it. The way the smell of his skin takes over the town as a plague signifies the collective guilt of Santiago Nasar's murder. On the dawn of a cloudy Tuesday, the narrator visits the house of María Alejandrina Cervantes. Despite the fact that she is a whore, García Márquez describes her to be a very decent and respectable personality, having all the manners and courtesy to facilitate people in getting a relief from the burden of worries. In contrast with the traditional view of a whorehouse, her home boasts of the respectability of it dwellers. In fact, the paradise-like picture of her home with musicians, the dancing courtyard and the lanterns lend a magical air to it, making it difficult for the reader to believe in its being a whorehouse. Instead of condemning her for being a whore, Maria is described as an attractive woman whose job is to give information about secrets of sexuality to men. Magical realism comes into play when the narrator does not condemn Maria for being a whore but presents her as a decent woman without an element of surprise, especially when the culture of the place does not allow women's sexuality at all. The collectively agreed upon concept of woman in the Colombian society is either the one completely conforming to the social values defining their sexuality or their complete rejection. There is no moderate way of living a life in the society. The nature of the collective guilt of the townspeople is so intense that Maria, who is herself a whore and thus symbolic for filth, tells the narrator about the hideous smell of human flesh. Just

about to make love to him, she stops and tells the narrator/investigator that she could not do it because "You smell of him" (p. 78).

> Not just I. Everything continued smelling of Santiago Nasar that day. The Vicario brothers could smell him in the jail cell where the mayor had locked them up until he could think of something to do with them. "No matter how much I scrubbed with soap and rags, I couldn't get rid of the smell," Pedro Vicario told me. They'd gone three nights without sleep, but they couldn't rest because as soon as they began to fall asleep they would commit the crime all over again. (pp. 78-79)

The inability of the townspeople to remove the smell of Santiago Nasar's skin and their act of extensive scrubbing with soap and rags resembles the helplessness of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth to wash away the stains of Duncan's blood. Macbeth says: "Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood / Clean from my hand. No, this my hand will rather / The multitudinous seas incarnadine, / Making the green one red" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, p. 55). Lady Macbeth also suffers the same agony: "My hands are of your color [. . .] A little water clears us of this deed" (p. 55-56). The failure of people to promptly act in order to prevent the threat against Santiago Nasar show the indifference in the society where everyone is but a silent observer.

Again, the abstract is juxtaposed with the concrete: the fear of a revenge from the Arabs along with the un-vanishing smell double the punishment of Vicario twins when one of them is unable to urinate and cannot sleep.

> Pedro Vicario couldn't stay there lying on the bed, but the same weariness prevented him from standing. The pain in his groin had reached his throat, his

urine was shut off, and he suffered the frightful certainty that he wouldn't sleep ever again for the rest of his life. (p. 80)

On the contrary to the Vicario twins' fear of revenge by Arabs, the reader is informed in a very plain manner that when the Colonel Aponte, the mayor,

> " . . . worried by the rumours, visited the Arabs family by family and that time, at least drew a correct conclusion. He found them perplexed and sad, with signs of mourning on their altars, and some of them sitting on the ground and wailing, but none harboured ideas of vengeance". (p. 82)

The Arabs too, like the other ethnic segments of the community, felt themselves equally responsible of the crime on the basis of their silence and inaction. Victims and the culprits at the same time, the very realization of themselves as accomplice in the crime does not let the Arabs even think of taking revenge from Pedro Vicario and Pablo Vicario. The novelist deliberately holds any solid comment or information regarding whether it was really Santiago Nasar who was responsible of taking the virginity of Angela Vicario, the returned sister of Vicario twins. The beating of Angela Vicario by her family is yet another point of protest in the novella. The way brutal social conventions are imposed on the individuals, especially on the females, lays bare the double standards of the society that apparently claims otherwise. It comments upon a society where men are allowed to do as they please, whereas the women are denied an equal treatment. On finding that she is not a virgin on her wedding night, Angela is not only banished from the home of her husband but is inhumanely beaten by her own mother. The prettiest of all her sisters, Angela Vicario is described to be so beautiful

that "she had born like the great queens of history, with the umbilical cord wrapped around her neck" (p. 31). Not unlike Sierva Maria in García Márquez's *Demons* (1994/1996), who too had her umbilical cord wrapped around her neck . . . strangling her" (p. 43) at the time of her birth, Angela too suffers from the so-called values of the parochial society she is part of. The wrapping of one's own umbilical cord, which is the source of food for a baby in the womb, around one's neck is symbolic for the trouble the child is to see in the future life.

As a matter of fact, the male members of the society, e.g. the narrator himself, Santiago Nasar, Luis Enrique, and Cristo feel no fear of bringing a bad name to their families as well as deceiving their female partners, when they visit a whorehouse in the town and do whatever they want. In other words, a man's having pre-marital sex is acceptable in the Caribbean culture and if a woman is found to have done the same, her sin is considered unforgivable. This has been extremely manifest in Garcia Marquez's *Whores* (2005) in which a ninety years old man wants to give himself pleasure of the company of a virgin as a birthday gift. The discrimination a woman faces in a male dominated society is one of the major themes of *Chronicle* (1981/1983). Nearly all the major female characters in the novella are shown to be victim to an unjust treatment. García Márquez clearly defines how a woman should be brought up, what should she learn, etc.

> The brothers were brought up to be men. The girls had been reared to get married. They knew how to do screen embroidery, sew by machine, weave bone lace, wash and iron, make artificial flowers and fancy candy, and write engagement announcements [. . .] [a] mother thought there were no better-reared daughters. "They're perfect," she was frequently heard to say. "Any man will

be happy with them because they've been raised to suffer." (pp. 30-31)

While acquainting the readers about the way Angela Vicario was brought up, the narrator provides an explicit description of what a woman is in the parochial Colombian culture. The life of a woman is synonymous to a severe punishment in the un-named town. Their only purpose is to do household chores and produce children of men who are less their husbands and more masters. This slave-master relationship defines all aspects of the life of a woman in Colombian culture. The more a woman is beautiful and skilful at doing certain chores, e.g. washing, ironing, sewing, weaving bone lace, etc. the more her suitors are expected to be. They have no right to choose a husband on their own will and are bound to abide by the orders of their fathers and brothers in matrimonial matters. When "Angela Vicario only dared hint at the inconvenience of a lack of love . . . her mother demolished it with a single phrase:

"Love can be learned too." (p. 34)

This parochial atmosphere of the fictional town and the marriage of convenience that leads Angela Vicario to develop a kind of hysteria. Having reached the conclusion that Bayardo San Roman "seemed too much of a man for me" (p. 34), especially when "he hadn't even tried to court her, but had bewitched the family with his charm" (p. 34). The marriage of convenience could not last for even a single day and the unfortunate girl is "softly pushed his wife into the house without saying a word" (p. 46) back to her parents' home.

Pedro Vicario, the more forceful of the brothers, picked her up by the waist and sat her on the dining room table.

"All right, girl," he said to her, trembling with rage, "tell us who it was."

She only took the time necessary to say the name. She looked for it in the shadows, she found it at first sight among the many, many easily confused names from this world and the other, and she nailed it to the wall with her well-aimed dart, like a butterfly with no will whose sentence has always been written.

"Santiago Nasar," she said. (p. 47)

Presenting a surreal version of thoughts passing through the mind of Angela Vicario along with the fact that so many names of both alive and dead people who she could mention as the violator of her virginity came to her mind is an attempt on part of García Márquez's deliberate attempt to obscure the whole situation. The use of surreal description works in contrast to the journalistic styled provision of information creates an ambiguity about the reality. Throughout the text, the reader remains confused whether Santiago Nasar was the one who violated the virginity of Angela Vicario or was it somebody else.

Victoria Guzmán, the cook in the household, can see that Santiago Nasar "was just like his father, [. . .] a shit" (p. 8). The submission of the whole black community to the atrocities and wrongdoings of the feudal lords of the society is manifest in the submission of Divina Flor's being "overwhelmed by the drive of her glands" when Santiago Nasar "grabbed her by the wrist when she came to take the empty mug from him" (p. 8).

"The time has come for you to be tamed," he told her.

Victoria Guzmán showed him the bloody knife.

"Let go of her, whitey," she ordered him seriously.

"You won't have a drink of that water as long as I'm alive." (p. 8)

The submissive attitude of the daughter symbolises the centuries long fear of the colonial masters, while the intensity of the mother's reaction informs the reader about the collective anger of the black community and how it is being bottled up for so many years. The way Santiago Nasar retreats is the result of another kind of fear: the fear of a possible revolt by the black servants who are treated as slaves. This fear is identical to that of the Marquis in *Demons* (1994/1996), where the Marquis always suffers from a fear that the black slaves are going to bring about a revolution against him and kill him in a most savage way. Contributing towards magical realism, the juxtaposition of two contrasting extremes, i.e. submissiveness and revolt, on the one hand, provide the tension between two opposite forces at work in the novella, and on the other, foreground the bitterness of the slave-master relationship. Water, here, serves as a metaphor for virginity and the purity of the black woman (the colonised). It is a purity that is attempted to be defiled by the masters in the most horrible manner. The whole episode can be taken as a metaphorical representation of the slave-master construct. It is quite important to note that the mother addresses Santiago Nasar as "whitey" just to highlight the author's protest against the racial tension in the community. Santiago Nasar belongs to the second ethnic class, i.e. the Middle Eastern descents. The Nasars and the so-called Arab population have been referred to as 'Turks' in the novella. This reflects the mass displacement of the Arab-Christians from the Ottoman Empire in a period ranging from 1860 to 1914 (Holland, 2005, p. 7). The narrator-investigator tells the readers that,

> Divina Flor confessed to me on a later visit, after her mother had since died, the latter hadn't said anything to Santiago Nasar because in the depths of her heart she wanted them to kill him. She, on the other hand, didn't warn him because

> she was nothing but a frightened child at the time, incapable of decision of her own, and she'd been all the more frightened when he grabbed her by the wrist with a hand that felt frozen and stony, like the hand of a dead man. (Marquez, 1981/1983, pp. 11-12)

The way slave-like servants were treated in the society is exhibited by Divina Flor when she tells the narrator about her inability to avoid Santiago Nasar's "butcher hawk hand . . . when he grabbed my whole pussy" (p. 12). And it was not something that happened once or twice. Rather, it was a daily routine of Santiago Nasar to get amusement and sexual pleasure by teasing the girl.

> It was what he always did when he caught me alone in some corner of the house, but that day I didn't feel the usual surprise but an awful urge to cry. (p. 12)

She took revenge of all these crimes from Santiago Nasar by leaving the door unbarred, against the orders of Placida Linero's orders on the day of his killing, and let the killers have an opportunity to kill him. This is particular to note that the reader is made to believe numerous times that everyone knew about what was going to happen to Santiago Nasar and that the two killers are waiting out there to kill him.

The detail regarding the sadist nature of Santiago Nasar and the way he used the female servants of the house as objects for sexual gratification at the age of just 21 years is quite relevant to unveil not only his feudal disposition but that of his whole class. However, it has got nothing much to do with the plot of the novella. Apparently, the insignificant detail seems to be a net of diversion thrown on the readers to divert their attention from the killing and the killers. But, as a matter of fact, the extraordinarily lengthy description of what could be condensed in just couple of lines or not presented

before the readers at all is used as a tool to protest. The extraordinarily banal detail works against the journalistic investigative style of the narrative. It helps the reader to experience various conceptual areas between reality and fiction that s/he has to disentangle in order to reach a possible interpretation.

The third category in the multi-ethnic world of the novella is represented by the San Román and Vicario families, who are of European descent and characterise the Spanish conquest of the region and the subsequent colonial era. The description of Bayardo San Roman in a magical way helps García Márquez build an ideal picture of the people of European descent and presents to as a contrast to the Arabs and the Africans in the novella. Having all qualities one can imagine in a man, it would not be wrong to say that Bayardo is projected to be a godlike personality.

> He is around thirty years old, but they were well concealed, because he had the waist of a novice bullfighter, golden eyes, and a skin slowly roasted by saltpeter. [. . .] Magdalena Oliver had come with him on the boat and couldn't take her eyes off him during the whole trip. "He looked like a fairy," she told me. "And it was a pity, because I could have buttered him and eaten alive." She wasn't the only one who thought so, nor was she the last to realize that Bayardo San Roman was not a man to be known at first sight. (pp. 25-26)

Certain information regarding the characters lets the magical work with the real in a way that allows the reader feel the protest as if s/he were part of the fictional world, while remaining in the real world. For example, when read along with the long and unnecessary detail regarding things quite unessential to the plot, the extraordinary happenings like the investigator-narrator's magical ability allowing him to see Santiago Nasar in his mother's memory (p. 5) and Santiago Nasar's "dreaming aloud" (p. 17)

foreground the intended message by the novelist. Magical realism comes into play when García Márquez chooses names from the world of the real and include them in the names of his fictional characters. By doing so, the novelist establishes a link between the worlds of fiction and the reality and lets the reader enter into the world of fiction. He includes fictional names along with the names of his own mother, Luisa Santiago, and of his own wife, Mercedes Barcha. Here, the fantastic-real names of the characters work towards tying the events more strongly to a fixed reality, giving the readers an opportunity to enter the fictional world[7] and legitimatising the magical real story of sex, murder, betrayal, and the shared guilt of the entire town for their indifference towards one of their fellow being. The Vicario twins are acquitted by the court on the basis that they had killed Santiago Nasar to save their family's (so-called)honour.

[7] According to Thiem (1995), the effort to provide a door for the readers to enter the world of fiction is called 'textualization'.

Chapter 10

RELIGION, MAGIC, MODERNITY AND SOCIAL PROTEST: *WINGS*, *WATER* AND *BLUE DOG*

Being a Marxist García Márquez uses his writings as an instrument of propaganda against capitalism. The journalistic objectivity while describing plain events along with the fantastical and imaginative elements help him protest against exploitation of the proletariat by the forces of capitalism at various levels. This chapter will demonstrate how García Márquez's short stories exhibit a use of magical realism that enables him to register protest against exploitation in the society.

The first short story isolated for this chapter is García Márquez's *Un señor muy viejo con unas alas enormes* [A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings, 1968/1996 (*Wings*)]. Published at the time when Colombia was passing through a crucial phase of its history known as *la violencia*[8], *Wings* exhibits a juxtaposition of the fairy/folk-tale elements – in the form of falling down of an angel from the heavens to the compound of a destitute family – with a plain explanation of the events. When Pelayo and Elisenda see the angel, they are taken up by a feeling of surprise, but they do not doubt or question the existence of a heavenly figure, who is so weak and feeble that he is unable to even move or hide somewhere. Apart from the astonishing attitude of the family towards the angel, what makes the situation even more realistic is that the angel himself is surprised on being cornered by human beings. It is thought and believed that an angel comes to take the life out of the one who is to die. The lady next door, while explaining the strange creature, tells the family in a very plain manner that,

[8]Levine (1981, p. 62) described The Violence (*La Violencia*) as "a massive and savage explosion of killing and civil warfare which claimed hundreds of thousands of lives in the decade after 1948."

"He's an angel," she told them. "He must have been coming for the child, but the poor fellow is so old that the rain knocked him down". (p. 204)

The way family captures the angel and uses it as a source to become wealthy is something very extraordinary. The wonder of readers and villagers on coming across a heavenly being, in flesh and bone, right in front of their very eyes has been explained by García Márquez in the plainest manner possible. The very fact that the angel has fallen on earth because he could not fly in a violent storm. His use of hyperbolic language and its irony seems to be on its peak;

It so happened that during those days, among so many other carnival attractions, there arrived in town the travelling show of the woman who had been changed into a spider for having disobeyed her parents. The admission to see her was not only less than the admission to see the angel, but people were permitted to ask her all manner of questions about her absurd state and to examine her up and down so that no one would ever doubt the truth of her horror. She was a frightful tarantula the size of a ram and the head of a sad maiden. What was most heartrending, however, was not her outlandish shape but the sincere affliction with which she recounted the details of her misfortune. While still practically a child she had sneaked out of her parents' house to go to a dance, and while she was coming back through the woods after having danced all night without permission, a fearful thunderclap rent the sky in two and through the crack came the lightning bolt of brimstone that changed her into a spider. Her only nourishment came from the meatballs that charitable souls chose to toss into her mouth. A spectacle like that, full of so much human truth and with such a fearful lesson, was bound to defeat without even trying that of a haughty angel who scarcely deigned to look at mortals. (pp. 190-91)

The juxtaposition of the actual rules of morality and the fantastic repercussions of their violation create a tremendous biblical atmosphere in the description of the Spiderwoman. Malm (2008, p. 79) argued about the above instance of hyperbolic language that it is a "remarkable mock-morality much in the manner of Rabelais . . . built around allusions to Biblical language, the parables of the New Testament, and traditional Spanish literature".

Perhaps, the author wants to imply that certain trivial happenings in the course of history sometimes may cause happenings of extraordinary nature. Being a significant constituent element of magical realism, hyperbole, humour and irony are extensively employed by the author to develop the general phenomena of protest against the social, political and economic injustice. However, the implications of this phenomena are much vast than they appear to be. To achieve the effect of a biblical undertone, García Márquez uses the names of days of the week. The basic theory behind this technique is that odd and quasi allegorical references to time establish an air of authenticity around the narrative. When in *Wings* (p. 186) the narrator suddenly narrates that "The world had been sad since Tuesday", Márquez not only wants to give the narrative a biblical touch, but creates an atmosphere of authenticity around it. The very act of introducing an angel among mortals, and that too very poor, adds to the irony and paves a magical realistic ground for the story.

Having a sound knowledge of the varying attitudes and historical experiences of the Colombian/Latin American people, García Márquez was in full agreement that they shared a common understanding of *la violencia*, and, thus, have developed a familiarity towards it. This is why he portrayed manifold reactions of the villagers to the institution of religion. When Pelayo and Elisenda "went out into the courtyard [. . .] theyfound the whole neighborhood in front of the chicken coop having fun with

theangel, without the slightest reverence" (p. 106). The angel in *Wings* stands symbolic for the institution of religion; the villagers as Colombian people; and Father Gonzaga as Roman Catholic Church. A general psyche of the villagers is manifest in their desire to see the whole angel-episode in the perspective of a theocratic government.

> [The villagers] thought that [the angel] should be named mayor of the world [. . .] [or] be promoted to the rank of five-star general in order to win all wars. (p. 107)

The destitute family, in the compound of whom the angel had to land, and the villagers manifest multiple reaction to it. By doing this the author lets the reader at liberty to choose the side on which s/he would like to stand. This comments on the socio-cultural norms of the region by making the readers, who are Colombians/Latin Americans/Third World people, to understand that they can influence the society in general by identifying themselves either with the religion or the otherwise. In both the circumstances, they are able to create an impact in shaping the society.

As part of hyperbole, the visualizing capacity of magical realism (as discussed by Zamora & Faris, 1995) is at work in full in García Márquez's *Light is like Water* (1992/1994). The extraordinary description of light as an unusual phenomenon highlights the difference between the way of thinking between the children's mythical-rural background and the technologically advanced urban materiality: "Light is like water . . . you turn the tap and out it comes" (Márquez, 1992/1994, p. 158). The visually supported explanation of light is understandable for a Colombian, who hails from a place "so recent that many things lacked names" (Márquez, 1967/1970, p. 1). The kids are left so startled by the technological advancement in the city life that the narrator explains light coming out of an electricity bulb in a magical way;

> On Wednesday night, as they did every Wednesday, the parents went to the movies. The boys, lords and masters of the house, closed the doors and windows and broke the glowing bulb in one of the living room lamps. A jet of golden light as cool as water began to pour out of the broken bulb and they let it run to the depth of almost three feet. Then they turned off the electricity, took out the row boat, and navigated at will among the islands in the house. (Márquez, 1992/1994, p. 158)

The children miss the boating adventure, which they were used to enjoy every other day in their native place. The wish to boat once again resulted in their fanciful inquisitiveness regarding the light. Their house in which the family previously lived was in Cartagena de Indias. It had "a yard with a dock on the bay, and a shed that could hold two large yachts. Here in Madrid, on the other hand, they were crowded into a fifth-floor apartment at 47 Paseo de la Castellana" (p. 157). The narrator never mentions the reason behind the migration of the family to Madrid. The silence is of postcolonial nature and highlights the element of protest running in the background of the whole short-story. Madrid has been described as "a remote city of burning summers and icy winds, with no ocean or river, whose landbound indigenous population had never mastered the science of navigating on light" (p. 161). The description draws a serious comparison with Cartagena de Indias in that the latter does not have the technology of air-conditioners that turn the burning summer into icy winds in no time.

Eyes of a Blue Dog (1950/1996) is yet another of García Márquez's magical-real short stories. By the use of magical realism, the author enables himself to highlight the urge of intimacy in the utter isolation and loneliness of the modern world. The desire to have a relationship, either of love or sex, is manifested through the way the two main characters, the narrator and the woman, meet each other in a dream shared by both. The

abrupt beginning of the short story leaves it up to the readers' curiosity to determine the extent of loneliness of the narrator. The opening line, "Then she looked at me" (p. 146), lets the reader feel the long waiting of the narrator for the moment when the woman looks at him. But, right after the long awaited glance, the woman's magically "slippery and oily look" makes the narrator realize that soon the dream will be over and that he will eventually forget her. He offers her to make a simple phrase an event to remember each other, so that in their next dream they could make each remember of their last night's dream: "Eyes of a blue dog" (p. 146). The phrase becomes the very source of their intimacy, a junction where the abstractions of their memories intersect and turn into the (desired)concrete reality. Without taking her hand off the lamp she said to me: "That. We'll never forget that." She left the orbit, sighing: "Eyes of a blue dog. I've written it everywhere." (p. 147). Both the man and the woman are victims of isolation, a mega feature of modern world. They are simultaneously afraid of any possible intrusion in their short-lived 'dream-date': "I'm afraid that someone is dreaming about this room and revealing my secrets" (p. 147). Afraid of the fact that it shall break the magical world of their dream, they avoid any physical contact and try to feel each other with the help of other abstract feelings. So cold do they feel that they agree that the world of their dreams "must be a city of ice" (p. 148).

> And over the flame she held the same long and tremulous hand that she had been warming before sitting down at the mirror. And she said: "You don't feel the cold." And I said to her: "sometimes". And she said to me: "You must feel it now." [. . .] It was the cold that had been giving me the certainty of my solitude. "Now I feel it," I said.

Magical realism works to highlight the miserably isolated life of the modern man by presenting a juxtaposition of the couple's shared dreams and the bitter reality of their

loneliness as well as inability to meet in the real world. However, it is to be noted that the lack of a physical connection does not necessarily weaken the bond between the two. Their intimacy in dreams increase with the passage of time, as they are able to feel each other's presence in their dreams. The desire to find each other in the real world is manifest in the woman's turning her skin from copper to red while becoming suddenly too sad and saying: "Do something about it" (p. 148). She is more desperate in her desire to create a reality out of a dream.

> "If we find each other sometime, put your ear to my ribs when I sleep on the left side and you will hear me echoing. I've always wanted you to do it sometime." I heard her breathe heavily as she talked. And she said that for years she'd done nothing different. Her life had been dedicated to finding me in reality, through that identifying phrase: "Eyes of a blue dog." (p. 149)

Her attempt to find an opportunity to meet the narrator in the real life makes her speak the agreed upon phrase wherever she goes. She tells him that "she went into restaurants and before ordering said [eyes of the blue dog] to the waiters" (p. 149). She tells him the way she would write the phrase on the napkins and scratch it on the varnish of the tables with a knife. Even on the steamed-up windows of different buildings with her forefinger. She mentions how, on remembering the smell of the room where she met the narrator last night, she asked about the narrator and repeated the phrase in front of the clerk of a drugstore. She even wrote the phrase with her lipstick to write the phrase on the tiles of the drugstore and got rebuked by the clerk. But all the efforts were in vain. She becomes so afraid of leaving the narrator's memories that she asks him not to "open that door . . . [the] hallway is full of difficult dreams" (p. 153). The acute desire of the couple to see and meet each other in the world of reality highlight the increased sense of loneliness in the real life.

To conclude, García Márquez's short stories exhibit a use of the technique of magical realism to protest against injustice at societal level. He is able to transform the individual/personal perspective into the political one, ultimately spreading his protest to the whole Third World. It is through his created-world of fiction, García Márquez comments on the empty norms of society and presents how different institutions in a society contribute to the deterioration of the condition of people living in it. If his Wings (1966/1996) focuses religion by criticizing how the lack of faith destroys the real meaning of making collections in the name of Church by letting the so-called pious souls to become greedy and selfishness, *Siesta* (1962/1984) highlights the divide between the First and the Third Worlds by continuously referring to various historical developments of the region, such as the metaphorical use of banana and almond trees for heat and shade. The reflection of his portrayal of the First World as the exploiter of the Third World can be seen on various segments of the society as well, e.g. the oppression of men against women, the usurpation of rights of the Black by the White, the exploitation of the proletariat at the hands of the elite-class. Loneliness, as experienced by the couple in *Blue Dog* (1950/1996) who can only try to wipe away their feeling of loneliness through their shared dreams, can be seen as the loneliness of all the Third World countries that share a dream of real independence and prosperity.

Chapter 11

CONCLUSIONS

The present study was an attempt to explore the potency of the technique of magical realism to help García Márquez register protest against social injustices in the Latin American society. In the analysis and discussion chapters (Chapters 4 to 10), I have analysed the way García Márquez uses the technique of magical realism to register protest against social injustice in his fiction. A close reading of the selected texts of García Márquez shows that the technique of magical realism provided necessary space to the novelist to blend reality and fantasy in such a proportion that the difference between the two gradually diminished. The study highlighted that the amalgamation of the factual and the fantastical in a magical realist text is meant to challenge the authenticity of the so-called objective reality, which – in the postcolonial context – can be taken for the official readings of history. The textual analysis of the texts of García Márquez have confirmed that the use of magical realism enabled him to address a number of social and historical problems of the Third World with the help of the corresponding ideological and political action in the texts (see Chapter 7). His writings provide an example of 'historiographic metafiction' in that they not only challenge the thought-to-be objective in the general and philosophical terms, but re-creates history to be read in parallel with the official versions of the same, e.g. banana plantation massacre and insomnia plague episode in *Solitude* (see Chapter 5 for details) and the way dictatorial governments oppress general public as depicted in *Patriarch* (see Chapter 7 for details). In the former, the fictional events correspond to the real incidents of killing of innocent workers, who were on strike for their rights, and the way government tried to rub it off from the pages of history by denying the massacre; whereas, in the latter, the Third World people's dream of peace, progress and prosperity is shown to be

shattered at the hands of the dictatorial system of government. Magical realism helped the novelist to (re-)construct history by juxtaposition of the extraordinary and the ordinary. The episode of insomnia plague in *Solitude* serves as a metaphor for a highly controlled media and a public who is denied the right to information. As a critique of the way colonizers imposed their own version of reality leaves Macondo without a clear sense of the past (see Chapter 5). The First World countries have democratic governments, but create such circumstances that most of the Third World have dictatorships. Political repression as a major consequence of the prolonged dictatorial rule in the Third World countries has been highlighted in *Patriarch*. The novelist creates a fictional dictator by mingling features of all major Latin American dictators. Extraordinarily long sentences and the cyclical movement of time in the novel manifest the prolonged and un-ending dictatorial rules in the region (see Chapter 7). *Colonel* serves as a comment on the way long civil wars have told upon lives of people, who should have been living in peace without any financial and mental tension. The old war veteran – the Colonel – has to live from hand to mouth because he has been denied the right of pension. His long and unending wait for the pension letter symbolizes the way the whole Third World is waiting for the prosperity it was promised by the First World (see Chapter 6 for details). In his *Demons*, García Márquez discusses another theme related to exploitation, i.e. slavery and racial discrimination. The very foundation of the novella has been established on magical realism in that the novelist took its basic idea from the stories he heard during his childhood, folklore, and the real event of excavation of a tomb. The way slaves were auctioned on the basis of their physical traits is especially focused in the novella (e.g. the Abyssinian slave girl episode; for detail see Chapter 8). Chapter 9 analyses how García Márquez comments on the social injustice inherent in the indigenous culture by discussing the idea of (so-called)honour killing. It

is in this chapter that he discusses how discrimination on the basis of race, colour and creed tells upon the integrity of a society as a whole, e.g. the way Victoria Guzman thinks about Santiago Nasar is metaphorical for the disgust of the whole black community on the atrocities of the white feudal lords of the society (Chapter 9). The critical analysis of García Márquez's three short-stories foregrounds how the novelist makes certain social problems the focus of his censure. *Blue Dog* reveals the broken and bruised social structure of a Third World country, where people are so isolated that they can only meet each other in dreams. Garcia Marquez's use of magical realism in *Wings* enabled him to criticize how people, on both individual and collective level, use religion for their own benefits. The amalgamation of the magical and the real in the form of an angel descending from the sky to the house of a poor family. The wonder of the villagers on seeing an angel is narrated by the novelist in the plainest possible manner diminishes the difference between reality and fantasy, disturbing the entity of established reality. The children's magical imagination regarding light in *Water* manifests a disapproval of such empty advancement at the cost of rich cultural values (see Chapter 10).

All the texts selected for a close reading in this study showed that magical realism corresponds to the Third World's social, political, economic and geographic conditions and has evolved as a subversive phenomenon that is helpful to raise a voice of protest against colonialism and its after-effects. It provides a freedom from the control of realism and lets an author invent new and neutral spaces somewhere between the real-world and the fairy-land. They are at liberty to mingle the realistic with the fantastic in order to give the lesson of tolerating others' views, however different in nature they may be. The study also demonstrated that just like the hybrid nature of magical realism, we are living in a multinational and multi-ethnic postmodern world,

where different cultures intersect each other to form a global culture. In other words, magical realism works as a facilitating force to create a point of fusion between different worlds and shows that people belonging to otherwise diverse and opposite worlds can co-exist. Through reconstruction of history, fiction writers show the official readings of past events as a subjective experience, resulted from a particular mind set. An official reading of history is, in fact, the relation of the process of invading another nation's land, economy, resources and culture, whereas the magical realist literature is an expression of the colonized, the 'Other' of the society. As a magical realist, García Márquez communicates the experience of a marginalized community back to the rulers through his writings (e.g. *Solitude*, *Demons*, *Colonel*, *Patriarch* as discussed in the Chapters 4-10). The study highlighted that magical realism, as a narrative technique and a popular literary genre, is of help to a postcolonial fiction writer. It serves as a means to articulate what s/he otherwise cannot.

Latin America is no different from rest of the Third World in that it has been exploited by a number of colonial rulers and military dictators. For the writers of this region, magical realism is specifically suitable to write their experiences, both colonial and postcolonial, back to their colonial masters. García Márquez responds to the specific conditions of his region by giving vent to his views about the effects of colonial experience. He is able to do it with the help of the technique of magical realism. The study deliberates that García Márquez's magical realist fiction transcends the boundaries of the real and the fantastic and creates an atmosphere where the authenticity of the so-called objective accounts of history, as propagated by the colonial rulers, become vulnerable. The analysis of his texts showed that it is the extraordinary use of language by García Márquez that contributes to raising a vòice of protest regarding the mental and physical problems caused by the (post)colonialism. The juxtaposition of the

fantastic and the real, e.g., in *Solitude* (as discussed in Chapter 5), banana plantation massacre and the introduction of insomnia plague in the town along with a stress on the cyclical movement of time; the highly realistic portrayal in *Colonel* (see Chapter 6). His extensive use of hyperbolic language foregrounds ironic undertone throughout his major texts. In *Solitude* (1967/1970) the description of Ursula Iguarin's chastity belt that has been used against her cousin-husband Jose Arcadio Buendia's attempts to consummate their marriage, because cousin marriage was considered to be a sin in that society and it was thought that such incestuous marriages always resulted in children with a pig's tail. Another instance of hyperbole is manifested in the fact that Macondo, an important human settlement has comes into existence because of an apparently insignificant rooster. In the beginning of the novel, the reader is startled when s/he sees the technological revolution, imported in the town by Melquiades is used for getting lost iron-pots and braziers from the places such articles are least expected to be (see Chapter 5 for details). In *Patriarch* (1975/2007), we come across extraordinarily long sentences that themselves are an example of exaggeration (see Chapter 7). In *Wings* (1968), on a stormy night, an angel happens to land in the compound of a destitute family and is subsequently captured by them to be put on display for a meager amount of money (see Chapter 10). In *Colonel* (1968/1996), the protagonist's prolonged and rather un-ending wait for his pension letter and the way it has been described by the author is an example of overstatement and irony (see Chapter 6). Another example of hyperbole is the way young Erendira's, in the short-story *Erendira* (1972/1996), is forced to prostitution by her own grandmother in order to regain her wealth. But the loss is too heavy and can only be covered by selling her body for one hundred and fifty pesos for two hundred years (see Chapter 4). Such hyperbolic language is supported by humorous explanations of nearly all his characters and events throughout his fiction.

The biblical undertone adds to the overall effect of irony and makes his fiction fulfil the criteria of an epic. In *Solitude* (1967/1970) for example, parallel can be drawn between Macondo and the Garden of Eden; Jose Arcadio Buendia as Adam and Ursula Iguarin as Eve; and the sin of incestuous marriage between Jose Arcadio Buendia and Ursula Iguarin can be compared with the Adam and Eve's eating of the forbidden fruit.

The study reveals that García Márquez's fiction is quite relevant in that they continue to be a source of awareness among the masses about the social as well as political realities of the region. Their main purpose includes registering a protest against the exploitation of the native resources, unveiling the deliberate attempts to distort and even omit certain incidents from the history, and to show respect towards the native culture and tradition. The dilemma presented in his fiction not only addresses the Latin American political realty, but has become a phenomenon to highlight the presence of such problems in throughout the Third World. His short-stories and novels are of great significance on the basis of the use of magical realism and the manner in which they communicate the feelings of protest. Exploitation of the working class, on both individual as well as collective level, is highlighted in his texts. The author relates even minute details of seemingly trivial incidents and proves that sometimes such insignificant happenings may cause a major change in the social fabric. His fiction attempts to highlight the fact that there is nothing that could be called 'objective truth' or 'absolute'. Through a skillful use of magical realism, he demonstrates that it is the subjectivity of experience that drives an individual to form certain beliefs, either individual or common. Therefore, one should not term another's belief as wrong on the basis of mere difference of opinion, (e.g. the conflict between the banana plantation workers and UFC highlighted in Chapter 5). Opinion and perception may vary from one person, one nation, one society, one culture to another. As human beings, we should

respect each other's beliefs and should respect the points of differences, because reality depends upon the individual perspective and experience. The use of technique of magical realism in the selected texts aims to re-interpret the Latin American reality. It proves to be a strategy stemming from postmodernism and postcolonialism. The technique disapproves of the idea of binary oppositions and invites the human beings to live in harmony with each other and respect others' beliefs. History is an important medium used by governmental authorities to impose their own particular view point on the world. In an attempt to do so, history is distorted by the oppressor and is used as a tool to make others believe in something which had never occurred. The study shows that by creating a parallel reality García Márquez finds a better ground to protest against such practice. The re-construction of history through magical realism enables him to present his/her perspective of an event from the past, a perspective which has been denied by the official versions of history.

Keeping in view the evolution and use of magical realism in Latin America and the Sub-Continent along with the native / indigenous cultures of North America, it is suggested that areas of further research can be defined by the ways this narrative style is being used in different places, e.g., Arundhati Roy and Salman Rushdie in India; Amitav Ghosh in Bangladesh; Mo Yan with his hallucinatory realism in China; García Márquez, Isabel Allende and Laura Esquivel in Latin America; Toni Morrison along with other ethnic writers in North America; and Graham Swift in the UK. There is something that connects all these writers and yet there is something that is different and unique about each one of them. The changing locale also changes the symbolic and metaphorical value of the use of the genre. The dictator in García Márquez's *Patriarch*, for example, can be seen in the context of the way a significant part of the global South has been exploited at the hands of dictators. It would be of importance to explore the

role these dictatorial governments played to suppress their people and deny them the right to information by introducing censorship boards, which controlled both print and electronic media. As a Third World country, Pakistan may be taken as a prime example in this regard. The study demonstrated that magical realism can fulfil the inclination of a writer, a nation, a country, a continent, and of the whole human race to have a tendency toward the fantastic and the absurd that shapes our version of reality. Magical realism is a technique through which a version of reality that is coloured by myth and memory, by human fantasy, and by our own subjectivity can be captured. This study showed that the technique of magical realism helped García Márquez highlight various constructs of exploitation and register a voice of protest against them. The way magical realism is being frequently used in the contemporary fiction, it needs more attention in terms of criticism in order to reach a clear and complete understanding of a text. It is recommended that the presence of magical elements, such as myth or folklore and fantastical or the bizarre, in a text be given special attention while interpreting a work of fiction.

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